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Report of Proceedings

from 19 to 23 April 1982

Europe House, Strasbourg

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NOTE TO READER

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

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

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

*President**(The sitting was opened at 5 p.m.)*1. *Resumption of the session*

President. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament, adjourned on 26 March 1982.¹

2. *Tribute*

President. — The House will have learned with sadness of the death of one of our number, Mr Francis Combe, on 15 April 1982, at the very early age of 56. Francis Combe was an ardent champion of the cause of the skilled tradesman, rising to become President of the Chamber of Trade in France. His twin objectives were to lead a coordinated campaign in favour of artisans and to win acceptance by the authorities of their economic importance in the country.

Although he had at first thought of seeking a career in the army, he became a baker at Bondoufle, in Essonne. He then took up the cause of his fellow artisans in 1955, and in 1970, following violent demonstrations, put forward a series of fiscal and social proposals, many of them enacted in 1973 in the *loi Royer*.

He gave his life literally for the cause for which he had fought for so long, as he died soon after delivering a speech at Versailles to the representatives of tradesmen in the Paris region.

Francis Combe was elected to the European Parliament in 1979 on the list of the *Union pour la France en Europe* and joined the Liberal and Democratic Group. He served with distinction on our Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, and brought to their discussions an unrivalled experience and talent for expressing the hopes and fears of those whom he led with success.

(The House rose and observed one minute's silence)

Honourable Members, it is also my sad duty to record the death on 29 March, on the 25th anniversary of the treaties, of Professor Walter Hallstein, the first President of the Commission of the European Economic Community. I would like to take this opportunity of

paying a warm tribute to him on behalf of the European Parliament.

Walter Hallstein can take his place with the greatest of the creators of Europe in the decades from 1950 to 1970. That place was almost assured even by 1958, when he became the President of the new Commission of the European Economic Community, for his Presidency sealed his great work for Europe. His training was in law and by 1942 he had already been a Professor of Law for 12 years. Having met Konrad Adenauer at the Congress of Europe at The Hague in 1948, in 1951 he became Secretary of State, the chief official at that time at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bonn. After that, in quick succession, he negotiated the Saar Treaty and led the German delegations to the talks on the Schuman Plan in 1951 and to the Messina Conference of 1955. With Chancellor Adenauer he had the distinction of signing the Treaty of Rome on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany and then faced up to the challenge of presiding over the new Commission. He used to describe it as a motor, a watchdog and an honest broker for the pioneering Six of the young Community and believed it essential to preserve its newly-won unity against attacks from within and without.

Professor Walter Hallstein was elected to the Bundestag in 1959 as a representative of the Christian-Democratic Union for Neuried-Altenkirchen. Although modest and in private life retiring, his steel-willed determination and total devotion to the cause of a united Europe embodied in a political union founded upon supranational institutions led inevitably to national challenges to his position and that of the Commission.

I conclude with some of the last words spoken by Professor Hallstein to European Parliament on 21 June 1967 when, having spoken of the rôle of technocracy in political life, he paid this tribute to the Parliament, and I take it from the Dutch text:

that in this Parliament are subsumed the human element of human collectivities, in other words that which is genuine and which determines both the destiny of nations and the success of their enterprises, such as this Community, as well as its endeavours in completing the work of construction enjoined on us by the Treaty of Rome.

(The House rose and observed one minute's silence)

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Mr President, I wish to draw your attention to a fact which is, I believe, of serious concern to the whole House.

At 11 o'clock (European time) this morning in the capitals of the Warsaw Pact countries — Moscow,

¹ Approval of the minutes: see Minutes.

Pannella

Bucharest, Budapest, Sofia, East-Berlin and Prague — forty young Europeans publicly demonstrated their support for the 'objectives of the Nobel Prize Winners' Manifesto and the objectives of the European Parliament's resolution against the extermination by hunger of millions of human beings each year'.

Mr President, I believe that this goes to show that our Parliament sometimes manages to make its presence felt to the public and become a source of militant hope in men's hearts.

I am able to inform you that the chancelleries have now obtained a guarantee that the young persons arrested in Moscow will be released tomorrow. It appears that these young demonstrators received a very democratic welcome in Bucharest and may be appearing on television to explain the objectives of the European Parliament and of the Nobel Prize Winners; in the four other cities, the young people are still under arrest.

Mr President, I hope that after seeking such information as you may consider necessary, you will feel able to put on record, on behalf of our Assembly, the hope that these young people who were taking part in a peaceful and non-violent manner in demonstrations in these cities in the name of the Charter of Human Rights and the Helsinki Agreement will be immediately released and have their rights recognized. I also hope that the Commission will follow suit even if it is continuing to obstruct the resolution adopted by our Parliament after the manner of the Warsaw Pact countries which we often have cause to regret.

I would point out that this demonstration took place eight days after the great march by 50 000 persons in Rome; the specific objective of that march was to secure application of the European Parliament's resolution — it was not a march for peace as some reports claimed.

President. — Mr Pannella, I am glad that you pointed out that the impact of the resolutions passed by the European Parliament reaches not only beyond the Chamber but even beyond the frontiers of the Community. I shall find out what consequences are suffered by those who take part in these demonstrations and consider what measures should be adopted.

3. *Membership of the Parliament*

President. — At its sitting of 26 March 1982, the House was informed that Mr Cousté would resign his seat in the European Parliament on 30 March 1982.

Mr Cousté has since informed me that he is withdrawing his resignation.

The withdrawal of the resignation has been noted.

(Applause)

I see that Mr Cousté is a highly valued member of the House!

In its letter of 6 April, the Committee on the Verification of Credentials considered, at the request of the Enlarged Bureau, Mr Fergusson's objections to Mr Fanton's resignation and to the declaration that his seat was vacant.

The committee stressed that a rotation system, referred to as the 'tourniquet' system was in operation in the case of Members elected to the DIFE list in France, whereby those elected to that list were required to resign their seats after a certain period of time in order to enable other candidates on the list to be appointed.

The Committee on the Verification of Credentials will look into the matter. However, it stressed that Members can protect themselves against pressure to resign their seats before the end of their term of office by invoking Rule 2 (2) of the Rules of Procedure or Article 4 (1) of the Act of 20 September 1976.

In the case of Mr Fanton, the Committee, which considered in detail the objections raised in the House, concluded on the basis of the considerations referred to above that Mr Fanton's resignation had been duly and properly notified and that the legal objections raised by Mr Fergusson could not be taken into account.

It therefore recommended that Parliament formally establish the vacancy resulting from Mr Fanton's resignation. I therefore invite the House to establish that the vacancy exists.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, may I ask first that the House be allowed to study the text that you have just read out before voting, which I think it has to, on Mr Fanton's resignation? It appears to me that the committee, which has been quite clear on the political and the moral issue, the impropriety of the tourniquet, does sound as if it had ducked the legal issue. Indeed, it has been somewhat craven about it. I think therefore that we should have some time just to consider, as a House, how to react to this particular report.

Evidently, Mr President, the tourniquet turns on, and if we cannot stop the flow of Members out of this Chamber, we can perhaps stop the flow into this Chamber of Members who have undertaken improper obligations in respect of their membership and of how long they intend to stay with us. Would you confirm, Mr President, now that you have received my letter to

Fergusson

you of 12 March asking you to refer to the Committee on the Verification of Credentials the question of obligations undertaken by new Members in respect of early resignations? And if this is not the way to tackle this particular issue, perhaps you would give me guidance on how to do so.

President. — Concerning the issue arising out of Mr Fanton's decision to resign as a Member of this Parliament, I perhaps could ask Mr Prout to explain the reason advanced by the Committee on the Verification of Credentials.

Mr Prout. — It is not often, Mr President, that I am actually asked to say something. I usually have to force my political attentions upon you.

(Laughter)

I think you put it more eloquently than I could.

(Laughter)

Therefore I do not have very much to add. The committee felt, in its wisdom, that Mr Fanton had the opportunity, if he wished, to remain in Parliament; and he would have been protected both by the Treaty and by our own Rules of Procedure. It was quite clear that he did not wish to avail himself of the opportunities that clearly exist in the Treaty and in the Rules of Procedure and, we felt that we could not recommend to the Parliament that we should order him to stay. That was the main reason why we took the position that we did.

On the question of the tourniquet itself, that is still a matter under study by the committee, and we shall be reporting to the House in due course.

President. — Thank you very much, Mr Prout, for this explanation. It simply means that by accepting the resignation of Mr Fanton we do not pronounce on the system of the tourniquet, which is still under study. That is mainly what I wanted to extract from your committee and from you, in particular. So I would invite the Assembly now to accept the vacancy.

Are there any objections?

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Mr President, I heard the interpreter say 'accept the vacancy'. I think he meant 'establish the vacancy'.

Mr President, how do we establish it?

President. — It is very simple, Mr Pannella.

It is, I think, quite clear that Mr Fanton resigned of his own free will and with full knowledge of his rights.

Parliament then, with full knowledge of the facts, noted Mr Fanton's resignation.

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Mr President, our Rules of Procedure and the Treaties use the term 'establish' and not 'take note'. We must establish the fact by a consensus or by taking a vote after you have made a proposal to us; it is not simply a matter of taking automatic note. That is why I wanted you to tell us, Mr President, how we establish a vacancy: by consensus or by a vote?

President. — Mr Pannella, when Parliament is informed by the President that a Member has stated that he wishes to resign, it notes the statement and then that a vacancy exists.

In the case we are considering, certain difficulties arose concerning the establishment of the vacancy. We therefore refer the matter to the Committee on the Verification of Credentials which established that we could take note. It is then for Parliament to establish that a vacancy exists and that is what I am submitting to the House.

Are there any objections?

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Yes, Mr President, to make sure that the precedent is clear.

What happens now that the objection has been made?

President. — It is noted, Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Of what?

Mr President, it is for the Assembly to decide.

President. — I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — *(DE)* Mr President, perhaps you should find an opportunity outside this Chamber to explain to our honourable colleague, Mr Pannella, the difference between a legal declaration — which consists in saying yes or no — and the establishment of a fact.

If Mr Pannella decides to get married he has to say yes. Therefore nobody can just try to 'establish' that he is married. That is a matter for his own free will. But if a Member of Parliament declares of his own free will that he is leaving our Parliament it is not a kind of divorce for which our consent is needed; we can simply establish that the colleague has left us.

Bangemann

It may be regrettable, but it is a fact that we can only 'establish'. Perhaps if Mr Pannella gives the matter close thought he may be able to establish the difference for himself.

(Laughter)

President. — We therefore note, that Mr Fanton has left us. Even Mr Pannella should therefore be satisfied.

It is therefore established that a vacancy exists.¹

4. *Withdrawal of a report*

President. — Sir Fred Catherwood, chairman of the Committee on External Economic Relations wishes to withdraw the report by Mr De Clercq on relations between the Community and Comecon since it no longer corresponds with the present situation. Are there any objections.

I call Mr Radoux

Mr Radoux. — *(FR)* Mr President, the Socialist Group is able to agree to the referral of this report back to Committee because the Committee itself wishes to revise the text. But that is the only reason for which we agree to reference back to Committee.

President. — Mr Radoux, the matter is somewhat more complicated than that. It is not a question of referral back to committee since the report is not on the agenda, but of the withdrawal of the report by the committee. That can only occur with the approval of the House. That is why I formulated it in that way, but I think we are now in agreement.²

(Parliament adopted the proposal)

5. *Agenda*

President, *at its meeting of 30 March the enlarged Bureau drew up the draft agenda which has been distributed.* — At the meeting this morning of the chairmen of the political groups it was agreed that I should submit the following amendments to the House:

¹ Membership of Parliament (continuation) Membership of Committees — Petitions — Documents received — Texts of Treaties forwarded by the Council — Authorisation of reports — Referral to Committee — Competence of Committees — motions for resolutions (Rule 49) — Withdrawal of a motion for a resolution: See Minutes.

² Urgent procedure (Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure): see Minutes.

Tuesday

At the request of Mr Aigner, chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, the report by Mr Cousté on the borrowing and lending activities of the Commission of the European Communities (Doc. 1-103/82) within the framework of the joint debate on several reports by his committee, tabled as Items 27 to 34.

Wednesday

Two oral questions by Mr Fanti and others (Nos 0-19/82 and 0-18/82) to the Commission and to the Council on the institutional balance of the Community and the strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament, have been included in the debate on the meeting of the European Council under Item No 39.

At 3 p.m., after the vote on motions to amend the list of subjects for urgent debate, the President-in-Office of the Council will make a statement followed by a debate on the embargo on trade with Argentina. After this debate the President-in-Office of the Council will answer all questions included in the debate on the European Council.

After this statement, a debate will be held on the statements by the Council and the Commission on the European Council Meeting of 29 and 30 March 1982. This debate will be closed at 7 p.m. to enable Question Time (Questions to the Council) to take place until 8.30 p.m.

I call Mrs Kellett-Bowman.

Mrs Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, is it possible to take the de Pasquale item, No 37, by itself on the agenda for Wednesday? I understand that Miss de Valera's report has not in fact been to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning and that we have only just had it today. It seems inappropriate, therefore, to put it in with an item that has been under consideration in the committee for nearly a year — well, for eight months.

President. — I call Sir Henry Plumb.

Sir Henry Plumb. — It is really not, Mr President, on the question of splitting the two — the de Pasquale report and the de Valera report — but on the de Valera report — Item 38 that I wish to speak. I am quite sure that no one objects to having an interim report on the situation of women in Europe, whether they are in the less-favoured areas or regions or not. Quite frankly this committee is a committee of enquiry, and if one looks at the Rules, Rule 95 does not, for that reason, permit references to committee. That means that that committee of enquiry makes proposals to the various committees. In that sense, as I understand it,

Plumb

no reports have gone to the committees. Reports should be sent and therefore the final report should come to this plenary from the parliamentary committees and not from any committee of enquiry.

President. — I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de la Malène. — (*FR*) Mr President, I want to draw your attention to two points.

Firstly, the procedural problem which Sir Henry Plumb has just raised: is a Committee of Inquiry entitled to table an interim report at the Plenary sitting?

Secondly, since we shall be sitting until 8.30 p.m. on Wednesday, should we not adjust the speaking time arrangements?

President. — Mr de la Malène, the problem raised by Sir Henry Plumb is not provided for in the Rules of Procedure. I therefore think that the House has the right to decide on its own authority.

On the second point you raised, I also think that speaking time should be adopted as proposed.

I call Mr Gendebien.

Mr Gendebien. — (*FR*) Mr President, I should like to point out that we received the De Pasquale report on Friday morning. The deadline for tabling amendments had been fixed at noon on Friday in Luxembourg. I therefore formally ask for the deadline for tabling amendments to be extended.

Secondly, I support the observation by Mrs Kellett Bowman on the division of the debate on the reports by Mr De Pasquale and Miss de Valera.

Without wishing in any way to underestimate the scope of the reports on the situation of women in the Community regions. I think that the De Pasquale report on the reform of the ERDF regulation is far more important and deserves our undivided attention.

I therefore think our debates would be more effective if these two items were taken separately.

President. — I call Mr Notenboom.

Mr Notenboom. — (*NL*) Mr President, I wish to put a question about the vote on the Key report. This is an interim report on the budgetary discharge. I was told that the vote would be taken on Thursday following a debate on the report on Tuesday. But I find no mention of this in the agenda. If that is not now the intention, I wonder if you could see to it that we do pro-

ceed in this way. This is not a report to which amendments need to be submitted; the issue is whether or not to grant the discharge or whether to defer it. Discussions may be necessary in the political groups and that will not be possible if the debate on the report is completed on Tuesday and a vote taken only one or two hours later.

Mr President, is your intention still to take the vote on this report on Thursday and, if not, can we now decide to do so?

President. — Mr Notenboom, I think that, in general, the political groups appreciate the problems concerning the consideration of the Key report and that the changes in the deadline for tabling amendments — which I still have to put to the House — also enable us to take them into consideration. The problem is that if all the votes were to be taken on Thursday — as would be the case — nearly all of Thursday would be taken up with voting and this would be bad for the order of business. However, if you wish to have all the votes held on Thursday, it will have to be submitted to the House.

Mr Notenboom. — (*NL*) Mr President, as you may perhaps know I am very reluctant to disturb the order of our business but this is no ordinary report; the budgetary discharge is a power which rests with Parliament alone and I am therefore entitled, and indeed see it as my duty, to make this proposal, especially as this seems to have been the original intention of the Bureau. I now propose that the vote on the Key report be taken on Thursday.

President. — I call Mr Seligman.

Mr Seligman. — I presume, since the Falkland Island debate will still be an emergency debate, that the vote will be taken at the end of that debate on Wednesday evening.

President. — No sir. It is a debate in the context of the meeting of the European Council and the discussion related to that topic so that the vote will be taken normally on Thursday. There is no other way.

I call Mrs Maij-Weggen.

Mrs Maij-Weggen. — (*NL*) Mr President, I wish to comment very briefly on Mrs Kellett-Bowman's remark about the de Valera report. I am doing so because the chairman of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women is not with us and misunderstandings might arise as a result. Miss de Valera was specifically asked to investigate on behalf of the Committee of Inquiry whether account was taken in

Maij-Weggen

the reform of the regional fund of the resolution which we adopted last February on the position of women. That is the subject of the report and it seems perfectly normal to me for it to be taken jointly with the De Pasquale report. We are of course all aware of the importance of the De Pasquale report but it seems perfectly proper to consider the paper by Miss de Valera in this context especially as she was asked to prepare it; now that the report has been submitted it seems strange to suggest that something out of order may have been done. Partly because Miss de Valera is not now here with us, I should be very sorry and would consider it a strange political development for Parliament now to decide to refer the de Valera report back to the Committee of Inquiry. The Committee of Inquiry cannot work in that way. We try to adjust our activities as far as possible to the ordinary work of Parliament. I therefore wish to protest once again against Mrs Kellett-Bowman's request and I would urge Parliament to keep Miss de Valera's report on its agenda.

President. — As we must get on with the business of the sitting I am obliged to point out that requests to amend the draft agenda are not admissible unless they reach me one hour before the sitting begins. I regret to have to point out that Sir Henry Plumb's request to delete Miss de Valera's report because of the special position of the Committee of Inquiry on Women's Rights is not covered by the Rules of Procedure. We must therefore treat this report as a normal report which means that the only course open is to refer it back to committee. I think that that is what Sir Henry Plumb had in mind and that is what I shall put to the House.

I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (*IT*) Mr President, Rule 95 of the Rules of Procedure defines the tasks of the committee of enquiry, and there can be no doubt that Miss de Valera's report exactly conforms to the terms of the mandate granted to this committee by Parliament concerning the situation of women in Europe.

If a question were to be raised about the interpretation of the Rules, you would not be able to go ahead and take a vote on this point; you would be obliged, under Rule III (1) of these Rules to refer the question to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

There the matter stands. In fact, earlier Sir Henry Plumb did not ask — in the terms you mentioned — for a change in the agenda. Moreover, Rule 95, in my opinion, is sufficiently explicit, and it should be interpreted in a manner totally different than that advanced by Sir Henry Plumb and his group.

President. — Mr D'Angelosante, I do not see where the problem is. Sir Henry Plumb is entitled under

Rule 85 to request that the de Valera report be referred back to committee. The terms of reference of a committee of inquiry are the same as those of any other committee.

Any Member can at any time request referral back to committee.

I call Mr Prout.

Mr Prout. — Mr President, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions is going to ask Parliament to refer the whole question of the status of committees of enquiry to it for an interpretation. Now obviously that interpretation has not been made yet . . .

President. — Mr Prout, that is a very different subject. I agree that it is fine for the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions to sort it out but on this problem the situation is extremely clear. The question concerns the matter of referring back a report to a committee or not. From that point of view we deal with reports by an enquiry committee in exactly the same way as the reports of a normal committee. So it is a different subject.

Mr Prout. — May I just finish what I was going to say, Mr President?

I can ask you then that any vote taken on this matter now will not prejudice any future decision taken by this House about the status of committee of enquiry. Is that quite clear?

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — Mr President, there is one matter which is very germane to this particular issue Mrs Maij-Weggen is quite right in one respect, namely that both the de Pasquale report and the de Valera report are on the same matter, namely a Commission text and both suggest amendments to that Commission text. Now it seems to me you cannot have a procedure like that; either one committee or the other is the committee responsible. If I may refer you to Article 101, I would like to ask you as President whether the Committee of Enquiry on Women's Rights asked you and obtained permission to produce an opinion on this Commission text because, if not, the report should never have appeared on our agenda in the first place. Either one committee or the other is the committee responsible, and you cannot have two committees reporting on the same Commission text. So it is not a question of referral back to committee, it is in practice a question of this report being out of order in the first place.

President. — Yes, Mr Patterson, but that is in fact the problem indicated by Mr Prout. We still have to

President

become a little bit clearer on the competences of the enquiry committees and we have not sorted it out. So I now have to deal with them under the Rules as they are established, and from that point of view I think there is no other way than to accept the proposal by Sir Henry Plumb and vote on whether or not the report by Miss de Valera should be referred back to committee.

(Parliament rejected Sir Henry Plumb's proposal)

I call Mr Pearce.

Mr Pearce. — Mr President, on that vote that you just took you said the report was being sent back to committee. The vote was about which committee the report should be referred back to. It seems to be highly unclear in the way you put the matter to the vote as to whether we were talking about sending it back to the Committee on Women or to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning. That is what you should have said in putting it to the vote. I think what Sir Henry Plumb meant was that it should go to the latter committee.

President. — Not at all Mr Pearce. If we refer a report back to a committee it goes back to the committee it came from and that in this case is the Committee of enquiry into the situation of Women in Europe.

However the proposal was not adopted.

Thursday

At 3 p.m., vote on the motion for a resolution by the chairmen of the political groups on the composition of the parliamentary delegations.

The deadline for tabling amendments has been fixed at midday tomorrow.

I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, could I ask you, please, at what stage we will be debating the resolution from the group chairmen on delegations. Presumably the House will want an opportunity to discuss this important matter and to make its views clear to the public who are much concerned about delegations. At what stage are you proposing we debate it?

President. — The proposal, Mr Forth, is a clear one. No debate.

Mr Forth. — In that case could I oppose that proposal, Mr President?

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Mr President, I heard you announce that a vote would be taken on Thursday on the membership of our delegations. I suppose that this has been the subject of discussions between and within the political groups. May I point out that the Non-attached Members still have no information whatever about the proposals from the group chairmen. Could you see to it that we are apprised of those proposals to avoid unnecessary discussion on Thursday.

President. — I would suggest, Mr De Goede, that you contact the political group chairmen who, I believe, are meeting tonight to discuss these matters and who have not yet reached full agreement on the resolution they intend to submit. The next of the resolution should be available tomorrow morning so that there will be time formally to table amendments.

We have not yet received the motion for a resolution from the political group chairmen on the membership of the delegations. I had proposed that the deadline for tabling amendments should be tomorrow midday. In view of the situation I think it would be better if we extended it until 5 p.m.

I call Sir Fred Catherwood.

Sir Fred Catherwood. — Mr President, on this point and, indeed, on a point of order. We discussed with your predecessor the problem of establishing a functional relationship between the committees and the delegations, because we feel that in order to make sure that the delegations are seen in public to be functional, the whole business of briefing and debriefing delegations should be incorporated in a motion like this. It is not incorporated. Therefore, I think that you should at least consult the committee, Mr President, before this goes forward and see if they want to make any amendments.

Secondly, it is very important that it should not appear as something which we are trying to get through the Parliament without debate. Those of us who have had to defend the position of delegations as something useful to the Parliament in conjunction with the functions which are being performed in the Committees — I speak particularly of my own committee — feel that there is a very good case to be made. Therefore, if the enlarged Bureau tries to push it through, simply by a vote and without a debate it will appear that someone is trying to cover up something, when they are not. Therefore, I very strongly urge you, first of all to consult the committee chairman about it in the meeting that you will shortly have with them, and, secondly, not to put it through without a debate.

President. — Sir Fred, I thank you very much for words I very much agree with, but I have to point out that Rule 106 (3) says: 'the political groups shall appoint the members of the delegations'. That means I

President

suppose that you have to discuss the matter with your group chairman.

It is a problem of the rules. In fact we have tried to implement what you are advocating, and I think it is right. But we are in the hands of the group chairman as far as the final proposal is concerned. Amendments can then be put by the Assembly. But there is no other way.

Sir Fred Catherwood. — Mr President, there are two quite separate issues here.

One is who is put on the delegations and that, of course, is for the group chairman to decide. No one is questioning that.

Secondly, there is the question of this particular resolution that is before the Parliament, and my understanding was that your predecessor said to the group chairmen that we would be consulted on what would be put to Parliament and that Parliament would decide. I do not really see how Parliament can come to a proper decision unless it also discusses it. Therefore, I do not think that this should be pushed through simply without a debate.

President. — I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — *(DE)* Mr President, this matter was discussed by the group chairmen and I am able to inform you, and the House as a whole, that three chairmen of small groups proposed a change in the system under which we would only appoint the Bureau of each delegation in order to have a fixed nucleus; Members would then be appointed to the delegations on an ad hoc basis from the individual committees depending on the topics of discussion. That, I believe, is what our colleagues wished.

Unfortunately, however, I must inform you that two of the large groups do not agree to that system so that the chairmen of the small groups are in a minority. We have therefore not changed the system. In other words we are still using the old system and if it is to be changed the change would first have to be approved by the two large groups concerned. To put it clearly, if the Socialist and Christian Democratic Groups agree — and also the Communist and Allied Group which supported the old system — we can change it. But the group chairmen are dependent on majorities and since the groups I have mentioned which want to adhere to the old system have a majority in the House, the system was not changed.

I think therefore that the House will have to continue to apply the existing system however much I may regret the fact that it prevents us from appointing genuine experts to the delegations depending on the topics for discussion.

President. — Thank you, Mr Bangemann, I do not think there is any point at this time in discussing the background and motives. That is something we shall have to do on Thursday if we decide to hold a debate.

I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — In a spirit of inquiry, Mr President, I wish to clear up what is clearly ignorance on my part. I do not quite understand how we started taking a vote which has suddenly turned into a debate. I do not know under what Rules of Procedure we are doing that. The vote had started.

President. — Some people were under the impression that we had started to vote, but we did not really start it yet.

(Laughter)

I call Mr Seefeld.

Mr Seefeld. — *(DE)* Mr President, you said a few minutes ago that the deadline for submitting nominations for the various delegations would be 5 p.m. on Tuesday. On behalf of the Socialist Group I would urge you to fix a somewhat later deadline. Our group will not have an opportunity to reach its final decision until tomorrow evening. I should be grateful if the House could take account of that and postpone the deadline until late tomorrow evening.

President. — Mr Seefeld, we are concerned not with names but with the text of the motion for a resolution. The names have been agreed by the chairmen of the political groups.

I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Mr President, I do not know why we are having this discussion now and why you are allowing Sir Fred Catherwood a second bite at a long-standing cherry that he has been putting forward.

The proposal that came forward to the enlarged Bureau previously was basically that Sir Fred Catherwood's committee and the members of that committee were the experts on delegations and membership of delegations. That was fully discussed and at that time. When I was a member of the enlarged Bureau I understood that it had been turned down and all the political groups, with the exception of one or two minor ones, were in agreement that the position should stay as it is.

Now, when this Parliament was reconstituted, as I understand it, it was again decided that we would proceed under the old situation that pertained. All that we

Rogers

are doing now is actually constituting the delegations of Parliament.

Now the functions of these delegations and their reporting capacity and so on are laid down in the Rules. And there is a rule in the Rules of Procedure which says that if you want to amend the Rules there is a certain way of going about it. It certainly is not by getting up at the beginning of a session, like Sir Fred Catherwood, and seeking to retread ground that has been gone over so many times before.

Now I think we ought to proceed as you have suggested. We should receive the nominations as they are put forward by the groups and let that be the end of it. I do not think we should open this debate again. If Sir Fred Catherwood wants to alter the Rules, then he should put a notice down for that and should go to the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Petitions.

President. — Thank you, Mr Rogers, I think the situation is clear: tomorrow morning there will be a motion for a resolution by the group leaders. That proposal is open to amendment until tomorrow at 5 p.m. We have to vote on the proposal to debate or not to debate that motion for a resolution.

(Parliament approved Mr Forth's request)

That means that we will have a limited debate on Thursday before we vote on the amendments.

I call Mr Van Minnen.

Mr Van Minnen. — *(NL)* Mr President, you have now said that amendments may be tabled to the text of this resolution but you did not reply to the objection by my colleague, Mr Seefeld. Is it not rather unreasonable and surprising for you to place a political group in this Parliament before the fait accompli that amendments have to be tabled without the possibility of prior discussion in the group? I see that Mr Bangemann is looking askance at me but the fact is that the matter has been arranged by the group chairmen behind closed doors and has now come to light more or less accidentally. Mr President, I ask you once again to postpone the time limit for tabling amendments until after the group meetings.

President. — Mr Van Minnen, this resolution is not concerned with names. The names have been supplied by the political groups themselves on the basis of the d'Hondt system. That lies outside the plenary sitting. The sitting is concerned exclusively with the text of the resolution submitted by the group chairmen. The names play no part in it. That is what I pointed out to Mr Seefeld.

I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — *(DE)* Thank you very much, Mr President, for making that statement but I wish to make a brief additional comment. I have really had enough of the suggestions that I belong to some kind of Mafia!

(Laughter)

If I did, I would not be with you here. I am the chairman of a democratic group and of a group which does its work. This proposal was discussed by the group chairmen more than six weeks ago and my own group adopted its position in good time. If the Socialist Group is unable to define its opinion in time that is its own affair, but please do not accuse other group chairmen of belonging to a Mafia! You yourselves are unable to take a decision at the right time — that is the only reason!

President. — I wish to announce that the report by Mrs Salisch, on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, on the free circulation of workers within the Community, entered as Item 41 on Thursday's agenda, has been withdrawn.

Moreover, at the request of Mr Collins, chairman of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Consumer protection, the report by Mr Provan on processing of foodstuffs scheduled as Item 47 on Thursday's agenda will be replaced by Sir Peter Vanneck's report on titanium dioxide.

I call Mr Balfe.

Mr Balfe. — On the agenda for Thursday, Mr President: in recent months we have had some difficulties with the allocation of time for urgent debates and I would like your assurance, that the time allocated this month will be used for subjects of urgent debate which reflect wishes of the back-bench Members and some Members of this House and that it will not be used as an extension of time used elsewhere. I am thinking in particular of the telegram which you will have received from me during the week-end, if you spent the week-end in your home . . .

President. — I received your telegram, Mr Balfe, but I do not know where.

Mr Balfe. — . . . drawing your attention to the need for a debate on a resolution that was tabled many months ago on the subject of plastic bullets, that is of a plastic bullet fired by British soldiers at an Irish child — to be debated within this Parliament. This is the first priority of the Socialist Group, as decided at its March meeting. I would hope that, while we are talking about human rights and things which are going on outside Europe, that we will discuss at least now, after many months, what is going on inside Europe. That is what

Balfe

a plastic bullet looks like . . .

President. — Mr Balfe, you know as well as I do that tomorrow there will be a preliminary discussion on the priorities for urgent debate and I hope to hear from the chairman of your group what his priorities are.

I call Mr Deleau.

Mr Deleau. — (FR) Mr President, I wish to make a point about Thursday's agenda on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

Our colleague, Jacques Moreau, is due to present two reports on the Community's borrowing and lending policy on Thursday. The Council consulted us as a matter of urgency and it was right to do so because an urgent solution must now be found to this problem. In view of the fact that the conciliation procedure has been followed with a negative outcome because of the differences of opinion between the Council and Parliament — a fact which you yourself, Mr President, have termed a serious disappointment — the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs felt it desirable for the reports by Mr Moreau to be discussed in the presence of the Council i.e. on Wednesday. In common with all the other Members of this Assembly I have noted that Wednesday's agenda is already very heavy but I am nonetheless obliged to fulfil the mandate given to me and ask you for the reports by Jacques Moreau to be placed on the agenda of Wednesday's sitting so that they can be examined in the presence of the Council. However, should that prove impossible, as I imagine it may because of our heavy agenda on Wednesday, I would consider it necessary for the Council which made no great effort to reach agreement during the conciliation procedure, to be present when the reports by Jacques Moreau are debated; the Council will then have an opportunity to take note of Parliament's concern over this matter and of the importance which we attach to the problem.

That is all I wanted to say, Mr President. In brief, the presence of the Council is necessary because it will then have an opportunity to put its views to the whole Parliament.

President. — You are therefore proposing to bring forward the debate on the report on the NIC from Thursday to Wednesday. The President and the chairmen of the political groups considered this question which was submitted to them this morning. The request was not accepted in view of the fact that Wednesday's agenda is already extremely full. However, the House may decide otherwise if it so wishes. I therefore ask the House to decide on Mr Deleau's proposal to bring forward from Thursday to Wednesday the urgent debate on the NIC.

(Parliament rejected Mr Deleau's request)

I call Mrs Squarcialupi.

Mrs Squarcialupi. — (IT) Mr President, I am rather disconcerted by the ease with which changes have been made in the agenda. The directive on titanium dioxide has been included, but we are not allowed to present amendments, for such amendments — even if the deadline for their presentation is put back a day — require an entire dossier which I did not bring along with me today.

There are Members who have worked in committee for months on an issue, and are then put in a position where they cannot even present an amendment once the final phase has been reached. I ask you, Mr President, to find out how we arrived at this decision, which placed me in a profoundly embarrassing position; and this is true not only for myself, but also for others who would have liked to table amendments, or, in any case, to take part in the debate.

President. — Mrs Squarcialupi, no amendment has been made to the agenda so far. We have had a proposal from Mr Collins to replace the Provan report by the Vanneck report. You state that you have objections in view of possible amendments. I fully appreciate that. If you wish to request that a vote be taken to amend the agenda, you are perfectly entitled to do so. I am interpreting what you have said as a request to put Mr Collins' proposal to the vote.

I call Mr Provan.

Mr Provan. — Mr President, I am not worried whether my report is taken during this part-session or at the next part-session. But I would suggest to you that as it was adopted unanimously in committee, and is not of high significance, it could be taken this session without debate and thus allow the Vanneck report in as well. I would therefore suggest to you that it be taken without debate. I have consulted the chairman, Mr Collins, and I believe him to have no objection to this arrangement.

President. — Mrs Maij-Weggen, do you wish to object to Mr Provan's proposal that his report be taken without debate?

Mrs Maij-Weggen. — (NL) Mr President, I think that Mrs Squarcialupi is perfectly right. I too am not opposed to a debate on Sir Peter Vanneck's report on Thursday but I do think we should have an opportunity to submit amendments until Wednesday. If the deadline for tabling amendments is postponed until Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning I think it will be perfectly acceptable to debate the report. However, arrangements must then be made to see to it that the

Maij-Weggen

report is actually available because I for example did not bring my copy with me.

President. — Mrs Maij-Weggen, when, as in this case, a report is added to the agenda, one must obviously allow sufficient time for tabling amendments. You mentioned Wednesday; I think that is the minimum amount of time to place at Parliament's disposal.

(Parliament rejected Mr Collins' request)

I call Mr Deleau.

Mr Deleau. — *(FR)* Mr President, a few moments ago Parliament rejected my proposal concerning the presentation of the reports by Mr Jacques Moreau. I also proposed an alternative solution. I asked for the Council to be present in view of the negative outcome of the conciliation procedure. Mr President, could you invite the Council to be present when the reports by Mr Jacques Moreau are debated, presumably on Thursday evening or during the night sitting? That will enable both the Parliament and the Council to get off to an excellent start that evening.

President. — Mr Deleau, I must point out that requests to amend the agenda must be submitted one hour before the part-session opens. That is why the request for a switch from Thursday to Wednesday was made. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs did not wish to be seen as guaranteeing that the Council be present. Of course, I shall forward your request to the Council but I do not think that the Council will be able to comply with it.

I call Mr Radoux.

Mr Radoux. — *(FR)* Mr President, I asked to speak just now to support Mr Deleau's proposal.

(The President read out Wednesday's agenda)¹

President. — The Group of the European Peoples' Party, the Liberal and Democratic Group and the Group of the European Progressive Democrats have requested that the motion for a resolution by Mr Hopper on the current status of the Mandate of 30 May 1980 be referred back to committee.

I call Mr Abens.

Mr Abens. — *(FR)* Mr President, the Socialist Group supports that proposal.

President. — I call Mr Bonaccini.

Mr Bonaccini. — *(IT)* Mr President, we will vote against this proposal because, apart from certain doubts as to its procedural legitimacy, there also exists a substantive question of legitimacy which concerns the political aspects of the question and the role already played by Parliament on this issue. There are two reasons: the first is that none of us has the right to frustrate the effort made by Mr Hopper; the second is that we should finally take the opportunity to present something before the Council makes its decision.

President. — I call Mr Hopper.

Mr Hopper. — Mr President, I understand that the group chairman this morning decided that the report should be sent back to committee and I understand this decision was taken on the grounds that the 3 April meeting of the European Council had already taken place. May I say that all this proves is that the group chairmen do not read their newspapers. The European Council meeting was postponed until 27 April and there is therefore every reason why this report should be voted on today. I believe that Parliament does itself enormous injury when it makes decisions and then reverses them for no reason at all. I also believe that we Members do enormous injury to our relations with our excellent staff when we make them work under impossible conditions to meet impossible deadlines — which they do with great skill and willingness — and then simply set aside their work at the last minute.

Having made this very vehement protest, Mr President, I shall bow to the irrational and not object.

President. — Mr Hopper, I have to correct you. The group chairman cannot decide anything. The Members decide and I ask them now to vote on whether or not they want to vote in favour of the referral back of the Hopper report.

(Parliament approved referral back to committee)

Mr Forth and nine others asked that the urgency debates scheduled for Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. take place from 9 p.m. until midnight.

I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, this move arises from the fact that for many months we operated the system very successfully to the benefit of all in the House whereby urgent debates were held at the late Thursday sitting. A brave and bold experiment was introduced by yourself, Mr President, and I regret to say that I do not think that it succeeded. I say this for two reasons. One is that, if I recall correctly, one of the main reasons for moving it to the Thursday morning was that the Council could be present, and my recollection is that the Council was not here on the Thursday morning of

¹ See Minutes.

Forth

the last session in any case. The second reason is this. I was very disappointed that the Group chairmen were unable to make any real selection of urgencies last session, nor to give them any real sense of priority. My fear is that whilst it is given the Thursday morning position on our agenda, it will attract a rather large number of somewhat frivolous resolutions whereas with the old system, on the Thursday night it was only those of substance and importance which tended to come to the House quite simply because only those who felt very sincerely about it came along for that late Thursday night session. So I offer the House the opportunity again of restoring urgent debates to the three-hour-position, where I believe they belong, and that is the late-night Thursday sitting.

President. — Mr Forth, I wanted to make one remark regarding the Council's presence on Thursday morning. As you know, the Council does not work that speedily so that the problem could be solved within two or three months. But we are discussing this point and I think there is a better chance of getting the Council to be present on Thursday morning than on Thursday evening. I do not know whether we shall succeed, but the problem is still under discussion.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — This is a matter to which I referred before, Mr President, and I do not want to try your patience any further. But 1 hour and 10 minutes ago I asked you a particular question about the letter I wrote to you earlier and I would much appreciate a reply. The question is whether resignations, forced or otherwise, are a suitable subject for the Committee on the Verification of Credentials, when new credentials are considered. I said in my letter to you that I would let you know any reply I had from the chairman of the Committee on the Verification of Credentials about Mr Monchel who replaced Mr Clément, as you remember. The chairman of the Committee on the Verification of Credentials has since told me that the committee did not ask about Mr Monchel's credentials in this particular respect. They did not find out whether we had been given any assurance that he would resign in due course. Therefore, unless Mr Monchel can assure the House that he is going to be with us until the end of the parliamentary term, I would like, under Rule 7(7), to refer his particular case to the Committee on the Verification of Credentials, if that is in order.

President. — Thank you, Mr Fergusson, but I will have to look it up; I can not tackle all these problems simply from memory. I will look into it.

*(Parliament rejected Mr Forth's request and adopted the agenda as amended)*¹

¹ Deadline for tabling amendments — Speaking time: see Minutes.

6. Action taken on the opinions of Parliament

President. — The next item is the communication from the Commission on action taken on the opinions and resolutions of the European Parliament.²

I call the Commission.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) Mr President, during Parliament's last part-session, we discussed farm prices. Since Parliament adopted its Opinion on 26 March, there has been a further meeting of the Council of Ministers, and the Commission has amended its proposal. I think it important that I make an immediate statement to you here in the House, so that Members of Parliament may have full and clear information on the current situation.

As you know, there is to be another meeting of the Council, starting tomorrow in Luxembourg where, let us hope, new progress can be made. I think we are all disappointed that the Council was not able to reach agreement at its last meeting. All the other institutions have discharged their obligations in respect of farm prices. The Commission has presented proposals, Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee have delivered their opinions. The Commissions has even presented an amended proposal.

I hope that all Members of Parliament present will join with me in calling on the Council to perform its duty and to take decisions, so that the difficult situation in European agriculture is not further exacerbated.

During the last part-session, Parliament adopted a Resolution which gave detailed expression of its views on the farm price proposals. I said on that occasion that the Commission, even if it could go along with some of Parliament's ideas, could not meet some of Parliament's demands in full. For example, it was and still is the Commission's view that it would be unwise to increase the common prices by 14% or to abandon the principles underlying the co-responsibility levy.

As I pointed out during the debates, the Commission has taken note of Parliament's views and has accepted the need for flexibility. We therefore decided at the last meeting of the Council to put forward revised proposals, in the hope that this will lead to agreement on the price package as a whole. I will therefore first give an account of our revised proposal and then indicate the position last taken up by the Council.

In view of the importance of this question, I hope that you will allow me a few minutes, so that I can quickly inform the House.

Having regard to Parliament's Opinion and the views put forward by the Council, we decided to make a

² See Annex.

Dalsager

modest increase in the price proposals. The revised price package provides for increases of between 10.5% and 11% for a number of products and 8-14% for some other products. The main proposal, in the first instance, affects products for which the increase is on average (and it applies to most animal products): 10.5% for milk, sheepmeat and pigmeat, 11% for beef, in three stages, 11% for wine and olive oil. In the second instance, there are lower increases for certain crops: 8% for grain, but for durum wheat of minimum quality only 6.5%, 8% for rape and 9% for sugar. In the third instance, there are bigger increases for a number of Mediterranean products, including 13% for cotton, flax, hemp and sunflower seed, 12% for most fruits and vegetables, between 8% and 16% for tobacco and between 11% and 14% for protein-bearing and oleaginous products.

The revised price package also comprises a considerable reduction in the monetary compensatory amounts. According to the proposal, the green exchange rates will be devalued by 5.1% for Belgium and Luxembourg, 3.6% for Italy, 3.2% for Denmark, 1.8% for France and 1% for Greece, and the green parities will be revalued by 4.4% for the Federal Republic of Germany, 3.1% for the Netherlands and 2.7% for the United Kingdom. I should add here that certain minor amendments have been introduced, because the monetary compensatory amounts may change from one week to the next, and arrangements have been made on a straightforward practical basis for a few items.

We have also retained in our proposals the concept of production thresholds, to which we attach great importance. The package contains a number of special measures to help countries with high rates of inflation. For Greece, we propose to bring prices for olive oil, soft wheat, red wine and lemons up to the Community level immediately. The premium for new-born calves, which is currently being paid in Italy, will also be paid in Greece, Ireland and Northern Ireland. With regard to durum wheat, we have followed Parliament's advice and withdrawn our proposal to limit support to the first ten hectares. Instead, support will be limited to the traditional sectors of production.

These are the most important elements in our compromise proposal. We think that the costs which flow from it can be covered by appropriations in the 1982 budget, if we take into account the expected savings and the fact that expenditure on agriculture will continue to rise at a slower rate than the Community's own receipts. This revised proposal from the Commission is a balanced attempt to reach a basis for an agreement. It meets the wishes of Parliament to a large extent, and it has been well received at the Council. I am convinced that the solution eventually adopted will be very close to what the Commission is now proposing.

However, there was disagreement on a number of points, which was sufficiently strong to prevent the

Council from reaching a final decision. These points can be summarized as follows: first, the common prices for certain products. Second, the agrimonetary arrangements, although the Council did accept a devaluation of the Danish green krone with immediate effect. Third, the co-responsibility levy for milk. Fourth, the introduction into the package of changes in prevailing Community law, the so-called *acquis communautaire* . . . the proposals on Mediterranean products. Fifth and last, the possibility of giving special support to countries with high rates of inflation.

Tomorrow in Luxembourg, the Council will make a serious effort to resolve these outstanding problems and reach a decision this week. We in the Commission will do all we can to ensure that this aim is achieved.

IN THE CHAIR: MR LALOR

Vice-President

Mr Rogers. — Mr President, it is on the general point of the statement by the Commission on action taken on the opinions and resolutions. At the last plenary session I questioned the format in which the statement is given and I asked President Dankert if he would discuss with Commissioner Andriessen the possibilities of a new format, to be presented to Parliament. We have the old format and I presume that nothing has been done about my request last time, which I thought was generally agreed.

This statement on action is nothing but a recital of what happened at the last session, and we already know what happened at the last session. All it says is that the Commission delivered six opinions, two matters were discussed, the Parliament asked the Commission to alter its proposals, during the debate, the Commission expressed its views and took note. We know this, so all this is a summary of the minutes of the Parliament. There is no word in this that says what action the Commission has taken on any proposal of this Parliament, neither at the last session, nor in any other previous session.

What I am asking, Mr President, in case there is some misunderstanding, is that we should have a rolling report from the Commission on the action it has taken, or what might be more appropriate on some occasions, the action it has not taken, as a result of the opinion of this Parliament. We will be learning tomorrow, in the course of the budgetary control debate, of some action that has been taken without our permission, although we are part of the budgetary process. And on more than one occasion, of course, we have seen Parliament pass opinions with no account being taken of them. If the Commission is not

Rogers

going to take account, well that is fine, but it really ought to let us know. So, please, could I ask, through you, that President Dankert discuss with Commissioner Andriessen, who has a special responsibility for relations with the Parliament, the format of the Commission's reporting back.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) Mr President, criticism of the way in which it has long been our established practice to present the report on the action taken by the Commission on the Parliament's proposals was, if I remember rightly, clearly expressed for the first time in this House two months ago; the criticism referred to the decision that this agenda item should be confined to matters debated at the previous part-session and to the Commission's action thereon. On that occasion, following I believe a question by Mr De Goede, I indicated our willingness to look into ways of improving this procedure, if only because the Commission is often unable to indicate its opinion in the course of a debate on the definitive text of the resolutions. Often, however, the Commission does adopt a clear position during the debates so that there is no reason to set down again on paper what the Commission has already said. The Commission is now working on a modified procedure and I expect that we shall be able to hold an exchange of views on it with the Bureau in a few weeks' time; the purpose of our consultations will be to determine how Parliament can be kept informed as effectively as possible of action taken by the Commission and of measures which the Commission does not feel able to take; our aim is to give Parliament an opportunity to exercise its controlling function effectively.

Mr Johnson. — I shall immediately take up the point which Mr Andriessen just raised. He said that the Commission, in the course of a debate, gives its opinion and sees no reason to change it. Well, of course, the Commission's statement in the course of the debate takes place before the vote itself — the vote must be a matter of some interest to the Commission. Therefore I think it is perfectly reasonable at a later meeting for the Commission to come forward with further thoughts, particularly in the light of that vote.

This brings me, Mr President, to the point I really wanted to raise with the Commission. We have this statement by the Commission. It is, as Mr Rogers says, skimpy. Could I remind the Commission that Parliament adopted, by 160 votes to 10, on 11 March a resolution based on Mrs Maij-Weggen's report which called for an EEC regulation to ban the import into the Community of products coming from young harp and hooded seals, or seals whose stocks were depleted, threatened or endangered.

Parliament's resolution also called for the Commission to propose now to the Council that all seals should be included in Annex C of the draft Community regula-

tion on protection of species which is actually being debated by the Council now with a view to adoption on 8 June at the Environment Council. Now, please, Mr President, can the Commission actually tell us what action it has taken in the light of the Parliament's resolution last March. I have a newspaper in front of me which says 'for the Commission, Karl-Heinz Narjes said he would approach the Canadian authorities with a view to ending this slaughter'. Has he done so?

Point 2: has the Commission actually proposed in Coreper that all seals be included in Annex C of the Council regulation?

Point 3: what is the timetable for the presentation of the draft regulation? This is a matter of great importance.

Mr Rogers. — Can I again repeat that an undertaking was given to me by President Dankert last time that he would discuss this form of reporting back with Commissioner Andriessen. I realize the problems but please would Commissioner Andriessen take on board the fact that he really ought to discuss this matter with Mr Dankert? Perhaps if we do it the other way round we might get some results.

President. — Mr Rogers, I will convey your message to President Dankert.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, the Commission has given careful consideration to the content of the resolution adopted by this House in March on trade in sealskin products, in particular products of the skin of young white harp and hooded seals. The Commission has approved the statement which I made during the debate that all available instruments of commercial policy would be used in order to implement the European Parliament's resolution. The Commission attaches great importance to this matter and is resolved to pursue it energetically.

With that end in view the Commission has taken the following initiatives pursuant to the cooperation agreement with Canada:

1. I asked the head of Canada's diplomatic mission to the European Communities to visit me as a matter of urgency and I handed to him the text of the European Parliament's resolution together with the verbatim report of the sitting of 11 March. I asked him to apprise the Canadian Government to the political implications of this matter and to point out that the Commission hopes to see a considerable improvement in this situation before the next hunting season opens.

2. We agreed at short notice with the Canadian Ambassador to hold a two-day working meeting of Commission officials and representatives of the Cana-

Narjes

dian authorities on this subject. That meeting took place last week.

3. It was agreed that the European Parliament's resolution should be placed on the agenda of the next regular high level consultations between the European Community and Canada which will be taking place later this week.

4. We have taken the necessary steps to obtain more detailed scientific information immediately in order to determine whether stocks of these seals are threatened. These steps were necessary and desirable because the most effective possibility for action would arise if it can actually be shown that these seals can be classed as endangered species.

We have contacted the Nature Conservancy Council and asked it to examine the latest available scientific data and submit an independent expert opinion. We hope that the first results of this work will be available in June. A study of that kind is also necessary if the efforts to have seals included in annex C to the Washington Convention on the Protection of Endangered Species are to succeed.

We consider it desirable for this scientific data to be recognized by all parties as a joint basis for further action. The Commission therefore intends to discuss the results of these independent studies with the Canadian authorities as soon as they become available. Suitable measures could then be taken, preferably under the aegis of the Organisation for North West Atlantic Fisheries and in the context of the Washington Convention on the Protection of Endangered Species.

However, I must take this opportunity to inform the House that many political circles in Canada felt its resolution to be an impermissible interference in the internal affairs of their country; to some extent also, the view of the situation expressed in the resolution was rejected as inaccurate.

As I mentioned earlier, the working meeting with senior officials took place in Brussels on 15 and 16 April. Several aspects of the problem were discussed, including in particular: 1. hunting methods and supervision of hunting, 2. scientific evaluation of the biological status of the harp and hooded seals and 3. the possibility of drawing a distinction between commercial hunting and hunting in the subsistence economies of the Inuits. In the course of these discussions the Commission was told by the Canadian authorities that they will be continuing their efforts to develop and apply alternative hunting methods and practices. The Canadian representatives also gave assurances about the admission of observers. They offered to cooperate with the Commission in bringing scientific information on the biological status of the harp and hooded seals completely up-to-date.

As regards the stocks of monk seals in the Mediterranean, I am pleased to be able to inform you that

the Commission is now working out with the Greek authorities detailed arrangements for Community support for the necessary conservation measures. All other aspects of the Parliament's resolution are at present being studied. Before reaching our definitive position we shall of course also have to consider the political implications in other areas such as external relations in general and fisheries policy. I expect the Commission to be able to give further information on the progress of its work to Parliament or its committee responsible on a number of occasions in the course of this year.

Mr Muntingh. — (NL) Mr President, I am very impressed by the action which the Commission has already taken so soon after the adoption of this resolution by Parliament. I welcome this rapid response by the Commission on a matter which has attracted wide publicity and is very important. I do however have one question relating to the Commissioner's last point. The Commission has indicated that it will use the possibilities available to it in so far as that is commercially acceptable. I find that last rider somewhat threatening and I should like to know exactly what it means. In a resolution on the world conservation strategy Parliament asked the Commission whether it would give precedence to the requirements of nature conservation over commercial arguments. The Commission's answer was a clear yes. Later on I put the same question to the Commission again and the Commission answered: 'Yes, in the case of endangered species the Commission will give precedence to nature conservation over commercial arguments.' That being so, I should like the Commissioner to tell us exactly what his words mean on this occasion.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) The rider refers to the following fact: if it should prove impossible to proceed on the basis of the Washington Convention on the Protection of Species, i.e. impossible to create the necessary conditions for implementation of that convention, the general agreements on commercial policy will naturally apply. In the case of Canada these begin with the bilateral cooperation agreement whose procedural provisions must be fully utilized. Then there is GATT; under certain circumstances Article 20 of GATT may be relevant to the application of the measures decided by the House. It cannot be applied autonomously but only in conformity with the statutory provisions established by the Community. To that extent the question as to the precedence of commercial policy or conservation of natural species does not arise. In so far as the Washington Convention is applicable the matter is settled.

Our aim, and we hope we shall succeed, is either to create in agreement with the Canadian authorities the conditions necessary for application of the Washington Convention or the North Atlantic Fisheries Convention — in which case results will be relatively easy to obtain — or alternatively to reach agreements,

Narjes

through consultation with the Canadian authorities, putting an end to the practices against which objections have been raised.

Mr Harris. — In the hope that the Commission will give an equally full and up to date report, could I ask about another matter which was taken in the first part-session of March and that is what is its response to the Aigner report, the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on the exports of Community agricultural products to the USSR? The paper sets out the position of Parliament, particularly the request by Parliament for a full report on the upsurge in exports of foodstuffs to the Soviet Union in 1980. Now is the Commission's view still that set out in the document because, if so, I believe many of us would find it to be woefully inadequate and a position which really raises more questions than it answers?

Is the Commission going to give a full report, particularly bearing in mind the debate due to be held by this House tomorrow on the discharge of the 1980 budget? Is it going to produce a full report and if so, when is it going to produce a full report to the Parliament in response to the very serious allegations made by this House?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) As has been pointed out by the Honourable Member, the whole question of the Aigner report will be debated in Parliament tomorrow, and any questions which remain unanswered will be answered then. I can say that a number of questions having to do with agricultural exports have been put to the Directorate General, and these are being teletransmitted to Parliament's Committee today, so that they can be included in the debate tomorrow morning.

Mr Wurtz. — (FR) Mr President, the Council of Ministers of Agriculture will be meeting tomorrow. It is already 20 days late in fixing farm prices, a fact which is prejudicial to the interests of our farmers. As we heard just now, progress has been made beyond the initial position but the fact of the matter is that we are still in a state of deadlock. In order to break that deadlock, is the Commission prepared to take fuller account in its proposals to the Council of Ministers of Agriculture, of the resolution on farm prices adopted at our extraordinary part-session? Is the Commission prepared to propose full application of that resolution? I would remind you that the resolution called for a 14% increase in farm prices, dismantling of the monetary compensatory amounts and abolition of the co-responsibility levy on dairy products.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) The answer to the Honourable Member's question is not so simple, as one might perhaps imagine. I am certain that, if the Commission followed the proposal put for-

ward here, it would give rise to such negotiating difficulties for certain delegations that it would not be possible for them to accept the Commission's revised proposals at all. I am not in a position to give an account here of the Commission's strategy with regard to the negotiations which are to be conducted, but I can say that what the Honourable Member has suggested would create considerable difficulties in the negotiations for some of the most important delegations and for some Member States which will be particularly closely affected by the farm prices. I do not therefore think that it would be a good idea to take up this suggestion.

Mr Blumenfeld. — (DE) Mr President, I wish to return for a moment to Commissioner Narjes' answer to the question concerning sealskins. Parliament will naturally welcome the fact that the Commission, acting in conformity with our resolution, is embarking upon the political and commercial policy negotiations to which the Commissioner referred and conducting them with great care and circumspection. But does the Commission not think its position would be stronger if it were at the same time to discuss at the level of the European domestic market with traders, importers and big department stores whether the latter would be willing and able to boycott these sealskins next season? There would then no longer be any political issues and a commercial solution could be found through the play of market forces. I think the Commission would have a real advantage in the negotiations if it could inform the Canadian Government of such a situation on the European market.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) I am most grateful to Mr Blumenfeld for his question. The Commission does not wish to rule out any possibility in advance but at the present stage of application of the consultation agreement, we do not consider it appropriate to take immediate initiatives.

Mr Provan. — Firstly, let me welcome the statement that Commissioner Dalsager has given us this afternoon and thank him for his efforts to keep the House informed as to what is happening on the issue of agricultural prices. We would join with him in urging the Council of Ministers to come to a conclusion on these price negotiations as quickly as possible and urge all vigour to be used by the Commissioner in his role as conciliator in these matters. Let us hope that he can reach agreement with the Council and yet maintain the price package within the existing budget requirements of the Community as laid down so far by Parliament.

We are sorry, however, that he cannot accept the change that was proposed by Parliament in the abolition of the linear co-responsibility levy on milk. After the Court of Auditors report last year we would have thought it was almost mandatory on the Commission

Provan

to try and get rid of this co-responsibility levy as it is an iniquitous tax on farmers and the consumer. But will he in fact do all in his power to go ahead and try and get agreement within the next few days because it is an urgent matter for the farmers in this Community that prices be agreed as soon as possible. We do not like, however, the revaluation of the MCAs that is proposed and bearing these two things in mind we would urge him to do all in his power — and all power to this elbow — to reach agreement.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) Mr President, I must comment on Mr Provan's last remark, 'we do not like the revaluation of the monetary compensatory amounts'. I do not know whom he means by 'we' in this context. If he means Parliament, then I have a different impression. Parliament is in favour of the revaluation of the green monetary compensatory amounts. I know that there are certain delegations which are not enthusiastic about the revaluations, but that is a different matter. I think it is necessary for us to stick to our proposal in this area or perhaps present an amended proposal. How can I know? I cannot negotiate with the Council while I am standing here, the Council is not here.

Concerning the other question raised by Mr Provan, I also think that this question — if the Commission abandoned its attitude on the matter — would give rise to added negotiating difficulties for some delegations other than you, with whom it is already difficult to negotiate on the co-responsibility levy. It is not therefore a simple matter of saying that, if the Commission abandons its attitude, there will be broad agreement in the Council, for there will be some members of the Council who oppose any abandonment by the Commission of its present position on the two points raised by Mr Provan. We could certainly get agreement from some delegations, but we want agreement from all delegations. That is the reason, therefore, why it is not possible for me at this moment to say what the Commission will eventually do in its endeavours to bring about agreement in the Council. It may be something that crops up at the last hour at the last Council meeting before we get a final decision on these prices.

Mr Gerokostopoulos. — (GR) Mr President, we shall read Commissioner Dalsager's remarks on the new Commission proposals with particular interest when we have the minutes of proceedings because he read his observations so quickly that the interpreting services were unable to render the exact percentages and more especially the products to which he referred. I should like to join my other colleagues in urging the Commission to continue to make every possible effort and to exert every possible pressure to find a solution as quickly as possible to the pending issue of agricultural prices, an issue which is of vital importance to the agricultural populations of the Community as a whole.

In particular, I should like to ask Mr Dalsager to answer the following question: during the sitting of 26 March, the Parliament approved the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Curry on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture together with the amendments. Among these amendments was one by myself signed and tabled by other colleagues urging the Commission to implement Regulation No 355 of 1977, as amended by Regulation No 1361 of 1978 to extend the assistance provided by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund for the Italian Mezzogiorno to include Greece as well. This amendment was adopted by the House and incorporated in the final draft of the motion for a resolution as paragraph 10. Can the Commissioner say what attitude the Commission adopted in its proposals to the Council on this subject?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) I am able to say to the Honourable Member that the Commission's attitude on the question put by him is absolutely positive. It has already resulted in the presentation by the Commission of a proposal for structural projects in Greece to which all the funds we have available under the the EAGGF structural budget up to 1984 have been allocated. We have simply used all the money we had. A sum in excess of that to which we were obligated under the Accession Treaty has been budgeted for Greek structural projects. I think the amount the Commission has provisionally proposed is 199 million units of account. It is of course the Commission's opinion that the structural problems which Greek agriculture quite clearly has can only be solved with the help of the Community, and it will be the Commission's policy in the future to put forward proposals for solutions.

Otherwise, I can assure the Honourable Member that the Commission will spare no efforts to secure the speediest possible conclusion to these price negotiations, for every day that passes means that Europe's farmers have to do without the money they could otherwise have reckoned with on the strength of the Commission's price proposal.

Mr Pearce. — Mr President, I am obliged to return to the question of the action taken on the Parliament's resolution about seals. I am obliged to Commissioner Narjes for telling us what he did, and I am pleased that the Commission is having meetings with various people on this subject. But the Commission's response to what my colleague Mr Johnson said a little while ago seems to misunderstand the whole nature of what we are about. To quote from the document on the action taken on our last part-session's work:

The European Parliament requested the Commission to introduce, by means of a regulation, a ban on imports of all skins and products coming from seals whose stocks were endangered, in particular young hooded and harp seals.

Pearce

A regulation, Commissioner, for a ban; not a series of conversations around the place. We represent in this millions of people: 3 million people signed the petition, and I have answered hundreds of letters from my own constituency alone. What we want from the Commission is information on a date by which it will introduce a regulation for a ban on seal imports. Nothing else, nothing short of that, is adequate. And if I may put forward a personal view on this, if the Commission cannot come forward at our part-session in June with a date for a regulation for a ban in the not too distant future, I believe the Commission will have failed. This is an opportunity, Mr President, for the Commission to demonstrate that it is not just a bureaucratic exercise, not just a lot of penpushers in Brussels, but that is concerned with doing what the people of Europe want. It is also an opportunity, if ever there was an opportunity since direct elections, for the Commission to demonstrate its oft repeated wish to respond to the expressions of view of this Parliament. If ever there was a case where we gave the Commission a mandate, it is this issue.

Please, Mr President, will the Commission give us a date by which it will introduce a regulation to ban these imports?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, I can only repeat to the honourable Member that the Commission and Community are not at liberty to impose arbitrary bans on imports without first taking the necessary measures under international law. In this particular case the requirements of international law are laid down in the Convention on the Conservation of Species — under which certain requirements must be met — and in GATT to which the Community is a contracting party and which must be observed in our fundamental interest.

I have explained to you in detail the efforts which we are at present making in various quarters in order to create the conditions necessary for a ban on imports of the skins of young white seals. I might also point out that the 4 million signatures are not the only aspect. If the Community were to impose a unilateral ban on imports without an adequate legal basis for doing so, the Canadian Government would be entitled to retaliate; it might for example limit our access to the Canadian fishing grounds which would result in several thousand more unemployed in Europe and put an end to one of our ocean fishing activities. If the Commission is to act responsibly it must respect the international commitments entered into by the Community and also consider the consequences if it should itself infringe legal provisions which it is in our own interest to respect. That is how matters stand.

President. — I know that some Members are anxious to come back to this topic, but this is not a debate and I still have five more Members who want to ask ques-

tions of the Commission, we still have two resolutions to deal with and we have very little time. So I will ask Members not to try coming back but to try to get helpful answers from the Commission and to accept them. Maybe some of the five who still have questions to ask could take up some of the issues.

Mr Tolman. — (NL) I should like to put one more question to the Commissioner. In connection with the farm price proposals he pointed out that the Council must do its duty. I wish now to put a pertinent question to him: if the Council fails to take decisions at its meeting this week, is the Commission prepared to show the necessary flexibility and adjust its price proposals in such a way that European farmers do not suffer further prejudice as a result of the postponement of a price decision?

One further question: a highly infectious disease affecting animals in Denmark is creating a very difficult situation at present. Imports from the German Democratic Republic to West Germany are still going ahead; this is extremely dangerous in that it may cause the disease to be propagated through the European Community. What action is the Commissioner proposing to take or has he already taken in this connection? I should welcome further information on this urgent matter.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) The fact is that, when the Commission has unanswerable questions put to it, some of the answers may not always be entirely satisfactory. It is, of course, impossible for the Commission to say whether the Council will reach an agreement this week. We very much hope so. When the Honourable Member asks whether the Commission is prepared to show flexibility, I would answer that the Commission has shown flexibility. The Commission has presented a compromise proposal which attempts to adjust the Commission's original proposal to the wishes put forward from various quarters in the Council. What we need now surely is for the Council to show equal flexibility and to reach decisions regardless of the distance still separating positions in certain areas, and I have said before that the Commission intends to do all in its power to get the Council together to take the decisions which — I agree with the Honourable Member — are of such great importance to European agriculture. I think that the question of imports from East Germany to West Germany has already been resolved, to the extent that, until the Commission has full information on the cattle disease, which is at present rife in both East Germany and Denmark, there will be a cessation of imports into West Germany of beasts which could be carriers of infection from East Germany.

Miss Quin. — Mr President, I would like to ask the Commission a question relating to the report by Mr Battersby on a fishing agreement between the Com-

Quin

munity and Norway. The report was adopted in the first part-session of March. The document that the Commission has given us on the action that it has taken said that this report was favourable to the Commission proposal and did not request any formal amendment. This is true, but Mr Battersby did ask the Commission to undertake a study into aspects of sprat-fishing in the North Sea, which is certainly of interest to fishermen in my own area, and I would like to ask the Commission if this study into certain aspects of the sprat fishery has been begun, and if not, whether it is likely to begin in the near future.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) I am not entirely sure, Mr President, whether work on the study has already begun but I can assure you that it will be put in hand very rapidly if work has not already begun.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, at this point on the agenda in previous months, the Commission has been asked what progress has been made on the resolutions of the Parliament on the question of the special rate for gas given to horticulture in Holland. Can the Commission tell us whether the reports in the press are true that some agreement has actually now been reached with the Government of Holland whereby there will be step-by-step increases up to next April? Can the Commission also now tell us if it will allow other Member States to continue their subsidy to the horticulturists until that period?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) I can inform the Honourable Member that the Commission and the Government of the Netherlands are on the point of concluding an agreement — I hope so, at least — on this question, which has lingered on for many years and has been under discussion in the Community for a long time. I do not think that the Commission will be ready to take a decision this week, since I cannot attend the meeting of the Commission because of the Council meeting. But next week, my colleague, Mr Davignon, who has responsibility in the Commission for energy questions, and I myself will present a proposal which may solve the Dutch problem, provided the Dutch Government accepts the Commission's conditions, which have been presented to it. I hope that we shall have a solution to this problem in two weeks' time — perhaps not precisely the solution to which the Honourable Member refers, but a solution which we believe will be acceptable to the Community.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) Mr Dalsager was kind enough to answer the honourable Member's last question but I must point out that when the Commission gives its action report under the procedure agreed two part-sessions ago, we can only consider matters raised at the previous part-

session. The problem of Dutch natural gas was not raised at the last part-session so that a question of this kind cannot be taken at this point on the agenda. We should find other ways of giving Parliament information on matters of this kind. The Commission is naturally willing to provide information but I felt it appropriate to make this comment now that we have just introduced a new procedure.

President. — I appreciate the Commissioner's point of view and I do not think I will call Mr Moreland for a supplementary question. Maybe he can say that it was a subject that he wanted to discuss last month and that we might cover it that way, but I think we have to appreciate the difficulties that the Commissioners have in this regard. I also want the House to appreciate the difficulties I have at the moment in trying to get through today's agenda. I know Mr Moreland is anxious to apologize for having asked the question at all.

(Laughter)

He doesn't? Well, then, we will go ahead to a further question. I have two more people who want to ask questions.

Mr Moreland. — I did not know, Sir that you were a mind-reader as well. I would only make the point — I think it is an important one — that obviously many of us realize that a month after a resolution, the Commission cannot necessarily come up with all the action it has taken. Sometimes it takes months, and there is clearly a logic in saying that the Commission should tell us at a later date what action has been taken on previous parliamentary resolutions. For example, I have a suspicion that this will not be the last time that my colleague Mr Johnson will be asking about the resolution he asked about today.

Mr Wurtz. — (FR) Mr President, I shall respect the discipline of our proceedings and put a question which is in order. In March the European Assembly adopted a resolution calling for a concerted reduction in interest rates in the Community. In the present situation this concerted reduction remains essential since it would enable the Ten to find a more effective, coordinated response to American economic policy; this policy of low interest rates, together with the dollar parity, are exerting pressure on the currencies in the International Monetary System and on that system itself to such an extent that its cohesion and the relative monetary stability within the Community are now threatened.

A further essential consideration is that coordinated action of this kind might prevent speculative transfers of capital to the United States. The advantage of a reduction in interest rates to the European economies is self-evident since it would further the cause of

Wurtz

economic recovery and promote investments which generate new jobs.

We would like the Commission to tell us what action it proposes to take to implement the resolution adopted by our Assembly.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) Mr President, during the debate on this important matter, Mr Ortoli, on behalf of the Commission, broadly outlined the action which the Commission would like to take on this point. As the honourable Member knows, further consultations will be taking place with the Member States in May on the strengthening of the EMS partly through measures to promote convergence of the monetary policies of the individual Member States, including the aspect of interest rates. At the next meeting of the Council in May, the Commission intends to hold a full exchange of views with the Council on this matter in an endeavour to bring about measures leading to the coordinated approach whose importance is fully recognized by the Commission and Parliament alike.

Mr Verges. — (FR) Mr President, the Commission has been courteous enough to use this debate as an opportunity to inform Parliament of disaster aid and financial and food aid granted to Third countries. The document mentions 100 000 ECU for Tonga following hurricane Isaac and 320 000 ECU to repair a bridge in Malawi destroyed by hurricane Electra. May I remind you that our Parliament unanimously adopted a request for emergency aid following the natural disaster which hit the whole island of Madagascar? The Commission informed us that it had made available emergency aid of 100 000 ECU which does not seem to reflect the scale of the disaster; this subject was discussed at the last meeting of the Committee on Development and Cooperation.

I shall therefore take this opportunity to ask the Commission whether it agrees that — quite apart from aid to bring the rice fields back into production, repair dykes and carry out other work which is currently being discussed between the Commission and the Madagascar Government — the initial endowment of 100 000 ECU should be substantially increased especially as the Commission felt able to allocate three times more funds to repair a bridge in Malawi (and a similar amount following the hurricane in Tonga) whereas the scale of the disaster in Madagascar is such that it affects the whole island.

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) As soon as we were informed of this event, we made available initial emergency aid of 100 000 ECU to Madagascar; at the same time we asked the government of the island to inform us of the nature and scale of its needs.

As soon as we were in a position to assess these needs, and this is a very recent development, we decided to allocate further aid of 1 000 000 ECU to Madagascar. We shall continue to study the matter as and when further information is brought to our attention; the figure of one million ECU which I mentioned just now is not all we are doing and must be seen in conjunction with substantial food aid since 6 thousand tonnes of cereals are being shipped to Madagascar and further decisions will be taken shortly.

I would like to remind Parliament, and the honourable Member in particular, that we cannot move beyond emergency aid as soon as we receive reports of a disaster, in order to provide aid for repairs or food aid without detailed information on the extent of the disaster; we must also have a detailed request from the government which is facing so serious a problem. Parliament tends to criticize us for not responding quickly enough to the Madagascar problem; but if we improvised our aid it might equally criticize us for wasting public funds. We always have to steer a middle course between these two extremes.

7. Summertime

President. — The next item is the second report (Doc. 1-975/81) by Mr Baudis, on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-163/81) for a second Council directive on summertime arrangements.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Baudis, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the proposal to harmonize summertime dates is based on considerations of logic and efficiency. In that spirit the Commission of the European Communities submitted to the Council as long ago as February 1976 a proposal for a directive seeking to fix the beginning and end of summertime at the same hour on the same day in all the Member States in the years 1983 to 2000.

On the basis of an initial proposal for a directive from the Commission and the report by Mr Seefeld, the Council adopted a uniform regulation on the beginning of summertime in 1981 and 1982. On the other hand the Council was unable to reach agreement on the end of this period which will terminate this year on Sunday, 26 September in Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands and Luxembourg, but only one month later on Sunday, 24 October in Ireland and the United Kingdom. I must say that without creating a single time zone this reform has the undoubted advantage of avoiding confusion surrounding the adjustment of international timetables for air, rail and road traffic.

Baudis

Moreover, this coordination undoubtedly facilitates telecommunications between the Member States just as it defers by one hour the time at which artificial lighting has to be switched on; this clearly saves energy. The Commission noted that the Member States had different preferences as to the dates for the end of summertime. After discussion the Members of the Committee on Transport approved the Commission's proposal for the beginning of summertime which will be on the first Sunday in April unless that is Easter day in which case the previous Sunday would be taken.

The Committee on Transport felt that, on the more delicate issue of the end of summertime, the second Sunday in October was undoubtedly a suitable date; the 18 Members of the Committee on Transport who were present unanimously accepted the Commission's proposal to this effect.

Your Committee wishes to stress the real advantages of this reform and gives its unreserved approval to the proposal for a directive on summertime. The introduction of uniform Community provisions with the participation of our Parliament on a matter which is readily understandable to all our citizens, gives clear practical evidence of European solidarity in an area of general concern.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I very much hope that the Council of Transport Ministers which is to meet on 10 June next will endorse the Commission's proposal if it is approved by Parliament.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Albers. — (NL) Mr President, it was no easy matter to draw up the proposal for a directive on provisions relating to summertime. A well earned tribute should be paid to the Commission for its tenacity in conducting negotiations. We now have a compromise on the time change in the continental Member States and the United Kingdom and Ireland have also made their contribution. There is little need to dwell here on the advantages of summertime. The benefits which spring most readily to mind relate to recreation and holidays but more recently interest has focused on possible energy savings which are considerable. Then there is the aspect of road safety. The longer vehicles can be driven in daylight, the less risk of accidents. This too was felt to be an important consideration by the Committee on Transport.

As explained in the documents, the coordination of the beginning and end of summertime is not merely a symbol of agreement within the European Community but also a matter of great practical significance. Air, rail and road transport timetables are important examples while inland waterway navigation has an interest in identical times for passage through locks; in the

case of transfrontier traffic too, e.g. for frontier workers and goods traffic, the maintenance of identical times is extremely important. This applies particularly to telecommunications. Last September when the matter was discussed for the first time, our colleague, Mr Hutton, worked out that British Airways alone would save 5 million pounds on the printing of timetables and so on if agreement could be reached on summertime. The original objections to the second Sunday in October as the date for the end of summertime — objections made by our colleagues from the Federal Republic — weighed heavily on our discussions to begin with but the observations by Mr Megahy who spoke of a devilish plot on the part of Parliament to deprive the population of the United Kingdom of three weeks of summertime, made it impossible for us to reach a decision on September. The fact that agreement has now been reached in the Committee on Transport gives us reason for satisfaction.

This proposal is not at all complicated and there is no need for long discussion. I might point out however that the Council asked for our opinion one year ago. If in our resolution we now urge the Council to act quickly we must ourselves reach a clear decision. I hope this will be possible. I wish to thank our colleague, Mr Baudis, warmly for his perseverance on this matter. Finally, I wish to inform you that the Socialist Group will be voting unanimously for this proposal and for the resolution.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Mr President, it gives me great pleasure to inform my friend, Mr Baudis, of the unreserved support of our group for his report; as Mr Baudis well knows I have always advocated action on this matter.

I have always made a stand on this matter because — if I may continue in Dutch, Mr President — it is something which the man in the street can understand as my colleague, Mr Albers, knows too. I have always advocated the European clock, the European postage stamp, the European driving licence and the European passport. But, and I hope the Council is listening, where have we got with the European passport?

I am pleased that action is being taken on summertime, Mr President, because it is a matter of concern to all our citizens just as delays at frontiers are a concern to frontier workers. It was a most unsatisfactory state of affairs for the clocks to show 12 o'clock in Germany and 1 o'clock in France or vice-versa. There was a time when businessmen arriving late in their offices in London found that their counterparts in Paris had already left early for lunch so that there was no contact between them. That is now a thing of the past and I am delighted that the Council has reached agreement, albeit with such difficulty. I now hope that

Berkhouwer

the European clock will be a symbol and lead to further progress in other areas which mean something to the man in the street in Europe.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) The Commission asks the Assembly to adopt the report by Mr Baudis.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

8. Food aid in 1982

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-34/82), by Mr Lezzi, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on

the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1045/81) for regulations concerning food aid in 1982.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Lezzi, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in its concern to make food aid more effective Parliament has already clearly underlined the importance that it attributes to the long standing issue of the division of responsibilities between the Commission and the Council regarding the management of food aid and consequently, the interpretation of the relevant Regulation.

The conciliation procedure has finally been initiated. Although we are aware of the difficulties involved in arriving at a positive and rapid conclusion, we reaffirm that:

- the programme of food aid in cereals should have as its legal basis Articles 113, 235, and 43 of the Treaty,
- food aid should be classified as non-compulsory expenditure,
- the recipients of food aid should be indicated by the Commission,
- the Management Committee on food aid should act only as a consulting body. Parliament's objective is to render this aid as effective as possible and to situate it in the context of an overall policy of development.

The lack of a detailed report on the effects of Community food aid on the peoples and economies of the

countries receiving it and the Commission's failure to carry out the commitments indicated in the Ferrero report do not permit us to make an overall judgment on the Commission's proposals regarding the food aid programme for 1982.

Nevertheless, there has been an increase in the quota of Community food aid obligations estimated by the Commission (an increase of 17.2% over 1981), a quota which is further increased by the making up of delays accumulated in the implementation of the annual programmes. For the first time, indeed, the Council was able to conclude its work on the 1982 programme in March.

In the face of the constant increase in the annual need for cereals and in view of the fact that the overall demand for food aid in the form of cereals communicated to the Community by the countries concerned is well in excess of the amounts available, it is necessary to increase the quota of Community obligations.

It is true that the short-term food estimates in the developing countries are more promising than those of last year. They also include several positive factors which, for example, have permitted food aid in cereals to be concentrated in some of the poorest countries with the largest cereal deficits.

It is also true that some countries which have received food aid in the past, such as Pakistan and Zambia, have not requested it for 1982; but the lack of a valid analysis makes it impossible to identify the reasons for the increases in production, and therefore precludes the attainment of a relative self-sufficiency.

Is it attributable to the way in which food aid has been linked to national or regional food strategies in the recipient countries?

Such a link is particularly important in places where the Community can provide technical assistance in drawing up such strategies and ensure that they reflect the needs of the population accurately and contribute to the agricultural development of the recipient countries.

Food aid — we repeat — should not be merely a way to dispose of agricultural surpluses (in addition such an approach would do serious damage to the already precarious agricultural economies of the developing countries); rather it should play an active part in agricultural and rural development. This cannot be accomplished over the short term; it must be done in the framework of the Commission's multiannual programmes.

Another necessity for effective Community food aid is the availability of an adequate range of food products. From this derives the importance of the 'three-way operations', which allow the Commission to obtain farm produce in regions close to the recipient coun-

Lezzi

tries and make it possible to respect local eating habits. The 'three-way operations' also reduce import costs and the risk of waste, and they minimize the delays connected with long-distance operations.

We can only regret that in the programme for 1982 the Commission did not refer specifically to the use of the 'three-way operations', and that because of this no general programme of food aid in the form of sugar or vegetable and other products was devised; consequently there is a risk that Parliament might not be informed before measures are initiated which include the granting of this type of food aid.

The motion for a resolution being studied by Parliament calls for the overall quantities of food aid for each individual year to be determined in the context of the general budget of the European Communities. The motion further states that more realistic budget estimates could be obtained by introducing graduated appropriations for food aid, especially in view of the fact that specific multiannual programmes will be prepared in the near future. New programmes should be more precise, and make a clear distinction between food aid in rice and food aid in other cereals.

The programme of food aid for 1982, allowing for the reservations I have mentioned, represents — within the limits of the funds available — a step forward, and for this reason it can be approved. It should be stressed however that many steps taken in the Ferrero resolution, along with the measures relating to them, have not yet been adopted. This is the case, for example, where the staff of DG VIII are concerned.

The Commission has announced the introduction of multinational programmes for food aid and has stated that emergency supplies will be maintained for use in the event of famine. It has established criteria for financing the costs of transport and reaffirmed its commitment to keep Parliament adequately informed. These are important steps, but we are still in the realm of good intentions, and much remains to be done to provide a more efficient administration for the Commission's food aid programmes.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mrs Rabethge. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Christian Democratic Group I wish to congratulate Mr Lezzi on his excellent report and motion for a resolution. Given the balanced and comprehensive presentation — especially of the present shortcomings and problems — it is not surprising that his motion for a resolution should have been approved unanimously by our Committee on Development and Cooperation. I hope that Mr Lezzi's motion will also gain the unanimous approval of the House.

I do not wish to look yet again at the underlying problems of European law which were discussed in our committee according to which Parliament might very well oppose the procedure which has been followed. However, to do so might jeopardize food aid in 1982. My group also endorses the view of the Committee on Budgets that in future the Commission would be entitled to implement the food aid programme without annual Council regulations.

The conciliation procedure which is currently in progress on this fundamental point must surely take priority — let us have cooperation rather than confrontation in order to ensure smooth implementation of the aid programme.

Mr Lezzi has rightly and resolutely — I think this is important to us all — set down once again the essential demands which have been repeatedly made by the Committee on Development and Cooperation especially since the report on world hunger. I have in mind paragraphs 2, 3, 17, 18 and 20 of his motion. What are we asking for? We are simply repeating the demands made in various ways by individual committee members in other reports on food aid:

- firstly, the urgent definition of a food strategy
- secondly, concentration of all aid on the least developed countries
- thirdly, we are asking the Commission to draw up what is known as a report of evaluation, something to which my group has always attached particular importance; to put it simply, a report on the impact of EEC food aid on the population and economies of the individual recipient countries
- fourthly, the non-governmental organizations which have not received sufficient attention up to now, must be involved much more effectively in the various tasks.

Finally, a particularly important demand, by which my group and I personally have always set great store, is repeated: food aid must not be made dependent on the type of government or political situation in the developing countries but steps must be taken to ensure under all circumstances that aid actually reaches the needy population groups.

Mr President, I realize how difficult it is for the Commission to give practical shape to all the demands made by the Members of our Parliament — for close on three years we in Parliament have been drawing up creative proposals and the matter has now been discussed enough. As a great German poet, Friedrich von Schiller, said: 'We have talked long enough, the time has come to act.'

The poorest citizens of the developing countries have a right to a more effective food aid strategy coordinated in the long term with their own agricul-

Rabbethge

tural development. But the citizens of our countries too are entitled to more effective action with better controls than we have seen up to now. The report by Mr Irmer will certainly be giving more detailed information on this aspect later this week. At all events, I and my group fully endorse Mr Lezzi's report.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr C. Jackson. — I too would like to congratulate Mr Lezzi on his very thorough and rapid report. My group is glad to give general support to his resolution, although they tabled one amendment to paragraph 20, on matter to which Mrs Rabbethge referred designed to make it plain that while we may provide food aid to countries that do not respect human rights, we should do this on condition that we ensure that that aid goes direct to those suffering. I think this is obvious and I suspect we all agree that we do not want the aid to support obnoxious regimes rather than the people who are suffering.

I think the House will unite in its dislike for the regulations before us. What we want is a better, more flexible and effective food aid management programme, and it is indeed just such a regulation that is the subject of conciliation with the Council at the moment. My group believes that it is very important indeed that this conciliation should be successful in order to enable the Commission to manage food aid more effectively.

Food aid is in fact an increasingly controversial subject. This Parliament has always, rightly, had particular concern for hunger in the world. In our budget discussions we give much attention to food aid, to types of food aid and amounts of food aid. Many Members feel that such aid is not only symbolic of our will to help those who are starving, but that it actually provides direct help. The reality is somewhat different. Only a few weeks ago the Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Committee presented President Arap Moy of Kenya, who is also President of the OAU, with a report saying, and I quote 'The massive food aid to Africa has in many cases not only proved not very effective, but even pernicious.' Now in Asia and Latin America there has been real progress in food production but in Africa the situation has worsened.'

Our Community food aid in the main does not go direct to the hungry, it is balance of payments support, usually sold in the towns and the proceeds then used for other development projects. Its benefit for the hungry, directly, probably comes mainly from substitution, i.e. our food aid is eaten by better off people in the towns of developing countries, but this in turn frees local food for poorer people in the rural areas. I look forward to proof of this in the detailed report due to come to us from the Commission later on this year.

My group is well aware, of course, of the criticisms of European Community food aid to be found in the Court of Auditor's report; criticisms of administration as well. We know that not all this is the responsibility of DG VIII. Indeed, I hope that the President of the Commission will personally investigate the relationship between DG VIII and DG VI insofar as food aid is concerned, with the aim of making distribution and programming more effective.

At this point I would like to ask the Commissioner a direct question. From time to time Parliament has voted more staff to DG VIII for food aid. I would like to ask him how many additional staff are now employed on food aid?

The worries that we have had as to whether food aid is itself effective or pernicious, the worries about administration and programming, all place food aid in some doubt. Yet we in the Community are spending very large sums each year on food aid — some 400 million ECU. I exclude the export restitutions from this figure. So our support for the programme as presented is, I think, rather conditional and I hope that we shall not again be asked to support such a programme and such regulations.

Mr President, I have been somewhat critical in my comments because there are real grounds for concern about food aid, but I also want to express my appreciation to the Commission for the efforts that I know they are making to improve the situation. The intention of the Commission to use food aid in support of food strategies in developing countries must be the right way to proceed. That is a programme to which my group will lend its full support. Recently the Commissioner himself has said, and I quote him, 'Only lengthy analysis, definition and organization can make the rich countries' contribution towards combating hunger effective and useful.' That seems to me to be an admirable statement of the situation and I can promise him that proposals following that philosophy will receive our support.

I will end with a personal view. In most areas where food production per head is falling, this is mainly because the population is rising fast. Mr Lezzi has hinted at the importance of population increases in his resolution. I am increasingly concerned that the Community should not ignore, as some developing countries themselves seem to ignore, the difficult issue of population planning. Population planning is indeed the other side of the coin to the problem of food production and world hunger. I hope we will in the future find it possible to provide some aid for this as well.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Pruvot. — (FR) Mr President, Commissioner, food aid is a weak instrument when measured against

Pruvot

the existing development needs but it has a decisive role to play in the short term. Man's first right is to food. No economic, social, political or even human progress can be made while men, women and children are still dying of hunger.

The European Community has been engaged in food aid operations since 1968 and the effort made by it is by no means negligible in terms of the volume and number of countries covered. I might also point out that an equivalent effort is not being made by all the industrialized countries, Japan, the United States, or the countries in the socialist camp.

We are therefore bound to welcome the Commission's proposal to increase deliveries of cereals by 17.2% as compared with the 1981 figure. If they are accepted these proposals may — although I am not sure of this — jeopardize the outcome of the conciliation procedure currently under way between the Council and Parliament on the legal basis for food aid.

But, Mr President, when human beings have to be saved from malnutrition or even death, should we really sit back and wait for the outcome of a dispute over terms of reference? Certainly not. My group therefore fully endorses the excellent report by Mr Lezzi who approves the Commission's proposals while stressing the importance of the conciliation procedure on the proposal for a regulation concerning the management of food aid. Here, Parliament must make sure that account is taken, as has been done by the Commission of the appropriations adopted by it in the 1982 food aid programme.

After our debate in October 1980 on world hunger and prior to our second debate in two months time, we would be doing ourselves a disservice if we were to proceed otherwise.

I shall not look at the Commission's proposals in detail except to point to the effort to achieve greater effectiveness in the list of beneficiary countries. To avoid scattering the available aid too widely as had been done in previous years, the Commission has only entered 21 beneficiary countries as against 43 in 1981 on the list for cereals deliveries.

In the light of their privileged ties with us it is perfectly normal for the list of countries selected to include many African nations, among them Angola and Mozambique. We welcome the fact that the two latter countries will be able to benefit from EEC food aid since we are aware of their difficulties as front line states and of their hesitation to join the Lomé Convention.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that my group agrees to a substantial increase in the quantities of cereals placed in reserve; this will give the Community a wider margin of manoeuvre to meet unforeseen requests following natural disasters.

Mr President, the Commission and Parliament are united on this matter. They must oppose any delaying tactics by the Council of Ministers. If the manoeuvre by the Member States were to succeed it would have the effect of reducing the quantities earmarked for each country by 15%. This would be contrary to our commitments at both European and national levels. Let us not have short memories; we should read again the declarations made about the least developed countries following the Paris Conference and the Cancun Summit.

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Israël. — (FR) Mr President, the EPT Group naturally gives its full support to the ideas set down by the rapporteur and I am pleased to inform him of our approval. He will of course not be surprised if I lay emphasis on the section of his report dealing with human rights. In the course of our discussions we were faced with the by now traditional problem: are we to strengthen oppressive regimes by making food aid available to peoples who ultimately do not benefit from it? Conversely, is it acceptable to avenge the mistakes of governments on their peoples?

Certainly not. We therefore welcome the caution with which Mr Lezzi has approached this report. Whenever possible we must try to strengthen our influence in the area of human rights for the benefit of the people whom we are helping to save from starvation but we must never contribute to a deterioration in their own situation.

The only real problem, Mr Lezzi, is to know whether food aid does directly reach the people for whom it is intended and whether it is used in an appropriate manner. The Commission and Parliament must take all possible steps to strengthen the necessary controls. It remains for me to say that some Members of this Assembly will always keep a close watch on the regimes of the countries whose people we shall be aiding; we shall not hesitate to speak out strongly whenever that is necessary, in this Parliament. We are not satisfied with some regimes but, I repeat, Mr President, we shall never avenge the indifference and wickedness of governments on their peoples.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, on behalf of the Commission I welcome the ideas and conclusions set out in the report by Mr Lezzi. He has dealt with most of the problems which we consider important. That being so we willingly endorse the report and ask Parliament to adopt it.

Time is short and I shall simply deal rapidly with two or three matters which have been raised. Triangular

Pisani

aid is tending to develop. The methods for this type of aid have not been finalized but the time will come when we shall be able to define them in the light of our experience.

As to the action of non-governmental organizations, we do tend to use them in a number of cases because they are able to ensure to some extent equitable distribution and exercise control.

As regards new products, these have recently been included on the list of eligible products. In a number of cases the result has been extremely positive and we shall continue our work on these lines.

As to the problem of staffing in the Directorate General, the resources at our disposal to administer food aid are clearly inadequate to reach the degree of efficiency which Parliament would like. I have promised to let Parliament have a full report on food aid in July. On the basis of that exhaustive report I shall be asking — as I have already announced in the Commission and Council — for additional staff to administer aid under the most effective conditions possible.

Finally, on the vital issue of relations with certain political regimes which do not give us the necessary guarantees, I can inform you that we are increasingly determined to take steps to ensure that the aid reaches its intended beneficiaries rather than to concentrate on determining the nature of the regime governing these countries. As Mr Israël so rightly said, we must not punish a country which is already suffering under a dictatorship.

As to the last point, our intention is to ensure that food aid, a necessary but dangerous instrument, is linked increasingly closely to the development effort of the beneficiary countries. That is the underlying purpose of our food aid strategy and the first measures are due to be taken in the next few weeks.

In conclusion, Mr President, we agree fully with the report and the previous speakers and I hope that a detailed debate will take place in the next few weeks on the basic problems of food aid because we do not want the difficulties to be taken as a pretext for diverting public opinion elsewhere. Food aid is an essential, although in some respects dangerous, instrument. The need for a parliamentary debate has become imperative.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

I should like to thank the staff for facilitating the House again tonight and enabling us to finish our business.

*(The sitting was closed at 8.10 p.m.)*¹

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see Minutes.

ANNEX

Commission action on opinions on its proposals delivered by the European Parliament at its two March 1982 part-sessions

1. As agreed with the Bureau of Parliament, the Commission informs Members at the beginning of every part-session of the action it has taken on opinions delivered at the previous part-session in the context of parliamentary consultation.
2. At its two March part-sessions the European Parliament delivered six opinions on Commission proposals in response to Council requests for consultation.
3. At the part-sessions two matters were discussed in connection with which Parliament delivered favourable opinions on or did not request formal amendment of the proposals mentioned below.

Report by Mr Battersby on the proposals for:

1. a decision concerning the conclusion of the agreement in the form of an exchange of letters establishing fishing arrangements between the European Community and the Kingdom of Norway for 1982,
2. a regulation laying down for 1982 certain measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources to apply to vessels flying the Norwegian flag (COM (82) 25);

Report by Mr Nyborg on the proposal for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 3164/76 on the Community quota for the carriage of goods by road between Member States.

4. In four cases the European Parliament asked the Commission to alter its proposals under the second paragraph of Article 149 of the Treaty, and in one case the Commission accepted the proposed amendment.

Report by Mr Sassano on the proposal for a decision concerning a research and teaching programme (1982-86) in the field of controlled thermonuclear fusion (COM (81) 357)

The Commission has sent the Council an amended proposal incorporating the amendments suggested by Parliament.

In the three other cases the Commission explained at the debate why it preferred to maintain its proposals.

Report by Mr Combe on the proposal for a directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat,

Report by Mr Gatto on the regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2511/69 laying down special measures for improving the production and marketing of Community citrus fruit (COM (81) 402),

Report by Mr Curry on the setting of prices for certain farm products and certain related measures (1982/83) (COM (82) 10).

With regard to Mr Curry's report, the Commission took account of it during the discussions in the Council and has prepared a revised proposal. The Parliament will be informed of this orally.

5. The Commission also expressed its views during discussions concerning it and took note of the European Parliament's opinions on the following.

Report by Mrs Lizin on European nuclear safety policy;

Report by Mr Aigner on the export of Community farm products to the USSR and State-trading countries;

Report by Mr De Gucht on the waiving of a Member's parliamentary immunity;

Report by Mr Sieglerschmidt on the protection of individual rights in the face of computer processing;

- Report by Mr Carossino on the common transport policy;
- Report by Mr Gabert on the future of the EEC's rail network;
- Report by Mrs Moreau on Europe's raw material supplies;
- Report by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli on the shoe industry in Europe;
- Report by Mr Seitlinger on the draft uniform electoral procedure for the election of Members of the European Parliament;
- Resolution by Mr Fanti on the level of interest rates in the Community;
- Resolution by Mr Bonaccini on the revision of the European Monetary System's central rates;
- Resolution by Mr Barbi on the situation of political parties in Uruguay;
- Resolution by Mrs Van den Heuvel on the situation in El Salvador;
- Resolution by Mr Habsburg on the situation in Cambodia;
- Resolution by Mr Papapietro on national financial aids for film producers;
- Resolution by Mr de Pasquale on the drought in Sicily;
- Report by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase on a Community education programme;
- Report by Mr Hahn on radio and television in the European Community;
- Report by Mr Schön on the European Parliament's administrative expenses during the period 1 January – 31 December 1981;
- Resolution by Mr Welsh on renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement;
- Second report by Mrs Maij-Weggen on Community trade in products derived from white-coated baby harp seals and baby hooded seals;
- Report by Mr del Duca on combating smoking;
- Report by Mrs Squarcialupi on the problems of alcoholism in Community countries;
- Report by Mr Price on research on the use of wind power.
6. The Commission took the opportunity to inform the European Parliament on the disaster aids and the financial and food aids granted since February 1982.
- (a) *Emergency financial aids for third countries*
- 100 000 ECU for Tonga after the hurricane Isaac,
- 320 000 ECU to repair a bridge in Malawi destroyed by the hurricane Electra;
- (b) *Food aids*
- 500 t of skimmed milk powder for Mozambique.

SITTING OF TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 1982

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IN THE CHAIR: MR LALOR

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9.00 a.m.)¹

¹ Approval of minutes — Petitions — Topical and urgent debate (announcement of motions for resolutions tabled): see the minutes of this sitting.

1. Discharges in respect of the 1980 financial year

President. — The next item is a joint debate on nine reports drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control:

- interim report (Doc. 1-100/82) by Mr Key, on the discharge decision in respect of the 1980 financial year embodying a draft motion for a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Article 85 of the Financial Regulation informing the Commission of the reasons for the postponement of the grant of discharge in

President

- respect of the implementation of the budget for the 1980 financial year;
- report (Doc. 1-105/82) by Mr Gabert, on delays in the ECSC discharge procedure for the 1980 financial year;
 - report (Doc. 1-33/82) by Mr Kellett-Bowman, on the discharge to be granted to the Administrative Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in respect of the implementation of its appropriations for the 1980 financial year and the comments accompanying this decision;
 - report (Doc. 1-32/82) by Mr Kellett-Bowman, on the discharge to be granted to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in respect of the implementation of its appropriations for the 1980 financial year and the comments accompanying this decision;
 - report (Doc. 1-98/82) by Mr Irmer, on problems in the implementation of Community food-aid policy in the light of the Court of Auditors' report;
 - interim report (Doc. 1-104/82) by Mr Price, on the accommodation policy of the Community institutions;
 - report (Doc. 1-31/82) by Mr Wettig, on the Tenth Financial Report on the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund — year 1980 — Guarantee Section — and food-aid financing;
 - report (Doc. 1-1070/81) by Mr Filippi, on the Tenth Financial Report on the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (1980) (Guidance Section);
 - report (Doc. 1-103/82) by Mr Cousté, on the borrowing and lending activities of the Commission of the European Communities (COM(81) 222, 223, 224 and COM(81) 649).

I call the various rapporteurs.

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Mr President, the debate we are holding today deals with issues which are very fundamental to Parliament and to Parliament's role in these matters. It concerns the balance between the institutions of this Community and it concerns the Commission's answerability to this House.

In my report, I set out the various points which we have discussed many times. What I want to emphasize is that the problems dealt with in the various reports from the Committee on Budgetary Control go beyond what I would term party-political differences. I therefore do not want to make specific party-political

points; neither do I want to emphasize personalities in this matter.

First, I will try to set this debate in perspective. One of the first actions of the directly-elected Parliament was to set up a Committee on Budgetary Control. This was a highly significant step for a number of reasons. It showed that the directly elected Parliament took its responsibility for the management of Community funds far more seriously than its predecessors had done. It also meant that the reports coming before this and other plenary sittings would be drawn up in a more thoroughgoing manner than was possible in the old Parliament, where the work was done by a sub-committee and by relatively very few members. For instance, the discharge report for 1971 was considered in November 1975, four years later and actually consisted of a single page, unlike the report which we have before us today.

The Committee on Budgetary Control has a wide range of responsibilities. I have listed them in paragraph 3 of my explanatory statement, but I wish to emphasize that the right to grant a discharge to the Commission for its implementation of the budget is the exclusive right of this Parliament, unlike the drafting of the original budget, and if this House is to carry out its mandate from the electors, we must ensure that prudent use is made of the taxes collected from citizens for spending on Community policies. We must ensure that payments are made both in a legal and in a regular fashion. We must satisfy ourselves as to the timing and effectiveness of payments and any frauds or irregularities must be investigated and curbed.

The committee's examination of the 1980 accounts took place against a background of a sense of unease about the failure of the Commission to use budgetary instruments to get to grips with the major problems that confront Europe today. Members, too, were concerned that the Commission should give evidence of their activities and we found evidence of the apparent incapacity on the part of the Commission to carry out its responsibilities, either for implementing the budget, or for giving precedence to Community interests over other considerations.

The wide responsibilities conferred on Parliament by the Treaty of 22 July 1975 put an obligation on this House to scrutinize Community expenditure carefully. The techniques developed by the Committee on Budgetary Control ensure that this careful scrutiny takes place. These techniques involve drawing to the full on the resources of the Court of Auditors and appointing several rapporteurs with special briefs and a readiness to consult all other expert committees on expenditure matters.

Although the Commission is the institution to which the discharge report is addressed the Council is also concerned and before addressing my remarks to the

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Commission, I would like to say a few words to the Council and to their representatives here.

In paragraph 18 of my explanatory statement I have described the objectionable attitude of the Council towards the 1980 budget in its preparatory stages, and in paragraph 19 I have cited, not you, Mr President; but President Dankert when he castigated the irresponsible attitude of the Council towards the 1980 budget and later in my paragraphs 95-106, I describe the other shortcomings of the Council. That list is not exhaustive but I do hope that they take on board those comments made.

Furthermore, in paragraphs 34 and 35 of the motion for a resolution now before you, I expressed the serious dissatisfaction voiced in the Committee on Budgetary Control in relation to the Council. The Council simply does not act as and when it should and we have grave concern about it. Also can I just make one or two points about the Court of Auditors.

This is relatively a very new Community organization but it has been of great assistance to the Parliament and has been a very constructive working partner with us in the control of the budget. May I express on behalf of all the committee our appreciation to the Court and to its members. However, we do have serious reservations about certain aspects of it but we know that we can work with them in future and we know they are presenting their work a lot better than anybody ever envisaged to start off with.

As regards the Parliament itself, many Members of this House have repeatedly expressed their unhappiness about the way in which this institution is managed. There is a fairly widely-felt concern that those in the top echelons are short of the required management skills. Techniques, procedures and attitudes must be set right within this Parliament at the top management levels. Measures must be implemented carefully and thoughtfully. Otherwise Members of this House will quite probably recommend measures other than the usual system of a golden handshake in a year's time. I should say to you, Mr President, that all of us are very conscious of the efforts that you and President Dankert are making to bring about greater efficiency in the administration of this House and I know my colleague on the committee, Konrad Schön, is continuing his work in relation to Parliament.

So much for the other institutions of this Community. I now want to turn to the most serious matter we have to deal with, namely the Commission. The recommendation for deferral of the discharge is not just my work or my recommendation. This has nothing to do with false modesty. All committee work, and especially the work of the Committee on Budgetary Control, involves other Members of this Parliament and other members of the committee. It entails getting together a consensus viewpoint and it involves a degree of continuity. It requires the acceptance of opinions formu-

lated not just by the Committee on Budgetary Control but by other committees of this House and, indeed, the opinions of other committees are fully reflected in my final report. And therefore I would like to thank and pay tribute to the draftsmen of the individual working documents. I should also like to thank the five draftsmen of the specialized committees and I would like to say a special word of appreciation to Mr Pedini and Mr Normanton, both of whom made very useful and interesting statements personally to our committee.

As to the conclusion of the work of the Committee on Budgetary Control, we were faced with three choices. Having looked at all the documents and at all the information that was before us, we could do three things. We could either refuse discharge, quite simply, and therefore risk an institutional crisis within the Community. Or we could defer the decision on the discharge and give the Commission the opportunity and more time to explain what they are doing or what they plan to do to overcome the weaknesses that we have discovered in our debates. The third thing we could do is grant the discharge as we have done in the past and just sign off and not take our work seriously. After very lengthy deliberations and after hearing the Commissioner responsible and after weighing all the facts that have been presented to us, both verbally and in writing, the Committee on Budgetary Control decided to opt for deferment.

Because of the nature of many of the paragraphs in my motion for a resolution I think it would be appropriate to describe them to the House. However, I do not need to speak at length on all the points because other colleagues in the committee will present them in their own manner because they personally have dealt specifically with certain issues.

If I can draw Members' attention to paragraph 1, which is obviously the most crucial paragraph. It explains that quite simply the great majority of the committee felt that we had to propose the postponement of the discharge decision. This decision cannot be made just at a quick glance or upon assumptions, and we certainly cannot reach a final decision on the part-knowledge that is available to us and on the verbal promises which were made to us however well intentioned they were. What we have done is to defer it and we are recommending deferment to this House. We have had these policies in the past and many times they have not been fully implemented. I hope this time that the Commission and the Commissioners will actually respond to us in the next few months.

We are not satisfied with many of the answers we have received and we have certainly not yet seen action by the Commission on many of the issues which concern us or the taxpayers of Europe. Our decision therefore to propose deferral of discharge today reflects both a practical and a political judgment on the manner in which the Commission has used, or failed to use, the

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resources made available to it to carry out the Community's policies. The outstanding issues on which we require either additional information or more definite Commission action are listed in the following paragraphs.

Paragraphs 2 to 4 take up the failure of the Commission to carry out the wishes of both the Council and Parliament in regard to the 1980 embargo on the export of agricultural products to the USSR which followed the invasion of Afghanistan and the disgraceful treatment of dissidents in the USSR. The attitude of this House in this matter was clearly brought to light by the 2 to 1 majority by which the Aigner resolution was adopted by the House last month at a very well-attended sitting. On that occasion the statements of Mr Tyrrell and Mr Hord were very exceptional, very forceful, clear and relevant. Indeed, when we discussed the matter in the Committee on Budgetary Control on 1 and 2 April Mr Tugendhat gave us a very clear agreement that he would allow us to develop and carry out an investigation into this matter once again. Even yesterday I received from the Commissioner responsible for agriculture a telex which gave us additional information on this very serious matter. That was the first point: a direct breach of what this House and what the Council said on the 1980 embargo.

The second point which is dealt with in paragraphs 5 to 8 concerns the very technical matter of the provisional twelfths. The nub of the argument can be found in the Court of Auditors' report. President Dankert and other colleagues will remember that in April and May 1980 they commented on the use of the provisional twelfths. Indeed, members of the European Democratic Group actually tabled a resolution in this Parliament on the use of the provisional twelfths. It is a very technical matter. But what I am seeking in my comments on this is that the Commission in their work with the Court of Auditors and in their work with this Parliament, when they come to draw up the new financial regulations, which we all must operate on, actually understands and recognizes not just the legalistic point of the provisional twelfths, but the spirit of it, so that we actually operate in line with Parliament's decision taken on the basis of its responsibility for budgetary matters to reject or accept a budget.

Contrary to the practice of the Commission I believe that the follow-up to the discharge should be dealt with before the latest possible deadline is reached. In the committee we had a debate about what the deadline was. I am convinced that the second sentence of the third paragraph of Article 85 of the Financial Regulation obliges the Commission to respond far more quickly than they would need to if they were purely to rely on the fourth subparagraph in this article. Logically this House should pronounce on the follow-up to the discharge for one year before we adopt a decision on the discharge for the following year. Hence paragraphs 9 and 10 of the resolution are made very firmly, and I know Mr Irmer will actually

pass a comment on that as the man responsible for the discharge for 1979.

In paragraphs 11 to 12 the committee insists upon a full written response to the points raised concerning the Joint Research Centre establishment at Ispra. Members of this House know all the problems of Ispra — we have reported it to them on many occasions; whether it is the number of cars that have been used there, whether it is the problem of the administrative building, or whatever. The problems are very firmly there and have been registered in this House and in committee. Indeed, the report on my colleague, Mr Kellett-Bowman brought to light the very serious fundamental reforms which are required at Ispra and in other research institutions. The Commission promised us a written report last December. We were told it was on its way. It has not arrived at the committee officially. We have had verbal promises, we have had verbal statements and, indeed, I have received a letter from the Commissioner responsible. I am very pleased with what I understand is happening and the changes that are taking place at Ispra. But this House, and more particularly the Committee on Budgetary Control, needs to look in great detail and very carefully at the comments and decisions that have been made by the Commissioner responsible and by his directorate. We need in that committee to talk it through and pass judgment on it. We cannot just accept what is being said to us. Too many times in this House we have had to accept what is being said to us verbally. What we need is something in writing so we can discuss it and go through it in detail. In our Committee on Budgetary Control we have the ability to do that and I am sure we can come to a very satisfactory solution on the whole problem of Ispra.

Paragraphs 13 to 17 fall within the responsibility of Mr Price, who is the vice-chairman of our committee, and I am pretty sure I can rely on him to deal with this in his later intervention. I am very grateful to him for drafting several of these paragraphs, notably paragraph 15 which dealt with a matter, on which I feel very strongly, namely the responsibility of financial control.

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

I know, Mr President, you are indicating my official time is up. All I can tell you is that I am taking the time of my own group and they have allocated me time on that point.

President. — You have already taken seven minutes from your group.

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Yes, I know, it is alright, it has been agreed. It is a very serious report this, Mr President, and I need to get the points on. The Commission is going to deal with it very seriously and we hope

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that they deal with it very seriously. This is one of the major responsibilities of this Parliament.

In paragraphs 13 to 17, we deal with the whole problem of what is called the Jean Monnet Building in Luxembourg. Members are aware from press comments of what happened at that centre, and it really does need the serious consideration of this House.

Members are also aware of the Commission's failure in the past to implement Parliament's amendments to the budget. Amendments to the budget are adopted by huge majorities in this House; they result from intensive discussion by specialized committees and by the Committee on Budgets; the support required for the adoption of such amendments cuts across national frontiers and indeed across the divisions of groups within this House; and year after year, Parliament has been insulted by the failure of the Commission to carry out Parliament's budgetary instructions. The reasons given by the Commission for its failure to act have often been very shallow and evasive. Parliament has the last word when it comes to non-compulsory expenditure, and the Commission is wholly responsible for implementing the budget, including, in particular, those amendments which Parliament in exercise of the Treaty-given rights sees fit to adopt. By not fully implementing the budget as adopted by Parliament, the Commission has failed to carry out its duties under the Treaties, despite repeated warnings by this House, and a very formal and unequivocal response is demanded by paragraph 80 of the motion for a resolution. This is a necessary prerequisite for the granting of a discharge later this year.

I am sure colleagues will find Mr Saby's comments on the implementation of the budget and especially in relation to industrial policy of very great interest to them. Paragraphs 19 to 22 come within the sphere of Mr Irmer, who I know has great expertise in this field. In fact, he described the Community's food aid policy, as other people have, as an unmitigated disaster. This is a matter which calls for very positive and early action by the Commission, and I am sure Mr Pisani will respond to that. Another colleague, Mr Cousté, will explain paragraphs 23 to 25, which deal with the very important question of borrowing and lending within the EEC financial policy. Mr Price, I am sure, will comment on paragraphs 26 and 27, which deal with personnel and equipment.

I should like to say that whilst the broad intentions of policy may be clear enough, there are very few attempts to set operational objectives and realistic targets against which to measure output. Measures of output are inadequate. Consequently, there are no systematic means of either guiding or correcting the use of resources within the Commission. Indeed, what we are asking the Commission to do is to take control of and responsibility for their departments: not just to deal with manpower deployment but also to take a serious look at the utilization of resources within their

departments on behalf of the Community which they seek to represent. Likewise, when they consider the internal audit, they seem to be largely concerned with the regularity of payments instead of looking at what is more important, which is getting value for money. This is more important than whether something is absolutely legal and fits into the right line. What we in this House and what the taxpayers of this Community are seeking is value for money; and the Commissioners should realize that an ability to manage their departments is just as important as how they perform in this House, on television or indeed before the Council. What they have to do is to manage their own departments and take control of them.

Problems stemming from accounting aspects are well known to us in the Committee on Budgetary Control and have been highlighted in very many early reports. It is necessary that we now formally call on the Commission to tell us what they plan to do and so ensure that there is greater clarity in the budget accounts.

I am indebted to Mr Notenboom for paragraphs 30 and 31. He has put a lot of work into the preparation of his working document, and between meetings, both now and in the past, he has given me very useful advice on my drafting of these two resolutions. We must never forget that the resources side is, after all, half of the total budget, and we look forward to the Commission's long overdue report on the value-added tax. On paragraph 32 the Committee on Budgetary Control proposes that the answer of the Commission in relation to all matters outlined in this report should be made available to us by 1 September 1982. We can then get down to considering seriously the discharge on the 1982 budget.

As regards the other institutions of this Community, there are weighty reasons for not granting the discharge. However, in paragraphs 32 and 33, we speak of continuing to discuss the problems of the Parliament, and I know Mr Konrad Schön will bring up issues which are of vital concern to us. In paragraphs 34 and 35, we demand a very much more positive attitude from the Council than last time. In paragraph 36, the committee deplores the very serious delay in the clearance of EAGGF accounts, and there is an urgent need for the catching-up operation that we now demand. After all, the discharge decision is one of the few decisions that this House can take. It is robbed of much of its meaning if national accounts are not available now and lag behind for many years; it makes a mockery of how we operate in this House if we have not got the accounts fixed and made available to us.

In paragraph 37, I suggest that this resolution and the report should be transmitted to the governments of Member States. This is very appropriate because the possibility of the refusal of a discharge towards the end of the year cannot be ruled out. If this were to take place, the governments of the Member States

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would be faced with the need to appoint new Commissioners. Moreover, some of the issues will be of interest to the national authorities and to national audit courts.

I now come to the conclusion of my opening remarks. This House simply cannot get on putting down and forwarding resolutions calling on the Commission to act, because its promptings have in the past fallen on deaf ears. When the Commission does not heed Parliament in the budgetary sphere, it runs the very great risk of incurring reactions on our part. This is why we cannot yet grant a discharge for 1980. However, the members of this committee and the Members of this House, I know, are not unreasonable. The resolution presented to you today does not recommend the refusal of discharge. Instead, it gives the Commissioners a final opportunity to put their own house in order.

There is a sense of continuity in our work. What I have been saying is an echo of what has been said many times before. Indeed, last June, when we discussed the 1979 discharge, the same comments were made. It has been the theme running through the ongoing debates in committee and indeed inside this hemicycle. In the Committee on Budgetary Control on the evening of Thursday, 1 April, we heard very many promises of great improvements from the responsible Member of the Commission during a very serious one-hour contribution from him. We actually got more concessions in that one hour than we have in two and a half years of this committee. We would like to see the promises that were made then to us orally translated into very prompt reforms which are so long overdue. The Commissioners are not accountants who act within a very narrow concept of legality and efficiency. For the budget and the discharge of the budget they as the executive must give serious consideration to the effectiveness of that budget. It also means that they must have a clear idea of what objectives they are trying to achieve. This House has been very clear in telling them what our objectives are. What we need from them is a response, not just in writing but also in action.

Therefore, with those remarks, Mr President — and I thank you for your indulgence in allowing me to speak longer — I recommend my report and the reports of all the other members of the committee for the consideration and approval of this House.

(Applause)

President. — Mr Key, you did establish the importance of the report by speaking 12 minutes into your group's time.

Might I say at this stage that in view of the large number of speakers entered for this debate, I propose to close the list of speakers at 10 a.m.

Mr Gabert, rapporteur — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, after Mr Key's excellent and detailed presentation I can keep my own relatively brief. In the context of the discharge the committee has, of course, also considered the question of the European Coal and Steel Community. The difficulties connected with the discharge for the 1978 and 1979 financial years have now been largely overcome.

I would remind the House that the decision to grant a discharge for these two years could not be taken until 15 December 1981. The difficulties at that time were initially caused by problems connected with accounting and the internal organization of the Commission or the High Authority, which were partly due to an increase in borrowing and lending activities. The coordination between the Court of Auditors and the Commission raised a number of problems arising specifically from the competence of the Court of Auditors to make checks in the Member States themselves and from the external certification of bank balances. The rapporteur for the 1978 and 1979 financial years, Mr Antonozzi, referred to this aspect in his report.

The present rapporteur is happy to report that the Commission's accounting departments are in the process of a major reorganization and that greater efficiency will be achieved through the application of modern EDP processes. It was possible to eliminate the differences of opinion between the Commission and the Court of Auditors on the external certification of bank balances as part of the discharge procedure through an appropriate agreement, with the Committee on Budgetary Control involved. Nor, according to the institutions, are there now any problems about on-the-spot checks in the Member States. The rapporteur nevertheless feels obliged to point out in the motion for a resolution, which was unanimously approved by the Committee on Budgetary Control, that this decision on a discharge has had to be deferred because the report of the Court of Auditors on the economic efficiency of the High Authority's activities is not yet available. The representative of the Court of Auditors told the committee that the report had been completed and would be forwarded to the Commission. The Commission and Court of Auditors have promised to adopt an accelerated procedure for the submission of the report and the Commission's opinion to the Committee on Budgetary Control. After considering this report, the committee will table a motion for a resolution concerning the granting of a discharge to the High Authority for Coal and Steel for the 1980 financial year.

It is undoubtedly regrettable that delays have again occurred with regard to the 1980 discharge. But it should be appreciated that in conjunction with the Committee on Budgetary Control, the institutions have overcome the difficulties which led to the delays in the granting of a discharge in respect of the 1978 and 1979 financial years. Parliament hopes that in future the report of the Court of Auditors on the

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economic efficiency of the High Authority's activities will be submitted at the same time as all the other documents required for the discharge. Parliament must insist on this, and the institutions gave specific assurances for the future during the discussions in committee. On behalf of my committee I ask you to approve the motion for a resolution.

Mr Kellett-Bowman, rapporteur. — Mr President, at an early stage in its work the Committee on Budgetary Control divided up the responsibility, as mentioned by Mr Key, for the political audit and control of the Community budget. We divided it into 12 sectors. I was given responsibility for the so-called satellite sector and was asked to keep a continuing watch on the budgetary control aspects of a large number of agencies and bodies that enjoy some degree of operational autonomy.

Some of these are fully decentralized; for example, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in Berlin and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin. Certain other so-called satellites operate within the sphere of the Commission but carry out highly specialized tasks in a semi-independent way and can conveniently be looked at as distinct and separate entities for control and management purposes. These include the data processing service and the Joint Research Centre. The total amount of Community funds involved runs into several hundred million ECU.

I participate in today's debate, Mr President, first in my capacity as rapporteur for the two discharge reports relating to the Centre and the Foundation and secondly, as draftsman of the working document attached to Mr Key's report.

The task laid down for the Centre in Berlin under the founding regulation was the promotion and development of vocational training and in-service training. The Centre was expected to contribute through its scientific and technical activities to the implementation of the common vocational training policy and to encourage the exchange of information and comparisons of experience. This is the third report before Parliament covering, in fact, four discharge years in regard to the Centre. The problems of an accounting and procedural nature were identified by the Court of Auditors or by the Committee on Budgetary Control and they have been resolved. Therefore it came as a small surprise to me that the debate in the committee on the report that I now place before the House was far livelier than the debates on previous reports. It should be pointed out that the Committee on Budgetary Control is concerned with the use of funds, with value-for-money aspects and with the regularity of expenditure generally. Other committees are better placed to judge whether the Centre is delivering the goods, that is whether it is producing the results that

were hoped for when it was established. I do not doubt that the specialized committees, notably the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, are keeping a watchful eye on the results being achieved by the Centre. The remarks accompanying the discharge should give no particular problems and I would expect that they would be speedily adopted by the House.

I now turn to my report on the Foundation. The debate in the Committee on Budgetary Control on the report on the Foundation was even livelier than that on the Centre. Matters which came in for particular comment were the results being achieved, the need for attention to living conditions as well as to the improvement of working conditions and the issue of payments to outside agencies for translating and printing work.

I think the Foundation and the Commission must take warning from two things. The first is that Mr Muntingh and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection last year raided the budget line for the Foundation in order to find some money to spend on other aspects which they hold dear. They did this because they felt that the Foundation was not concentrating sufficiently on environmental matters and matters concerning living conditions. This time, for the discharge, Mr Forth has put down an amendment suggesting that unless the results coming from the Foundation are visible it is likely that the budget will show a fall in funds for 1983.

I would now like to draw the attention of Members to Annex VIII in Mr Key's report which the committee asked me to prepare. In Paragraph 1 I describe the criteria of public accounting which the Committee on Budgetary Control applies to expenditure by satellites. I then thought it would be useful to reiterate the views expressed by us in the House two years ago regarding the justification for decentralized agencies and for the grant of a degree of autonomy to certain administrative units. These bodies should be kept under continuing watch and the justification for their existence should be reviewed from time to time. Over the past two years the committee succeeded in bringing about really worthwhile improvements in the way in which these so-called satellites manage their funds and keep their books. This is particularly true in the case of the European Schools and of both the Centre and the Foundation. In the case of data processing there have been certain improvements, and Parliament has endorsed relevant criteria in its July 1980 part-session when it considered my report on the DP centre.

In the case of the Joint Research Centre at Ispra a serious catalogue of shortcomings was in fact revealed. I am encouraged by the Commission's responses to Parliament's report.

I do not believe that this matter is going to rest there. I believe the Commissioner will be putting matters right

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and we hope to make a visit to Ispra — we have applied to the Bureau, Mr President, for permission to make another visit there to see whether the reforms which we asked to be carried out have, in fact, been carried out. Following that visit, I will report back to the House.

The Court of Auditors has expressed a number of reservations about the accounts of the JET undertaking. However, it did utter the opinion that the financial statements of the JET present fairly the financial position of the JET. In view of the reservations expressed by the Court, the Committee on Budgetary Control has asked the Bureau for permission to prepare a special report on the JET accounts and budgetary control procedures. The Bureau has authorized us to produce such a report.

There is one further point that I would like to make regarding JET — at present the JET Council gives discharge for the accounts. However, since 80% of the funds come from the Community budget, I contend that discharge should be given by the Parliament and that the statute should be amended accordingly.

Printing and publications are of major significance to the Community. We use 2 000 million sheets of A4 a year. I forget how many thousands of trees that represents but that is a measure of the output of the Community. The Office for Official Publications is one of the more important satellites of the Community. It is not, however, the only printing body because all the institutions, and some satellites, have printing facilities of their own, and this is rather a complicated subject which will be dealt with in a future report on budgetary control.

I would like to draw the attention of Members to the tables annexed to my working document. They are on pages 140 to 159 in the English version of Mr Key's report. Colleagues will see the wide spread of organizations that benefit from subsidies out of the Community budget. Although the amounts involved are not substantial, public funds are concerned and therefore I endorse the call made by the Court of Auditors for the Commission to ensure that greater control is exercised over the making of such grants and also ask that the accounts of these bodies be scrutinized more carefully.

I look forward, Mr President, to the day when Parliament has developed the control work to such an extent that we shall be able to look with the same detail at the larger chunks of Commission expenditure such as the 70-odd percent of the Community budget which goes into the agricultural sector.

Now I turn to Mr Key's report which is really an omnibus report. He has worked very hard indeed organizing the committee and collating views and opinions. Members of the committee act, as he says, as sub-rapporteurs and carry out detailed investigations into narrow segments of the Court of Auditors' report.

These sub-reports are appended to the Key report. The spending committees also submit their opinions on their parts of the Court of Auditors' report. The Council sends Parliament its recommendations for discharge. So we have the Court of Auditors' report, the sub-reports from members of the committee, the opinions from the spending committees and the recommendations from the Council. All of this input has been considered by the rapporteur and this report is his recommendation to the committee and to Parliament.

Frankly I believe that, serious though some of the matters called in to aid may be, these are not grounds for not granting discharge at this meeting. The Court does not suggest it, none of the reports from members of other committees or of our own committee hint at rejection — clearly the Council has not rejection in mind when making its recommendation.

So, Mr Key has weighed the evidence, and I believe that he has come up with the wrong answer. How on earth did it happen? Every discharge rapporteur has to decide whether Parliament should grant discharge or whether Parliament should refuse it. This is his big decision. In the past, the committee has been unanimous.

Now refusal, Mr President, is dramatic. Refusal is Community-shaking. It is the same as a vote of censure on the whole of the Commission, in fact, a qualified vote on censure would force all the Commissioners to resign — dramatic indeed. By comparison, granting discharge does seem very tame. The debate could go by almost unnoticed. There is, though, a second bite at the cherry. The Commission has to report back as to the instructions given in the discharge and then the rapporteur can produce a further report on the reactions to the original discharge. Dissatisfaction at the Commission's responses could easily result in appropriate reductions in the relevant budget lines. As I said, all this is very tame when compared with the refusal to grant discharge.

But there is no half-way house; no *media via*. There is a provision in the Financial Regulation for late grantings of discharge, put there obviously, to cover occasions when procedurally it is not possible for Parliament to carry out its obligation to grant discharge in April. The procedural reasons have applied for the last three discharges — '77, '78 and '79 were all late because the committee could not cope in time. This year it is different. The rapporteur with his drive has got the committee through all its work and so we could present a recommendation for discharge by the proper date.

This is a triumph, but it is a triumph he proposes to spurn. Why, why, Mr President? Here we can be on time and get on with our job but by perverting procedural regulations, the rapporteur is recommending a schedule deferment. He calls it a postponement of the

discharge. Is it for political reasons? Is it for any good reason? The only one I can see is brouhaha as a possible reason. Will deferral strengthen Parliament's position? Would it help the development of the quasi-legislative role for Parliament through the discharge? This is something we have been nurturing over the last two to three years — the discharge decisions with its accompanying recommendations and requests and demands of the Council are quasi-legislative and once you have passed the discharge, you put this responsibility onto the Commission and that is the power of the discharge.

Mr President, it would do neither of the things which I think it is hoped it will do. Deferment is not a powerful weapon. At most it is a slap on the wrist with a very wet lettuce. Accordingly, I have put down an amendment that suggests that Parliament should ask the Committee on Budgetary Control to bring forward a recommendation for granting discharge at the next plenary part-session. By supporting this the House can put the Committee on Budgetary Control back on the rails. The committee can then get on with its work exposing those weaknesses in the Commission — they will always be there. The Court and the committee are working all the time to find them and to get them put right and this is the work we should be doing. We should be getting matters put right and properly controlling the budget. Deferral will only weaken Parliament's legal powers to get things put right. If we do not grant the discharge we should have the courage to refuse it. Deferral, as I have said, is no half-way house.

The Commission has many, many weaknesses and it is our job to expose them. We should now be considering the discharge for 1981, which is another busy year.

We should be making sure, as soon as we get the 1981 report from the Court of Auditors, that there have been improvements in the conditions which they discovered in their previous report. It is a continuing way of controlling expenditure. It is a highly responsible job and we are developing that work in the Committee on Budgetary Control.

I believe we have an obligation to grant a discharge according to the Financial Regulations, which lay that obligation upon us. I do not believe that a scheduled postponement is the correct way of going about it. I am not saying that everything in the Commission garden is lovely. All the conditions which Mr Key has attached to this report to the Commission would stand if we granted a discharge. It is just a matter of which decision one takes. I do not believe that the committee and Mr Key have taken the right decision on this occasion. I think we should be chasing the Commission, and I believe we shall get an undertaking from the Commission to do all we have asked them to do without actually putting on them the legal obligation which granting a discharge would do.

(Applause)

Mr Irmer, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, allow me to begin with a remark which is not directly connected with my report. A Member of this House has made an invaluable contribution to the preparation of today's debate and has worked untiringly to ensure that the House appreciates the importance of the debate on the granting of discharges. I am referring to the chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, Mr Aigner. He cannot be with us today because of illness. I believe I am speaking on behalf of you all when I wish him a speedy recovery.

The report drawn up by the Court of Auditors on the Community's food aid policy came as something of a bombshell. It does not pull any punches in its criticism of the situation to date, but I nevertheless feel we should regard this report as a very positive document. Owing to the analysis it provides, we now know what needs to be improved.

The Court of Auditors must, however, confine itself to analysing the situation. It is for this House to draw the political conclusions from its analysis, and anyone who takes the merciless criticism of the Court's report seriously knows that it is five minutes to midnight for the Community's food aid policy.

It is not simply a question of money. I am sorry that Mr Pannella is not here. He is probably preparing another Easter or Whitsun march or something similar. He was not here yesterday, when the Lezzi report was being debated, and he is not here today either. He will be out denouncing Community policy to get some publicity. What is important is that we now consider what constructive changes must be made.

We all know the situation. Millions of people are starving, while a terrifying arms race is taking place in the world. Billions are being spent on armaments. It is not enough to make a simple change from one to the other, but the situation is intolerable. As long as one human being in the world is going hungry, we in the rich countries cannot sleep easily in our beds. We have an inalienable responsibility in this respect, and Parliament has taken this responsibility seriously from the outset. I would remind you of the many reports on hunger in the world, by Mr Ferrero, Mrs Focke and most recently by Mr Michel for the Consultative Assembly of the Lomé Convention.

What needs to be done now? There are two categories of food aid. One is aid granted in exceptional situations, in the event of disasters. In such cases, assistance must always be granted quickly, unbureaucratically and with the right means at the right time. There can be no question of wanting generally to prescribe whether the Commission should undertake individual operations of its own or assist other organizations or make money or even foodstuffs available. That must be decided in each case according to the circumstances, and the Commission should largely have a free hand in this area.

Such aid in the event of disasters will unfortunately always be needed, because situations in which we have to provide direct help will always occur somewhere.

The second category comprises medium- and long-term aid to combat food shortages caused by structural factors. Such aid serves two purposes. Firstly, it is, of course, designed to save human lives, to alleviate hunger.

Secondly, it should really result in its eventually becoming completely superfluous. That is its real purpose, and it would be utterly wrong to regard food aid as a permanent solution. It would be disastrous to assume that the north could go on feeding the poor countries of the south for ever. There are many reasons why this cannot be. These countries have completely different needs. The objection to this may be that anyone who is hungry will not be asking himself whether his dietary habits are such that he can eat what is sent him as food aid. That is undoubtedly true, but we must not forget that economic structures have repeatedly been destroyed in the past by the supply of goods to which these countries are not really accustomed or that their cultural and social identity has been threatened or their political independence undermined. All these dangers exist, at least in latent form, and the aim of food aid cannot therefore be a permanent situation in which the north feeds the south.

Our aim must be to integrate food aid into a general development policy which guarantees countries in need a maximum of self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is a difficult concept. It cannot mean that every country or region produces everything it needs. What self-sufficiency means is that they are in a position to produce as much as possible themselves, but buy elsewhere anything else they need, rather than depending on others to be charitable.

But this can only succeed if food aid is not seen in isolation but forms part of the efforts — and there are plans for this — to develop the agricultural structures of these countries and their economies generally.

The report of the Court of Auditors makes it quite clear that the Community policy has not so far succeeded in this. To be honest, others have not succeeded either, and one thing that is lacking is reasonable coordination of all the measures taken by the various donors. Hence the call for the progressive transfer to the Community of the development policy efforts of the Member States, which must, of course, be accompanied by an appropriate increase in resources.

The analysis made by the Court of Auditors shows that there are various problems. For one thing, there is the division of resources into two budgetary titles. This must be changed in the future. The management of the resources reveals deficiencies. The transfer of resources to current programmes from earlier

programmes and the transfer of funds from year to year have resulted in the appropriations being reduced to absolutely non-binding games with numbers. This must be changed.

The basic problem, however, lies in the fragmentation of responsibilities for the management of food aid. Here again, the situation has changed since the Commission put forward its proposal for a regulation in 1979 and Parliament delivered its opinion in the same year, and this aspect therefore needs to be reviewed and a new line adopted. But those who took part in the round of conciliation meetings between Parliament and the Council of Ministers only a few weeks ago must have been shocked to find that the Council has not yet shown any willingness to draw any conclusions of any kind from the analysis made by the Court of Auditors.

In paragraph 27 of the motion for a resolution we have indicated the form this fundamental redistribution of responsibilities should take. After considering the Commission's proposal and hearing Parliament's views, the Council must confine itself to laying down the basic guidelines and then taking a decision by a qualified majority. The unanimity rule must not apply in this area, because the whole wretched situation the Court of Auditors has so mercilessly exposed can be put down to cumbersome procedures and decision-making structures that were not in order.

The House should not put up with this any longer. Where food aid is concerned, there is no crisis of concepts or of programmes, because the Commission has already established all the programmes and the Committee on Development and Cooperation has long since given the answers. The institutional crisis is the cause of the mess, and Parliament must clear the whole matter up.

In this we need the Commission as an ally. I therefore call on you, Mr Pisani, to sit down again with us in the next few weeks and consider what changes need to be made to your proposal for a regulation, so that due account is taken of the analyses made by the Court of Auditors and the necessary conclusions drawn from them.

If the Council cannot come to an agreement on this proposal for a regulation, we must urge and, if necessary, force the Commission to implement this policy without the Council's approval. It will have Parliament's full support in this.

I should like to add to my comments on food aid a general remark on the Key report. On behalf of my group I would ask you to pay careful attention to the conclusions in particular. The draft report was unanimously adopted in committee. I would ask the House to approve it too.

As regards the debate on the discharge, I wish to stress, and this is also a reference to what Mr Kelle-

Irmer

Bowman has said, that there is no question of refusing to grant the discharge: that would really be going a bit too far. The majority of the committee — and this is also endorsed by my group — merely decided that, in view of the general circumstances that have emerged here, the discharge cannot be granted for the moment. We have put our conditions and demands to the Commission, however. If it meets these demands, it may be possible for the discharge to be granted next month or the month after next, if the answers are satisfactory.

What is the situation we are facing in this case? I recall what I said last year as rapporteur in the discharge debate, which was basically the same as Mr Key has said today, and two years ago all the speakers were saying the same thing: the Commission acts in accordance with the three classical principles of any administration, which are, firstly, we have always done it this way; secondly, we have never done it that way; and thirdly, we can't have everyone coming along with new ideas.

The Commission does not take seriously enough what this House has been saying for years. The majority of our committee therefore felt that, although we cannot refuse to grant the discharge because the individual complaints we have are not sufficient grounds for this, if we collect everything together, we have enough to say that certain conditions must now be satisfied. The Commission has it in its power to satisfy them, and I must say that the position adopted by Mr Tugendhat at the committee's last meeting was extremely encouraging.

I will conclude with three comments on the European Development Fund. For years we have been calling for it to be included in the budget. Although we are aware of the objective difficulties, we feel that here again a clear step forward must be taken. We therefore call on the Commission to propose the budgetization of this fund in the next draft budget by entering figures in the preliminary draft rather than token entries as in the past. We also call on it to state quite clearly that European Development Fund operations form part of Community policy. This is disputed by the Council of Ministers, as was evident from its refusal to consult Parliament on the financial regulation governing the Development Fund. We cannot accept that. We must urge the Commission to side with us now and to make its position absolutely clear.

The conditions we are imposing with regard to the Development Fund can also be easily satisfied by the Commission. I repeat: here again, that is to say, wherever the implementation of the budgets is concerned, we have an institutional crisis. In connection with the anniversary — 25 years of the Community — there have been so many moans about the crisis. The cause of the crisis is not that the answers are not known or that Parliament lacks the political will. The Council of Ministers is preventing action from being taken, and

Parliament must carry the Commission to the hunt. We want it as an ally.

Please, do not regard our proposal for a postponement of the discharge as a declaration of war. By making this proposal, we are in fact calling on you to cooperate more closely with us and come down more clearly on our side in this political dispute between the institutions.

Together we will succeed in overcoming the institutional crisis. Parliament alone cannot succeed. The Commission alone cannot succeed either. The resistance and inertia, the national interests and egoisms in the Council of Ministers are too strong for that. But the Commission and Parliament together can succeed, and we urge you to join with us. We therefore ask you to regard our proposal that the discharge should not be granted today but postponed as a constructive offer and as a decision designed to help the Community as a whole to make further progress.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

Mr Price, rapporteur. — Mr President, I address myself to the interim report on accommodation policy which bears my name. The starting-point for this report was the special report of the Court of Auditors on accommodation policy which was prepared over two years ago, and my report has had a somewhat long and difficult gestation period in committee because this is a very sensitive subject.

The importance of it starts, I think, with the fact that we spend at the moment something like 75 million units of account annually by way of rent. What is more important is that public administration is, one need hardly say, carried out in buildings, and the nature and location of those buildings is very important to the efficiency of the institutions. So it is for two reasons — cost and efficiency — that accommodation policy is an important subject.

Decisions about accommodation policy tend to be very long-term ones, even when such decisions are taken for short-term reasons in the first place; and this is even more true of growing and developing institutions such as those of this Community. We have had no major changes in the accommodation policy, so far as it exists, despite the fact that we have had enlargement of the Community and an increase in our responsibilities. Moreover, in the years ahead there will be further enlargement, further growth in our responsibilities,

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and unless we get the basis of the policy right now, we shall simply go on making mistakes. So the objective behind this report is fundamentally to try and get a firm basis for the future.

Of course, when the Community was established there were ideas of having a policy based upon a decision on the seat for the institutions. Some 31 years ago, when the ECSC Treaty was adopted, it stated that the seat of the institutions of the Community 'will be determined by common accord of the governments of the Member States', and in the early days that was what was foreseen as the basis for a policy. We are, of course, still waiting for these decisions, and they become more difficult the longer they are delayed.

It is this failure to fix the seat which underlines many of the criticisms in the Court of Auditors' report. They say, for example, in paragraph 7:

The Court acknowledges that the continuing uncertainty as to the permanent location or locations of the institutions and, more recently, the expectation of changes which might arise from the enlargement of the Parliament are factors which must have acted considerably against acquisition of permanent buildings. The resolution of these problems would certainly give a better background for establishing a more effective and economic accommodation policy.

If one looks at the present situation, it is quite amazing to find that we do not at the moment own most of the buildings that we have in Brussels or Luxembourg as the basis of our Community activities: in those places, we own simply a sports facility at Overijse. We even own buildings in Washington, Ottawa and Montevideo, indicating that it was thought that there the permanent location of our premises was a more certain factor than it was in Brussels or Luxembourg. This is an absurd situation that we must remedy.

The second important criticism of the Court of Auditors was lack of adequate forward planning, and that, of course, is very much linked to the question of having a permanent basis.

The third area of criticism was the lack of collaboration between the institutions and the fact that there is scope for them to find ways of meeting their needs by joint action. A number of other detailed points were raised by the Court of Auditors which are referred to in the resolution now before Parliament.

Now action has since been taken. An interinstitutional group has been established on accommodation policy, and some very useful results have already come from it. In particular, it has recommended that the Community should in future purchase rather than construct buildings, and in December there has been a decision by the Council in respect of premises in Brussels, and extension in *Rue de la Loi* that should be purchased.

That is an important step forward, albeit so far only on a very small scale. There are other actions which have been taken by this working-group, and we look to it for much more action in the future.

With regard to the question of location policy, which, as I have said, is the basis for so much else, the situation of the Commission, the Council and the Court of Justice is very different from that of the Parliament. Those institutions' present locations have a certain air of permanence about them, after so many years. But as for the Parliament, its situation has very much an air of uncertainty. It is a Parliament which is very different from what was originally planned and envisaged in the very early days. If one just goes back, for example, to 1965, when certain decisions were taken, one finds that at that time the Parliament consisted of 142 part-time Members and a staff of 492. Today the Parliament has 434 Members, almost all of them full-time Members without a dual mandate, and a staff, including the political groups, of almost 3 000: a very different situation from 1965. So it is quite clear that the longer these decisions are delayed, the bigger and more difficult they become.

Now the impact on the Community budget is a very important factor; but even more important, perhaps, is the impact on efficiency. Bearing in mind that Parliament is scattered over three working-places, just compare us with any commercial organization! Any commercial organization would have gone bankrupt by now if it had organized its affairs in such a scattered and haphazard fashion as we do. Now it is not the actual extra-administrative cost (we have yet to establish precisely what those figures are, and in this report you will see an initiative suggesting that an independent firm of accountants should be engaged to do partly that job): what is more important is the effect on efficiency. If this were a commercial organization, it would not be the extra, perhaps, 10% on their administrative costs which would worry them, but the fact that they were not achieving the sales or the production desired because they simply were not geared up to do the job. This Parliament is not able, as effectively as it could and should, to fulfil its task of exercising control over the administration, which is at the heart of our discussion today about discharge on the budget; and this is true because we have no proper location policy established for this Parliament.

As I have said, the Committee on Budgetary Control has suggested an initiative by way of engaging an independent firm of accountants. Part of their job would be backward-looking in a sense, to establish what it has cost and is costing us to be in three locations instead of one. But the other part would be forward-looking — to establish what the costs would be of being in one place, whether it be Brussels, Strasbourg or Luxembourg.

What is fundamentally important is, I believe, not the choice of location, but that we should have a single

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location. This initiative may help us in getting to the point of taking a decision of that sort.

So, Mr President, I hope that in this report there is some degree of progress. We are wanting for the Commission to report on the work of the inter-institutional group and also for the results of a report by independent accountants. When we have those documents we shall, of course, wish to look at them further and present a further report to Parliament. That is why this is labelled an interim report. I commend the document to Parliament.

And now, Mr President, taking perhaps two minutes of my group's time, I would like to say something about the discharge. In what he said to the House earlier, the general rapporteur, Mr Key, talked about the three options, the third of which he described as just signing off and not taking our work seriously. I regard that as being far from a true statement of the third option. If that were the position, if that is what grant of discharge means, then every year we would have to take our position seriously by delaying the discharge. In fact, however, the Financial Regulation enables us to grant a discharge and to take it seriously, and if one looks at Article 85 one finds the mechanism stated in one sentence.

The institutions shall take all appropriate steps to take action on the comments appearing in the decisions giving discharge.

We actually have a power to append to our decision on discharge instructions to the other institutions! It is a unique power, a very important power possessed by this Parliament. And today we are not going to use it. What an extraordinary situation, that we should be delaying the exercise of this power which we have, and instead putting up a whole series of what I regard as bogus reasons for delay!

When I look at the reasons put forward, Mr President, I feel that they are totally insufficient. Most of them relate to past matters on which we cannot obtain any further action, and they are criticisms of the kind that should be incorporated in a decision granting a discharge and including our views and our instructions to the institutions.

I hope that Parliament will accept the amendments which our group — the European Democratic Group — have put forward, and I have also added a few that may help to concentrate minds on a few particular paragraphs in the resolution. I commend those amendments to the House, Mr President.

Mr Key, deputy rapporteur. — Mr President, may I, on behalf of Mr Wetting, give his apologies. He is unavoidably detained in another nation at a very important congress.

I would also like at this point — and I regret not doing so in my opening remark — to pay a special tribute to

the chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, Mr Aigner, who has worked very hard on all aspects of budgetary control and unfortunately is ill at the moment and unable to be here. I think we ought to place on record our sincere thanks for all the work he has done, and we know he will return with full vigour to pursue it.

What I want to do now is just to very quickly recommend to the House Mr Wettig's report on EAGGF expenditure. This is a major part of this Community's budget. A large percentage of the money is allocated to the Guarantee Section. This is due largely to the fact that agricultural policy is the only policy of this Community which is fully developed. It is also due to the fact that many other policies of this Community have been stunted either by the inactivity of the Council or the Member States.

The Committee on Budgetary Control's responsibility in looking at agricultural policy concerns not the policy itself — although we clearly define the positive aspects of the CAP and explain our reservations about certain aspects of it — but the question of whether we are getting value for money. That is where we get deeply involved. We do not trespass upon the work of the Committee on Agriculture. They are the people who have the expertise and the specialization to decide what the policy should be. Our job in Budgetary Control is to ensure that we get value for money. Therefore, with regard to Mr Wettig's report, which I recommend everybody to read, in my explanatory statement I recorded in detail the positive aspects of the CAP and said how it succeeded in the past in achieving certain of its objectives. I have then gone on to try to point out certain aspects, where there has been a lack of efficiency and a lack of effectiveness. We say there are certain shortcomings and we list them very generally. Firstly, subsidization has often created a persistent surplus in certain commodities — not just a marginal surplus but a structural surplus — and this has led to a very serious waste of funds.

Secondly, we have talked about the complexity of and the failure to consolidate Community regulations to ensure that fraud and irregularities do not occur. Every month in our committee we have received details of frauds which take place in the Community and obviously many of them are related to certain aspects of the common agricultural policy. We do need a more serious consolidation of the regulations in these areas.

The third point is that we asked for the harmonization of agriculturally-related expenditure by both the Community and the Member States. We have got to get those two linked together if we are going to have a true common policy.

And the fourth point we are very concerned about is that, because of the CAP's large percentage of the

Key

total budget, we are faced with a position where the whole budget is rather distorted and is overbalanced.

Our fifth point is that, because of this imbalance and because of the frauds which are revealed in this Community, we are faced many times with a very negative public and media image of this Community. They highlight the marginal aspects where we fail. That is not to say that we have got to sweep it under the carpet — we have got to look at it very seriously and pursue our policies very carefully.

Our final point is that we are trying to argue that the common agricultural policy had a social aspect. It was intended to help certain regions of this Community — the less-advantaged regions and the disadvantaged regions. In many ways the common agricultural policy has failed to live up to this and has not provided the assistance to the small rural farmer it was intended to provide. Therefore, we have certain reservations about it.

Therefore, Mr President, on behalf of Mr Wettig, I would like to recommend this report to this House and hope that we can have a serious discussion on it, not just today but in future, because this is one subject to which we are going to have to return again and again.

Mr Filippi, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in the past the European Parliament has several times had occasion to affirm that the policy on agricultural structures performs a vital function, reducing the wide disparities in productivity and income which exist within the agricultural systems of the Member States, and contributing towards the solution of problems posed by the presence of large structural surpluses in certain sectors.

At the same time Parliament was brought to realize that the Community policy on structures is inadequate in relation to the task these structures must perform: in fact, although this policy was initiated in 1964, it has always lacked the instruments and the financial means which would have allowed it to function effectively. In particular, the reorganization of this policy effected through the socio-structural directives of 1972 did not produce the desired results, for the application of these measures has proved to be excessively complicated. Moreover, the measures themselves were not flexible enough to be adapted to the various local conditions.

Because of these difficulties of application, the budget appropriations for the policy on structures have generally been underutilized in previous years. This policy has been linked with a concentration of Community action in the Member States whose agricultural sectors have already attained the highest levels of income and productivity. These Member States are usually also the ones with the most efficient administrative and organiz-

ational structures, and this in turn makes it easier for them to obtain Community contributions.

This is an observation I permitted myself to make last year as well when this subject was being discussed, and it represents a contradiction to the spirit which presided over the creation of the EAGGF Guidance Section. What was this spirit? It was the intention to eliminate the 'gap' which existed between countries with strong agricultural structures and countries with weak agricultural structures. Now, at a time when the EAGGF Guidance Section actually favours countries which are already in a structurally advantageous position, the disparity between them and countries with weaker structures is in fact increasing. I believe this observation to be fundamental, and I offer it to your consideration as a premise of my very brief speech.

The study of the Commission's financial report on the expenditures of the EAGGF Guidance Section for the 1980 financial year yields a picture characterized by both light and shadow: on the positive side, the fact that the budget appropriations intended for the policy on structures finally received, at least in a general way, an adequate utilization from the viewpoint of commitments (92%) and payments (90%) is certainly a source of satisfaction. This is obviously an overall statistic, for if we carry out a country-by-country examination we find that from the perspective I mentioned a moment ago, that is, the perspective of the structures, the stronger countries are still favoured and the weaker disadvantaged. In any case, this is still a very prominent and noteworthy fact. I should say this is the first time this ceiling has been reached.

We must remember, however, that the EAGGF Guidance Section is now in possession of sizeable appropriations carried over from financial years prior to 1977, which are being disbursed at a very slow rate. In addition, an increase in utilization so large in respect to previous years raises two sorts of problems: on the one hand the effectiveness, and on the other the regularity, of expenditure.

In the light of the Commission's 10th financial report on the EAGGF Guidance Section, and of the Court of Auditors' report for 1980, Chapter 5, we can see that, in the year in question, the policy on structures did not provide the effectiveness desired. As for direct intervention, I mentioned in the explanation several cases of crucial agricultural sectors, such as the milk and milk products sector and the wine-growing sector, where Community action is extremely slow, and I also criticized the long delays in carrying out a considerable number of subsidized projects.

In the case of 'indirect action', it is easy to see that intervention is now concentrated almost exclusively in the areas whose agricultural structures are least in need of support. On this question I refer you to the table in Annex 2 of my report.

Filippi

This consideration, therefore, led us to hope for a reinforcement of the initiatives taken by the Commission in the field of information on Community measures, with particular emphasis — and I will come back to this later — on courses intended for local administrators and on the publication of a guidance manual.

Concerning the proper administration of the Fund, apart from certain observations of a purely technical nature, two points should be stressed: the Commission's estimates of expenditure, although adequate from a general standpoint, are totally inaccurate in certain individual cases, and the procedures applied in this area are unacceptable.

There are various instances of budget entries increased by transfers in the course of the financial year and then only partially disbursed, giving rise to large carryovers and cancellations. It therefore seems reasonable to request the Commission to make a greater effort to improve its estimation techniques; this is also in line with the requests made by the European Parliament in its opinion on the fixing of agricultural prices for 1982-83.

On the other hand, it must be noted that the improvement in the spending capacity of the Fund is due in great measure to the gradually increasing use of the system of advances. This once again highlights the problem of controlling the application of financial measures; although it is true some of the decisions concerning the advances made will take effect only with the 1981 financial year, it is equally true that the report for 1979 put out by the Court of Auditors made the need for increased control in this sector quite evident. Leaving aside the discrepancies in the data provided by the Commission and the Court of Auditors on this subject, there seems to have been no significant increase in controlling operations — and this issue is also an old one, which I am raising for the third time.

The question of controls brings us to a final observation: the Commission's 10th Report is much too laconic. It would be interesting to have more details concerning the irregularities met with in the course of the controls and the difficulties and basic problems generally encountered in the process of disbursement. As it stands now, the Commission's report is a statement of accounts and nothing more; it would be extremely useful to know the Commission's opinion on the implementation of the policy on structures.

In conclusion, Mr President, we must bear in mind that in July of 1981 the Council adopted a series of measures which suggest a more flexible regional approach to the problem of structural policy. It will take time to evaluate the results of this new approach, and in the interim it would be well to urge the Commission to pay the closest attention to the implementation of the measures currently in force, with particular regard to the elimination of excessive delays in carrying out subsidized projects.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I was obliged to read this report by official duty. I did it much against my will — and this does not imply any lack of respect towards you, or towards my colleagues. Someone had to make this report; the Committee on Budgetary Control entrusted the task to me. Why was I reluctant to perform it? This is the third time, Mr President, that I have had occasion to speak on this subject, and I must say that the first time I felt a certain enthusiasm; my tone of voice was also somewhat less disagreeable to my listeners than the tone I used this morning. I must say however that this morning I felt I was mumbling useless ejaculations. Indeed, Mr President, this morning I was obliged to repeat the same observations which have been totally ignored by the Court of Auditors and the Commission during the last two years. Naturally, it is not a personal uneasiness that I am expressing. I am only providing an outlet for feeling shared by the Committee on Budgetary Control, and by the European Parliament as well. At this half-way point in our Parliamentary activity, I could almost ask myself: what are we doing here in this Chamber?

(Applause from various quarters)

Mr Cousté, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, I have just heard Mr Filippi say that he wonders what he is doing here. Well I know exactly what I am doing here — I am presenting a report, for the Committee on Budgetary Control, on the borrowing and lending activities of the Commission of the European Communities, which is a difficult and highly topical subject.

I should like first of all to express my gratitude to Mr Ortoli for his kindness in joining in our committee's discussions on 1 April, for the dialogue that has been established between him (and the services under him) and our committee, and for the evident goodwill evinced by the Commission.

Mr President, in the course of the discharge procedure in respect of the 1980 financial year our committee adopted a working document in which were formulated a number of observations concerning the Commission's borrowing and lending activities during the financial year in question. May I remind the House that particular attention was drawn to the fact that non-budgetization of these borrowing and lending activities was weakening Parliament's powers to determine the general guidelines to be followed, as well as giving rise to practically inextricable problems when it came to the control aspect of the discharge procedure on which we are now engaged.

The Committee on Budgetary Control was also critical of the Commission's report for the 1980 financial year, as well as of the revenue and expenditure account, observing that whilst the information and figures contained in these documents were obviously very useful — and I am grateful to the Commission for them — they were not full enough to enable Parliament to

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exercise its rights of budgetary control in the context of the discharge procedure.

It seems to me therefore that Parliament must reaffirm its powers of discharge in respect of borrowing and lending activities and declare that the Commission is not supplying sufficient information.

The report for 1980 is in our view inadequate, particularly in relation to those instruments of which the management has been entrusted to the European Investment Bank and which are subject to cooperation agreements between the Commission and the European Investment Bank.

It is our wish — and this is in fact already a matter of record — that Parliament should be advised beforehand not only of these cooperation agreements but also of the detailed rules for their implementation. Generally speaking these agreements reserve to the Commission the final decision on the choice of a project for which it is proposed to grant a loan, while the European Investment Bank has responsibility for appraising projects, granting loans, setting the terms of these loans and also for managing the projects.

We express the view in our report that the Commission does not give a sufficiently detailed explanation of the criteria used in deciding which projects to select, nor of the manner in which decisions on eligibility are taken.

The effect of this is to deny us any overall picture of the policies being pursued by the Commission through the medium of its financial activities. There is also the fear lest crucial decisions relating to financial policy should in reality be delegated to the European Investment Bank and we should ultimately be prevented from exercising proper control over it. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Parliament to exercise its powers in this respect. In point of fact, virtually all the European Investment Bank's transactions still elude parliamentary control. Moreover, the division of responsibility between the Commission and the European Investment Bank is a factor that seriously complicates Parliament's exercise of its powers of control.

Let me give you an example of what I mean, taken from the annual report of the Court of Auditors for 1980. In paragraph 13.11, the Court points out that the total for loans granted in 1980 under the New Community Instrument is shown in the Commission's accounts as 294.5 million EUA, whereas the accounts of the European Investment Bank, which manages these very same loans, shows a total of 197.6 million EUA. I ask you, how can we exercise control when we are faced with these apparent anomalies, due — as the Commission explains in its reply to a question I put to them — to differences in accounting practice between the two institutions?

If we wish to exercise genuine control — and we do, because there are large amounts involved and because

the loans granted relate to vital sectors like energy — then we must ask ourselves how we are to do the job for which we were elected to this Parliament.

Finally, may I point out that in its resolution of 10 April 1981 concerning the financing of the New Community Instrument, this House had already expressed a negative opinion on this division of responsibilities between the European Investment Bank and the Commission and asked the Commission to reassume responsibility for defining investment policy.

The Commission therefore needs to be reminded of this request and I am pleased to see that Mr Ortoli is with us today so that he may hear how much importance we attach to this question. He sat in on our discussion in the Committee on Budgetary Control on 1 April and must have understood that we were united in our determination, not to be offensive to the Commission and its services, but to obtain a clear picture of the situation. It is essential therefore — and I make no apology for repeating this point — that the cooperation agreement to be concluded with the European Bank for New Community Instrument No 2 should be submitted to us beforehand.

Mr President, the thrust of my remarks is to enable us to work better together, because in the final analysis when we work better together we work better for the construction of Europe and for the interests of the people of Europe.

President. — I call Mr Cluskey.

Mr Cluskey. — Mr President, before referring to the text of Mr Key's document, I would like on behalf of the committee to convey our most sincere wish to our chairman for a speedy return to health and to the work of the committee and of this Parliament to which he has contributed so diligently.

(Applause) ,

I would like to thank Mr Key for the clear text which he has put before the House. His explanatory statement serves a very useful purpose indeed. He sets out in easily understood terms the role of Parliament in regard to the control and financial audit of the Community budget. This role was conferred on the European Parliament by the Treaty of July 1975 which was finally ratified by all the Member States in mid-1977. The significance of the powers granted to Parliament under this Treaty is spelt out in the opening paragraph of Mr Key's report.

Political control over the Community budget is something new in the interstructural framework. It only really got off the ground when the Committee on Budgetary Control was set up some 2½ years ago. Therefore it is still necessary to bring home to Mem-

Cluskey

bers of the Commission and to their officials, as well as to the officials in the other institutions, that the money that they manage is not their own. It is collected from taxpayers for Community purposes. Because the rapporteur's text is so comprehensive and because his opening remarks set his report in perspective, I can be brief.

One of the issues raised by Mr Key was the anxiety felt by many Members of Parliament because of the Commission's failure to use the budget to the full, to grapple with the problems that are facing Western Europe. Members are decidedly angry because the Commission failed to spend the money set aside by Parliament by way of amendment to the budget for highly desirable social and political purposes.

If we look at paragraph 63 of Mr Key's explanatory statement we see at a glance the magnitude of the problems that the Community faces. Unemployment is now running at about 10% of the labour force. If present trends continue the total number out of work will rise to 13½ million in a couple of years. This is equivalent to one in every eight of the labour force according to official figures. In fact, the situation is probably much worse because many of those who are unemployed do not feature in official records. Yet despite this terrible prospect, the Commission fails to spend the modest amount made available by Parliament for eminently desirable schemes. I honestly believe that the tone of Mr Key's report may not have been severe enough.

The Commission also has the responsibility for the welfare of the people of the Community as a whole. They have an obligation to bring to notice the extent of problems facing the less fortunate sections of the Community. They should endeavour to bring about the kind of harmonious society in which great extremes of poverty could not exist. In a recent answer to a question put in the European Parliament about poverty, a Member of the Commission, Mr Richard, said, and I quote 'By the mid-1970s no less than 30 million people were living on poverty in the Community Member States.' Those 30 million people in poverty were people living on less than half the average income of their Member State.

It is an underestimate for the present position. This is partly because many poor people get excluded, as do the unemployed, from most of the surveys or official statistics upon which estimates are based and partly because of the deterioration in the economic situation over recent years which has undoubtedly increased the number in the poverty category. This state of affairs calls for far more in the way of an urgent reaction than the Commission has shown up to now. There can be no denying the fact that Parliament is entitled to clear, frank and comprehensive answers to questions put by it to the executive. It is apparent from Mr Key's resolution that in a dozen instances the Commission has failed to meet this obligation. Therefore I think

everybody in this House can agree fully with paragraph 32 of the motion for a resolution.

At a meeting of the Committee on Budgetary Control a special study of the Court of Auditors on the financial systems of the European Communities was considered. This document revealed a great number of shortcomings in the Commission's systems. Many Members who were present were disconcerted by the rather blasé reaction of the Commission to the situation.

In view of the importance of having a transparent system of accounts and in view also of the adverse publicity in the newspapers of Member States following reports of weaknesses in the Community system, I personally attach great importance to paragraph 29 of the motion for a resolution. At the root of the points made in paragraphs 13 to 17 and paragraphs 26 and 27 there is deeply felt worry of the Committee on Budgetary Control about delegation of responsibility and the management of staff and equipment. The problem over the Fitness Centre might never have arisen if there had been clear lines of responsibility.

Looking at Mr Price's working document we see references to a wide range of problems in the management of personnel and equipment. These problems must be set right. Job descriptions need to be drawn up for all posts. The workload of each official and his sphere of responsibility should be clear to him and to his superiors. This applies equally to Parliament staff and to the officials of the Council of course just as much as it applies to the Commission.

Mr Key's report is concerned with ensuring the following; sound management of Community funds, attention to the wishes of Parliament in the matter of implementing the budget as adopted, regularity in the making of expenditure and answerability to Parliament. I believe that the vast majority of Members in this Chamber can subscribe to these principles and I fully endorse the motion for a resolution that has been put down by the rapporteur.

President. — I call the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr Clinton, draftsman of an opinion. — Mr President, I always feel in a discussion of this kind that we are dealing with matters that were transacted two years earlier. It is almost a waste of time, a waste of time in the sense that we cannot change a single figure in the accounts before us. In these reports we have a factual recording of what happened at that time, but as far as I am concerned, this is really water under the bridge. That is, unless there is some lesson to be learned, some pitfall to be avoided, some measures that can and should be taken to improve matters.

In this Tenth Financial Report on the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund for 1980, we

Clinton

see that the rate of increase in expenditure between 1975 and 1979 was almost 23% and that this came down to 11% in 1980. How did this occur? What brought it about? In my view it was due to better overall management on the part of the Commission and to higher world prices reducing the Community's support needed to make our products more competitive on the various export markets. I personally believe that the results would have been even better if the Members of this House were to cease interfering with the Commission and if they were to refrain from telling the Commission when, and above all where, to sell and not to sell products. The place to sell a product, in my views, is where the Community gets the best possible price. The time to sell is before surpluses build to mountain and lake proportions and before the world gets to know this. Freedom to take quick action is essential for good marketing.

We also see in this report that on the guarantee side the increase of 20% in 1979 dropped to 8.4% in 1980. My feeling is that the Commission put up a fairly exceptional performance in 1980 and, in my view, this is not the time for the Members of this Parliament to make a whipping boy of it. Unless we have teamwork and a better relationship between the institutions of this Community, we have very little hope of real success.

I am not suggesting, of course, a mutual administration society, but no one institution has the right to be talking down to the other. That was never intended to be the Community spirit, and I regret to say that that was the atmosphere here this morning, I felt, when this debate opened. There was not a single acknowledgement of the Commission's difficulties, not a single reference to any part of the work that they were doing being well done. As I listened, I felt that they were being scolded like schoolboys and not being regarded as equal partners in this important work of development and building up a real European Community. Of course we have the right to get more information. Of course we have the right to look for the best possible value for money and suggest ways and means of achieving this. But we must not try to give the impression that our knowledge is vastly superior to those directly involved in administering Community policies 365 days of every year.

We had a good deal of criticism again of the embargo on exports to the USSR. I think that the Commission fairly accounted for what they did in relation to this embargo and acquitted themselves well in explaining what happened exactly at that time.

We had criticism also about the amount of fraud in EAGGF expenditure. All of us want to stop fraud wherever it occurs, because a small amount of fraud gives the Community a bad name and gives a bad impression to the people outside, but I think it is well to emphasize that the fraud as a proportion of the total expenditure was infinitesimally small. So while it

is right to follow it up and right that we should ensure that wrong impressions are not given, still there is very little in it.

I would also like to make a reference to the delays in spending the appropriations provided by the EAGGF. These delays are most regrettable and everything possible should be done to urge the Member States, especially the areas and regions that need it most, to produce their accounts and the details that are necessary in order to get the money spent and accounted for.

I see that the President is rightly waving at me to finish; this is something that one would need a half an hour for and I could easily spend a half an hour on, but I am not going to be allowed to do it.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Tugendhat, Vice-President of the Commission. — Mr President, may I begin by saying how very sorry I am that Mr Aigner cannot be here today. He has devoted a very great deal of work over many years to developing the discharge procedure and I should like to pay tribute to what he has done and also to send my best wishes and those of the Commission to him for a speedy recovery. I imagine that whatever is the matter with him must be quite serious because nothing minor would keep him away from the Commission on a day such as this.

Mr President, the basic documents which we are discussing come, of course, from the Court of Auditors and from the Committee on Budgetary Control, and I would like to begin, if I may, with a word on the Court of Auditors' report for the financial year 1980. As one would expect from a body as thorough, well-qualified and diligent as the Court of Auditors, it contains a number of criticisms about the way in which the Commission conducted its activities and, indeed, the way in which other institutions conducted their activities. But I am pleased to see that it also contains a number of positive comments and that it goes out of its way to recognize the improvements which have occurred in the Commission's management compared with previous years. That view is, I note, also shared by the Council which has commented favourably on the Commission's work and recommended to Parliament the granting of the discharge. It is against this background, Mr President, that I must state on the Commission's behalf my deep regret that the Committee on Budgetary Control should, on the basis of Mr Key's report, advocate for the first time that the discharge should be postponed beyond the date which the Financial Regulation stipulates.

Our regret is twofold. First, there is the need for Parliament to respect the relevant provisions of Community law and secondly, there is the need for the discharge work to fulfil its objectives and not to be misused for other purposes.

Tugendhat

The justification given in Mr Key's report for postponing the grant of discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the 1980 financial year is basically that Parliament has not been given adequate information and explanations by the Commission. I will, Mr President, seek to answer those points, but I must say that I am gratified, and grateful for the speech made by Mr Clinton a moment ago and for the earlier speeches by Mr Kellett-Bowman and Mr Price which, I think, provided extremely substantial answers to some of the points made earlier by Mr Key and others.

But the House will want to know what we think, and I must say that I do not believe that the justification put forward by Mr Key and so ably rebutted by Mr Clinton and Mr Kellett-Bowman is valid. I say this because the Commission, both through its officials and through its members, has gone to very great lengths to answer all the questions put to it, to provide all the explanations requested and, most important, to meet the criticisms made and provide assurances for the future.

For example, Vice-President Ortoli has dealt with borrowing and lending; Vice-President Davignon has dealt with various points, in particular work at Ispra, and I have, in fact, copies of the documents which he has sent to members of the committee and to which Mr Key referred earlier. Mr Dalsager and Mr Pisani, both of whom are here at the moment, have also dealt with their points, and they, as well as another of my colleagues, intend to intervene in the debate upon their particular subjects.

I myself, of course, have spent many hours with the Committee on Budgetary Control. I have also sent each and every member of the Committee on Budgets and of the Committee on Budgetary Control a copy of a 27-page statement I made to the Committee on Budgetary Control and which I believe goes into all the points raised in Mr Key's report. That speech is available in, I think, nearly every Community language, there is a pile of them here, and if Members of this House feel that they would like further clarification on my remarks and were not able to attend the Committee on Budgetary Control's meeting, I can provide the very full answer which I gave, in whatever language would be most convenient to the Member concerned.

I also said on 1 April that I would make myself and my services available during the Easter break or at any other time to provide further information on any point relating to the discharge in order to enable Parliament to take action within the appropriate time frame laid down in the Financial Regulation. We did, in fact, receive one request — Mr Price made such a request — and it has already received a reply and, indeed, so has the Committee on Budgetary Control. I hope therefore, Mr President, that when people say there is a lack of time, they will remember that we have made

ourselves available, that we received a request and answered it, and I hope that those people who complain so vigorously about lack of time will, perhaps, think for a moment about the fact that they did not take up the offer which I made and which my services made.

I hope, too, that Members of the House will take account of the fact that the decision which Mr Key is now asking the House to take is essentially the same as that which he prepared *before* I had given my very extensive evidence, my very extensive information, explanations and, most important of all, undertakings to the Committee on Budgetary Control, although, of course, one of the undertakings which I gave then and which I repeat now was that whether or not the House decides to grant the discharge at the appropriate time, the Commission will do whatever it can to provide further information as required, to provide further explanations as required and, indeed, if necessary, to give further undertakings.

I want to make it clear, in other words, that nothing would be gained one way or the other by deferring the discharge, because the Commission is at the disposal of Parliament to the fullest extent possible in either circumstance and we are, of course, at Parliament's disposal because it is our duty so to be and because I believe that we should be and because I believe that the Commission has a duty to Parliament in any case, and I want to make that quite clear to everyone.

Now, I face a certain difficulty because I know that there is a shortage of time and I have been confronted — as Mr Clinton pointed out earlier — with a number of really quite serious speeches. What I would really like to do, despite the fact that not very many Members are present, is to answer each of those points in detail as I did to the Committee on Budgetary Control. But I realize that if I do that you will run into difficulties with your timetable and that the important debate on Mr Jackson's report, which is due to take place today, will not take place, and therefore I will not go into all the details that I would like, though my colleagues will certainly make some points in their own fields.

I do emphasize to the House that all the answers, all the explanations, all the undertakings which I have already given in the Committee on Budgetary Control and, indeed, which Mr Irmer and Mr Key were kind enough to say were very impressive are available here and I hope that before Members make remarks of the sort that Mr Cluskey made a few moments ago they will do us the honour of reading the speech which I made. I would, however, feel that it was not right to pass entirely silently over the criticisms which were made and I would like therefore, very briefly, to deal with the ones to which Mr Key devoted most attention.

Now he began, I think I am right in saying, with the point about the export of agricultural products to the

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Soviet Union. I would like to point out that that was not a point which featured in the Court of Auditors' report, and as the Court of Auditors' report is the basic document for the discharge, I feel it is reasonable for me to make that point.

I would also like to point out that the Community was acting in support of the American embargo. The Americans were the initiators and we in the Community were acting in support of the American embargo. We were not under an obligation not to export to the Eastern bloc — some Members of Parliament think we should have been, but we were not — we were under an obligation not to fill the gaps left by the American embargo and not to undermine the American embargo. The American Secretary of State, Mr Alexander Haig, wrote a letter to the Commission at the end of the embargo thanking the Commission for its work and praising the Commission for what it had done. Now I realize that there are many great experts in this House on the conduct of agricultural exports but, as I said earlier, the Community was acting in support of the United States and the United States Secretary of State went out of his way — he was not obliged to, the courtesies of diplomatic life did not require it — to praise the Commission for what we had done.

Now I think that that is a point which perhaps ought to be taken into account. I, of course, have said that the embargo was a new experience for us. It was something where we were flying rather by the seat of our pants, as is usually the case when one is doing something for the first time. I think that problems did arise, as I said, with regard to prefixed export refunds, and we underestimated them. I believe, however, that the experience which we gained during the conduct of that embargo and the extremely useful and helpful suggestions and criticisms which have been made by a number of Members of this House will ensure that if any similar situation should arise in the future the Commission will be better placed to take account of the pitfalls in implementing such a policy.

Certainly it could have been done better, despite Mr Haig's kind words, but I think that, on the basis of our experience and on the basis of the suggestions and criticisms made in this House, we will be able to do it better in future. Furthermore, since a number of honourable Members have suggested that we exceeded budgetary appropriations or that we did not have budgetary cover, I would like to place it clearly and unequivocally on the record that there was no question at any time of the Commission exceeding the appropriations available within the EAGGF Guarantee. I do not believe therefore that that issue provides any justification for a postponement of the discharge.

As regards the allegation that the Commission misapplied the law relating to the regime of provisional twelfths, which was, I think, the second point mentioned by Mr Key, I explained to the Committee on

Budgetary Control that the object of the provisional twelfths was not, as some parliamentarians claim and as some parliamentarians want, to bring the common agricultural policy to an abrupt halt. I know that is what some people wanted to happen. On the contrary, the object of the provisional twelfths regime is to ensure the orderly continuation of Community business until the Commission can bring forward and the budgetary authority adopt a new budget reflecting the views expressed by Parliament at the earlier rejection. That is what we did — the rejection was in December, we brought forward our proposals in February and the Council adopted our proposals very largely reflecting the views which Parliament had expressed.

I told the Committee on Budgetary Control, and I say again to the House now, that the Commission informed Parliament at the outset of the provisional twelfths regime of how it intended to proceed, and no criticisms were forthcoming from this House until just before the regime came to an end. I do want to emphasize that I told Parliament how we intended to proceed; Parliament had the opportunity to say that we were doing it wrong or that it did not like the way we intended to do it, but although I made the point several times to Parliament, there were no criticisms from this House until just before the regime came to an end.

The third point that Mr Key mentioned was the fitness centre at Luxembourg, and I explained to the committee that the budgetary appropriations for the rental of the building in question were respected but that, in the light of the criticisms made by the committee, the Commission has now made internal administrative provisions so as to ensure that in future this type of problem should not recur.

Mr Key also raised two other points. He drew attention to what he considers should be a link between the final follow-up report by the Commission on the 1979 discharge and the 1980 discharge decision. The Commission, in the report I have mentioned, has given a very full explanation as to why no link should be made. This explanation covers practical considerations, in particular the fact that the Commission has already submitted an interim reply covering a good 90% of the actions requested by Parliament. The Committee on Budgetary Control has examined this reply and has not, to the best of my information, found fault.

The explanation also covers legal considerations, where the Financial Regulation is quite clear in providing for Parliament to take the discharge decision before April 30 of the second year following the implementation of the budget and that the Commission is to report 13 months later, that is to say, by 31 May on the follow-up given to the previous discharge decision.

Thus the link mentioned by Mr Key runs counter to the relevant legal constraints. I am not suggesting,

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Mr President, that the legalities should not be changed — perhaps they should. But what I am saying is that we are operating on the legal basis. The point that Mr Key is making runs counter to the legal basis, and in any case we have provided a report covering 90% of the points already and there has been no criticism of our report thus far.

A further point, Mr President, raised specifically by Mr Key, concerned what he called the Commission's failure to implement the budget adopted by Parliament. He knows, Mr President, that this issue is not so straightforward as it appears. He also knows that the Commission's view, explained at length in the report I have mentioned, namely that the budget represents a necessary legal base for revenue and expenditure but is not always sufficient in itself, is practically the same as the one enunciated by Parliament in November 1980 when it adopted its resolution on the 1981 draft budget.

Furthermore, Mr Key in his own report in paragraph 35 acknowledged that the budget cannot on all lines be implemented before the Council has acted. And he has had some very salutary things to say about the Council on that score. But that is the point — before the Council has acted. And it is not, therefore, reasonable to ask the Commission to implement the budget as adopted when both sides — both Parliament and Commission — recognize that there are legal difficulties and when Parliament is quite rightly, as indeed we are, doing all that they can to bring the Council up to the mark.

Now, Mr President, in the light of all that I have said in the Committee on Budgetary Control, some of which I have repeated here, I find it difficult, I must confess, to escape the conclusion that the reason for the proposal to defer the discharge decision is in reality the one that was given openly by Mr Aigner when he explained from the chair to the Committee on Budgetary Control that the main justification for postponing the decision was to further Parliament's institutional powers, relative to those of the Council, by bringing pressure to bear on the Commission to support more fully Parliament's views. When he said that, Mr Aigner was, of course, supported by the committee.

Now, Mr President, I would like to make it quite clear, as clear as I possibly can, that the Commission is strongly in favour of developing Parliament's powers. And, indeed, of enhancing Parliament's influence in every possible way. I also want to make it clear that the Commission has a well-defined duty towards the Community to act as the independent initiator and executor of policy and, of course, to point the way ahead. As Mr Clinton said in his notable speech earlier, the Commission should not be subordinated to any one. I should say should not be subordinated to the Council, should not be subordinated to Parliament. I wish to see Parliament's powers increased. I

wish to see Parliament's influence increased. But all of us who wish to see the development of the Community recognize that our three institutions are supposed to be, should be, must be, independent institutions and it is not right, therefore, to use a procedure designed for one purpose in order to try to subjugate one institution to another.

Moreover, Mr President, I would like to emphasize the fact that all of us — the Parliament, the Council and the Commission — are subject to the laws of the Community. I submit, therefore, that the Financial Regulation — a regulation that is absolutely central to so much Community activity — obliges Parliament, as Mr Kellett-Bowman pointed out, to decide on the discharge for 1980 before 30 April this year. The only circumstance under which the decision can be postponed is if that date cannot be met, as was the case, for example, last year. But there is no provision for postponement in the event of Parliament not wanting to decide. The entire Community risks being the loser if Parliament decides that it wants to postpone the discharge decision. Parliament has every reason to respect Community law in order to maintain its institutional position and every reason not to advocate the setting aside of the law for reasons of convenience.

Now, Mr President, Parliament is, of course, an independent institution and must take its own decisions. It will do so in any case. But I believe that in general the Court of Auditors has given the Commission a clean bill of health. It has, of course, as one would expect, made a number of criticisms and drawn attention to a number of areas where procedures could be improved. There is no Court of Auditors in the Community that does not do that each year and no government in the Community that does not respond. As I have explained, we have responded. Not just with fair words and promises, but we have, where possible, implemented changes to take account of the criticisms; and, of course, some of the criticisms that have been made in Parliament, especially in the agricultural field, are not found in the Court of Auditors' report in any case.

In the few cases where we have not felt able to act in response to the Court's points or in response to the committee's points, I have provided a reasoned explanation, which I was able to defend in the Committee on Budgetary Control and which, if the House wishes, I could defend at equal length today or tomorrow or at any other time. During the 5 1/2 hours of debate in that committee, I did not hear anyone suggest that the discharge be withheld, although many members said that it should be granted either now or later.

I also think the point which Mr Kellett-Bowman made about the rapporteurs in that respect is a significant and important one, that not one of them has suggested that it should be deferred or withheld. Since then, Mr President, only one Member — only one of the

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434 full-time Members of this House — has taken up my offer to provide further information or explanations, and we have provided an answer to him just as we would have to anybody else who had come to us for additional information. In these circumstances, Mr President, I ask Parliament to grant the discharge and I ask it to grant it now.

I must, however, delay the House for a few minutes longer, because we have also been dealing, during the many speeches which took place before mine, with the ECSC discharge and with one or two other matters, and it is probably better that I should answer them all now, rather than make several speeches.

As to the ECSC discharge, I am pleased to find that there are no major difficulties to report. The House will recall that the question of the discharge for ECSC activities has been dominated in recent years by the problem of independent control by the Court of Auditors within the Member States of the financial activities of the ECSC. As Mr Gabert has indicated in paragraph 1 of the motion for a resolution and as President Lelong of the Court of Auditors told the Committee on Budgetary Control at its last meeting, the problems of procedure as between the Court and the Commission are, I am happy to say, now resolved. I should like to thank the Court for its work in this connection as also in others — for instance, under the ECSC for the annual and special reports as well as for the external confirmation of bank balances. This development reflects a welcome improvement in working relations between the two institutions, which we are both anxious to advance.

As regards the discharge in particular, the Commission services had a very detailed discussion in January of this year with the Court of Auditors about its preliminary draft comments on the sound financial management of the ECSC activities in 1980. The Commission is awaiting receipt of the draft comments and will do its utmost to ensure that the Court of Auditors can present Parliament with its comments and the Commission's replies as quickly as possible.

I now turn to the next two reports on the agenda, those concerning the Centres in Dublin and Berlin. The Commission welcomes the two reports, and I would like to thank Mr Kellett-Bowman for the care and attention he has given to the examination of the activities of these two centres.

In the case of the Centre at Berlin, I would like to emphasize that following the reorganization of its services the Commission has taken steps to streamline its working relations with the Community. The Commission will thus be in a position to exploit more systematically the results of the Centre's work where these have relevance for its own policymaking.

So far as the Foundation in Dublin is concerned, the Commission is very pleased with the terms of the draft

resolution and associated report. As in the case of Berlin, we are progressively improving our methods of cooperation with the Foundation. I would also like to emphasize that more attention is now being given in the Foundation's work programme to projects concerned with living conditions although in the early years there was a tendency for the programme to concentrate almost exclusively on working conditions. I am sure that a satisfactory balance between these two related sets of activities will be secured. The Commission, for its part, will continue to be vigilant on this point in the deliberations of the Governing Board of the Foundation.

Mr President, that concludes my remarks, but I would like to re-emphasize the very considerable importance we attach to the discharge procedure. I hope that Members will think carefully on what I have said. I hope that if they have any doubts they will take advantage of my offer to make my speech available in any Community language, and I trust that if they have any further queries my colleagues Mr Pisani, Mr Ortoli and Mr Dalsager will be able to answer them.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR GONELLA

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Cousté.

Mr Cousté, rapporteur. — *(FR)* Mr President, I should like to raise a point of order in relation to this debate. I did not hear from Commissioner Tugendhat any response to the really very important points I raised concerning the Commission's borrowing and lending policy. I imagine that he will not now be giving me a reply, but I should like to have an assurance that Mr Ortoli will do so.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Tugendhat, Vice-President of the Commission. — I can give the honourable Member the assurance he requests. Mr Ortoli intends personally to intervene in the debate.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Saby. — *(FR)* Mr President, if one wanted to put into a nutshell the essence of the Community's 'no, but' system, one would say that we have two instru-

Saby

ments: the first, which looks at the objectives, is the budget; the second, which measures the results, is the discharge procedure. And, apart from details which may occasionally create a minor sensation in the press, I am truly amazed that the media have not made capital out of the considerable importance of the discharge procedure, which is the instrument by which the political impact of what the Community is doing is assessed in the context of our present-day needs and the needs of economic recovery.

I should like for the moment, therefore, to leave on one side the purely accounting aspect of the discharge called for by the legal and other provisions, in which connection I must mention the excellent work done by the Court of Auditors — so far as that goes discharge could be granted today. I want instead to draw attention to the political dimension, in the finest sense, the essential dimension of the discharge procedure. In effect, the Commission and Parliament define the objectives; targets are set and an attempt is made to reach them, and the point of the discharge procedure is to measure the extent to which this attempt has succeeded or failed and the impact it has had. I believe that the political dimension derives also from the fact of Parliament and the Commission taking into account the supplementary budgets of the following years, for it is in fact only by assessing and understanding the precise impact of intended policies that one can modify subsequent budgets in such a way as to ensure the effectiveness of Community action. Take, for example, industrial policy, on which I have had the pleasure of drafting an opinion in the context of the discharge. Apart from the ECSC, where the measures are very positive, I am pleased to say, the Commission, in an extravagant disquisition in 1980, showed the necessity for a genuine industrial policy that would help mitigate the vagaries of the world economy and the effects of the crisis and on this basis argued, in a preliminary proposal, for a tenfold increase in budget appropriations.

When one looks at the 1980 budget one finds that they have only been increased twofold. And when one looks at the results I would say that we are really no better off, because we are completely off-target. In fact, even though the overall budget is relatively small, actual payments amount to no more than 35%. And when one looks even closer, it becomes apparent that all the measures being implemented within the framework of this industrial policy have been directed at . . . what do you think? Maintaining employment, creating new jobs? Well, no — it is evident that a large part has gone on studies and running costs, and only in two or three cases has industry benefited directly from these measures. No one knows yet — this is something we are going to look into — what effects this has had on the employment situation.

There you have a concrete example and I believe that, leaving aside for a moment questions of legality, it is

precisely the impact and the results obtained through pursuing this policy that we have to measure.

By the same token — but I do not wish to take up any more of Parliament's time — I wanted to mention the other points in Mr Key's report, such as borrowing policy, and other policies. I believe it is very important, as much for Parliament and its Members as for the Community, the Council, to measure exactly the effects of a whole one- or two-year programme and for this reason, having regard to the extreme importance of this dimension and the positive aspects deriving from it, I shall urge my colleagues in the House to support the rapporteur's conclusions and defer the vote on the discharge.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Konrad Schön. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of my group I too should like to send best wishes for a speedy recovery to the chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, Mr Aigner. I am very sorry he cannot be here today, because I am sure, Mr Tugendhat, that he would have had an answer to the reply you gave just now. I will come back to this in a moment.

I should like to begin by thanking the Court of Auditors. The cooperation between the Committee on Budgetary Control — and therefore Parliament — and the Court of Auditors has become extremely effective. I believe Parliament can be proud of its role in initiating the establishment and development of the Court of Auditors. It should really increase this cooperation because there is no point talking about strengthening Parliament's powers if we do not make full use of the ones we already have.

I must contradict you, Mr Tugendhat: my group has no intention of using the discharge procedure to exert pressure on the Commission, with its sights on something quite different, namely the solution of institutional problems. We take the right of control seriously, Mr Commissioner, which should also be a help to you. It is not a question of apportioning praise or blame in one-sided manner but of keeping things under control as objectively as possible so that, as the previous speaker said, a yardstick is created for what has been achieved with your policy.

First, then, a remark on the internal structure of our control: we welcome the setting-up in the Commission of special groups, which have worked very efficiently and made useful suggestions, especially when I think of the agricultural sector. I would urge you, Mr Commissioner, to send your staff to the Member States as well to strengthen your control activities together with the control authorities there. I believe that would be an extremely good thing, and I am sure you will be as successful in this as with internal controls.

Schön

And now a comment on the Court of Auditors, on whom I have just heaped praise. We see the control we exercise, unlike that exercised by the Court of Auditors, as a political task, political in the sense that, while the Court of Auditors cannot impose sanctions, we can. It is not a question, Mr Tugendhat, of Parliament wanting to subjugate the Commission politically, but one thing is certain: the Commission is subject to control, and that control is exercised by Parliament. That is what parliaments were invented for, that was even why this Parliament was directly elected, so that it might have a legitimate right to perform its control function. This is not a question of institutional conflict, dear Mr Tugendhat, but of what we understand by democracy. You will simply have to put up with it.

The reason why my group is also in favour of the discharge being postponed — not refused, but postponed — is that a number of questions remain unanswered. I would remind you, Mr Tugendhat, that the *conditio sine qua non* for the discharge in respect of the 1979 budget was that full answers be given to Parliament's questions. Mr Aigner could tell you what questions on the 1979 budget have still not been answered. Here again I agree with the previous speaker: there is continuity in the policy on the budget and there is continuity in the policy on discharges. I would welcome it, Mr Commissioner, if you could use the time you are gaining through the postponement of the final discharge by Parliament to provide us with the supplementary information on the 1979 budget at the time of the debate on the 1980 discharge, so that we can form an opinion.

You referred just now to the system of the provisional twelfths, which the excellent Key report also takes exception to — and it should be realized this is a political report and not a book-keeping exercise — but, Mr Commissioner, the question is not whether you apply the provisional twelfths system in respect of the budget which is adopted in the same year: this is again a political issue. What use is our budgetary law or Parliament's right to reject the budget if the executive, whose duty it is to implement this budget, by-passes that right? It is a political question, Mr Tugendhat, whether you like it or not in connection with the discussion on the provisional twelfths. I am not saying that is what you intend, but there would be a danger of budgetary law being undermined.

The same is true of the embargo, Mr Commissioner. You mentioned Secretary of State Haig, who has praised the Commission. According to my information — and this is also the information Mr Aigner has — you were praised for the clarity of your political statement. But I do not know if Mr Haig would have been so full of praise if he had known what then emerged. I do not want to go into whether or not embargoes serve a useful purpose: a great deal can be said on that subject. But it is quite simply a fact that, contrary to the Commission's political declarations, far more food was supplied to the Soviet Union than the average for

the previous three years. That is a fact, and as Parliament had agreed with the Commission and the Council on how this embargo was to be interpreted politically, there must be further discussion of this point.

And now to food aid, Mr Commissioner, and we should not pass over the Irmer report so lightly. At a time when the starving world is looking to Europe, it is intolerable — although I hasten to say that it is not the Commission but other authorities who are to blame for this — that millions should perhaps be wasted and rotten food delivered somewhere. This really must be discussed in full. If only because of the Irmer report, I personally feel Parliament has a duty not to grant the discharge today so that the Commission may have an opportunity to give us an appropriate answer in due course on the subject of greatest interest to Mr Irmer, putting a stop to the abuses and developing new methods.

The next point is that we want to use this discharge debate to make it clear once again that the Commission must face the Council with courage on the issue, for example, of the budgetization of the Development Fund and of borrowing and lending activities. You have our full support in this respect, Mr Commissioner.

I should also like to hear you say something, if possible during this debate, which Parliament, and in particular the Committee on Budgetary Control and the Committee on Budgets, always expects of you, and that is that, in the wrangling with the Council over the implementation of the budget, you have at last overcome its blocking tactics when it shows itself incapable or unwilling to create the necessary legal bases. If the Council fails to do this, you must take action. I was pleased to hear you again defining the Commission's role just now. You are the initiators, the motive power of the Community, and together with Parliament you can make this Community a reality. This is the only way we can correct the mistakes of the past. This is where the cause of the poor outflow of resources lies. You are not to blame, Mr Commissioner, but while you have the full weight of Parliament behind you, you have a political duty to take a harder and different line with the Council in this respect, because the Commission is in fact Parliament's ally here.

Independent though your institution must be, independent though the Council and also Parliament may be, if we intend to comply with the Treaties, if we intend to go so far as to achieve political union and if Parliament is able to use budgetary policy and the policy on discharges in this particular respect, the goal is such that by definition there must be this cooperation with the Commission.

To conclude, I should therefore like to say on behalf of my group that, while we are in favour of the postponement, it is not because we want to insult the Commission, because we want an institutional conflict

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with the Commission, but because we hope the time thus gained will enable us to receive full answers to our questions and that together with the Commission, while respecting each other's independence, we can perhaps take another step towards that European Community for which the citizens of Europe have already waited far too long, particularly in view of the failure of the national governments.

My group at least thus sees this discharge debate as a political debate. I am, of course, grateful to the Commissioner for once again offering to cooperate just now. And I should again like to thank our rapporteur, to whose report we do not need to make the slightest change.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Patterson. — Mr President, could I make two preliminary remarks. First of all, I wish to join with others in wishing Mr Aigner a speedy recovery. It seems quite extraordinary, that we should have this debate without him. He has been at these debates for years and years, both in this and the previous Parliament. Secondly, I wish to protest to you, Mr President, that the documents for this debate are still not available. This morning we could get neither the amendments nor the annex to Mr Key's report and the debate is almost over. I think it is a disgrace that this debate should take place without the proper documentation.

Now in all the popular literature about the European Parliament you always find it said, when talking about Parliament's powers, that we possess two nuclear weapons, the power to reject the budget and the power to sack the Commission. As those of us who attend this annual debate always point out, a third nuclear weapon should be added to this list, namely the power of discharge.

Since, as Mr Schön has said, this is a political debate, a word about nuclear weapons. The great thing about them is that you should never actually use them. It is the threat of using them that is important in gaining your objectives. If you are compelled to explode one, the effects are incalculable and possibly fatal to you as well as to the enemy. This is why Parliament should always be very circumspect in trying out one of its three nuclear weapons. In the case of the 1980 budget, the subject of this debate, we did explode our weapon. One of the points at issue today is precisely that the result was not quite what we expected. To be precise, the Financial Regulation allowed the system of twelfths to be operated by the Commission in such a way as to evade much of the stringency which rejection of the budget implied. As to the question of whose fault this was, I shall come back to it in a moment.

The point I am now making is somewhat different. It is that we should also be very careful indeed before

using it even in rather a mild way — if you can use nuclear weapons mildly — our powers under the discharge procedure. Before either refusing or postponing discharge we should ask ourselves two questions. First of all, are the issues this year really of such overwhelming and exceptional importance that we should use our weapon rather than keep it in reserve for the future? Secondly and more important, are we absolutely sure that the consequences of our action will be those we expect? I shall come back to this matter in a moment, but my group's answers to both those questions lead us to question, to say the least, the conclusions in the Key report.

First, could I turn briefly to a linked matter, the Irmer report on food aid, and specifically Section I where the title talks about tricks in the execution of the budget. Now what did the Commission actually do in this matter? What they did was to make use of carryovers so that the finances in the budget were not wasted and that food aid was provided. That would seem on the face of it an extremely laudable thing for the Commission to have done. The trouble was, as the special report of the Court of Auditors on food aid points out, that in that chapter in the budget it is impossible to have multiannual programmes and non-differentiated appropriations.

A very interesting section on page 49 deals with the case of flood programming in India where, because the Commission was unable to have multiannual programmes, the rate of deliveries by the Community can exceed India's needs and this country then asked for the deliveries to be slowed down. This creates the vicious circle of falling behind with the annual programme, carrying over the appropriations and finally cancelling part of them. Now the Court of Auditors is very clear as to what ought to happen. It is that the Financial Regulation should be changed to make differentiated appropriations possible. This is therefore not a criticism of the Commission, it is a criticism of the arrangements under which the Commission operates. I think this is a point which, although in the Irmer report, is very important when considering the issues of the Key report.

The second issue I want to touch on is one for which I had some responsibility for the committee, and that is smuggling on the Irish border. Now whenever I mention this a certain amount of hilarity sweeps through people. Yesterday there were some students from Northern Ireland who came from the border area and who pointed out that smuggling was a national pastime and nothing we could do would stop it. Nevertheless, considerable frauds on Community funds were carried out over the years, something of the order of 15 million EUA per annum. Everybody knows the stories of the poor pig going round and round, smuggled from South to North and then collecting a positive MCA when it came from North to South. Major steps have been taken in the last years and we must congratulate the Commission and the two governments con-

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cerned for stopping a considerable amount of this trade.

The one smuggling problem that remains is the special case of butter. Here Mr Tugendhat is not quite correct in saying that only one Member asked for information. I understand that was Mr Price. I also asked and received yesterday very interesting information on what is happening in the case of butter. The conclusion is most extraordinary. Up to this year there was a higher Community subsidy in the South and therefore it was advantageous to smuggle from South to North to gain the Community subsidy. Now it is the other way round. The reason butter is now smuggled is because the Irish taxpayer adds on a subsidy and we now have the situation where it is an advantage to the European Community to encourage the smugglers because there is a difference of 59.5 u.a. per tonne. Indeed if we were to encourage the smugglers we would get a profit to Community funds of some 200 000 EUA per annum. Now I mention that to show you how extraordinary the situation is. It is an illustrative point.

What is the basic cause of all this? It is MCAs in the first place and different levels of consumer subsidies in the second place. Until the Community as a whole gets to grips with these things we shall never be able to stop frauds.

Now I come to the Key report. First of all, Mr Key points to 12 issues on which the Commission is taken to task. Some of them are a bit spurious, Mr Key. You talk about the ninth as being the 'ambiguous attitude of the Commission in regard to the budgetization of the EDF'. I can hardly think you could postpone discharge because of an ambiguous attitude. Nevertheless, there are two major ones, the embargo and the administration of the twelfths.

On the matter of the embargo, no group is more passionately concerned than my group to see that the Commission carried out to the letter the embargo which it undertook to enforce. But as Mr Tugendhat pointed out, this is not in the Court of Auditors' report. The embargo itself is a political matter. It is not necessarily part of the discharge, and the question we have to ask — was there budgetary cover? — has already been answered by Mr Tugendhat.

In the question of the twelfths the answer I come back to is the same as in the case of food aid. If you look at Article 8 of the Financial Regulation and the Court of Auditors' report and dialogue with the Commission you will find that it turns on a technical argument as to whether advances are payments or commitments, and nobody can give a clear answer to that. It is in fact a question for the revision of the Financial Regulation and I hardly think that this is matter on which we will gain anything at all by delaying discharge.

So what should we do? Refuse discharge? No. Postpone discharge? Well, I think we should then look

very carefully at Article 85 of the Financial Regulation, quoted by Mr Price. Will postponing discharge actually achieve what we want? Now if we were to give discharge today — and we cannot — because we have not got the documents — what would happen? It says in Article 85 that 'subject to the second and third paragraphs the institutions must give an account in an annex to the revenue and expenditure account for the next financial year of the measures taken in the light of the comments appearing in the decisions giving the discharge'. This document has to be produced before 1 June, so that had we given discharge today we would already have legally the Commission's answers by 1 June. As Mr Price is pointing out, all we are doing is delaying the matter.

What will happen if Mr Key gets his way, and indeed the committee, is that no discharge can take place, as I understand it, until the end of the year, although Mr Irmer did mention something about a couple of months. What we must do is to make sure that action is taken on all these matters in the Key report. I believe that the correct thing to do is what our amendment suggest, to prepare the discharge papers as quickly as possible for the next meeting, to give a discharge and to build into that discharge all the comments which we wish. We have listened very carefully to what the Commissioner said today and he has already given many of these answers. Those answers he has not given we will get when he comes to produce the necessary documents as a result of the discharge. I am afraid, Mr President, that may not happen because so few of us are here today. It is a lamentable fact that in this Parliament even if you win the debate — and I think those who wish to give discharge have won the debate — don't win the vote because people are not here to listen to us. But insofar as it has been made clear by Mr Tugendhat that this is the correct thing to do, I hope you will support my group's amendments.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mrs Boserup. — (DA) Mr President, I must begin by pointing out that I do not speak on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group. I only speak for myself and, for reasons of modesty, therefore, I shall be brief. None of the members of the Communist and Allies Group from the two major countries have asked to speak. It has been left to me. They will have to be content, therefore, with what I have to say. I cannot pronounce on how the French and Italian Communists will vote on this question.

Since I became a Member of Parliament, I have been a member of the Committee on Budgetary Control, and I have been very happy in that capacity. The work suits me very well. I hope that no one in this Chamber is by now unaware that I am opposed to my country's subjection to the Treaty of Rome. To that extent I

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think it is meaningful and highly important to take part in the work of the Committee on Budgetary Control, for the process of control follows up action taken, and the work is important in enabling us to determine what has been done with the taxpayers' money. When the Committee on Budgetary Control exceeds its powers by seeking to place itself ahead of the train of events, I do not of course take any part.

I join in readily in the criticism of the Commission's administration. The little confidence trick over the substance of the motion is very entertaining but does not need to be mentioned, because there is so little money involved. Regarding Ispira, as I said last year, I think that we should close it down. Its whole concept is wrong. Joint research could be organized for those Member States which wish to participate and to the extent that they wish to participate, instead of that colossus on feet of clay.

What is new and more important in this matter is all this talk of embargoes. My word! How popular it has become — or should we say how necessary — for the Community to go in for embargoes. But we should not forget that the Community did not declare an embargo against the Soviet Union. It agreed to abide by rules which would ensure that it did not undermine the United States embargo. We got involved in a venture which we did not understand, and the Commission has admitted it. We cannot withhold discharge on that ground. When the Commission admits that this is a form of policy that it cannot find out how to operate, there is no reason to demand that it do so. It is now getting the opportunity to practise, however. So maybe it will learn how to operate such a policy. We could not expect it to be able to do so the first time, and it is foolish to carry on talking of an embargo, when there was no such thing as far as the Community was concerned.

What I find more serious is the Commission's inadequate explanation of the missing accounts for the agriculture Guarantee Fund. We are told that this is something which is very difficult and must be highly accurate, and in any case it is something which is dealt with by the Member States. All right, but we no longer live in the age when accounts were kept with a quill pen. It cannot be true that it is impossible to complete these accounts more quickly, and there I do join very readily in the criticism.

When I do take part in the criticism of the Commission but nevertheless say that I cannot vote in favour of it and must abstain, it is entirely because of the wording at point 18, where there are complaints that we do not have Community policies for this and that. Clearly, I do not bemoan that fact at all. I do not yearn for a Community energy policy. But the worst is the conclusion given to it, in which a formal and unequivocal assurance is demanded of the Commission that it will in future implement the budget as adopted. We cannot do that. It is exceeding our powers, it is

issuing threats and it is not what budgetary control is all about. And it is certainly not within the competence of budgetary control to state, as the report does, that in any case the Council is at fault and that the Council should undertake to draw up its own list of what it has failed to adopt, and the chairman, Mr Key, rails against the Council. All right, but we should not exceed our powers in demanding that the Commission execute an illegal act as a condition of our approval of accounts which, after all, are no better and no worse than we are used to.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Mart. — (*FR*) Mr President, after twice rejecting it, the Committee on Budgetary Control has finally adopted, by a very slender majority, the Price report on the accommodation policy of the Community institutions.

May I point out that the rapporteur was at first unwilling to accept the idea of a searching inquiry. In the meantime he has been persuaded by the Committee on Budgetary Control to change his views somewhat. However, the report he is putting forward now certainly cannot be called objective and I would even go so far as to say that he is trying to hoodwink not only public opinion but also the Members of this Parliament.

I am perfectly well aware of the situation as it exists following the adoption of the Zagari report and I am not asking anyone to go back on what he or she voted for in the past. But the interim report by Mr Price is seeking to force Parliament to ignore the truth and us Members to forget their intellectual integrity.

The interim report, in its present form, constitutes an attempt to legitimize the choice of Brussels as the sole working place and seat of the European Parliament by advancing a number of practical and financial considerations.

In arriving at this result the rapporteur was inevitably obliged to give prominence to some facts and totally ignore others. If the report were to be adopted as it stands now, one could not spare him the accusation of bias. The idea of appointing a firm working independently of the Council to conduct an analysis on the basis of the points listed in paragraphs 10 to 15 of the interim report in particular is like paying a false witness out of taxpayers' money. The terms of reference in the motion for a resolution are such that the independent expert could not do otherwise than turn in a biased report: so we are being conned.

As regards the amendments, I must draw your special attention to the one concerning paragraph 17. To ensure a minimum degree of objectivity, according to the independent expert's terms of reference, at the

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very least existing facilities should be taken into account as well. One might even go so far as to say that the amendment in question has been drafted to safeguard the reputation of our Parliament, which has responsibility for handling considerable sums of money. A serious and honest inquiry, whatever its result, does not in any way absolve us from making a certain political choice, perhaps on the basis of criteria other than the purely financial. But we must at least be told everything objectively and honestly and be fully aware of all the facts, that is to say we must know the truth.

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Nyborg. — (DA) Mr President, neither my group nor I myself harbour any wish to get into a conflict situation with either the Commission or the Council. Let me say that at the outset. But we also do not wish to sidestep the mandate we received when we were elected to this great Assembly, a mandate under which we are obliged to exercise supervision over the Commission's administration, including its administration of the resources at the Community's disposal.

Some reports have been drafted in the Committee on Budgetary Control. I must say that the report prepared by Mr Key is indeed one of the best documents, from the technical point of view, that I have ever seen in this Parliament. It is intelligent, logical and schematic in its structure and is filled with a mass of facts which we cannot ignore. Our group will vote in favour of Mr Key's proposal to postpone discharge, because, in the present circumstances, we do not think it reasonable to grant discharge this week, when there are far too many obscure points needing clarification. On the other hand, we have rather more misgivings with the report of Mr Irmer and Mr Wettig and are directly opposed to Mr Price's report for broadly the same reasons as those set out by the previous speaker.

We regard the budget as a finance law, and I stress the word law. The Commission has to conduct its administration according to the law, and that means that the Commission must abide by the budget. It must be a self-evident precondition. Sometimes, things are cut a little fine.

The European Progressive Democrats, of whom I am happy to be one, have always worked for a more logical structure for the budget, a better accounting plan. Development aid should be entered as development aid, social policy should be entered under social expenditure, and this would amongst other things purge the agriculture budget of extraneous expenditure, would make for better presentation and easier location of facts, and I think that is something we all want. It would mean that a considerable part of the expenditure entered under agriculture would appear

where it should really be and that agricultural expenditure would be reduced to less than half the amount of the budget as a whole. In other words, we want a budget which corresponds to actual activities.

Now the reports we are discussing today speak of an embargo, in which the Commission has failed to carry out the wishes of both the Council and Parliament. That is regrettable, because it also means that the thoughts and ideas from political quarters are being ignored. We have had unfortunate experiences in connection with Ispra and we have had unfortunate experiences in other connections too. In fact, it has to be said that the accounts are simply in a mess, and that is something we cannot accept. As Mrs Boserup pointed out, we have advanced beyond the times when accounts were kept with a quill pen. Today, we have technical aids which can be used to keep accounts in proper order, and it is possible to obtain from them at very short notice all the information which is required.

We cannot really accept Mr Irmer's recommendation that the Member States should channel more of their development aid through the Community, since unfortunately we have had to note that the Community, or rather the Commission, is not fully up to the task. When I say that, I am not criticizing Mr Pisani, since it is something which goes back to a time before Mr Pisani became a Member of the Commission. But there is something which makes me feel that we do have a task which goes rather further than the prerogative of review. The prerogative of review can be exercised in order to determine after the event whether mistakes have been made, but it is just as much our task, as Parliamentarians, to do what we can to ensure that mistakes are not made. I therefore propose that a working party be set up here in Parliament to cover the field of development aid. Whether it should consist of three, five or ten members is of no importance to me whatsoever; it has nothing to do with the matter. But it should have authority to examine projects worked out, so that comments can be made on them before they are put into effect. It could possibly and hopefully be instrumental in preventing the foolish mistakes which we have witnessed in the past.

I have spoken with the chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control on the subject of a working party of this kind, and he thinks it is a good idea.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) Mr President, I should like to add a few comments to one of the reports which have been presented for discussion here today. I refer to the report prepared by Mr Wettig and presented by Mr Key, and I thank both Mr Wettig for his report and Mr Key for his presentation.

Dalsager

I note, for example, that the report points out that the rise in expenditure under the agriculture Guarantee Section in 1980 was only 8.4% as against 23% per year in the four preceding years. It is a figure which I can confirm. The figures now available for 1981 show that expenditure for that year was at an even more favourable level. There was thus a drop in the expenditure for 1981 compared with the preceding year. This improvement was due in part to the following factors: first, an improvement in prices for dairy produce on the world market, hence a reduction in refunds. Second, very good prices on the world market for certain other products, such as grain. Third, a relatively stable foreign exchange situation and, fourth and last, the improvement in the Commission's efficiency in managing the markets.

I should like to add some more specific comments on individual points in the resolution: point 6 in the resolution states that expenditure on export refunds for beef and dairy produce was higher in 1980 than in 1979. These are both sectors in surplus. The surpluses have to be sold off, and it is usually least expensive to do so on the world market. As far as dairy produce is concerned, this export policy made it possible to reduce the export refunds in 1981 by a considerable amount while, at the same time, exports were held level. As far as beef is concerned, our position on the world market is not so strong that we are able to influence the market to the extent which would obviously be desirable.

In point 16 of the proposed resolution, Mr Wettig argues in favour of measures to enable the Commission to get information on the market more quickly. The Commission already has a number of sources of information, but it does of course share Parliament's view that these sources of information should be improved as far as possible. I would in that context mention that, in certain sectors, a period for reflection has been introduced for the issue of licences and submission of tenders for export transactions. This enables the Commission to obtain information on the reactions of the trade to a given market situation, and this procedure is at least as effective for economic and financial management purposes as a whole range of market information, however good this may be. All market information to persons who are not themselves operators in the trade is, by its very nature, second-hand, since it is only passed on when the transaction has been completed, i.e. after the licence has been issued. By the introduction of a period of reflection, the Commission can intervene after the trader has prepared the transaction, but before the licence has been finalized.

The withdrawal of products from the market by producers' organizations is referred to in points 7 and 8 of the Wettig report. It is stated that, on average, only about 2% of Community production is withdrawn and that we are therefore only dealing with very small quantities. With regard to the disposal of the products

withdrawn, care must be taken to ensure that these do not take the place of normal consumption. There are already rules governing a number of alternative possibilities for use or sale which, in all cases, seek to avoid destruction, and we are to a very large extent successful in that respect. Distribution free of charge has often been discussed. I do not wish to go into that here, however. I would point out in this connection that the transport costs are defrayed under the Guarantee Section and that the rules in this area are currently being reviewed in order to facilitate such free distributions.

But, Mr President, experience has shown that it is not possible in all cases to find outlets, even when the transport costs are financed. At certain times, there is simply so much fruit which is ripe and will rot in the space of a few days that it is just not possible to find takers for it. The Commission is asked in the resolution to report on the questions referred to. The Commission receives a great many such requests. Unfortunately, these reports are often additional to those which the Commission is already required to present in respect of the various regulations, for example, the annual report on the situation in the agriculture sector and the report on the activities of the EAGGF. If, however, Parliament insists on a special report for fruit and vegetables, the Commission will, of course, produce such a report. Parliament must, however, allow the Commission the time necessary to complete it.

With regard to the support given for the private storage of veal during the consumer boycott, which is mentioned in point 12, the Commission sticks to its view that this measure was economically and legally correct in the situation in question. With regard to the economic aspect, steps had to be taken to ensure that the producers did not need to keep their calves alive during the period of the boycott. For there was already sufficient meat from mature cattle in storage at the time in question. With regard to the legal aspect, the case was that of the application of a measure by analogy, following consultation with the legal experts of the Commission and the Council. Only one Member State seems to have experienced difficulty with this analogy procedure.

I must say finally, with regard to this proposed resolution, that the Commission fully shares the concerns of Parliament, which are apparent from many of the recommendations made in the resolution, regarding the need to counter irregularities. The Commission has emphasized this on repeated occasions to Parliament, and I do not therefore see any reason to enlarge further on this point on this occasion.

Now, while I have the floor, Mr President, I might add a few remarks on Mr Filippi's report. I am happy to see that the resolution accompanying it contains some positive comments. I am thinking here, in particular, of point 2, which deals with the utilization of the appropriations for 1980. On point 3, I would say first

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that the Commission has considerably improved its forecasts. Second, it is important to bear in mind some of the difficulties inherent in the structural measures from the point of view of forecasts. There is, for example, a considerable difference between the Member States in the extent to which they make use of the new arrangements.

Points 4 and 5 deal with certain measures which have not had a satisfactory effect. The Commission shares this view and, for this reason, various proposals for improvements, particularly in the socio-structural directives, have been made to the Council. I must say in that connection, however, that we have to be cautious in increasing flexibility, since this can lead to a distortion of competition.

The Commission has also noted that Parliament wants greater openness and more information regarding the application of Community programmes. This is one of the reasons for an increase in the number of seminars for local administrators in 1981.

With regard to points 8 and 9 on control and audits in 1980, I would stress that in point of fact there has been a considerable increase in these activities.

Finally, Mr Filippi in his report criticizes the content of the Financial Report, alleging that the Commission has failed to give information on the scope of certain projects. I would briefly point out that detailed information of this kind is to be found in the special reports covering the individual projects.

I noted during Mr Filippi's presentation of this report how he concluded somewhat bitterly by declaring that he had been saying the same thing year after year. 'Nobody ever listens to me or to Parliament on this matter,' he said. This does not tally with what Mr Filippi says in point 2 of the resolution, which he himself has presented to Parliament, where he says, and I quote: that Parliament 'welcomes the fact that, following a series of financial years characterized by a totally inadequate rate of implementation of the appropriations entered in the budget, the utilization of these appropriations showed substantial progress in the financial year 1980, reaching a level of implementation which is acceptable, though capable of further improvement.'

I think that I can be forgiven for saying to Mr Filippi that there is, in fact, someone who has been listening to him and taking account of his comments over the years. I do not think therefore that Mr Filippi had any really valid grounds for his rather critical and rather despondent remarks.

Mr Nyborg, who spoke on behalf of the European Progressive Democrat Group, has presumably not studied all the answers and information which Parliament has been receiving on the embargo he referred to. He is also apparently unaware of the fact that the

Council has at no time criticized the Commission for its application of that embargo. He has also, perhaps for natural reasons, not had the latest answer which the Commission gave to the Committee on Budgetary Control on the embargo and what was said previously on the subject of pre-fixing etc.

Thus it is a little depressing for the Commission time after time to hear critical remarks made by speakers in Parliament who demonstrate clearly that they have not studied the material that we supply in great abundance. We can truthfully say that Parliament has received all the information for which we have been asked.

I am therefore very pleased, finally to thank Mr Clinton for his comment and his speech on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control in the debate we have had today. Because of his long experience of this work, we listen particularly closely when he takes the floor. Not because Mr Clinton does not criticize; that he does. But he is critical in a positive way, which is indicative of a desire to support the Commission and cooperate more effectively with the Commission. In contrast — and here I refer back to what my colleague Mr Tugendhat said — one gets the impression that other Members of Parliament want to hinder cooperation with the Commission, which we greatly regret.

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) It is with a mixture of interest and surprise that I have been following the progress of this debate. With interest, because many important things are being said in it from which we can obviously learn something. With surprise, because I cannot see how, by what stretch of imagination, a debate whose object is to grant formal discharge in respect of transactions that are already to some extent past history can be turned into an attack when quite clearly the Commission these days often finds itself in the position of having to argue a case which is not entirely its own, either because it concerns an area of responsibility belonging to the Council, or because it was originated by the previous Commission.

That being so, I feel that Parliament would be well advised to take these factors into consideration, to abandon the course it is presently set on and to grant the discharge. After all, the essential points have been made today and there is little likelihood of any further progress on them in the months ahead.

Mr Irmer's report on food aid in 1980 is a case in point, raising as it does problems which for the most part have undergone substantial change since the time in question.

I have nothing very important to say concerning the broad thrust of the Irmer report. As to his statement here earlier that we were on the brink of disaster, that the clock now stood at five to midnight, I feel he is

Pisani

grossly exaggerating the situation and not even this House, crowded as it is, deserves to be treated to such turgid outpourings. However, let us get back to the essentials.

Mr Irmer has raised a number of points. He has asked for an improvement in the speed of delivery of supplies of food aid. Now, it so happens that since 1980 — and he occasionally makes reference to earlier figures — the speed of delivery has improved significantly. He calls for better supervision. Well, I am sure he knows that decisions were taken, in 1980 as a matter of fact, which allow better supervision both within the Community and in the recipient countries.

He has called for the immediate drawing-up of multiannual programmes. Now it so happens that since 1980, acting on a Council decision and a proposal from the Commission, multiannual programmes have been introduced and we are implementing them with ever-increasing regularity and determination. Right now, for example, we are engaged in talks with Zimbabwe with a view to starting a new multiannual programme there.

He has called for an increase in triangular measures, that is to say those which, based on the actual needs of the countries to be given aid, do not depend entirely on the Community's own agricultural products but can instead be geared more closely to product lines that we cannot produce ourselves and which are available on the world market (vegetable oil, millet and others). Mr Irmer must know that that is exactly what we have been doing since 1978, and whilst we have not yet succeeded in introducing this system universally we are nevertheless gradually extending the principle, with satisfactory results. There have also been occasions, in the temperate countries of the southern hemisphere, because they were far away and even though they consumed products which we do produce in the Community, when, rather than paying the transport costs, we decided to buy the items we wanted on the local market.

He also called for improvements — and this is something else that has reached the decision stage in the Commission and the Council — in the conditions under which transport by sea is effected. I would remind him that decisions have been taken with regard to the age of boats that are allowed to carry food aid to the recipient countries.

Lastly, he has called for more inspection visits, placing the accent on *a posteriori* checks rather than day-to-day management. Mr Irmer knows, I am sure, that these inspection visits have been increased and will be increased still further in the years ahead.

Questions have also been asked concerning a number of other points, and in particular about the problem of the resources available to the Commission for administering food aid. I want to tell you quite candidly that

this is a matter that concerns us deeply and that in fact, if we look at the way food aid is administered in other Western countries, we see that for the same level of aid as ourselves the United States has three times the administrative personnel that we have and even Canada, for a substantially smaller aid programme, has a greater number of administrative personnel than we have.

However, before taking any decisions on this very specific point, I and the Commission want to have in our hands, and I hope shortly thereafter it will be available to the Council and to Parliament, the results of the survey I commissioned on overall food aid policy, which I promised myself and promised Parliament and the Council that I would present in the first half of July. When that day comes you will have in your hands a complete set of all the documents relating to that subject, including the parliamentary reports by Mr Ferrero, Mrs Focke and Mr Michel, all the documents drawn up by the Court of Auditors, and also the results of the fact-finding missions and consultations that have been or are being carried out in the recipient countries.

Thus at the beginning of July you will be in possession of a critical report on how food aid is organized, administered and supervised. This report that I have undertaken to present will embody concrete proposals which are certain to include a request for an increase in the resources that we have at our disposal. I believe that we shall then be able, in July or September, to hold a thoroughgoing debate on this issue with all the facts laid before you.

I should now like to move on to another matter, namely the budgetization of the European Development Fund. Let us not beat about the bush: The fact of the matter is that Mr Key has done the Commission a signal injustice. When he says that the Commission has not taken a position on this matter, when he accuses it of being lukewarm towards such a move, I believe he is stating the very opposite of the truth. Every time the question was legitimately broached the Commission intervened in the debate. I would remind him, incidentally, that the question of the budgetization of the EDF is not one that can be dealt with just at any time but only in the context of negotiations for a new convention. Outside of the framework of negotiations for a new convention any discussion of the budgetization of the EDF is inappropriate, since ultimately the convention is the result of an agreement between the Member States and it would therefore be necessary to renegotiate with all of the Member States in order to lay down a new basis for relations between the Community and the Member States in the matter of development. It is my belief, therefore, that to expect the immediate budgetization of the European Development Fund, as from the next budget, is not compatible with an objective analysis of the legal and political realities obtaining in the European Economic Community.

Pisani

As for the belief, held by him and others, that the budgetization of the EDF would endow this very important instrument of intervention with greater flexibility and adaptability, in my view it is quite mistaken because, as things stand at the moment, for the management of annual tranches of the EDF we need to submit our preliminary draft budgets and our outline proposals for the following year around September, whereas were we obliged to go through the budget we should have to submit our proposals and outline aid programmes at the beginning of the previous financial year, and I have to tell you quite honestly that to budget a year in advance for measures that involve not only the Community budget and the EDF but also the budgets of the recipient States and of the co-financing States would prove rather difficult. The length of budgetary procedures — and I cannot see that they can be shortened — will do nothing to help adjust budget estimates to the concrete reality of a given financial year. We must remember that we are not the only pieces on the board. We are not the only ones involved in development programmes. We are constantly working in association with the recipient States and with other institutions or with other countries contributing to the financing of development programmes.

Mr President, I have said what I wanted to say. The debate has given me a welcome opportunity to clarify one or two points of doubt in my own particular field which Members in this House have raised.

Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, what I have to say will not take up very much time and I should like first of all to express my thanks to the Committee on Budgetary Control and its rapporteur, Mr Cousté, for their report on the Community's borrowing and lending activities. Let me say that we have here an excellent example of collaboration based on trust, since the Commission agreed, having heard what the rapporteur had to say on 1 April, to change its approach on certain points and to modify a number of its proposals. I am therefore in very broad agreement with the points made in the report.

I support what it has to say concerning the budgetization of borrowing and lending activities, on which the Commission's position is well known. I support what it has to say concerning information and I should like to use this opportunity to tell you that this year you will have the report on borrowing and lending activities already in June, that is to say earlier than last year, and that this report will be more comprehensive, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the committee.

As regards the relations with the European Investment Bank, which is one of the points that regularly come up for discussion, I believe that the explanations and indications I have given do show that they are in fact

relations in which the Commission's responsibility is clearly laid down, covering, firstly, the initiation of borrowing transactions, then, with regard to loans, decisions on eligibility on the basis of discussion with the Bank when the loans are drawn up, and the signing of these loans with the Bank. All of which ensures that we do in fact reserve for ourselves the right to define the strategy and we use an instrument of the Treaty — the European Investment Bank — to deal with those matters that we could not deal with ourselves without setting up another bank, which Parliament would never agree to.

I believe that this point has been understood and for that I am again grateful to the Committee on Budgetary Control. My final remark, Mr President, concerns the fact that the debate on Mr Cousté's report and the changes made in the draft resolution down for debate came after Mr Key's address, throwing some light, I believe, on some of the points in his report. And it seems to me that if one compares what is written in Mr Key's report, which preceded the debate on the subject, and what is written in Mr Cousté's resolution there are, if I may say so, certain discrepancies which should perhaps be sorted out. I simply mention it in passing, without wishing to make an issue of it. In conclusion I should like once again to express my appreciation to the Committee on Budgetary Control for the work it has done.

President. — I call Mr Irmer.

Mr Irmer, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, as rapporteur on food aid, I should like to reply briefly to Mr Pisani.

Mr Pisani, I found your answer very, very disappointing. What you have just said was far less outspoken than what you have said in the past: what is wrong with food aid is that it has not yet been possible to integrate it into the general development policy. It is not enough to speed up transport operations in individual cases or to do a triangular deal or some such. We are well aware of improvements of this kind.

I said earlier that it is five minutes to midnight, and I was not exaggerating, because the crux of the matter is that the Commission's hands have so far been tied. If the Council blocks action, you can do nothing, and that is where we should like to help you.

Mr Nyborg said just now that it was not right that development policy or food aid policy should become the responsibility of the European Community because the Commission was incapable of administering it. That is simply not correct. The Commission could administer this policy. You yourself and your predecessors have made this clear. You could pursue a reasonable and cohesive policy. You simply have to help us in the dispute with the Council, so that you get the powers you need.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, my reply may well have been disappointing, but that is how I intended it. I said that substantive discussion on food aid, on which subject I hold the same views as Mr Irmer, would have to wait until we had a detailed and comprehensive report on every aspect of food aid. I have promised this report and I shall hold myself available to Parliament for the debate when it comes.

I believe that so far we have not been able to cover every aspect to do with food aid in a summary document but, to take up something that was said by one or two speakers this morning, yourself included, Mr Irmer, the object of food aid should be to do away with the need for it. I would go on to say that the management of food aid is under any circumstances extraordinarily difficult. Food aid must contribute towards development — and that is the purpose of the food strategies which we are currently in the process of introducing — but I did not intend in the middle of a debate on the discharge, which is essentially a technical and legal issue, to enter into a full-scale debate on food aid. It deserves better than to be relegated to near the bottom of the list in a purely financial debate. Food aid is in itself a political act deserving a special political debate. That might help to explain the attitude I have taken.

President. — I call Mrs Dury.

Mrs Dury. — (FR) Mr President, allow me to return to another report, namely Mr Price's report on the accommodation policy of the Community institutions.

Mr Price has drawn up a report which looks at the Community institutions from the point of view of cost and efficiency. Perhaps I may be permitted to introduce another point of view, that of the inhabitants of a city in which the Community institutions are located.

In Brussels, the presence of the Community institutions has the effect of reinforcing its international role and raising its prestige. Furthermore, following in the wake of the Council and the Commission, a large number of pressure groups and important financial institutions have set up offices there. Brussels has also attracted a great many journalists from the press, radio and television. At first sight then, one would think that Belgium, and especially Brussels, must surely welcome this situation.

Well, I have to tell you, Mr President, that in Brussels there is a growing disillusionment with the European Communities, not on a political level, but because of the environmental effects the institutions have had on the city of Brussels. In consideration of the principle of the provisional seat, the siting and extension of these

buildings have been carried out without any overall plan, piecemeal. I am not trying to place responsibility for this on the Community authorities, it is the Belgian authorities that are to blame. Ineptitude, dithering, hasty decisions, slow decisions, lack of consultation with the inhabitants, all have helped to create havoc in Brussels. Living accommodation sacrificed, businesses expropriated, whole districts turned into wasteland, lack of contact between the inhabitants of Brussels and Community officials; Mr President, that about sums up the present situation.

Just recently, the Minister for Public Works, Mr Olivier, put forward a new scheme for extending the Community institutions in Brussels. This scheme, in contrast to another district scheme, provides for housing areas to be given over to offices. There are also plans for part of the administrative building, the Residence Palace, which has recently been refurbished, to be demolished and assigned for office accommodation for the European Community.

Mr President, the apparent absurdity of this situation owes everything, as it always does in such cases, to the profit motive, and for me that is a matter of considerable regret.

I am therefore in agreement with the proposals put forward by Mr Price in his report, but for goodness' sake I wish people would bear in mind that when the Community institutions come into a city they are not coming into virgin territory but into a city that has a history, a culture, an architectural heritage and in which there are inhabitants.

In 1973, the Council of Ministers issued a declaration on environmental policy. One of the sections is devoted to town and country planning. What I would like to suggest, with the publication of Mr Price's report, is that, should the Communities decide to pursue their accommodation policy, they should do so on the basis of the principles laid down by the Council of Ministers itself. Let us for once try to apply to ourselves the principles we have defined for the benefit of others!

Mr President, let me say that as citizens of Brussels we are proud to have the Community institutions in our midst. We are proud of Brussels' role as a European city, but we can no longer allow the inhabitants of Brussels to be the losers by it.

Finally, I should like to make a suggestion. It happens very frequently that the political groups and committees of Parliament have meetings in Italy, or Greece, or Ireland. I quite understand that the sun has its attraction for them, but I should like you one day to come to Brussels and to take another look at Brussels and then you might understand what I have been trying to say to you.

President. — I call Mr Notenboom.

Mr Notenboom. — (NL) I feel I must refer briefly to what the previous speaker said. I found her remarks very interesting, and I hope that, where our Parliament is concerned, her anxiety about a seat in Brussels will soon be a topical issue.

I should like, Mr President, to devote a few moments to own resources in order briefly to explain, as Mr Key did not have the time, paragraphs 30 and 31. In paragraph 30 the Committee on Budgetary Control emphasizes once again that the Community's financial autonomy is entirely dependent on own resources, which are due to the Community as a result not of the Member States' transfers but of the taxpayer's liability. That has always been the intention. This concept has suffered a great deal. The nationalism of the Member States is largely to blame for the fact that these own resources, with which the Community was entirely financed in 1980 for the first time, are usually regarded as national contributions. They are not, and I wish to take this opportunity to emphasize once again what Mr Key says in paragraph 30, that own resources are the Community's due. The Commission should have done more to counteract the serious misunderstanding about national contributions. This is also partly the reason why the concept of own resources has become watered down.

Paragraph 31 — the second paragraph on own resources — calls for an evaluation of the implementing regulations before 1 June and for the submission of proposals for amendments if these are considered necessary. This is very important. 1980 was the first year in which VAT was levied as an own resource in all the Member States, and we knew it would be an experiment. We knew from the outset that the collection of VAT and the fixing of the VAT base would create problems. That was inevitable, but an evaluation must quickly be made to see if everything is being done as the legislator and Parliament intended. The Commission must therefore make this evaluation and, if necessary, put forward proposals for improvements.

Why do I find it such a pity that this is happening rather too late? Because when people get set in their ways, it is more difficult to change them. That is what I am afraid of, and I sincerely hope — the will undoubtedly exists — that before 1 June of this year the Commission puts forward proposals for the elimination of any misconceptions that may have taken root.

Allow me to add another two brief comments on own resources. Own resources have everything to do with combating fraud. The Community's own resources are unfortunately subject to fraudulent practices. Criminal elements have taken advantage of complicated procedures, monetary compensatory amounts, rubber stamping at the time import duties are levied and so on. We are no longer talking about ordinary smugglers now. I have already said this on a number of occasions. The Commission can do two things about

this situation: firstly, it can organize even more courses and improve cooperation between the customs and the inspecting authorities in the Member States and secondly, it can set up its own control apparatus to look into cases of suspected fraud irrespective of the person and country concerned. There is considerable room for improvement in this area, because billions are involved.

My very last remark. Millions are involved. Criminals have specialized in fraud with import duties, for example. I would ask the Commission to consider whether it is right that *bona fide* agencies should frequently be held responsible for millions, while criminals guilty of fraud are not caught. In some Member States we even have the situation that the guilty parties are not apprehended and many customs agencies continue to be held responsible four or five years after their documents have been cleared and returned to them, which very often leads to bankruptcy.

To conclude, I intend to look more carefully at this question next year, because it is closely connected with the Community's own resources.

President. — I call Mr Maher.

Mr Maher. — Mr President, of course this is a historic debate, but if the human race is noted for anything it is that it fails to learn from the mistakes it made before. So perhaps in that sense this debate will be useful with regard to what we do in future.

I listened very intently to Mr Dalsager's comments — and I am sorry that he is not here at the moment. I would say to him that in my view he need never feel apologetic for lambasting any Member of this Parliament if he feels he ought to do so. By all means, why not? It is far better to have that kind of a relationship between Parliament and the Commission than one that is palsy walsy and not saying the things openly that we really feel, and I hope Mr Dalsager and the other Commissioners will continue in that spirit. That is what we ought to be doing, to be challenging each other about statements that we make, in order to get more heat into our discussions, because it is very hard to have light without heat — or *vice versa* for that matter.

But, Mr President, my real point is this. I am sorry that Mr Jackson has gone; perhaps he is somewhere around the House; but I wanted to compliment Mr Jackson on his report. That is not to ignore the other reports that have been presented, but I think it is a wonderfully analytical work and we need more of that sort of thing in this Parliament: good analysis of exactly what we are doing, greater transparency so that we can see more clearly exactly how the budget is structured, where the money is going, etc. I would, however, issue a warning to Mr Jackson that perhaps

Maher

he has not gone far enough. And since he is, of course, typically British, — he is not typical? Well, I think he is in this sense! — in being critical of the policy that accounts for the major part of the expenditure of the European Community, I would remind him that Parliament made a decision in Luxembourg nearly two years ago that the farm policy was taking approximately 50% and not 70%: I think it is time we recognized that decision and started talking factually in those terms.

Not only that, however. I would say to him and to the Commission, is it not time that we looked more critically at why it is costing so much? Why is that so? I will give you an example very quickly. In my country a farmer in 1974 sold 44 000 litres of milk to buy a tractor. Five years later, the price of milk had gone up three times, and yet he sold 65 000 gallons of milk to buy the same tractor. I could repeat that right across the board, and, of course, this is why the budget is costing so much. The inputs farmers are buying as consumers are costing more and more in relation to what they are getting, and I think it is time we analysed this situation. Why are these inputs costing so much? Are they justified? Could we get them under control and so ensure that we can give the consumer food at a lower price and at a lesser cost to the budget of the European Community? We have gone half way, but we have not gone far enough.

My last point is also to Mr Jackson — be careful! We might of course control agricultural expenditure at Community level, but be very careful we do not transfer it to the national level. If we do that, we shall renationalize the CAP and we shall be getting nowhere, because that is what will happen. Inevitably, if we cut the agricultural budget too much at Community level, all we shall do is to get the member countries to take up the slack, because they cannot let their agriculture down. And so we shall not have the one common policy that we need. I would warn Mr Jackson to be very careful of that.

President. — I call Mr Cousté.

Mr Cousté, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, at this point let me make just three very brief observations.

The first concerns accommodation policy. I should like to associate myself with the judicious remarks made earlier by René Mart and spoken with obvious sincerity. I go along with him entirely when he says 'I am fully aware of the situation we are left with following the adoption of the Zagari report and I would not ask anyone to go back on what he or she voted for in the past'.

My thanks then to Mr Mart and I should also like to express my support for the spokesman for our group, Mr Nyborg, and his reservations concerning some

aspects of the report. I should like in fact to remind the Commission and Mr Tugendhat, whom I am pleased to see here, that we do indeed intend the budget to be transparent, because the budget is an expression of the policy of the Community — not just the Commission, but the Community as a whole. Transparency is in our view essential. We therefore want it to be genuine and we also want to be able to monitor it.

I am accordingly very grateful to Mr Ortoli for pointing out that the discussions with the Committee on Budgetary Control, for which I acted as spokesman, concerning borrowing and lending policy had really borne fruit. So much so, that a few moments ago you heard Mr Ortoli announce that the 1981 report would be submitted already in June, that is to say in just a few weeks, much sooner than in previous years. This gives me great cause for satisfaction, it being understood that we shall ensure that the Commission, which implements the policies of the Community, can always act in a spirit of trust with respect to Parliament. But trust does not exclude control.

(The sitting was adjourned at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : LADY ELLES

Vice-President

President. — The next item on the agenda is the first part of Question Time (Doc. 1-112/82).

We begin with the questions to the Commission.

As the author is not present, Question No 1 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 2 by Mr Cousté (H-650/81):

Given the possibility that duty-free sales on journeys within the Community may be abolished, can the Commission say what measures it intends to take to include in its Community customs arrangements some provision to safeguard the acquired economic and social rights of workers and consumers in the Community?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Following the decisions of the European Court of Justice of 7 July 1981 in Case No 158/80 on the 'butter ships', the Commission called on the Member States to ensure that the duty- and tax-free sale of

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982.

Narjes

goods originating from third countries to travellers within the Community was stopped, regardless of whether such sales were made aboard ships or planes, at airports or elsewhere. The Commission gave the Member States until 31 March to make the necessary adjustments. The Commission is also continuing its investigations into the various forms of tax exemption in international and intra-Community transport. In this context, it will take due account of every aspect of the economic and social rights to which the honourable Member has referred.

Mr Cousté. — (FR) It is precisely this social aspect that led me to put the question, for the abolition of duty-free sales on journeys within the Community would have highly detrimental consequences for consumers and, more importantly, an adverse effect on the volume of sales, which represents jobs for the Community. It is this Community aspect that I wanted to underline, in the interests of consumers and workers alike.

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I have three points to make:

1. The great internal common market is by nature inimical to privileges. It demands the equal treatment of all consumers and all distribution channels.
2. As this internal market is created, there may be shifts in total demand, but the volume will remain the same. Minor adjustments may therefore be possible, but there will be no reduction of total demand.
3. The termination of the exemption from tax of products imported from third countries means the restoration of equality of opportunity to Community producers in these distribution channels and thus improves the social aspects of the Community rather than adversely affecting them.

Mr Martin. — (FR) To the extent that duty-free sales apply to only a limited range of goods, the sale of which is a source of useful publicity for European products as a whole and acts as an inducement to travel within the Community, does the Commission not think that the abolition of duty-free sales would in the final analysis have more negative consequences than economic benefits for the Member States?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) The Commission does not share this view. It would point out in particular that the abolition of privileges applies only to intra-Community transport and that, where it is a question of publicizing European products to the outside world, the possibility of exemption from duties and taxes will therefore remain unchanged.

Mr Marshall. — Would the Commission not agree that one of its objectives should be to seek to increase

the popularity of the Community rather than diminish it? Would it agree that duty-free goods are popular and that the wholesale ending of that privilege would cause an uproar amongst the citizens of the Community?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I cannot agree with the honourable Member if he is making losses or gains of popularity the sole criterion for the completion of the internal market. By that token there would never be any changes or therefore an internal market.

Mr Davern. — Would the Commission not agree that the already overtaxed, overharrassed and overpaying Community consumer of air, ship and every other system of travel in the Community will now be asked to pay 6 to 8% more in transport costs if the Commission goes through with its policy of abolishing Community duty-free sales?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I do not question the statement that the European consumer is overburdened with taxes and duties — particularly in the Member States. But if taxes and/or duties are to be reduced or abolished, everyone should derive equal benefit and not just the users of specific transport carriers.

President. — We have been following in this Question Time the procedure whereby only one member from each group speaking the same language has been called to put supplementaries. Now if the House does not wish to proceed in this manner and we wish to take a very much longer time to deal with one particular question, I would of course call Mr Curry.

I call Mr Boyes to speak on a point of order.

Mr Boyes. — Did I hear you correctly, Madam President, when you said 'from one language'? Last time you ruled, — and I do not think there was too much disagreement, except from myself — that one speaker from each group would be called. But if it is one speaker from one language it means one of that lot over there speaks and it means that one of us over here cannot speak . . .

(Laughter)

. . . and considering there are about 60 odd of them and only about 17 of us it means on my calculation I shall get about 1 in every 4 chances to ask a supplementary.

President. — Mr Boyes, you have been attending these sessions quite regularly, I am very happy to say, and you have watched, I hope, the way in which I have tried to call speakers by nationality and political

President

group, as far as possible. In that way we have managed to get through quite a lot of questions. I regard it as my duty, acting as President during this session, to get as many questions answered orally by the Commission as possible. So far I have not had any objections to this. If the House does not have any objection to this way of proceeding, I shall now go on to the next question.

Are there any objections?

I call Mr Curry.

Mr Curry. — Does the President make a distinction between the various tendencies in the group? May I not put a slightly wet question after the rather arid one you had recently?

President. — Mr Curry, you will know that every group has as many individual Members as they have tendencies. It is therefore not my role to have to judge the individual tendencies in each political group. I am therefore asking you, Mr Curry, if you would forego putting this question and we can proceed, in order to get through as many questions as possible.

Question No 3 by Mr Pranchère (H-669/81) has been put back to the May part-session at the author's request. As the author is not present, Question No 4 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 5 by Mr Purvis (H-700/81):

In its reply to Mr Newton Dunn's oral question No H-709/80 on 9 March 1981,² the Commission undertook to report to Parliament its findings regarding the herbicide 245-T and to make proposals regarding its control if justified. Would the Commission now let us know what has transpired and if it intends to make any proposals?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Commission accepts the broad conclusions of the opinion of the Scientific Committee for Pesticides which was published by the Commission in December 1981.

The Commission concludes on the basis of existing scientific evidence that Community-wide prohibition on the marketing and use of 245-T herbicide in the context of Directive 79/117 would not be justified. It recognizes that 245-T, by virtue of its efficacy against particular types of weeds, offers advantages to agriculture, particularly forestry, in many parts of the Community. The Commission considers, however, that a number of precautionary measures concerning the marketing and use of 245-T should be taken. It will be making a communication to the Council shortly.

Mr Purvis. — May I say to the Commissioner that I am grateful that finally we have had publication of this. This question was put down because of the long, long delay that took place and the rumours that developed in the meantime. Rumours in both extremes. Is this 245-T safe? Or is it not safe? Is it highly dangerous and are all the rumours that have been built up about its danger justified? Or is it in fact relatively innocuous? Could he just plainly say what is the position?

Mr Richard. — I can plainly say that the opinion of the Scientific Committee for Pesticides was published in December 1981 and that we accept the broad conclusions of the Committee's opinion.

Mr Boyes. — A technical question but a simple one. I recently wrote to the Commission and have not had a reply. The Commissioner who answered the question used the phrase 'the sole supplier of this pesticide'. Would you give me the name of the company which is the sole supplier, please?

Mr Richard. — I am a little mystified about the first half of the question. I am not sure what letter the honourable Member is referring to nor to whom he wrote nor what it was about. Secondly, I did not use the words 'sole supplier' in my answer. Thirdly, I could not give the names without notice of the question.

President. — I call Mrs Kellett-Bowman to speak on a point of order.

Mrs Kellett-Bowman. — Madam President, I would simply like to point out that I think you are the only one who introduces this particular rule about the restriction of supplementary questions. It would seem to me that some questions are quite clearly of very much more interest than others. It is a somewhat arbitrary rule, therefore, if only one is to be permitted in each language from each group. I would therefore ask you not to make it an inflexible rule but to be guided by the number of people who wish to speak. Because surely, Madam President, those of us who take the trouble to attend Question Time, as opposed to those who are elsewhere, should have the benefit of being here.

President. — Mrs Kellett-Bowman, thank you for your comments. Of course I take into account exactly what you have said. Nevertheless, there are times when the Commission, I think, has answered as fully as it can the questions that have been put to it together with the supplementaries and I think it is up to me to judge when we should go on to the next question.

¹ See annex of 21. 4. 1982.

² Debates 267.

I would add that according to the rules, Annex I 6(2), it is up to the President to declare which supplementaries are inadmissible, so I do have sole right to make that judgment. I hope that I make it in the interests of the House as a whole.

I now have two supplementary requests, one from Mr Newton Dunn and one from Dr Sherlock. Would they perhaps settle between them who should take the supplementary, this being a fair way of dealing with this?

Mr Sherlock. — Again, Madam President, there is a risk, particularly with rather technical subjects, that we could not in so short a time decide, but perhaps my question, or the answer we get, will satisfy Mr Newton Dunn. I think he might reserve his position should it fail so to do.

The unsavoury reputation acquired by 245-T has almost always, in fact perhaps essentially, been due to the percentage content of dioxin, one of the by-products which arise in the course of its manufacture. Would the Commission be prepared to say whether they will in future be making any recommendations about permitted levels of the content of this particularly noxious, undesirable by-product?

Mr Richard. — With the best will in the world I do not think that I can go very much further than I went originally, which was to say that we will be making a communication to the Council shortly. I am perfectly sure that the point that the honourable gentlemen has just raised is one which is very much in the minds of those experts in the Commission who are considering this matter and will, no doubt, be responsible for the drafting of the communication.

President. — May I request the Commission to send a copy to those who are interested in this matter of their communication to the Council, so that at least they may be kept informed of your decision.

Mr Richard. — I am sure that in this, as in all other matters, the Commission is anxious to have the widest possible dissemination of its ideas and will no doubt wish to act in accordance with well-established practices.

President. — Question No 6 by Miss Quin (H-709/81):

What in the Commission's view would be the effect on consumption of vegetable oils in the EEC if a non-discriminatory levy on these oils were to be agreed?

Mr Pisani, Member of the Commission. — (FR) The effect of this levy would be of the order of 17 Belgian francs per month per household of four people.

Miss Quin. — I do not feel that is a very helpful answer. It does not really clear my worries about the effects on households in the EEC. Is the Commission aware that, for example, the price of olive oil in the United Kingdom is four times the price of other competing vegetable oils? If such a tax were introduced there is a danger that this would have very considerable effects on households in the UK. Will the Commission therefore not come out formally against the introduction of such a tax, which is a totally inappropriate way of dealing with the problems of the vegetable oil and olive oil sector?

Mr Pisani. — (FR) This question was considered when studies were carried out on the consequences of the entry of Spain and Portugal into the European Economic Community. In point of fact, the production surpluses in these applicant countries would place a significant burden on the Community budget, representing several hundred million ECU. In the face of that prospect, a number of studies have been carried out and I have given the results of these studies in terms of the impact at domestic level, which seemed to me to be the most appropriate given the way the question was phrased.

One can therefore say, to answer the precise question, that the introduction of such a tax would have almost no effect on consumption at the household level. However, further studies on a product-by-product basis are of course necessary, and these are currently in progress. This is a matter on which the Commission has no preconceived views, and on which it prefers to reserve judgment until the results of the studies are known.

Mr Martin. — (FR) During the extraordinary session on agricultural prices the European Parliament passed a resolution calling for a tax on imports of vegetable oils and fats.

Does the Commission intend to meet this demand and submit relevant proposals to the Council as quickly as possible?

Mr Pisani. — (FR) As matters stand at the moment, there does not appear to be any need for such a measure, particularly as it would have to be subject to negotiations at international level, which would have no real chance of an easy success. In the circumstances the Commission, looking at the problem, does not intend to take a position on it right away. However, should the analysis it is engaged in at this moment go the way the honourable Member feels convinced it

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will, then the Commission would not fail to proceed accordingly.

President. — Question No 7, by Mr Davern (H-717/81):

Is the Commission aware of the United Kingdom's proposal to submit imports of cream and flavoured milks to that legislation (concerning the packing of liquid milk for retail sale to premises registered by the UK authorities) which is currently being challenged by the Commission before the European Court under Article 169 of the Treaty, and, if so, can the Commission confirm that it has protested in the strongest terms to the UK Government about this proposed legislation and, in the event of its being made law, will it include this further breach in its Article 169 application to the Court?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) The Commission is aware that the Government of the United Kingdom plans to apply the restrictions now governing the sale of imported pasteurized milk to cream of the same quality and flavoured milks. The Commission has lodged a strong protest with the United Kingdom Government against the proposed measures and has also taken the necessary steps to ensure the immediate introduction of a new procedure should the United Kingdom Government continue with its plans in breach of the provisions of the Treaty.

President. — Question No 8, by Mr de Ferranti (H-734/81):

Does the Commission still intend to subsidize the development of electron beam machines for making electronic circuits despite the Mackintosh report's statement that their throughput is extremely low and their costs extremely high?

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) As regards the subsidies for electron beam machines, as provided for in the Commission regulation, you have pointed out that we are not talking here of a Commission aid to the production of this type of technology but an aid towards its development in so far as the producer has a certain number of customers who would be interested in buying the prototype.

As to whether or not these types of machines will actually be used, I am familiar with the Mackintosh report to which the Member refers and which gives an estimate of the number of these machines that would be used per year: about ten. On the other hand, a Commission survey of the top high-technology companies, like IBM, Texas Instruments, Hitachi and Toshiba, reveals that large budgets are being set aside for research into this type of technology.

Mr de Ferranti. — There are many people throughout the Community who are very conscious of the need to maintain our technological ability in this area, but at the same time, if taxpayers' money is to be used by the Commission in support of a technological development — and this is money being used in support of a technological development — then it is right for Members of this Parliament to question whether particular projects are worthwhile or not. In view of the fact that a respected consultant has said that this project is not a worthwhile project and these machines are unlikely to be efficient, is it really right that taxpayers' money should be spent on it?

Mr Davignon. — (FR) May I say, on behalf of the Commission, that these questions are a matter of opinion. I do not believe it would be helpful at this point to recall all the predictions made by consultants over the years which have proved false, the most famous being the one made in 1948 by the person who announced that there would never be any call for a computer capable of storing more than 512 words. That gives some idea of the sort of errors that can be made.

I have given a totally honest answer to the honourable Member. He, obviously, has a right to put the question. The Mackintosh report considers that no more than ten such machines will be sold per year. Our own findings on the basis of consultations with the major high technology companies, who are our competitors, tell us that large sums are being spent on developing this type of technology for this and other uses. That is why we do not think that, on the basis of conclusions drawn by one consultant and with the other information that we have, we can justify withdrawing the proposal at the present time.

I believe it is all a matter of judgment, and that is never so precise.

President. — As the author is not present, Question No 9 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 10, by Mr Junot (H-811/81):

The establishment of a customs union within the European Community is a major objective as regards the internal market. However, only five texts were adopted in 1981 and progress towards a customs union is marking time.

What specific measures does the Commission intend to initiate in order to secure definitive harmonization of existing legislation in the Member States?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) As the

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982

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Commission clearly stated in its communication to the Council concerning the 1982 programme for the establishment of the customs union, it is not satisfied with the results of the efforts made in 1981 to strengthen the customs union. It knows that the honourable Member will agree when it says that, only if the customs union is strengthened, will that uniform economic area be created which will permit advances in industrial development and, through the elimination of as many obstacles to the movement of goods among the Member States as possible, benefits to be derived from a large-scale market.

The Commission is giving priority to persuading the Council to speed up its consideration of the many proposals which have been awaiting a decision for some considerable time. It feels the first step was taken in this direction when, at the Commission's prompting, the European Council expressed its concern about the state of the internal market at its meeting of 29/30 June 1981 in Luxembourg.

Subsequently, the Commission forwarded to the Council on 21 October 1981 a proposal for a resolution concerning the strengthening of the internal market, the progress of which it has since been following with keen interest. It also used its influence to have the simplification of formalities and procedures in the intra-Community trade included in the agenda for the European Council's discussions in connection with the mandate of 30 May, which have not unfortunately yet been concluded, what is known as Part 1 of this package.

The Commission hopes, however, that, in view of the developments that have occurred, early decisions can be taken on the matters before the European Council and that this will result in greater awareness among the technical experts than in the past of the political importance of having a customs union that works. The Commission realizes that its efforts in this area will be successful only if it has the full support of the European Parliament.

Mr Junot. — (FR) I am both fascinated and a little perplexed by the Commissioner's comprehensive but, dare I say, somewhat embarrassed replies.

He assures us that the Commission shares our concern. I am delighted to hear it and that is something we shall keep in mind for the future. Basically, not to put too fine a point on it, the fault lies entirely with the Council. It does not look at the proposals put to it. Now we are told that last May it consented to give consideration to one of the demands presented to it in connection with the protection of internal trade and the Commissioner says that he hopes the technical experts will be prepared to take these demands into consideration.

(The President urged the speaker to put his question)

In the circumstances, what steps does he propose to take to obtain a practical result for which we have been waiting for a quarter of a century?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I am very grateful to the honourable Member for his supplementary question. Allow me to recapitulate: following the European Council's encouragement in the summer of 1981, the Commission compiled a list of all outstanding decisions, which it set out in a proposal for a resolution in October 1981 and included in what is known as Part 1 of the overall package of subjects connected with the mandate of 30 May 1980, on which a decision was to be taken in the winter of 1981. Unfortunately no decision was taken during the negotiations at the London summit or at the recent summit in Brussels. The Commission now hopes that the next summit at least will produce a decision. But should this not be so, I would point out that we shall no longer feel bound to consider all these matters as a package and we shall try to have each proposal adopted by the Council on its merits, although we are afraid that each proposal, if submitted on its own, will meet with technical resistance. Hence my perhaps overinterpreted remark about the absence of political appreciation in the Council's technical committees of the importance of the internal market. There is a real gap between the political pronouncements of the European Council, according to which this internal market is of decisive importance particularly at a time of recession, and proceedings in the Council's subcommittees, where the more technically oriented officials have shown little regard for the political importance of the situation as a whole and have so far made no effort to speed things up.

That is what I was saying in my answer.

Mr von Wogau. — (DE) You have stressed the importance of Parliament in keeping the internal market in Europe open. I should like to point out that the European Court of Justice and the case-law it has developed in this area in recent years play at least as important a role.

But I must now say that there is a growing tendency in the Member States not to respect the judgment of the European Court of Justice or only after some delay or again and again to impose conditions in this regard. I believe this represents a very real danger for the free movement of goods in Europe. I should therefore like to ask you what the Commission intends to do to counteract this tendency.

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I share the honourable Member's concern and am also aware of the growing tendency in the Member States for judgments of the European Court of Justice not to be respected with the punctuality and care called for by Community law. The Commission will therefore use all the instruments for which the Treaty provides, and has already done so, to

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ensure the implementation of the Court's decisions where they have not been implemented or have not been implemented within the period specified.

(Applause)

Mr de Ferranti. — Is the Commissioner aware that a parliamentary delegation led by Mr Moreau, the chairman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, is to visit Brussels on 26 and 27 May and Paris on 7 and 8 June with a view to getting across to members of the national parliaments and to ministers and to the press the very points which the Commissioner has so eloquently expressed to this House this afternoon, and could we have again, please, his assurance that that delegation will have all possible help from the Commission's secretariat and facilities in the capitals concerned?

Mr Narjes. — *(DE)* The Commission is extremely grateful for this action by the European Parliament. It will provide every assistance it can.

President. — As the author is not present, Question No 11 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 12, by Mr Pasmazoglou (H-834/81):

What is the Commission's assessment of the causes, extent and duration of the fall in oil prices and what policy is proposed to take advantage of this change?

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(FR)* The reasons behind the oil price situation seem to me to be quite straightforward. At the present time actual and potential supply exceeds world demands. This has brought about a fall in crude oil prices on the open market, the levels of which are broadly speaking lower than the prices fixed at the last meeting of OPEC ministers.

In point of fact prices have not fallen all that sharply, only a matter of some 4%. Moreover, so far as the Community is concerned, we find that whilst this fall in prices has had the effect of reducing somewhat the oil bill expressed in dollars, this is not the case when it is expressed in units of account or in national currencies.

As regards duration, one can only speculate, it is something to which it is impossible to give any kind of precise or authoritative reply in view of all the factors involved, which are not just economic. All this has induced the Council — on the initiative of the Commission — at its meeting on 16 March 1982 to increase its efforts to attain the objectives that the Community

has set itself: restructuring of demand, more rational use of energy and developing alternative sources. The present market uncertainty makes these objectives more essential than ever.

Mr Pasmazoglou. — *(FR)* Could the Commissioner give some indication of the additional revenue the Community could expect to receive through a policy of holding the prices of oil and petroleum products? Given that there are certain provisions in the budget which are designed to aid the effort to stimulate economic recovery in the Community, could this additional revenue not be used to give the initial impetus for this recovery and at the same time to implement a regional development policy which could reduce the budget difficulties of the Member States of the Community?

Mr Davignon. — *(FR)* If I understood the question correctly, Mr Pasmazoglou is asking me what would be the result of substituting a reduction in prices by an additional tax levy which could be used to fund a development programme.

Firstly, so far as the present situation is concerned, we have always been in favour of the true price of oil being reflected in the economy, that is to say we do not believe that countries should grant oil price subsidies whenever there is an increase. In cases where there is a fall in prices expressed in national currency, which in most countries can be only very marginal in view of the strength of the dollar, in which oil prices are quoted, it seems to us that the first thing to ensure is that this price fall does not lead to a decline in the level of investment in measures to reduce dependence, restructure the demand infrastructure and develop alternative sources of energy. In the light of this it seems to us that the programme that the Commission is proposing to the Council to encourage these types of investment, which must obviously have an impact on the Community's policy for economic recovery, must be taken up and financed by the States.

As for financing them through additional taxes on oil, that is one option that has to be taken into consideration. The Commission is not in favour of introducing an automatic levy to compensate for the fall in prices and to finance this type of programme. That solution seems to us a little too simple to solve an extremely complex problem which, because of the exchange rate factor, is not felt uniformly throughout the countries of the Community.

Mr Seligman. — Can I then ask the Commissioner why he thinks an import levy on oil would not be the right way of stabilizing oil prices? If oil prices continue to fall, all efforts at alternative energies or rational use will drop and they have already been dropped. Therefore an import levy might be the best way of stabilizing oil prices.

¹ See annex of 21. 4. 1982.

Mr Davignon. — (FR) I should like to confirm that, on the whole, the Commission takes much the same position as that expressed in the two questions put to us, namely how to ensure that there is no relaxation of the effort made by the Community as regards increasing the level of investment in the energy sector, regardless of fluctuations in oil prices.

But to imagine that there is some magic formula whereby any fall in prices due to a return to the law of supply and demand in the market for oil can be compensated for by a single tax which would underwrite the investment programme is we feel to take a too simplistic view of things, when one also has to take into consideration all the other aspects of economic policy, the balance between taxation, inflation and so on. These considerations we cannot take lightly.

Be that as it may, what is vital is to have a sound policy to encourage investment in clearly defined programmes designed to attain specific objectives, and that is what the current discussions with the Member States are all about: to agree on what the investment objective ought to be. That is the first priority. Thereafter we have to set aside the necessary resources and I am not ruling out any method, but neither am I expressing a preference for any particular one, to achieve this objective.

The overriding priority is for us to reach agreement on the level of investment that we need to attain the various objectives of our energy strategy.

President. — As the author is not present, question No 13 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 14, by Mr Cronin (H-841/81):

What guarantees can the Commission provide that the benefits of an increased 'non-quota' section of the revised Regional Fund will be awarded to the most needy areas of the Community, particularly the border counties of Ireland?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) The very nature of the 'non-quota section' of the Regional Fund precludes the possibility of reserving a quota determined by certain regions or countries. However, Article 4, paragraph 3 (b) of the draft revision of the regulation for the Fund states that in the use of the resources earmarked for the financing of these measures allowance must be made for the specific problems of the regions and the relative degree of regional imbalance existing within the Community.

Mrs Kellett-Bowman. — Bearing in mind the President's reply, will the Commission seek to ensure that

areas which have been very badly hit by structural unemployment — for example, areas dependent both on textiles and on shoes, which frequently occur in the same areas — receive help from the non-quota section?

Mr Natali. — (IT) I would like to remind Mrs Kellett-Bowman that, in conformity with Article 27 of the draft revision of the regulation of the Fund, specific Community measures for regional development charged to the 'non-quota' section of the Fund must be applied in favour of Community areas which have either been particularly affected by the recent serious problems of industrial decline or which have suffered from certain Community policies or from provisions adopted to facilitate the application of these policies or to minimize their consequences on the regional level.

President. — Yes, Mr Boyes?

Mr Boyes. — I hate challenging your presidency, Madam, because you are, I think, one of the fairest Presidents in this Parliament.

(Laughter)

I do not know why your colleagues should guffaw when I say it sincerely. You have only taken one supplementary and I put my name down some considerable time ago for this number.

President. — I apologize to you, Mr Boyes, I did not see this on my left. Anyway I now call you to put a supplementary.

Mr Boyes. — I realize it was an oversight and not a deliberate decision.

(Laughter)

Some of us have more faith in you, Madam President, than some of those over there — they are ignorant and you know that.

(Laughter)

Mr Commissioner, I notice from the *Times* of 19 March 1982 — although the photograph in that issue is of Mr Ivor Richard, one of your colleagues — that the Commission is working towards a blackspot theory which is defined as: 'Aimed at job creation in pockets of high unemployment within the better-off regions'. In view of your answer to Mrs Kellett-Bowman when you started talking about regions and areas less privileged, could you tell me if you agree that blackspots in better-off regions are the ones that might benefit from the non-quota system or would you agree with me that there are blackspots in the worse-off

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982.

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regions that ought to have priority for any funds from the Regional Fund?

Mr Natali. — *(IT)* First of all I would like to point out that we are talking about a revision of the Regional Fund, and I believe that tomorrow or the day after Parliament will be giving its opinion on the draft revision presented by the Commission.

I must say to Mr Boyes that his question is very reductive. I have stated the guiding principles, and I mentioned that Community measures taken through the Regional Fund can be carried out in favour of Community areas particularly affected either by recent and serious problems of industrial decline or by the consequences of certain Community policies. This evidently implies a specific examination of individual objective conditions, without reference to subjective conditions in the regions themselves.

Mr Paisley. — While the non-quota grants from the Regional Fund are very deeply appreciated in Northern Ireland, is the Commissioner aware that the ludicrous use of some of these funds to build picnic sites in such infamous IRA terrorist areas as Crossmaglen have brought this Fund into grave disrepute in Northern Ireland? And could he not today see that this Fund is directed to areas like Fermanagh where it could be put to much better use?

Mr Natali. — *(IT)* This is the honourable Member's own personal opinion.

President. — Question No 15 by Mr Flanagan (H-842/81):

What assurance does the Commission intend to seek from the United Kingdom authorities that the recently announced UKL 90 million public expenditure programme for Northern Ireland which includes funds to the Housing Executive to construct 4 500 new houses will be additional to the aid to be provided by the EEC for housing purposes?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(IT)* As is well known, on 23 November 1981 the Commission presented to the Council a draft regulation aimed at initiating a specific measure in favour of housing in Northern Ireland. This draft regulation includes other specific provisions intended to guarantee the complementary nature of the Community measures.

Mr Flanagan. — I do not really propose to ask a question because it appears from what has been said that the answer is that no specific measures have in fact been asked for and that the word 'transparency',

which is very much in use in this House in regard to activities of the House and its associate bodies, is not sought to be applied to the government concerned.

Since my friend, Mr Paisley, has chosen to speak of Crossmaglen, perhaps I could ask if the picnic-type activities to which he refers would include the activities of the Crossmaglen branch of the Gaelic Athletic Association on the playing field which it legally owns but which has been taken over by the British Army.

President. — Mr Flanagan, since you yourself said you were not putting a question — I am grateful that you have now sat down. I will call Mr Paisley whom I would ask to put a question.

Mr Paisley. — Madam President, I always put questions. I would like to ask the Commissioner if he is aware of an answer given to me recently in the British House of Commons that of the money allocated to Northern Ireland 60% has been kept by the British Exchequer in London and never benefits Northern Ireland? Will he, therefore, take urgent steps to oblige the British Government to respect the principle of additionality?

Mr Natali. — *(IT)* I mentioned that in our draft regulation we include specific provisions intended to guarantee the complementary nature of the Community measures. I am not so fortunate as to have a seat in the House of Commons. I therefore do not know what sort of action can be taken there, nor do I know what influence we can exert on the Members of the House of Commons.

Mrs Ewing. — May I — as one who sat there for years — first assure the Commissioner that he does not miss too much by not sitting in the House of Commons.

Can I ask the Commissioner to elucidate something which came out of his answer? I was pleased to note that he said in his answer that his recommendation is that the measures be complementary. But can he, therefore, explain why it is that Northern Ireland is to be singled out for this better treatment by the British Government when there are other examples of grants of regional aid, such as in the case of my constituency and other parts of the UK, where the money goes into the Exchequer and is not additional as was the intention of the EEC, so that Britain is conducting a fraud? Can he explain why there should be different treatment for Northern Ireland — although I welcome it for my Northern Irish colleagues — from that in the other parts of the UK?

Mr Natali. — *(IT)* I said that I am not a member of the House of Commons; I am not a member of the European Parliament either. I have only the agreeable

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privilege of being able to address the European Parliament, and I would like to say to Mrs Ewing that the draft regulation we presented concerning Northern Ireland also has reference to a resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 19 June 1981, and that on this matter we have therefore acted in accordance with a parliamentary vote.

In answer to the rest of your question, the Commission has always believed that the measures taken should be complementary in nature. It therefore wished to emphasize that this draft regulation for Northern Ireland is a response on the part of the Commission to a vote explicitly formulated by the European Parliament.

Mr J. D. Taylor. — Would the Commissioner agree that if the principle of additionality is not applied to schemes identified by the EEC for regional aid, it does serve to bring the Community into disrepute, and since the United Kingdom Government appears not to be the only one which does not practice additionality, for certainly additionality is not applied by the Dublin Government where many rural areas in the Republic are deprived of monies originally meant for them by the European Community, will the Commissioner make the same representations to the Dublin Government as are requested in the original question to the United Kingdom Government?

Mr Natali. — I have already mentioned that tomorrow or the day after there will be a debate in the European Parliament concerning all the problems of the Regional Fund. I believe that on that occasion the approach of the European Parliament will be adequately confirmed in the document which Parliament itself will eventually approve.

President. — Question No 16 by Mr Lalor (H-843/81):

Would the Commission indicate the relative costs of intervening in the Community beef market through the export refund system and intervention and furthermore, does the Commission consider the export refund system more important at the present time to supporting the beef market than intervention?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) The cost of support in the beef sector in 1981 was about 1.415 m ECU, export refunds accounting for some 58% of this. The Commission does not regard the refund arrangement as more important or less important than intervention. The two arrangements do, after all, serve different purposes. Intervention is designed to support the internal market, while the refunds are intended to enable Community exporters to participate in world trade. The Commission natur-

ally takes the necessary steps to ensure that each arrangement is able to play its specific role. From 1979 to 1981 expenditure on export refunds rose, but exports also increased, from 340 000 tonnes in 1979 to 647 000 tonnes in 1980. This is the last full year on which we have information. In 1981 prices in the Community rose by about 15%. Intervention stocks fell substantially. I would point out in conclusion that exports have an immediate effect on sales, whereas intervention stocks are not sold until some time later.

Mr M. Martin. — (FR) In its resolution on agricultural prices, the European Parliament urged that the intervention system for beef should more effectively fulfil its role of safety net for the incomes of stock-farmers. What plans does the Commission have to put forward proposals to this effect at an early date?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Without being able to give specific, detailed assurance at this time, the Commission will obviously take account of the remarks made in the House on this subject.

President. — Question No 17 by Mr Calvez (H-597/81):

At the last meeting of the EEC-China Joint Committee, cooperation in the sector was discussed between the two sides. Can the Commission state which fields this cooperation would concern and what measures are being considered for putting it into effect?

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) In November 1981, in Peking, a framework for cooperation with China in the energy sector was laid down. Following a visit to the countries of the Community during February and March by a high-ranking Chinese delegation, we have now introduced a programme which consists in sending European experts to set up three training centres in Nanking, Peking and Tientsin for senior management, for officials of the various authorities responsible for energy planning and for the training of instructors. We are in the process of training here in the Community 19 officials and managers concerned with energy planning and energy conservation. And finally, two studies are being conducted, one in a rural and the other in an industrial environment, in order to draw up a model for the rational utilization of energy taking environmental constraints into account. That much has already been decided upon.

The Chinese delegation also submitted to us a second list of projects which are at present under consideration. And finally, I myself expect to be going to China before the summer on behalf of the Commission to look into other areas of possible cooperation between the Community and China.

Mr Calvez. — (*FR*) I am grateful for your reply, but the introduction of a programme of course implies its implementation, and I take note of the fact that 19 officials are to be assigned to a close cooperation. At any rate that is something positive. But can I ask you, as regards the coal sector, whether you do not consider that the distance separating China from Europe and the inadequacy of China's transport infrastructure — from the coal mines to the ports of shipment — are handicaps that are likely to affect import prices adversely? Also, is it envisaged that imports of Chinese coal into Europe will increase in the years ahead?

Mr Davignon. — (*FR*) The problem of developing cooperation between the Community and China in the coal sector is one of the topics that has been considered in connection with the exploitation of Chinese resources using European technology — you have there a tie-up with what European coal producers are doing. Secondly, consideration has been given to the introduction of new technology in the field of coal liquefaction and gasification. Thirdly, there is the whole question of supplies, which is where problems arise because very frequently the Chinese want to sign barter agreements and it is difficult to find suppliers who are prepared to enter into this type of agreement. In short, coal was regarded by both delegations as a matter of priority.

Mr Battersby. — In view of China's enormous energy needs and the Community's experience of coal and nuclear technologies, what steps has the Commission taken or does it intend to take to create the political framework for closer industrial cooperation in energy, including uranium raw and processed material supplies?

Mr Davignon. — (*FR*) As I said a moment ago, the Commission has started to lay down the framework within which these various exchanges can take place. Secondly, when the mission headed by the Chinese Vice-President had spent a month in Europe, we did in fact put them in touch, where coal and uranium are concerned, with certain Member States and undertakings involved in the development of cooperation. I believe that the honourable Member has put his finger on the problem, which is, so far as the Community is concerned, how to create a framework conducive to the development of individual contractual relations, which might receive our encouragement in order to implement a number of cooperative projects.

Mr Galland. — (*FR*) Would the Commissioner tell us what, according to his information, is the degree of importance that the Chinese government attaches to the development of nuclear energy and if he thinks European technology has a chance of being their first choice in the context of this development?

Mr Davignon. — (*FR*) I would not take it upon myself to try to give an authoritative answer to this question because quite obviously the Chinese will still be considering what their final position in this area should be. But I did come away with the impression that our Chinese partners in the dialogue had the political will to pursue this kind of discussion with a view to developing relations between the Community and China, which places the Community and its undertakings in a favourable position. However, I doubt that China herself will have decided on any definite options at this stage.

President. — Question No 18 by Mrs Pruvot (H-642/81):

Could the Commission report to Parliament on the first year of operation of the Eurydice system; does it not consider it desirable to extend the use of the Eurydice system as soon as possible to aspects of social policy other than those dealt with so far, and what is its opinion on the possibility of collaboration with the European Centre for Vocational Training (Cedefop)?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The information network on educational policy in the Community known as Eurydice has now completed its first full year of operation. The technical progress report concerning its first phase of development was approved in December by the Education Committee and the Commission intends to present to the Parliament in the near future a report on the first period of operation and latest developments. But perhaps I could say one or two words about it today in answer to this specific question.

In reviewing the progress of Eurydice to date, the Education Committee has agreed on the need during the next year to consolidate the activities of Eurydice rather than to envisage any extension at this stage to other policy themes. Although the network has undoubtedly been markedly successful in dealing swiftly with questions from policymakers, and that, after all, was the purpose of setting it up, and also in providing comprehensive and concise answers, its capacity for coverage is necessarily determined by the modest level of staffing resources available and by the progressive need to handle the data and material assembled, especially within the central unit, on a computerized basis.

Now the second part of the question. In answer to that, may I say that the Commission has already taken the initiative to ensure close and continuing cooperation with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) in Berlin. A report on the possibilities of such cooperation will be considered later this year by the governing board of the Centre. I think it is essential to recognize, however, that whereas Eurydice was set up to

Richard

underpin the education action programme at Community level, the European Centre, on the other hand, has a special responsibility to meet the information needs of the social partners and governments as well as those of the Commission in the field of vocational training.

Mrs Pruvot. — (*FR*) Thank you, Mr Commissioner, although your reply was not exactly the one I might have expected to receive to the questions put to you. I will therefore put a supplementary: Does the Commission not think the Eurydice system could be used for preliminary studies on the question of the mutual recognition of diplomas?

Mr Richard. — I am sorry I did not answer the precise question that Mrs Pruvot put down. I thought we had. What I said was that I thought that the first year had indeed been a success, but that it was necessary, in fact, to consolidate rather than to extend into different fields. But just let me say this in answer to the question just put. We do consider that the model developed in this field is invaluable in determining the most effective methods to link information about the evolution of national policies to the development of Community policies and programmes in other areas of social policy and, indeed, in other areas of education policy.

Now on the precise point that Mrs Pruvot put to me. I will look at it and see if there is any possibility of extending Eurydice in this direction, but I am bound to say that my preliminary feeling is that it would not be possible to do it at this stage. Therefore, while I am perfectly prepared to look at it, I hope that she and the House will understand that it is totally without commitment.

Mr Patterson. — It is now over a year since this Parliament adopted a resolution asking that special education of handicapped children should be one of those things to be included in Eurydice as a matter of priority. Now we thought that the Commission had accepted the main lines of the Clwyd report. Could the Commissioner say whether he could make an exceptional study of this matter too, and if the excuse for not doing it is that they have not got the staff, could he give us some indication of what staff is needed, and will that proposal be coming up in its budget proposals?

Mr Richard. — With great respect to the honourable gentleman the Commission is not interested in giving excuses. What it is trying to do is to explain to Parliament what the situation is. I am not in a position to run a vastly increased information network in the Community. I have neither the resources nor the money nor the staff with which to do it. What I am prepared to do in relation to Mr Patterson's request is exactly the same as in relation to Mrs Pruvot's — look at it again without commitment. But I must say to him,

as I said to her, that I think the chances of immediate expansion in this field are pretty slim.

President. — Question No 19 by Mr von Wogau (H-755/81):

In the draft directive for building products, the elaboration of special directives for single products is foreseen.

Has the Commission taken steps to make use of the work already carried out by the international and European standardization organizations in this field?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (*DE*) It is the Commission's declared policy to make the greatest possible use of the work of European and international standards institutions and similar establishments when approximating legislation. For the sake of the subject-matter and for personnel reasons, the Commission has a natural interest in continuing and improving its cooperation with these institutions, this being true not only of building materials but of all industrial products.

But before we can actually apply this policy to the various building materials, the Council will have to adopt the Commission's proposal for a basic directive on building materials. The distinction made between basic directives and specific directives dates back to the desire expressed by the European Parliament that the Community's legislative process should be speeded up with the aid of the fourth indent of Article 155 of the EEC Treaty. Only the basic directive will be adopted by the normal procedure, that governed by Article 100. The power to adopt individual technical directives on individual building products will then be conferred on the Commission. The latter will be assisted by what is known as a committee on rules, which adopts a position by a qualified majority.

The basic directive on building materials is, as I have said, before the Council. In its deliberations the Council is at present concentrating on deciding to which individual products the simplified legislative procedure should be applied. Two criteria are important in the compilation of this list: on the one hand, obstacles to the free movement of goods or their elimination and on the other, the ability to take advantage of the current and unfinished work of international standards institutions. This aspect in particular will be of interest to the honourable Member, to whom I am grateful for his question.

Mr von Wogau. — (*DE*) As you know, Parliament has for many years been an ardent supporter of the idea of the elaboration of certain technical details being transferred from the Council to the Commission. We also expect a decision to be taken in the near future so that this example can be taken to show that it is possible.

von Wogau

We have, however, always said that the elaboration of technical details should be the task not of the Commission but, as is the case at national level, of the standards institutions. We already have the European standards institutions CEN and CENELEC, in which the ten national standards institutions collaborate.

I have a further question to ask on this subject. What internal procedures and equipment does the Commission think these institutions must have if the elaboration of the technical details is actually to be transferred to them?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) As the honourable Member may recall from a report to the appropriate committee, the Commission tried to make a new start last December in its cooperation with CEN and CENELEC, and it has the impression that this move was successful. The test case — the toy directive standard — was completed a few days ago, and we hope on this basis we can also overcome the backlog in standardization in other fields. But it cannot be denied that equipping these committees and their working methods are time-consuming. The equipment is meagre, and the coordination procedures take a long time. This is where the real bottleneck lies. On the basis of future experience with a number of standards, we shall have to decide how the bottlenecks within CENELEC can be eliminated with our help. But we are not pessimistic in this respect.

Your other reference to the European Parliament's helpful support in extending the use for the fourth indent of Article 155 is in line with the requests which we have put to the European Council and which were mentioned just now in connection with the answer to Mr Junot's question. We therefore expect the adoption of the package under the mandate of 30 May 1980 to stimulate the Council and its subsidiary organs to be more helpful and generous than in the past through the application of the fourth indent of Article 155.

Mr de Ferranti. — Is the Commissioner aware that the building materials directive raised a vital national interest in the case of the United Kingdom, which was concerned about the thickness of the walls of scaffolding tubes? And could the Commissioner now assure us that there will be some way of ensuring that such a minor matter does not hold progress with a very important directive?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) I am grateful to the honourable Member for the way in which he has phrased this question. This is not the only obstacle of this kind, but it does illustrate the nature of the work and the difficulties we have to overcome. We hope, as I have said, that greater application in the European Council to the whole question of the internal market will make it easier for such questions to be overcome, because they

simply cry out for a practical compromise and should not be made into questions of principle.

President. — As the author is not present, Question No 20 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 21, by Mr Alavanos (H-802/81):

At the Panhellenic meeting of the General Confederation of Greek Agricultural Associations in Veroia on 7 February 1982, the representatives of Greek tomato, peach and beet growers demanded, among other things, that prices for the 1982-83 period should be fixed so as to cover production costs and to permit a reasonable profit margin. Why, then, does the Commission propose increases — which are unacceptable to farmers — of 8% for tomatoes, 10% for peaches and 9% for beet, especially since inflation last year rose to about 25% and production costs increased by about 30%?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) I must say first of all that the percentages quoted in Mr Alavanos's question are inaccurate. It is true that the Commission had proposed a 9% increase in base prices for beet-root, and 8% and 10% increases in base prices for tomatoes and peaches respectively. As Mr Dalsager mentioned this morning, it subsequently changed the last two percentages, raising them to 9% for tomatoes and 12% for peaches.

However, Mr Alavanos, you know perfectly well that in these proposals the common prices are expressed in ECUs and not in national currencies. As far as Greece is concerned, for both tomatoes and peaches it is necessary to allow for the narrowing of the gap between national prices and common prices; substantially, then, the proposal suggests an increase, expressed in drachma, of 17.1% of the base price for tomatoes and 19.6% of the price for peaches, and not increases of 8% and 10% as stated in your question. To these rates must also be added an increase due to agro-monetary measures.

I would also like to say — still in reference to the statistics quoted by Mr Alavanos — that, according to the most recent estimates available to the Commission, from February 1981 to February 1982 the rate of inflation in Greece was 19.5% and not 25%; production costs increased in 1982 by 23%, and not 30%. Finally, I would like to point out that, in the proposals concerning prices, inflation in general and the increase in the cost of production in particular are merely two elements of evaluation among others, such as market equilibrium, the general economic situation, and medium-term agricultural policy, not to mention the structural measures announced by the Commission in its response to the mandate of 30 May 1980.

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) I should like to say that both we and Greek farmers have considerable reservations with regard to Community statistics, and this brings the Community — to be precise the Commission and its statistics — into conflict not only with farmers' representatives but also with the Greek Government. According to Commission figures, last year saw a 1 to 2% increase in farmers' incomes — I am not sure of the exact figure — whereas the government's figures show that farmers' incomes would have fallen by 7% and more without government assistance. In this respect — and I am sorry to have to say this — we have considerable reservations over the figures provided by the Commissioner of 17% for tomatoes and 19% for peaches.

I should like to take the opportunity here of asking the Commissioner this additional question: by all accounts the Community is going to take appropriate additional measures in view of the high rate of inflation in Greece. I should like to ask, now that negotiations on agricultural products have got under way — what appropriate supplementary measures are being envisaged to avoid a repetition of this past year when agricultural incomes fell by 7%?

Mr Natali. — (IT) It is obvious — as Mr Alavanos himself will understand — that even if we should hold an extensive discussion on the Greek situation, we certainly cannot do it now. Although I realize that Mr Alavanos is particularly skeptical about figures, I would nevertheless like to quote some, and to say that in fact — as result of the financial mechanism established at the time of Greece's accession — Greece recorded a total net gain of 164 million ECU in 1981; for 1982 the estimates are even more favourable, and it is possible to foresee for Greece a net gain of between 400 and 600 million ECU.

As for what specifically concerns the problems relating to the structural proposals, I would like to point out that, in the framework of the 'price package', in addition to a more rapid equalization of prices, the Commission has already proposed structural measures which are applicable immediately. It has also been suggested that certain measures now in force be adapted to Greece at this time. On 4 March 1982 the Commission presented a regulation instituting a series of common measures for the improvement of agricultural structures in several regions of Greece; another series of measures will be proposed in favour of the Mediterranean region. There has been a proposal to extend the premium for the birth of calves to Greece — a measure which at present applies only to Italy — and there are also various other provisions among which I would like to mention the Greek exemption from the co-responsibility tax on milk.

Naturally these considerations are fragmentary in character, but they do tend to support the validity of my answer.

Mr Welsh. — I find that answer by the Commissioner rather disturbing, because it seems to me that the Commission is going out of its way to encourage the increased production of goods that are in structural surplus, and it does not really matter whether it is in Greece or anywhere else. So could the Commission confirm for us that unemployed workers and consumers in the Community, wherever they may be, very much resent having to pay inflated prices for agricultural products that are in fact in structural surplus, and perhaps he could explain that to Mr Alavanos?

Mr Natali. — (IT) This is obviously a provocative statement which calls for a much more extensive debate. I believe that Parliament has already thoroughly discussed the problems of agricultural production and eventual structural surpluses. I will only say to Mr Welsh that obviously the problem of Mediterranean products cannot be examined only from the viewpoint of structural surpluses; it must also be seen in the light of the geographic rebalancing of the Community.

President. — As the author is not present, Question No 22 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 23, by Mr Hutton (H-828/81):

Will the Commission confirm that the 'political priorities' referred to in the 1982 information programme include a continuing awareness of the state of public opinion — particularly in the United Kingdom — and of the need for a positive response to it?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) In its information programme for 1982 the Commission stated — and maintains — that the Community message should be directed above all to the general public. For this reason, past and future informative measures will fully allow for the state of public opinion in the Member States and for national or regional susceptibilities.

Mr Hutton. — In view of the continuing state of public awareness in several Member States, which is often based upon falsehood and distorted information, would there be money available over and above the normal budgetary allocation for the development of new and imaginative schemes to combat public hostility to the Community, including perhaps the recruitment of regional agencies to supplement the work of regional offices?

Mr Natali. — (IT) I would like to say to Mr Hutton that we have plenty of imagination but we are ill-

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982.

Natali

supplied with money. For this reason we can only try to put what money we have to the best possible use.

As far as certain specific regions — among them the United Kingdom — are concerned, I would like to point out that we have in fact created three offices in the UK — in Belfast, Cardiff, and Edinburgh — precisely in order to keep public opinion as well informed as possible.

Mr Prag. — While, as a former head of the European Communities' Information Office in London, I note with great pleasure that we now have a very high-quality monthly magazine and at last, after three years, a new basic booklet on the Community, would the Commissioner not agree that there still remains a great deal to be done? For instance, I get from my own constituency repeated requests for mobile exhibitions for public libraries. There was a time when we had 13 of those in London which were all fully booked all the time. Today we have none. Would the Commissioner not agree that in fact the effort is still very inadequate and could be considerably expanded?

Mr Natali. — (*IT*) I agree that the effort may be inadequate, but I can assure you that the imagination and the will to work are there. The problem is money. You will soon be discussing the new budget, and the problem will naturally be raised on that occasion.

President. — I wish to thank Members who have exerted considerable self-discipline when putting their supplementaries and as, I think, a consequence of this new self-discipline which the House recognizes, I would like to draw Members' attention to the fact that we have had during this Question Time ten members of the Commission, which I think is an innovation. On behalf of the House, I would like to thank the Commissioners who have attended this sitting and particularly the six Commissioners who have answered the questions put to them by Members of this House. Thank you.

(*Applause*)

The first part of Question Time is closed.¹

3. Welcome

President. — I have much pleasure in recognizing in the distinguished visitors' gallery the President of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr George Ladas, who is paying an official visit to our Parliament.

Mr Ladas's visit represents the first official contact between the European Parliament and the Parliament of Cyprus as foreseen in the EEC-Cyprus Association Agreement of 1972. So therefore, on behalf of the European Parliament, I extend a warm welcome to Mr Ladas and wish him an interesting and fruitful stay in Strasbourg.

(*Applause*)

4. Discharges in respect of the 1980 financial year (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the joint debate on nine reports drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, concerning the discharges and other budgetary questions.

I call Mr Ryan.

Mr Ryan. — Mr President, in the three minutes allotted to me to speak I want to use some of that very scarce time to join with others in expressing my deep regret that my colleague and neighbour, Heinrich Aigner, the king of budgetary control, is not with us today and express the hope that his indisposition will be of short duration.

It would be wrong, it seems to me, to discuss budgetary control and the issuing of discharge in respect of any year without Parliament itself looking at the unacceptable waste of resources forced upon the European Parliament by the Council of Ministers by virtue of their rule that Parliament may not have a single working place.

I endorse the report of Mr Price. I was very pleased with his remarks this morning. The one point of disagreement I have with him is one of emphasis. He said that a private concern would go bankrupt if it adopted our working rules. But we are not responsible for the unacceptable working conditions of Parliament, Parliament is not responsible for the waste of resources, the waste of time, the waste of taxpayers' money. Parliament wishes to have one working place, but Parliament has been stopped from taking that sensible decision, which is necessary not merely in the interest of costs, which are crucial, but also in the interest of effective democracy, by the cowardice of successive Members of the Council of Ministers who refuse to take the decision which any effective democracy would allow Parliament to have acceptable working conditions.

It therefore seems to me to be wrong that we should contemplate discharge in any year without drawing attention to the fact that Parliament has unacceptable working conditions because of considerations of national and municipal pride and greed.

¹ See Annex of 21. 4. 1982.

Ryan

I wish also to direct attention in the short time allotted to me to the Forth amendment on the discharge to be granted to the administrative board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. It seems to me that Mr Forth has tabled a resolution without reading the report, because the report itself makes it quite clear that there has been a very significant improvement in the output of the Foundation in question and asks other institutions in Europe to adopt the work and management practices of the European Foundation in Dublin because by so doing they would cut costs and become more efficient. Notwithstanding that report, which is presented to us by his own colleague, Mr Kellett-Bowman, we have Mr Forth's amendment suggesting that we should refuse discharge to the administrative board of the Foundation because he is not satisfied with their output. It seems to me that there is little point in this Parliament consuming, as it does consume, a forest per year — a forest of about one thousand trees — producing reports if Members who table amendments do not go to the trouble of reading the reports in the first instance.

I was glad that reference was made in the debate today by Mr Patterson to the situation on the border between the Republic of Ireland and that part of Ireland which is still under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. He said that there has been a waste of Community funds by virtue of the illegal passage of goods not once but twice and sometimes in a carousel across that border for the purpose of collecting Community funds and indeed also funds of the Irish taxpayer. That is true. But it seems to me that a solution to that particular problem is not something which lies entirely within the control of this Community or indeed of the governments in question other than to abolish the border in question because if there were no border then the abuse of the funds on the island of Ireland would not occur. It is true — it is an axiom — that as long as profit can be made through the smuggling of goods anywhere in the world man will smuggle. We might deplore that — in fact we do deplore it and we condemn it, but it happens to be a reality, it happens to be a consequence of the imperfections of human nature and, therefore, it seems to me that a pure administrative change or adjustment will not settle that particular problem on the island of Ireland or indeed for that matter anywhere else.

IN THE CHAIR: MR PFLIMLIN

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Hord.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I rise to support the Key report, and in doing so I recognize the good work which our Committee on Budgetary Control has done over the years. I think it can be said that the committee has been responsible, realistic and consistent. As we know, this debate follows on the debate last month on the Aigner report. In that report Parliament called for a series of answers from the Commission on what we believe to be failings in their handling of their export policy during 1980. One of these points brought up by my colleague, Mr Tyrrell, was that the Commission has deceived this House on several occasions in the answers to oral and written questions and that as late as November 1980 we were told that the Commission was not exceeding the normal levels of sales of agricultural products to the USSR, whereas in the case of wheat, we subsequently learned, there was a 340-fold increase. It is all very well to say that the United States thanks the Commission for this work in regard to the embargo, but I think that the United States, rather like this House, Mr President, did not know the facts and the facts only came to us later. It was only late in 1981 that we became aware of the horrendous increases which have taken place.

Now I would suggest, Mr President, that we still wait for reply from the Commission as to how the Commission has budgetary authority, bearing in mind that in early 1980, after the invasion of Afghanistan, both arms of the budgetary authority instructed the Commission to restrict sales to Russia and the Eastern bloc. We have heard nothing. Despite all the debate, all the arguments and the propositions put forward we still have heard nothing. Therefore, I believe that it is right at this stage, Mr President, for this House to call for the truth, the whole truth, on the attitudes and the performance of the Commission in regard to its export policy in 1980 with regard to the USSR. In my view they failed to invoke the instructions to restrict sales and it is up to them now to tell us why they changed the rules on payments on exports to Russia in 1980 so that figures for 1980 appeared in 1981, why they deceived the Parliament on written and oral questions. When they do this, and only when they do this, Mr President, can we consider discharge.

The situation clearly, in my view, is one of the utmost gravity and I exhort the Commission to recognize the situation which we are in. The responsibility for getting this information rests with the Parliament and, therefore, I call upon the Commission to give us the facts, to give us the whole truth, to expose what appears to the public at large to be a cover-up on the situation in 1980; when we have their answers then, and only then, will we consider discharge.

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — I rise to support the Key report, which has been so ably put to the Parliament today, and I

Paisley

feel that there are some matters that this Assembly needs to underscore.

When this Assembly was being elected, we were told, and rightly so, that this Assembly had no legislative power and no power to elect an executive — two very important roles in any ordinary parliament. But there was one matter that was continually reiterated, and that was the power of this Assembly on budgetary matters.

Today, therefore, we are discussing one matter in which this Assembly must exercise that power for the good of the entire Community. There are some matters that certainly call for an answer from the Commission, and one matter that is very relevant to the United Kingdom is the failure of the Commission to implement the decision taken by this Assembly and also by the Council in regard to the embargo on sales of agricultural products to the USSR and the state-trading countries of the East European bloc. This matter causes great concern in the part of the United Kingdom that I represent, simply because we have many people there who are on or below the poverty line. It seems absolutely outrageous that the people of Russia and the East European trading bloc should have agricultural products from this Community available to them at prices at which they are not available to the needy in my part of the United Kingdom — or indeed, in the rest of the Community as well. That is one matter that the Commission needs to come clean on in this Assembly. We need to know why the declared will of this House, backed up as it was by the will of the Council, was overridden by the Commission and why the Commission failed to bring in that embargo.

There are other matters of great importance that have been raised here today, and I am not going to underscore them, because they have been underscored by other speakers in this debate. There is, however, one matter I would like to refer to, and that is the loss of Community revenue due to the smuggling that goes on across the border in Ireland, and I would like to make a comment upon what Mr Ryan has said. He said that the Republic of Ireland had a border with that part of Ireland under the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, and the way to do away with smuggling was to abolish the border. Now if you carry that logic across the whole Community, then you will be talking about abolishing all borders and in fact across the whole world as well. I would emphasize that that border is there because of the right to self-determination of the people of Northern Ireland. They have decided that that border should be there, and this Assembly over and over again has emphasized and put on record the right of peoples to self-determination. It also needs to be emphasized that the party to which Mr Ryan belongs, when they were in power in the early days of the Irish Republic, also ratified that border; it was ratified by the British Government and this ratification was lodged with the League of Nations. So the smug-

gling has got to be taken care of, not by abolishing the border but by dealing properly with those that engage in lawless acts across it.

President. — I call Mr Key.

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Mr President, as the general rapporteur on this report, I do not wish to respond to all the points raised during the debate, but there are three or four points I think I should dwell on.

The first is that this report, Mr Tugendhat, is in my name, but it was drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control and was adopted by a very large majority in your presence. It is a report by the Committee on Budgetary Control and not one person's individual approach to it.

My second point to you is that it has been stated by yourself and one or two other people that what we should be dealing with in a discharge report is purely what is stated in the annual report of the Court of Auditors. The discharge is not about that: it is about the whole financial year and all its aspects. Sometimes, therefore, the Court will emphasize one point one year and another point the next. Also, now that so many special reports are being brought forward, they too have obviously to be included in it. It is a discharge for the financial year and not just the response to a report, though it obviously provides the basis for our report.

My third point is that I would like to thank the Commission and especially many members of the staff for accepting many of the criticisms, pointing out ways in which we can make changes and promising to make further changes. But I am a politician, as is everybody else in this Chamber, whether they are Members of this Parliament or represent other Institutions, and I am very wary when people make promises; and in seeking the deferral which I am proposing on behalf of the committee today, what I want to happen, what the committee wants to happen and what I am pretty sure the taxpayer in Europe wants to happen is that the promises that have been made, especially over the last three or four weeks, by various Commissioners will actually be implemented. I am sure that the Commission can cooperate very easily — they have done with Parliament and with the Court of Auditors — and then we would be able to present in the autumn of this year a positive list of things we have changed in order to eradicate the abuses which have existed and which have been highlighted throughout the discussion on this discharge report and to demonstrate that we are now introducing a more efficient method of running this Community. Because I, like you, Mr Commissioner, want to see this Community work and be successful.

What I want to do is to get rid of the abuses that stain the character of the Commission and the Community.

Key

We cannot afford these small things — to us they look small, sometimes they are very large — but the point is that they attract much public criticism, and it is our job as a Parliament to keep the executive in control, to ensure that we are representing the people of Europe and that we are getting real value for money. That is the basis of this interim report today. We want you to act on your promises and be faithful to the spirit of this Parliament and the spirit of this Community and make it a success. I hope that when we come back in the autumn of this year — because I am pretty sure Parliament will support this report — we will be able to come back in the spirit of working and cooperating together to actually show that we have achieved something.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Tugendhat, Vice-President of the Commission. — Mr President, in an earlier stage of this long and really very interesting debate, Mr Patterson said that he thought that the Commission had won the debate but that, because many Members were not present, we would lose the vote. I must say I think he is very probably right. But I am grateful to him for saying that we won the debate, though I must say that when I listened to Mr Key's wind-up I wondered whether that was so.

May I just make one or two things crystal clear. First of all I certainly agree with Mr Key, who has always made his points with great courtesy, that it is the task of Parliament, by which I mean the plenary assembly as well as the Committee on Budgetary Control, to act as a watchdog. I think it is certainly the duty of Parliament to do so. It is the duty of Parliament to search out abuse, it is the duty of Parliament to make sure that where things could be done better they are made better. It is the task of Parliament to ensure that high standards are maintained. I agree with Mr Key that Parliament is not obliged to restrict its oversight to the Court of Auditors' report, though I am sure he would agree with me that the Court of Auditors' report is, as it were, the basic document for this exercise, which is why I pointed out that one of the principal areas to which he and some other Members were directing their fire was not mentioned in the Court of Auditors' report at all. But if Parliament wishes to go wider than that, of course it may.

The two main points I was trying to make with Mr Key I would like to repeat. The first is that regardless of whether the discharge is started now or whether it is deferred — absolutely regardless of that — this Commission has undertaken — and I repeat the undertaking now — to cooperate with Parliament to the maximum extent possible. The deferral of the discharge cannot gain anything in that sense, and the reason why the Commission will cooperate with Parliament to the maximum extent possible is, first of all, because we have a duty to do so and secondly because

my colleagues and I actually believe in the principle that we should do so. I want to make that point absolutely clear. I also want to make it quite clear that although we have offered time out of number to provide additional information or answer questions or work over the Easter break or do anything that anybody wants us to do, apart from Mr Price and Mr Patterson, nobody asked us to do that, and that I think is a point which bears repetition.

On the next point Mr Paisley's speech was quite a good indication of the mood of some people. Mr Paisley was attacking very vigorously the sale of agricultural produce to the Eastern bloc. Okay, I understand that position. I understand exactly what he was saying, but he was using — and he is not the only one in this House who has been doing that — the discharge debate and the discharge procedure as a device to try to bring about changes in the Common Agricultural Policy which he happens, in this respect at any rate, not to like. But in this Community, anymore than in a national situation, one does not use the discharge procedure as a device for bringing about changes of policy. One uses the discharge procedure to see whether policies were properly executed in the first place. I thought Mr Paisley's speech was a very good giveaway of the attitude of a number of Members who see the discharge debate as a means for beating the CAP over the head, which they do in other circumstances as well.

And of course it is not only the case of the CAP, though that is the most obvious one. I think, Mr President, that it would be a great pity if, Parliament were to misuse the discharge procedure in this way. The discharge procedure has a very specific purpose, and if it is not used for the purpose for which it is designed, then the purpose for which it is designed will go by default, and that, in my view and I am sure in the view of many Honourable Members, would be a great pity.

The other point which I made is that the Financial Regulation — and nobody has contested this point — quite specifically says that the discharge should be handled by a particular date, and in general, I must confess, I believe that all Institutions ought to observe the letter as well as the spirit of the law. I believe that the Commission and Parliament should do so because so often our criticism against the Council is that it does not always do so and in general it is the weaker Institutions in a given situation that are best defended by a rigorous interpretation of the rule of law. If one starts not obeying the rule of law in one circumstance, one cannot be surprised if others do not obey it in another circumstance. But as a general principle, I must say I think a rigorous interpretation of the rule of law is a good thing.

To conclude, Mr President, I agree with Mr Key on the need for the highest possible standards of administration, I agree on the need for ensuring that where things have gone wrong they should be put right. I

Tugendhat

believe that in this particular instance we have done everything possible. We certainly remain at Parliament's disposal, whether or not the decision to delay is taken, to continue with this matter, and I do think it is regrettable that on the matter of the sales to the Eastern bloc people are using the discharge procedure as a device simply to attack the CAP. On the one-twelfth system I do think it is unreasonable for us to be attacked now long after the event for an interpretation on which I specifically sought Parliament's agreement at the outset and where no hint was given by Parliament of disagreement with what we were doing until the regime was practically coming to an end. Mr President, let us all do our best to make sure that everything works as well as possible in the future.

President. — The joint debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

5. Guidelines for the 1983 budget

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-97/82) by Mr Robert Jackson, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on the European Parliament's guidelines for the 1983 budget of the European Communities.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr R. Jackson, rapporteur. — Mr President, our debate today takes place at an unusually early stage of the annual budgetary procedure — which is perhaps why there are so few Members present to take part in it. There is, I am afraid, a tendency in the Parliament only to begin to think about the budget in the final quarter of the year, when we all look forward — if that is the correct expression — to the confused and obscure annual wrestling match between the European Parliament and the Council which takes place in November and December: a wrestling match in which we, the Council, the Press and indeed the public find it very hard to see exactly what is going on. Indeed I do not think that it is an exaggeration, Mr President, to say that as we go through this experience at the end of the year Members often find themselves in the frame of mind of Racine's Andromaque at the crucial stage in that great drama as she wanders disconsolately about the palace and asks herself: *'Ou suis-je? Qu'ai-je fait? Que dois-je faire encore?'*

Mr President, it seems to me that the first task that Parliament has to set itself is to try to make clearer what exactly is going on in the field of the budget, so that unlike Andromaque we know exactly where we are, what we have done and what we still have to do in this field. For, Mr President, it is crucial for our success as European Parliamentarians — who have to

face the electorate in 1984 — that we should clarify what we have been trying to do in the exercising of what is after all our most important constitutional power.

Mr President, in this endeavour I believe that the resolution on guidelines for the 1983 budget has a crucial role to play. Each year the budgetary procedure follows an established pattern. We have the Commission's preliminary draft in June, the Council's draft in July, the Parliament's first reading in October, the Council's second reading in November and the Parliament's second reading and the adoption of the budget in December. The way for the European Parliament to make better sense of the annual budget procedure is to develop a new stage right at the beginning of the procedure — a stage before the Commission adopts the preliminary draft and the Council adopts the draft budget. A stage at which the Parliament sets the guidelines and the targets that it wishes to see for the budget, so that all the world — and especially the Commission and the Council — can know what sort of budget we want to see in the following year. This is of course what we are talking about today, and I am delighted that President Dankert has agreed to the suggestion that Parliament should request an early meeting with the Commission as a body, so as to ensure that it is fully acquainted with our guidelines before it proceeds to adopt the preliminary draft budget.

Mr President, let me say something about the character of this Resolution. Honourable Members will notice that there is no explanatory memorandum attached to the resolution. There are only notes — notes which principally consist of references to previous resolutions of the Parliament and of the Parliament's committees. This is because in a very real sense those resolutions constitute the explanatory memorandum to the proposals which now lie before the House. This resolution on guidelines for the 1983 budget is thus essentially an exposition of the budgetary dimensions of the major political choices which Parliament has made since direct elections. Indeed, at almost every point it uses the exact words adopted by Parliament in its previous resolutions — this is notably the case in the paragraphs on balance in the Community budget and on the re-structuring of the budget by improved control of Community policies. This is why, Mr President, I think I can say that this resolution is in no sense a personal document or a national document. It is certainly not a Group document. It is not even a Committee on Budgets document. It is fundamentally and essentially a European Parliament document.

Mr President, I turn now to the substance of the proposals now before the House. The resolution makes our priority absolutely clear. Indeed its very first sentence states that 'the central theme of the 1983 budget should be the fight against unemployment'. The resolution also makes clear the precise ways in which it wishes to see this fight conducted. That is to say, in

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the first place it emphasizes that the whole range of Community policies must be deployed to achieve the end in view — the Social Fund, the Regional Fund, the borrowing and lending activities of the Community, agricultural structural policies, transport policies and the like. And in the second place it puts particular emphasis on the Social Fund, as there is a proposal which originated in the Social Affairs Committee for a 130% increase in the Social Fund during 1983. This is a figure which reflects the volume of applications for help from the Social Fund received by the Commission last year but for which the Commission was not able to find funds within the Budget. That is the justification of this precise figure, and what it indicates is that there is an enormous volume of demand which cannot be satisfied because there is not enough money in the budget — and I believe, and the Budgets Committee believes, that we should put that money on the line.

A number of questions are posed by this emphasis on the Social Fund. It has, for example, been suggested that we must not build up expectations which the Community cannot fulfil. Mr President, the draft resolution makes it absolutely clear that the primary responsibility for fighting unemployment lies with the Member States. But do not let us underestimate or in any way slight the very real contribution which the Community is already making in this field. I invite Members to look at my Working Paper No 3 from the Budgets Committee which deals with the 'Budgetary Aspects of Measures against Unemployment' in the Community. The Social Fund is one of the oldest Community policies. It goes back to the Rome Treaty. Indeed — and here I am thinking of a point which came up in a meeting with one of the groups yesterday — it is true to say that the Community's social policy and the Social Fund is much older than the Community's agricultural policy. In 1980, Mr President, the Social Fund paid for the training of something like 400 000 young people and for the creation of some 300 000 jobs. Of the order of a half of the current French and Danish job creation programmes are being financed by the Social Fund. So, Mr President, the Social Fund is already an important Community instrument. What is being proposed to the House is that we should try to make it still more important, still more useful in tackling the fundamental problem of unemployment.

We are not going to solve the problem this way, but we can, and we must, make a contribution. Mr President, another suggestion is that if we emphasize the Social Fund this year this will necessarily be at the expense of the Regional Fund. But this need not be the case, as the resolution makes clear at a number of points. But we in this Parliament must try to be consistent. We have always been critical of the way in which the Regional Fund works: the quota system, the lack of additionality, etc., etc. The Regional Fund Regulation is now under review and Parliament is asking for important changes to be made in it. Surely, Mr

President, it would be a political error for us in Parliament to say at this stage that, whether or not the Regional Fund is satisfactorily revised, we will still go on supporting its expansion. The resolution indicates that we will decide how much of a priority to give to the Regional Fund at our first reading in October, in the light of the progress made by the Council in revising the Fund in accordance with our views. Mr President, this is surely the right position for Parliament to adopt, and I hope that all honourable Members, whatever the particular national interests of the country from which they come, will support that position because it is the right *communautaire* position for Parliament to be in.

Mr President, the fundamental issue in each year's budget procedure is, and probably always will be, by how much will Parliament succeed in persuading, or forcing, the Council to agree to exceed the maximum rate for the year. I want to invite honourable Members — those that are listening to these remarks — to consider the political relevance for this annual battle between Council and Parliament of this proposal for a big increase in the Community's efforts against unemployment. If Parliament adopts this concept this week we will have forged ourselves a powerful weapon with which to influence the Council. After all, in all our Member States, efforts in this field are being stepped up. I think of the new efforts being launched by the French and German governments. I recall, for the benefit of British Labour Members of the House, that in Britain Government spending on special employment and training measures will be five times the amount spent in 1978-1979, a rate of increase considerably in excess of the rate of increase of unemployment. The Council itself has spoken often enough, most recently in the European Council, about the need for action at the Community level to combat unemployment. We have had fine words from the Council. If the Parliament adopts these proposals today it will be issuing a challenge to the Council to put its money where its mouth is. And this is a challenge which the Council may find it politically impossible to resist.

Mr President, all our work in this House on the budget is obviously leading up to a debate in due course about the increasing of own resources over the 1% value-added tax ceiling. Yet, paradoxically — or so it may seem — this subject is not explicitly mentioned in the resolution before the House today (although I personally would not mind very much if it was amended to do so).

There are two reasons for this omission. The first, and the most obvious, is that this is a resolution with a limited purpose. It relates simply to guidelines for the 1983 budget and we all know that — whether we like it or not — the own resources issue is not and will not be an issue in the context of the 1983 budget (although it may be an issue in 1983 when we come to the following year). But there is another and a more political reason for the silence of the resolution on this topic.

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Honourable Members, colleagues, reality tells us that an expansion in own resources in due course is not only desirable but is also inevitable and necessary. But, colleagues, the same sense of realism tells us — or should tell us — that this increase in own resources, when it comes, will only come about when the national parliaments who will have to ratify that increase have seen that certain prior conditions have been fulfilled. Certainly, this was the message that came across to me loud and clear when Parliament was visited last month by the influential Finance and Budgets committee of the German Bundestag. So, if we in this House are really serious about achieving an expansion of the financial means available to the Community, we should devote ourselves not just to passing resolutions calling for more money to be spent. That is too easy. We should devote ourselves also and more importantly to a sustained and genuine effort to establish the conditions in which we will be able to win consent for the provision of more resources for the Community.

I hope that the House will see this guidelines resolution in that perspective. It aims to make a real contribution to the effort now in hand to restructure the budget without calling into question the fundamental principles of Community policy. But, still more important, it aims to make an honest contribution this year and next to the solution of what everybody knows to be the fundamental problem this year and next year: the problem of unemployment — the problem of the future of our young people — the problem of the future of the young citizens of Europe.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Tugendhat, Vice-President of the Commission. — Mr President, I should like to begin by congratulating Mr Jackson on the eloquence of his speech. He is a great expert on budgetary matters, and I am sure that he will be an outstanding rapporteur, bringing such style to the knowledge which he already has.

As this is the second occasion in my career as Budget Commissioner that there has been a rapporteur from the European Democratic Group, perhaps it would also be appropriate to remember Mr Michael Shaw who was the previous rapporteur and who in fact initiated the procedure which we are taking part in today. The 1978 budget was the first one with which I had to deal, it was the first time we had this particular procedure. It has been subsequently developed each year by Mr Bangemann, by Mr Dankert, by Mr Spinelli and by others and is an example, I think, of the way in which Parliament's procedures do develop in the hands of people from different parties and different nationalities. It is, I think, one of the most encouraging features of this Parliament's life, Mr President.

Now I believe that the procedure initiated by Mr Shaw and continued now by Mr Jackson gives rise to a debate which is extremely useful, not only to the Commission, which certainly gains a great deal from hearing Parliament's views at an early stage and this year an earlier stage than usual, but also to the Community as a whole. Certainly I can assure the House that we will be paying the very closest attention to what is said in this debate today.

I would also like to make it quite clear that from the Commission's point of view this year is a particularly important one in budgetary terms. The last two budgets have been transitional affairs overshadowed by the May 30 mandate. Despite the considerable efforts made by the Commission to bring the negotiations on this matter to a conclusion — and here I would like to pay tribute to the personal efforts of President Thorn, who unfortunately, as the House knows, cannot be here today — the Member States have not yet reached a final agreement. Nonetheless, we feel that the Community can wait no longer. The Commission is not prepared to produce yet another set of transitional proposals.

This year our budgetary proposals will represent the first step in implementing the mandate. We believe that it will be a significant one to demonstrate beyond doubt the Commission's desire to develop a range of policies relevant to the 1980s and beyond.

I hope, Mr President, that Parliament and the Council will support us in that and in that spirit I welcome the Committee on Budget's guidelines as set out in the Jackson report. I listened very carefully, Mr President. Mr Jackson said that it was not just a committee document, it was a document of the whole Parliament. I only wish, Mr President, and I say this in all friendliness to Mr Jackson, that I knew how much weight to attach to that excellent statement. Because I have to say that the very first paragraph in Mr Jackson's report reaffirming Parliament's commitment to keeping, and I quote, 'agricultural spending under control' reads rather oddly in the light of the resolutions on agriculture passed by this Parliament only last month, resolutions which, as my colleague, Mr Dalsager, warned at the time, would have the effect of increasing agricultural expenditure by 1 600 million ECU in a full year if carried into effect. Put another way, Parliament's resolution passed only last month would cost three times more than the original proposals tabled by the Commission. I don't yet know what the final outcome of the Agricultural Council will be but I have not the least doubt that it will be less expensive than the proposals put forward by this Parliament last month.

Mr President, I am grateful for the recognition of what I say, because I think that in this debate all of us are in fact on the same side. Mr President, I would also like to point out that thanks to the favourable *conjuncture* in agriculture, helped by tighter and more efficient management on the part of the Commission,

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the rate of increase of agricultural expenditure, as Mr Clinton pointed out earlier today, has slowed down dramatically in recent years. The final outcome for 1981 was in fact slightly lower than that in 1980. This year we expect again to be able to rectify downwards our original provision for agricultural expenditure, and I hope to bring forward the appropriate proposals shortly.

Mr President, the central point, apart from agricultural expenditure, of the Jackson report is the need to increase the Community's efforts in the struggle against unemployment. That is the purpose towards which the recommendations are directed for enlarging the Social Fund and also for developments in other sectors, such as the ECSC social measures, regional policy, agricultural structures policy, industrial policy, the NIC energy policy, research policy, transport policy and promotion of trade in the context of aid to developing countries. The Commission agrees with these priorities and our budgetary proposals will reflect them. But of course more is needed than simply beefing up various budgetary lines, and we will of course, in fulfilling these priorities, have to decide the extent to which we feel it would be right to keep up the various budgetary lines.

More is needed, however, and we are also working on proposals for revising the basic regulation of the Social Fund in order to enable it to play a more effective role in future than in the past. We have of course already tabled proposals for improving the effectiveness of the Regional Fund. All of us, Mr President, recognize the role which direct budgetary action, as exemplified by those funds, has to play in the fight to get Europe out of the present economic recession.

But in saying that I feel I ought to make two additional points as well. The first is, as I am sure the Committee on Budgets would agree, that it would be wrong to measure the extent of the Community's efforts to reduce unemployment solely by the size of the Social Fund and the various other Community instruments. In this connection I am glad to note the importance attached by the committee, and I quote again: 'to those aspects of the Social Fund which have a catalytic role in stimulating action in Member States and encouraging convergence of other policies for training and employment promotion'. I believe that in present circumstances this catalytic role is potentially much more important than it has been given credit for in the past and that these catalytic aspects of the Social Fund and indeed of other Community policies as well should be emphasized more strongly in the future. Money is important, but the role that Community policies can play in stimulating action in the Member States, in bringing together other policies, in getting money out of the system which could not be got out otherwise, the catalytic role in short, is a very important one and often more important than the absolute size of a fund would suggest.

My second point, which again I imagine the Committee on Budgets will agree with, is that one cannot of course hope to cure unemployment simply through the expenditure of public money. If only one could, Mr President! If only one could! But the underlying problems are far too complex and deep-seated for that to be possible and can only be tackled by the deployment of the whole armoury of economic, financial and industrial policies. Most of these are, of course, in the present state of the Community's development, primarily in the hands of national governments, but the Community has an important role to play through the coordination of the individual national efforts, and in this respect the European Monetary System and the maintenance and extension of the common internal market are particularly significant. The Commission's efforts to help Europe out of the recession should be judged not only in terms of its budgetary proposals but also by what we are striving to do to develop the EMS and the internal market and by our other activities as well, such as, for instance, our steel policy, our competition policy and our conduct of the common external trade policy.

I was glad to note in that connection, Mr President, that the Jackson report does not confine itself to internal Community problems. The Commission shares the concern which has been expressed on several occasions by Parliament and which has been reflected in this report about increasing the means available to the Community for food aid. We must improve the instruments and procedures in this area and we must continue to work towards a satisfactory and early agreement between the Institutions on the basic regulations which have been under discussion for several years now.

I would now like, if I may, Mr President, to turn to a number of matters important in themselves but less important than the central features of the Jackson report. The debate on the discharge has yielded quite a full discussion of the problems of control. It would not therefore be appropriate for the Commission in the present debate to go into the problems of co-responsibility in the agricultural sector when the Council is in the process of deciding on prices and related measures. I would, however, stress that the packages currently proposed by Mr Jackson must be seen in the light of the resolution adopted by Parliament on 26 March 1982, which show clearly the difficulty Parliament has in choosing between co-responsibility and bringing the budgetary consequences of agricultural surpluses under control.

I would like to thank the rapporteur for the attention he pays to the Commission's staff needs. These are genuine and involve a large number of sectors, and it is to be hoped that Parliament, and indeed the Council, will be convinced of the need for increases in several areas this year.

As regards studies, the Commission has already provided last year detailed information to the Committee

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on Budgets. Here, too, the Commission may be able to convince Parliament of the real usefulness of these appropriations and the justification for their use. It should not be forgotten either that there are several studies which are indispensable in order to follow up requests made by Parliament.

Reference is made to the budgetization of borrowing and lending and of the EDF. The Commission has already proposed their budgetization. We support their budgetization and we maintain our position.

The final point in Mr Jackson's report concerns the vitally important matter of classification of expenditure. I am pleased, Mr President, to report that inter-institutional work on the classification of expenditure is in hand and that no effort is being spared by the Commission or indeed, I am sure, by Parliament or the Council to achieve agreement between the two arms of the budgetary authority. The second meeting of the three presidents will take place tomorrow here in Strasbourg, and I hope that further progress will be made.

May I conclude, Mr President, where I began by wishing Mr Jackson and the Committee on Budgets, as well as the whole House, the greatest success in their budgetary labours this year and say that I hope we shall be able to work as closely as possible, as we have done in the past, and to ensure that the procedures and indeed the influence of Parliament in budgetary matters continue to be improved.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport.

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, draftsman of an opinion. — *(IT)* Mr President, with this debate we are taking the first step on the long road to the formulation of the Community budget: Parliament must make a contribution to this effort. The task has often been a bitter one for this Parliament, but it is important nonetheless that we begin it on the right footing.

As draftsman of an opinion for the Committee on Youth and Culture, I wish first to offer my congratulations and those of my committee to the rapporteur for the manner in which he has approached the budget. The correlation of the question of the Community budget with the battle against unemployment both provides us with a valid overall technical and political guide for our decisions and demonstrates to public opinion that Parliament plays a vital role in Community policy for the solution of the problems affecting the peoples of the Community.

The Committee on Youth and Culture shares this approach and wishes to participate in it through its

contributions and amendments, which are aimed at giving additional force and clarity to the argument presented by the rapporteur. In fact, the relationships between the various areas of competence of the Committee on Youth and Culture and the general objectives of the fight against unemployment vary from one area to another; this report should be heard with this in mind, so that the separate significance of each area be clearly understood.

I will be very brief in mentioning the reasons for the Committee's proposed amendments, for these are issues which have already been discussed several times, and they will no doubt be discussed again. The policy on education, as already formulated by the Council of Ministers and approved by this Parliament during the last part-session in a resolution drawn up by me, is a necessary tool in the fight against unemployment. The time has passed when we could think that post-scholastic professional training would be enough to correct the imbalances between supply and demand in the Community.

If the fundamental choice made by the rapporteur is to have any meaning, it is essential to develop the policies initiated — particularly those relative to the entry of young people into active life, to the teaching of languages, to youth exchanges, and to all the various headings which concern the policy on education. This can only be done by gradually increasing the proportion of expenditure earmarked for our policy and by stressing in the programmes themselves that this policy is not separate from the other Community policies, but intimately connected with them.

The policy on culture as well — which is not the same thing as the policy on education — plays an important role, not only as one of the great ideal factors for strengthening the process of Community integration, but also as a field for the creation of new jobs. We all know that the trends in employment point to a decrease in employment in the industrial sector and an increase in employment in the service sector. And this service sector — the cultural service sector, the sector of growth in cultural measures and initiatives — is a key sector; cultural policy today, in our Community as well, is a policy of response to a growing intellectual unemployment affecting qualified young people, a policy of response to a society that needs new cultural requirements. We have put a special emphasis on the preservation of our architectural heritage, believing that this is a typical area in which employment does not lead to the import of raw materials but rather to technological innovations, new culture, and new opportunities for development, particularly in the underdeveloped regions. We feel therefore that this is a valid way to participate in the fundamental choices made by the rapporteur.

Finally, Mr President, we cannot forebear to point out that the outcome of Parliament's fight for a proper budget, for the launching of the Community policies, will not be decided in this Chamber alone: it will also

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be decided by the relationship with public opinion, by the overall manner in which Parliament and the Community present themselves to the outside observer. Therefore an information policy understood not as propaganda but rather as a proper relationship with the electoral base, a proper relationship with public opinion allowing European citizens to evaluate, to judge, and to choose the directions to be taken on issues of common interest, is certainly one of the objectives Parliament should urge the Council and the Commission to pursue as a meaningful political initiative.

I do not wish to take up any more time from the debate, we will have the opportunity and the means — by working on the individual budget chapters — to qualify, to determine exact amounts, and to justify these requests in sectors of expenditure which have in general been amply provided for, and where no significant amount is left over at the end of the year: I therefore ask the House to adopt the amendment proposed by the Committee on Youth and Culture.

IN THE CHAIR : MR JAQUET

Vice-President

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Fich. — *(DK)* Mr President, on behalf of the Socialist Group, I should like to present some comments on Mr Jackson's report on the guidelines for the Community budget for 1983. This report is headed: 'The fight against unemployment', and it is hardly surprising that the socialists consider this to be an excellent heading.

The socialists have on various occasions taken initiatives to further the fight against unemployment, the reduction of working hours and much more. We have often debated the question of unemployment long and hard in this Chamber and, again and again, we have had to conclude that we are alone in our struggle against unemployment. Again and again, our proposals have failed to secure a majority in the House. We are therefore obviously very gratified to see a proposal on the guidelines for the budget which bears the heading 'The fight against unemployment'.

Clearly we can only support something of that kind, and we will certainly do that. But I must at the same time say that we deplore the reason for this heading. We have repeatedly heard both in the Committee and here today that the reason for this now becoming a topical subject is that the 1984 elections are approaching, and it is necessary to come up with something the

electorate can understand. We do not think that unemployment should be combated for the sake of being re-elected in 1984. We feel that unemployment should be combated because unemployment is, in itself, a concrete and current problem. Unemployment should be fought, because unemployment should be fought, and for no other reason.

I consider that the central theme of the guidelines, which are before us today, is contained in the section on the Social Fund, and the crucial point, of course, is that an increase of 130% is being requested for the Social Fund, in other words, it is to be more than doubled. A proposal emanating from the Committee on Social Affairs, chaired by Ann Clwyd, has thus been incorporated into this report. We socialists will indeed support the proposal. But we must at the same time stress that it is not enough. For it is no substitute for an intelligent economic policy, an intelligent investment policy and intelligent planning of production. It is only a means of repairing the damage which has occurred because the wrong economic policies have been pursued. To spell it out, what good will it do to inject huge sums of money into the Social Fund, if at the same time we see one or more Member States pursuing economic policies which directly create unemployment? It will do no good at all, and we must be clear in our minds about that.

I should like to point out that, if we socialists support the enlargement of the Social Fund, we do so on one very clear condition, and that is stated in section 6 of the report. Permit me to read out this section. It says: 'The funds paid out from the Social Fund must supplement national efforts; they must be coordinated with the measures of the Member States in such a way that a genuine employment policy can be created. Payments from the Social Fund should not be used to reduce the expenditure of the Member States' on employment policy.' Our condition is that this part be adopted. Our condition is that the expansion of the Social Fund should not be followed by a corresponding reduction in the national budgets for combating unemployment.

Apart from the section on the Social Fund, the resolution contains a number of other sections, dealing with the Regional Fund, development and cooperation, industrial policy and much more. And in this connection, I must say that the Socialist group is disappointed. We feel that these sections are very loosely worded. Frankly, we feel — not to mince words — that they say nothing at all. We think that there are some very useful aspects but, in concrete terms, there is not really anything to these sections and, for that reason, a number of members of our Group have tabled amendments to these various sections in order to strengthen them. We should like to see something in these guidelines, something which will also assist the Commission when it comes to draft the budget, so that it knows in real terms in what directions we wish to go, in other areas too.

Fich

There is one question which has been left completely open, and the chairman admitted so a while ago. It is the question of the financing of this programme. Financing is a central problem. Everybody knows how close we are to the 1% ceiling — perhaps we have no accurate figure, but we have a good idea — and we get no answer as to how all this is to be financed. We know that we cannot apply heavy increases in the Regional Fund, in the Development Fund and in all the other areas, simultaneously with this huge increase in the Social Fund. The paper supplies no answer to the question how it is to be financed. Everybody knows that we have our 1% VAT limit, and everybody knows that this 1% VAT limit is not going to be removed in 1983, and we honestly feel that the resolution utterly and completely fails to provide a solution to the basic problem that is at issue here.

I would point out that a condition of our support for the Social Fund and the other policies against unemployment, such as the Regional Fund and the like, is of course that these policies should function more effectively. I was pleased to hear Commissioner Tugendhat today declare that the arrangements for these various sectors are to be improved, since that is a necessary precondition if it is to be at all worthwhile increasing the resources allocated to these various funds.

I should like to conclude by saying that the Socialist Group accepts this piece of paper but without any enthusiasm. We accept it as a provisional piece of paper, which is to be taken as a basis for further work but, of course, we expect some figures to be put to it. It is empty words, and we expect at some time or another to see it concretized with budgeted figures.

I will say finally that the Socialist Group wanted — and still wants — the 1983 budget to be an inspiration for progress. It should tackle the mandate of 30 May and possibly other questions too, so that we can make progress in the fight against unemployment and other issues, but we do not think that this paper imparts the necessary inspiration for these areas.

Let me finally add a personal comment. I cannot support the paper personally, because it contains a number of sections which I find completely unacceptable, for example, section 29, which deals with policy on youth, training and cultural affairs. I refer here to the previous speaker — who has unfortunately left — because I think it is in conflict with the Treaty, and I cannot therefore support anything of the kind.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Adonnino. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, both the rapporteur and the Commissioner have pointed out that this year Parliament has once

again made the interesting decision to have the actual budget procedure proceed from the adoption of a resolution, in order to indicate to the Commission the general guidelines to be respected in the preliminary draft budget, those which Parliament itself believes it can follow when the budget procedure reaches its essential stages.

I emphasize this point because I believe it to be extremely important. I would like to add that the approval of this method expressed by Commissioner Tugendhat and his hopes for its success are encouraging in that they can be interpreted as a commitment on the part of the Commission, which is responsible for the budget, to exert itself to the utmost to include Parliament's guidelines in the preliminary draft budget in the form of concrete proposals.

Naturally, these are general guidelines, statements of principle: Parliament is still free to make its final decisions in the course of the budget procedure, when it will have additional factors on which to base its judgment and be better acquainted with the proposals which will be made; the individual groups will also be able to develop their final positions.

Having said this, I wish to express my warmest thanks and those of my group to Mr Jackson for the great effort he made in drawing up this report. He was actually able not only to establish priorities among Parliament's longstanding budget priorities themselves, so to speak, but he also clarified Parliament's position on the different Community policies and activities.

Certainly, the inclusion of various fragments from a long series of resolutions relating to these policies and activities and presented over a considerable period of time has produced interesting and positive results; on the other hand, it is sometimes difficult to read these fragments, which are necessarily mentioned apart from their general context. Perhaps Commissioner Tugendhat was referring to this when he made some of his brief observations.

To draw up a budget — both for those who propose it and for those who must adopt it — is also to reach a balance among the basic policies: the policies already launched — which in our opinion are still inadequately funded, despite some progress, policies already accepted and included in the budget, whose further development appears nevertheless to be severely limited by the lack of funds; and the new policies which are to be introduced.

Commissioner Tugendhat has said — and we are very pleased about this — that he believes that the budget to be presented for 1983 should no longer be considered 'transitional,' as the preceding budgets unfortunately were — that is, 'transitional' between the old period and the new, the latter to begin with the deliberations on the Mandate of 30 May. Therefore, this budget can already reflect concrete proposals from the

Adonnino

Commission based on the guidelines supplied in the response to the Mandate of 30 May.

We are very pleased about this, even though I cannot help but remind myself and my parliamentary colleagues that the problem of limited own resources still makes itself acutely felt every time these budget issues must be dealt with. Although we are aware that this problem cannot be raised now in the context of the 1983 budget — and I concur with Mr Jackson in his avoidance of it — we know that it must be confronted soon, in all its urgency and importance. I hope that the Commission will follow us on this matter as well.

Another observation, which I think corresponds to what was said by the preceding speaker, is that this resolution may appear as a fanciful document where Parliament wants to say everything while paying no heed to the actual possibility of doing everything as it relates to the scarcity of funds.

I believe that this resolution, which had to be broad and general at this stage — considering that the specific choices are to be made later, during the budget procedure — must be read in a certain way. It should be stressed therefore that the various proposals complement rather than contradict each other, and that the definitive ones can be chosen from among them at the proper time.

Ladies and gentlemen, the essential aim of the resolution proposed to us — as has already been said — is to call attention to the need to increase intervention and strengthen the Social Fund in order to wage a more effective war against unemployment, itself a dramatic manifestation of the economic crisis of which Europe — and not only Europe — is now a victim. This vitally important problem forces us and the citizens of Europe to acknowledge the fact that the Community justifies its existence by making possible a common approach to difficulties which cannot be solved on the national level alone.

This leads us to the analysis of Community expenditure, which can directly affect the reduction of unemployment. Certainly, as was mentioned by the speaker who preceded me, the complexity of this problem is only matched by its seriousness. Therefore, one course of action alone cannot constitute a solution; there is need of many. I think that the resolution presented fully shares this approach.

No one believes that the increase of the Social Fund alone can succeed in solving the problems of unemployment in Europe. If only it could: Clearly, it is a question of supplementary initiatives carried out by the Community with its own resources as a complement to the national measures which the individual States must apply. It is also evident that we are speaking of measures which can attain the objectives proposed by the Social Fund, measures which have not yet been tried. In my view, these measures have two particular aims

which are in fact the primary objectives of these policies: to limit and eventually halt the reduction in the number of jobs, and to improve the poor or inappropriate training of the workforce.

On the first point, it is clear that in order to create new jobs we must defend the existing productive capabilities and stimulate the rise of new ones. The primary responsibility for this can be borne only by the national governments; they should increase their investments in production and limit the proportion of resources destined for consumption. We know that public spending can make a large contribution in this field, particularly in the area of social expenditure, which is so important to us.

I think it should be emphasized that in this field new technologies play a very important role both in stimulating new production and in influencing, sometimes negatively, the situation in regard to employment. It is equally obvious — as has already been said — that several factors are at work here: industrial policy, borrowing and lending policy, energy policy and research policy. Both the priority sector of nuclear research and other fields of research increase the importance of the latter. All these areas are stressed in the resolution, and they should therefore be borne in mind.

Naturally, the Social Fund can be of particular use in measures to promote employment and to improve the employment situation in certain regions, but it can be especially effective — as has been demonstrated — in the field of training and professional requalification, also in view of the restructuring of the sectors in crisis. It is for this reason that, in addition to favouring the establishing of the minimum increase for the Social Fund and demanding a consistent increase, my group also calls for this to be linked with the Commission's illustration of the ability of these measures to exert a concrete influence on the problem in question.

Ladies and gentlemen, the resolution touches on many points, and it is obvious that only the most important ones can be dealt with here, for the time is limited.

To conclude my speech and to further clarify the position of my group, I would like to say that we have always asserted that Parliament should not merely offer solemn declarations of principle, but that it should also work to provide concrete guidelines. The guidelines and decisions relating to the budget are precisely those which can have the greatest influence on concrete issues. We say immediately therefore that we are in favour of the resolution presented to us, with, of course, the modifications and improvements I have mentioned.

We believe that in this way we can demonstrate not only Parliament's readiness but also its desire to act realistically instead of adopting attitudes that may sometimes appear to be illusory or fanciful.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Balfour. — Mr President, there are moments in the life of this Parliament when it is difficult to believe that the Members who vote for one resolution are the same as those who vote for another. There are many examples of inconsistencies, as Vice-President Tugendhat rightly reminded us, and nowhere is this more glaring than in the budgetary field. It is not that the Committee on Budgets says different things to different people at different times. Indeed, I think the reverse is true, for within the committee the established response to most budgetary issues is now well developed.

The problem arises in matching the expectations of this House, as manifested through its specialist committees, with the budgetary constraints within which we need to live. The work of a budget rapporteur is a difficult one, and the House in many respects is as good or as bad as its rapporteur in defining a clear strategy on the budget. It is the rapporteur who must steer us through the technicalities of procedure and, as is so often the case, through the politics of confrontation with the Council.

I must confess that I wish I belonged to another political group from that of Robert Jackson, for a lot of what I have to say would sound more convincing if it came from another part of the House. For the truth is that we have never before been given such detailed and well-researched budget documents so early on.

We have had laid before us by the rapporteur a brilliantly comprehensive account of our own political and budgetary priorities. I have no idea how many people have managed yet to read the three working papers which the rapporteur has prepared. But I think they will be essential reading for anyone who wishes to take an interest in the 1983 budget procedures. He well described these documents, taken together, as a Parliament document. Our budget debates so often start too late in the day when the broad parameters have already been decided by others, and the House is then expected to follow the technicalities of such things as maximum rate, margin of manoeuvre, obligatory versus non-obligatory expenditure and so forth. Here at last we have a document to consider which is not just academically distinguished but also highly political. It sets forth nothing which has not already been accepted by this Parliament, except perhaps that it attempts to show that the Community can develop a coherent budgetary response to the problem of unemployment.

We are being given an opportunity here to state a clear and politically comprehensible set of priorities in advance of the Commission's preliminary draft. The resolution looks for a European solution to a European problem and is designed to show the electorate that, and I quote from paragraph 3 of working paper

No 3: 'Our Community can offer something better than the delusive temptations of national unilateralism.'

Mr Jackson does not merely propose to throw money at the problem. He has analysed the effectiveness of the various instruments at our disposal. He has looked at the effects of Community expenditure in terms of its contribution to new employment and he had analysed the Social Fund in the context of the other expenditure policies. He concludes that we should encourage through the budget and not just with words those policies which have a direct and rapid effect on unemployment. He suggests in particular that we expand our budget lines to give greater support for job-creation projects for young people, for small and medium-sized enterprises and for workers' cooperatives and local employment initiatives. He rightly calls for real additionality in Community policies and in consequence calls for a more cautious approach to expenditure in the Regional Fund, at least until the Council has accepted the Commission's proposed improvements. He believes that the Social Fund should be the motor, that it can serve as a real catalyst, as an originator, and that it is capable of additionality and thus deserving of the title of a Community policy and he has proved that the proposed new expenditure can actually be spent, and spent efficiently.

Because it passes these tests it has the full support of my group, but what is most novel and most welcome is that we are being given this set of guidelines today, early on in the budgetary procedure.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mrs Barbarella. — *(IT)* Mr President, I believe that today no one can dispute the fact that unemployment is the greatest problem faced by governments and political and social groups both within Community Europe and beyond. For this reason we agree completely that the fight against unemployment should determine the approach to the Community budget for 1983, as the Committee on Budgets has proposed to us. However, we also believe, Mr President, that this choice cannot and should not be made either in unrealistic or in demagogical terms.

It is not only a question of communicating effectively with our electors, as our rapporteur, Mr Jackson, has often assured us, but also and especially, in our opinion, of providing an adequate response to a very serious and concrete problem, even if only within the restricted limits of our field of action. I do not believe that the 40 million workers of the European Confederation of Unions, which is even now working at The Hague to define a strategy for a common fight against unemployment, could be satisfied with a budget which was nothing more than a showy but futile piece of work.

Barbarella

It is for this reason, Mr President, that we cannot accept an approach to the 1983 budget which, although beginning with a perfectly valid declaration of intentions, is limited in fact to the choice of a single instrument to combat unemployment, the Social Fund, and which is otherwise embodied in financial cutbacks for the other policies on the pretext that these funds have not been fully utilized.

It should be clear, however, that we are not opposed to a financial reinforcement of the Social Fund, nor to the meaning that our rapporteur, Mr Jackson, wishes to give to this reinforcement: that is, to more effective professional training for young people. We all know that the general crisis in employment is exacerbated by the arrival on the job market of crowds of young people, and that this has led to a fearful level of unemployment among those under 25 years of age. For this reason we agree with the Commission's approach which, albeit in the context of the vague and inadequate mandate of 30 May, declares its desire to make unemployment among the young one of the sectors to enjoy priority attention. If my information is correct, the English government itself appears to have made a similar choice, adopting a plan for professional training which it intends to apply to 30 000 young people when they leave their secondary schools. We therefore concur on the strengthening of Community action on behalf of young people, and also on the fact that such a strengthening may also represent support for national measures such as, for example, those undertaken by the British Government.

On the other hand, we cannot agree that this and this alone should constitute the fight against unemployment. We are convinced that the Community possesses instruments for direct action and coordination which can, and indeed should, in our opinion, be used to contribute towards the return to economic growth. The entire range of financial instruments and common policies should be activated to make a concrete contribution towards the implementation of measures capable of stimulating productive investments and thereby creating new jobs. In concrete terms this means, in our opinion, the appropriation of adequate funds for European policies on energy, research, technological innovation, and industry. It also means, however, in our view, the adoption of a regional approach in the policy of job creation, one which allows for the need to concentrate resources and initiatives in the least favoured regions and recognizes the advisability of encouraging technical and social innovation in the Community as a whole.

It is for this reason that we believe it is essential to reinforce the Social Fund, and the other policies as well. However, I cannot fail to emphasize the fact that for us this development of the Community policies can only be accomplished on one condition. It can only be accomplished if the financial resources of the Community are increased.

We would only be indulging in propaganda if we declared our intention to reinforce the common policies without raising the problem of the necessary financial means. It is for this reason that we have presented a series of amendments on this issue, amendments which we feel are directed towards the adoption of the resolution of the Committee on Budgets.

President. — As it is now voting time, I must adjourn the debate at this point. It will be continued tomorrow.

6. Topical and urgent debate (announcement)

President. — Pursuant to Rule 48 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, the list of subjects for the topical and urgent debate to be held on Thursday, 22 April from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. has been drawn up.

(The President read the list of subjects)¹

Pursuant to Rule 48 (2), second subparagraph, of the Rules of Procedure, any objections to this list, which should be tabled and justified in writing by a political group or at least 21 Members, should be submitted before 3 p.m. tomorrow. The vote on these objections will take place without debate tomorrow at 3 p.m.

I would remind the House that the deadline for tabling amendments has been fixed for Wednesday, 21 April at 5 p.m.²

I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, I have been trying to follow what you have been saying and I wanted to ask a question. You have announced several subjects under the heading of 'urgent and topical debate' and you said that this will take place on two separate days. Are you saying that the three hours allowed for urgent and topical debate will be divided between Wednesday and Thursday? If not, I wonder on what basis you are making the announcement.

President. — No, Mr Forth, all the votes will be taken on the same day, namely, Thursday morning.

Mr Forth. — Sorry, that was not what I was asking, Mr President. You announced a list of subjects under the heading of 'urgent and topical debate' and I believe you said that one of them anyway would be debated on Wednesday and the others on Thursday. Are you saying that the total would be within the three hours?

¹ See the minutes of this sitting.

² Speaking time: see the minutes of this sitting.

President. — No, Mr Forth. The debates will be held on Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the votes will also be taken on Thursday morning. That is quite clear.¹

Sir James Scott-Hopkins. — Did I understand you rightly? I am sorry to jog back, but I could not catch your eye earlier when you were answering the question from Mr Forth. Is the debate on the Falkland Islands on Wednesday or on Thursday? It is in point of fact, as I understood it, to be on Wednesday, and yet you have just said that all the urgency debates, including the Falkland Islands debate, will be on Thursday. I suggest there must be some misinterpretation of what you have said.

President. — Yes, Sir James. The debate on the Falklands will, in fact, be held tomorrow when the President-in-Office of the Council makes his statement. However, the vote will be held on Thursday along with the other votes. I think the whole thing is clear now.

I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Mr President, you have just said that the deadline for the tabling of amendments to the resolution on the delegations has been extended to 10 a.m. tomorrow. Can you also say when the resolution itself will be available? It was not in our pigeon-holes ten minutes ago.

President. — The resolution will be distributed this evening. The deadline for tabling amendments has been fixed therefore for tomorrow at noon.

I call Mr de Courcy Ling.

Mr de Courcy Ling. — Mr President, I wonder whether you would like to make it clear to the House that the vote after the Falkland Islands debate will take place at 10 a.m. on Thursday morning.

7. Votes²

President. — The next item is the vote on motions for resolutions on which the debate has closed.

¹ Deadline for tabling amendments — Membership of committees: see the minutes of the sitting.

² The Report of Proceedings records only those parts of the vote which gave rise to speeches. For details of the vote the reader is referred to the minutes of the sitting.

We shall begin with the *Baudis report (Doc. 1-975/81): Summer time.*

(Parliament approved the proposal for a directive and adopted the motion for a resolution)

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President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Lezzi report (Doc. 1-34/82): Food aid in 1982.*

(Parliament approved the proposal for a decision and the various proposals for regulations)

Motion for a resolution

Paragraph 2 — Amendment No 2

Mr Lezzi, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I am against it because the temporary nature of the food aid we are discussing should be considered in relation to the problem of hunger and not in relation to natural disasters.

(. . .)

Paragraph 20 — Amendment No 1

Mr Lezzi, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I ask you to request Mr Jackson not to maintain his amendment. Otherwise I would be obliged to express my opposition to it, if only for the reason that this point was discussed extensively in committee and approved by a unanimous vote in which Mr Jackson himself took part.

President. — Mr Jackson, do you wish to maintain your amendment?

Mr C. Jackson. — I maintain my amendment, Mr President.

(. . .)

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Key interim report (Doc. 1-100/82): Discharge in respect of the budget for 1980.*

President

(...)

Paragraph 1 — Amendment No 1

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Mr President, this goes clearly against the wishes of the vast majority of the committee. Therefore I move that it be rejected.

(...)

Paragraph 4 — Amendment No 2

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Mr President, this was discussed in committee but I do not think I have got any mandate to recommend this to the House.

(...)

After paragraph 4 — Amendments Nos 3 and 4

Mr Key, rapporteur. — Mr President, I have no personal objection to this amendment, but I do not think I have a clear mandate from the committee to tell you one way or the other.

(...)

Paragraph 7 — Amendment No 6

Mr Key, rapporteur. — As rapporteur I cannot accept this amendment. It would in fact water down the resolution.¹

(...)

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Gabert report (Doc. 1-105/82): Discharge in respect of the ECSC budget for 1980.*

(...)

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Kellett-Bowman report (Doc. 1-33/82): Discharge to be*

granted to the Administrative Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions for 1980.

(...)

(Parliament approved the proposal for a decision and adopted the motion for a resolution)¹

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President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Kellett-Bowman report (Doc. 1-32/82): Discharge to be granted to the Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training for 1980.*

(Parliament approved the proposal for a decision and adopted the motion for a resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Irmer report (Doc. 1-98/82): Implementation of Community food aid policy.*

(...)

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Mr C. Jackson. — Mr President, I am not sure that many Members in this House will realize that the report calls for all development aid and policy currently handled by Member States to be transferred to the Community. It may be thought that such a radical proposal should derive from the Committee on Development and Cooperation. It certainly seems to me to stray from the immediate responsibilities of budgetary control, let alone food aid. But leaving that on one side, it is a major proposal in its own right. Do Members realize that it would involve an increase of 11 000 million ECU in the Community budget — that is to say, a 50% increase in the total budget? Mr President, in my view, it is absurd to make such a proposal *en passant* in a budgetary control report. I have great respect for Mr Irmer, but I cannot vote for a report containing such a weighty proposal that has been so inadequately considered.

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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¹ The rapporteur was also against Amendments Nos 5, 8, 9 and 10.

¹ The rapporteur was against Amendment No 1.

President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Price interim report (Doc. 1-104/82): Accommodation policy of the Community institutions.*

(...)

Paragraph 9 — Amendment No 1

Mr Price, rapporteur. — Mr President, I think it is a useful idea to have implementing agreements relating to this taxation problem. If it had been put in committee I think the committee would have voted in favour, and I urge the House to do so.

(...)

After paragraph 11 — Amendment No 3/rev.

Mr Price, rapporteur. — I think the committee would be against this amendment, Mr President.

(...)

Paragraph 13 — Amendments Nos 4/rev., 5/rev. and 6/rev.

Mr Price, rapporteur. — These three amendments are very similar and they would mean that instead of making a neutral statement a particular reason is given. I do not think the committee would accept that reason and, therefore, I urge the House to reject all three amendments.

(...)

After paragraph 15 — Amendment No 9

Mr Price, rapporteur. — The particular idea put forward here was not discussed by the committee and I am, therefore, unable to give its opinion.

(...)

After paragraph 17 — Amendment No 8

Mr Price, rapporteur. — Mr President, I originally proposed this idea to the committee as a means of breaking the current deadlock in the Council and making a last effort to get an agreement but the committee rejected it by a small majority and, therefore, would be against this amendment.¹

¹ The rapporteur was also AGAINST Amendments Nos 2/rev. and 7/rev.

(...)

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Mr Goerens. — (FR) Mr President, whilst I do not deny Mr Price the right to develop his views on the accommodation policy of the European Community, I believe it is my duty to take him to task for a lack of objectivity in his analysis, which has inevitably resulted in a resolution that it is difficult to accept.

An objective analysis of all the political, legal and budgetary factors involved must in fact precede any decision on the question of the seat of the European Parliament. Rather than accept the location of the Secretariat in Luxembourg and the existence of Chambers in Strasbourg and Luxembourg, Mr Price is insisting on the building of a new Chamber in Brussels, for what he claims to be budgetary and political reasons.

The political situation in Belgium, on the one hand, and the additional costs that the Price proposal would entail, on the other, could certainly lead one to draw quite different conclusions. I therefore think it sensible to insist that any decision to be taken in this matter by the competent authorities must take into account the findings of an impartial study analysing the cost of the various working places of Parliament, on the basis of existing realities and of the Court of Justice's decision.

But Mr Price preferred to press on, drawing conclusions even before the debate on the budgetary and political, not to mention legal, aspects of the problem had ended.

Mr President, I trust that all my colleagues who are concerned about what fate lies in store for Strasbourg and Luxembourg are aware of the threat contained in this report. Despite the adoption of certain amendments by Mr Mart and endorsed by his colleagues Mr Estgen, Mr Abens, Mr Fischbach, Mrs Lentz-Cornette and myself, the general tone of the Price report remains too negative for it to meet with my approval.

Although belonging to a different political group, Mr Abens has asked me to inform you that he too would be voting against the report.

Mr Fischbach. — (FR) Mr President, I shall not be voting for the motion for a resolution contained in the Price report on the accommodation policy of the Community institutions.

Under the pretext of a concern for the budget, apparently justified by the high cost of the present accommodation policy of the Community institutions, and Parliament in particular, the rapporteur, supported by a majority of the Committee on Budgetary Control, hoped to use the opportunity to attack once again the

Fischbach

location policy operated by the Member States with regard to Parliament.

Whilst it is reasonable for the report to refer to the advantages, on a material, economic and also staff level, that a single seat for the Community institutions would offer, at least initially, what is in my view intolerable is that this report, full of tendentious assertions, should fail to take account of both the reality of the past and the present situation, and in particular the efforts made by different Member States to provide the infrastructure and facilities without which the Community could not function properly.

Far from having any concern for objectivity and impartiality, which would surely have done much to redeem this report on the accommodation policy of the institutions, the text placed before Parliament is in fact nothing more than an unqualified argument in favour of Brussels as the single seat of the Community institutions.

What is the point of instructing some foreign experts to compare the costs of the present situation with the costs if Parliament were to adopt a single working place? It is clear from the text of the resolution and explanatory statement that the budgetary problem is in fact secondary to the political problem.

For these reasons, Mr President, I shall be voting against Mr Price's motion for a resolution.

Mr Estgen. — (FR) Mr President, I intend to vote against this resolution, despite the improvements effected by the amendment put down by Mr Mart, not because I do not recognize the justice and necessity, not to say urgency, of a sensible Community accommodation policy and a determined policy to reduce wherever possible the operating costs of the Community — and if there is one aspect of President Dankert's policy on which I am one hundred percent behind him, that is it. However, the resolution that has been put before us is too tendentious, even misleading, in the sense that, under the guise of an apparent objectivity, it is trying to push the Members, by its ambiguous wording, indirectly to declare themselves in favour of Brussels.

Why, I ask therefore, should we not work on the basis that the Secretariat is located in Luxembourg, that this same place offers every facility to enable Parliament to conduct its business normally, both in committee and in plenary? What is more, there is in Luxembourg the possibility, there are even concrete plans, for whatever improvement and extension of the infrastructure may be desirable in the short term and foreseeable in the medium term.

There is all this talk of uncertainty and indecision with regard to the permanent location of the institutions. People seem to forget that this uncertainty is not due

to a lack of economic considerations but solely to a want of political courage. Now, only a clear and unequivocal political decision will enable a satisfactory provision for the future to be made, but this decision is up to the governments of the Member States and not up to this Parliament.

If one can question having the Secretariat in Luxembourg and disregard the efforts made to welcome Parliament there and to provide satisfactory working conditions, one can equally well question having the Commission in Brussels, its being in that city being no more of an inconvenience than Parliament's Secretariat being in Luxembourg.

I therefore intend to vote against this resolution, saddened by the fact that there are those in this Parliament who refuse absolutely to acknowledge the efforts made and the possibilities offered by Luxembourg, which to my mind is not only a mistake but also an injustice, as well as being a political error.

President. — I call Mr Price to make a personal statement.

Mr Price. — Mr President, it has been suggested that the motion Parliament has just adopted calls for the building of a new hemicycle in Brussels, and that was specifically stated. Let me say that the resolution does not do that. At no point is that said either in the motion for a resolution or in the explanatory statement.

I am sorry that I have offended so many of my Luxembourg friends, but they have suggested that this is a personal matter. It has been described as Mr Price's resolution, and attacks have been made on the resolution's impartiality and objectivity. I must just point out that it came to the plenary sitting as the report and motion of the Committee on Budgetary Control, and what has now been attacked is the resolution of this Parliament as a whole. It is not a matter of Mr Price, it is a matter of certain Members from Luxembourg who do not agree with the view of Parliament as a whole.

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Wetting report (Doc. 1-31/82): EAGGF, Guarantee Section.*

(...)

Fourth indent of the preamble — Amendment No 2

Mr Key, deputy rapporteur. — I have no mandate from the Committee on Budgetary Control to accept, but it looks alright.

(...)

After paragraph 1 — Amendment No 3

Mr Key, deputy rapporteur. — I have no mandate, Mr President, but I think it would actually help budgetary transparency and clarity, and therefore I personally would probably be in favour of it.

(...)

Paragraph 5 — Amendment No 4

Mr Key, deputy rapporteur. — Again no mandate, Mr President, but I am not inclined to accept it.¹

(...)

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Mr Eyraud. — (FR) Mr President, the French members of the Socialist Group, and to a lesser extent the members of the Committee on Agriculture, are always very sensitive to the way in which the appropriations allocated to the Guarantee Section of the EAGGF are used. They also wish me to make it clear that they attach a certain significance to the vote they are about to express.

By adopting the Wettig report Parliament will be declaring its intention to continue the tight financial management introduced at the time of the 1980 budget. That does not remove the need for realism in this area, nor the need for the Community to stand by its undertakings given to the workers in the agricultural and agri-food sector. In voting for the Key report just now we wanted, despite some reservations, to signal our rejection of the attitude taken by the Commission in the discussion on farm prices.

This year again it has failed to take into account in its latest proposals to the Council the opinion expressed by Parliament on 26 March. Though independent, the Community institutions must nevertheless maintain a degree of solidarity. We have seen this spirit of solidarity working so far in the Falklands crisis. We should like to see the same kind of solidarity in relation to the Community's own problems.

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Filippi report (Doc. 1-1070/81): EAGGF, Guidance Section.*

(...)

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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* * *

President. — We shall now go on to consider the *Couste report (Doc. 1-703/82): Borrowing and lending activities of the Commission.*

(...)

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

I call Mr Irmer to speak on a point of order.

Mr Irmer. — (DE) Mr President, I have been sitting here all this time, admiring the speed and consistency with which you have conducted the voting. The only thing is that even now I do not know who you are, because if I look straight ahead, half right or even half left, to the back of Mr Bangemann, all I see around me are officials.

Mr Jürgens and I have made a written request for better seats. It is unacceptable that we should be shoved into some corner or other. Mr Jürgens is even worse off than I am, and we ask as a matter of urgency that something be done about this situation. I do not consider it right, for example, that officials of the Commission — not even Commissioners — should have the best seats, while we Members have to put up with the poor seats at the back.

President. — Mr Irmer, I understand your concern entirely. I shall put the question to the Bureau.

8. Membership of Parliament

President. — I have been informed by the French authorities that Mr André Bord has been appointed a Member of the European Parliament to replace Mr Fanton.

I welcome our new colleague and would remind the House that pursuant to Rule 6 (3), every Member shall take his seat in Parliament and on its committees and shall enjoy all the rights attaching thereto until such time as his credentials have been verified or a ruling given on any dispute.

I call Mr Fergusson.

¹ The rapporteur was also AGAINST Amendment No 1.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, at the last session of the Parliament but one, the President, Mr Dankert, particularly gave me an assurance that no announcements, except exceptionally on a Friday about the resignation and replacement of Members, should be made except at the beginning of the sitting. I happened to be listening just now and it sounded to me as if you had slipped in an announcement about the replacement of Mr Fanton. If that is what you have just done, and I did not hear absolutely clearly, may I make it quite clear that I lodge an objection to this announcement until full verification of the new Member's credentials has been made in due course by the Committee on the Verification of Credentials, (*Applause*) particularly in respect of whether he is going to be with us until the end of the parliamentary term.

President. — Mr Fergusson, we are talking about the automatic replacement of Mr Fanton. The Committee for the Verification of Credentials is now going to discuss the appointment of his successor. I have simply pointed out that, while we are awaiting that committee's decision, Mr Fanton's successor can take his seat in this Assembly in the usual way and that this is entirely in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

Mr Fergusson. — Of course, Mr President, that is right, but I did get an assurance from the President that these announcements would not be made except first thing in the morning on Fridays, and this seems to have been gone against in this particular case.

President. — I believe, however, that I was obliged to make this statement. Mr Fanton's successor must be allowed to take his seat in the normal way. There is nothing in the Rules of Procedure to prevent this. However, his case is now going to come before the Committee for the Verification of Credentials. You will understand that it cannot deal with the matter of Mr Fanton's successor until it has first been announced here that Mr Fanton's successor has been appointed.

Mr Fergusson. — If I might try your patience, the point about this is that you have made an announcement at a time when the President said it would not be done. It is first thing in the morning — this is a very important point, especially when many people are

worried about this particular matter. It has been slipped in and no objection might have been possible had I not happened to be listening. We are ready for it in the morning and not ready for it at other times during the day. That is the point.

President. — Mr Fergusson, I think there is some confusion on this matter. What the President of Parliament actually said was that resignations would not be announced to the House at any time whatsoever. However, in this case the replacement is automatic.

I call Lord Harmar-Nicholls.

Lord Harmar-Nicholls. — Am I to understand that the replacement is automatic but it now goes for verification? Is the Member allowed to vote before he has been verified?

President. — Yes, indeed, Lord Harmar-Nicholls. Rule 6 (3) of the Rules of Procedure lays down quite clearly that the new Member may vote until such time as the Committee for the Verification of Credentials has taken a decision on his case. I shall quote the rule for you:

'Until such time as a Member's credentials have been verified or ruling has been given on any dispute, the Member shall take his seat in Parliament and on its committees and shall enjoy all the rights attaching thereto.'

Mr Israël. — (*FR*) Mr President, I should like to bring to your attention the fact that I have found in my mail box a leaflet that is not an official document of the European Parliament. It is a leaflet of the European Workers' Party, whose extreme right-wing tendencies are a matter of common knowledge.

I therefore ask you, Mr President, how it is that leaflets of extremist terrorist organizations can find their way into the official mail of a Member of Parliament?

President. — Mr Israël, I take note of your statement. We shall have inquiries made.¹

(*The sitting was closed at 7.10 p.m.*)

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see the minutes.

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 21 APRIL 1982

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IN THE CHAIR: MR MØLLER

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)

1. *European Regional Development Fund*

President. — The first item is the joint debate on the following two reports:

Report (Doc. 1-61/82), drawn up by Mr De Pasquale on behalf of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-735/81) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC)

No 724/75 establishing a European Regional Development Fund.

Interim Report (Doc. 1-102/82), drawn up by Miss de Valera on behalf of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, on the position of women in the less-favoured regions of the Community in the context of the revision of the European Regional Development Fund Regulation.

Before we start the debate, I should like to point out that the de Valera report contains a number of

amendments to the Regulation establishing a European Regional Development Fund as dealt with in the De Pasquale report. To facilitate the voting, these amendments have been printed as amendments to the De Pasquale report and will be put to the vote tomorrow together with the other amendments to the De Pasquale report.

I call Mr Forth on a point of order.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, I should like to ask for your guidance. Under which rule do you suggest that the de Valera report is admissible? Having studied what that report seeks to say, I find it difficult to detect under which rule of Parliament, or indeed where under the terms of reference of the setting up of the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, is that Committee entitled to draw up a report on regional matters which I gather has not been referred to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning itself? Unless I am satisfied as to this, Mr President, I would be terribly tempted to suggest that it was inadmissible. I await your guidance.

President. — I think Miss de Valera wishes to explain the matter.

Miss de Valera. — Mr President, the Committee of Inquiry on the Situation of Women in Europe considered this particular report in great detail and as you yourself have pointed out, Mr President, my report indeed comes within the context of the restructuring

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of the Regional Fund. I understand that this same debate took place on Monday last and that a vote was taken. The result of that vote was to my satisfaction so I do not believe that there is any reason for further discussion on this matter today.

President. — I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — I will not press the point at this stage. But I will say this, Mr President, I think that we should all be concerned at the apparent freedom which this committee of inquiry is giving itself to report on any subject it cares to. I think that this should be a matter of concern to the whole House. I will not press the matter at this stage, but I am now putting on record that this gives rise to some problem and should be looked at again. I would suggest that perhaps you might wish to refer it to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions yet again for them to give guidance on the extent to which any future committee of inquiry has a completely open remit. Otherwise we are going to get into the most terrible problems.

President. — I call Mr Pearce.

Mr Pearce. — Of course, I accept your ruling on this matter. However, I should like you to confirm that the ruling you have given means that, in future, when a report has been submitted by a parliamentary committee on a matter referred to it as the committee responsible, it will be possible for another committee which also wishes to pronounce on the same topic — for example if the Committee on Development and Cooperation wishes to pronounce on farm prices — to do so. I take it from your ruling that should the Committee on Development and Cooperation, for example, put forward such a resolution it would be brought directly to the floor of this House and not merely treated as an opinion submitted to the rapporteur of the committee responsible. I feel that this is the logical procedure because women after all are nothing special other than being half of the human race and they can hardly claim a fresh, different set of procedures for women which do not apply to the rest of us. Would you confirm, Mr President, that the interpretation that I have given of your ruling is in fact the correct one?

President. — I am not in a position to confirm your interpretation, Mr Pearce, but I shall put the problem raised by Mr Forth to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, so that we can have an opinion which can be communicated to the Members.

We come now to the debate.

I call Mr De Pasquale.

Mr De Pasquale, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we had hoped that this reform

of the Regional Fund would be part of a complex of measures designed to give new impetus to the process of integration, to ease the bottlenecks which are disrupting the Common Market, to improve the Community budget and correct the most flagrant distortions of Community policies.

Bearing in mind the expectations aroused by the Mandate of 30 May, these hopes of ours were reasonable ones. Unfortunately, the reality of the situation is very different: the Commission has not been able to put forward a common strategy for combating the economic crisis, the recession and unemployment, and the governments of the Member States have been unable to arrive at any kind of agreement on these matters. It would seem that each Member State has decided to go its own way, and in that kind of climate of opinion not only is it difficult to renew the Community's aims and rejuvenate its mechanisms, but it requires great effort just to keep them from collapsing.

Now, it is evident that a Community regional policy can only exist as part of a progressive extension of European integration. There is no doubt — as all the data prove — that the legislation and the attitudes that govern the European economy have helped to aggravate regional imbalances. They must therefore be changed and adapted to the particular challenges of the present day. But it is equally beyond doubt that one can only make changes to a structure if that structure is solidly based, and there is little that can be done if the base is beginning to decay and fall apart.

Nevertheless, in spite of the discouraging figure in the Community cuts at present, our committee has worked very hard to put before you a proposal which will turn the Regional Fund into an instrument that is capable of operating with greater efficiency if, and when, we manage to overcome the crisis in which the whole of the Community is plunged at present.

I want to thank all the members of the committee for their dedication, and I should like to point out that both the amendments and the resolution that I have the honour of submitting to you today are not in any way personal, but represent the fruit of our collective labours, a happy synthesis of different, but not preconceived, opinions, so much so that the final form of our report was approved almost unanimously. I should also like to pay tribute to the Commission, in particular to Mr Giolitti, for having taken due account, when drafting the proposal, of the opinions and recommendations expressed over the years by Parliament, and for having, in addition, accepted the informal practice of carrying out exchanges of opinions before launching any new proposals, which is what this House has always called for.

This is one of those rare occasions when Parliament has not been side-stepped by horse-trading between the Commission and the representatives of the Council. For this reason we believe this proposal is an

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important step forward which must be supported, when it is submitted to the Council, through a process of consultation, particularly as regards its most innovative aspects, which are, firstly, the recommendation that there should be closer coordination between Community regional policy and national economic policies, through the agency of development programmes which will no longer be limited to specially assisted regions.

Secondly, closer coordination between the Community's various financial organisms, by extending the so-called 'integrated operations'.

Thirdly, the adoption of Community criteria for the identification of economically weak regions of the Community, so that Community aid can be concentrated in areas with the lowest figures for production and the highest for unemployment. Incidentally, we think that fixing quotas for these regions and for those that may be selected later on, when the whole business has been revised, is still an indispensable prerequisite for ensuring that these regions are given support which is secure and regular, and not uncertain and hazardous.

Fourthly, the transition from the distribution of Community aid or reimbursements to individual projects to a system of co-financing of development programmes, with appropriate financial advances, in order to provide for a clear sharing of responsibilities in decision-taking and to ensure the 'additionality' of Community aid.

Fifthly, a considerable increase in the non-quota sector, in order to improve the chance of providing direct and flexible aid from the Fund throughout the territory of the Community.

Sixthly, a streamlining of the procedures which require, for each aid programme in the non-quota sector, nothing less than complete unanimity in the Council of Ministers.

Starting from this positive assessment, our committee has attempted to improve those parts of the draft regulation that it considered weakest and most in need of modification. Our main preoccupation was to include legislation that will oblige the Commission and the Fund to intervene with a certain minimum of efficiency in support of any measures that are directly productive of stable and worthwhile jobs. In fact, we think that this must be the Fund's main area of activity in future. At present the reality is different. The Fund confines itself to distributing partial reimbursements without any prospects return and almost exclusively for public works projects, and it lacks the instruments and the powers it needs to promote any kind of strategy for developing the weaker regions. We therefore suggest that a part of the Fund's resources should be devoted to interest subsidies on loans granted by the European Investment Bank and by local banks to small

and medium-sized companies in problem areas; in addition, we suggest that new forms of support for industrial companies, the craft sector and service industries should be created by financing partnerships, by opening repayable lines of credit, by setting up a patent bank, which would favour the acquisition, the use and the dissemination of new technologies and new products, and finally, by setting up local institutes for applied research.

As regards the direct participation of local and regional bodies in these programmes and in these decisions, our committee has attempted to improve the proposed text whilst respecting the area of responsibility of the Member States.

Altogether, ladies and gentlemen, what emerges from this proposal is a renovated and enlarged Community instrument, capable of being used to better effect than before — in close collaboration with the local bodies — to counter regional imbalances, on condition, of course, that the funds available for it should be increased by a conspicuous amount in the 1983 budget.

Mr President, the regional policy that we hope for is something separate from the Regional Fund, which, even though it may be improved in its mechanisms and strengthened in the means at its disposal, is still an instrument of partial and inadequate compensatory expenditure. In our view, regional policy means being able to affect not simply the volume of resources devoted to correcting regional imbalances but, above all, being able to influence the nature and the quality of the machinery of integration of the regions and the States. For us, a regional policy means giving a regional aspect to all policies; it means economic, fiscal and administrative measures which will be strongly selective in favour of the weakest or declining areas, in such a way as to affect the results of competition, capital movements, the processes of restructuring of the national economies, commercial agreements, and infrastructural and service equipment. For us, a regional policy should give new impetus to the productive potential of the weakest areas and of the local markets, by means of a vast investment plan in the Mediterranean regions and in the declining areas of the North and the Centre of Europe. Such a policy would also be to the advantage of the economically stronger areas and the more prosperous countries, which — far from remaining net payers into the Community budget — would benefit from the increased demand for capital and semi-finished goods.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must abandon the short-sighted view that looks at immediate costs of and immediate benefits from the Community budget, and if we do that we shall see that a genuine regional policy may redound to the mutual benefit of both the weak and the strong areas of Europe, and will give rise to a more equitable form of integration of their markets.

De Pasquale

In our opinion, this is the only way to create a more just, and therefore more united, Community. The present times are certainly not such as to inspire optimism, but we, with all due modesty, think that we have made a small contribution towards moving the Community in the right direction.

(Applause)

President. — I call Miss de Valera.

Miss de Valera, rapporteur. — Mr President, I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating Mr De Pasquale on his report. I know that he has put a tremendous amount of time and effort into it, and I am sure that this will be appreciated by each and every one of the Members of this Parliament. My own report is to be seen in the light of Mr De Pasquale's and, indeed, as complementing it.

The European Parliament proposed in 1973 many of the changes that are now being put forward by the Commission. There has been a major shift in emphasis on the part of the Commission. Until now we have seen a narrow outlook in the handling of the European Regional Fund, a bookkeeping mentality which has stuck to economic criteria alone, and there has been little opportunity for Community coordination or indeed initiative. This approach has not worked. We now see greater disparities in the economic situation in the Member States. Under the old system, the Regional Fund has not alleviated the problems and greater imbalances in certain regions are now evident.

It is nine years since the European Parliament first advocated this broader approach to the European Regional Fund, and I for one welcome this approach, for it will lead to greater controls, better coordination, greater accountability of the Member States and a greater flow of information. The system of periodic reports, on a 2½-year basis, on the situation in the regions will mean that Member States are obliged to inform the Commission in advance about the expected effects of the programme and then to report on the results achieved.

The European Regional Fund has now been given a human face. The economic imbalances of the Community regions can only be understood in certain human and social connections. Quite apart from the fact that the Regional Fund has never had sufficient appropriations allotted to it, its effects have been going on during a time of serious economic recession. The most immediate human consequence of this recession has of course, been unemployment.

Mr President, there are two extremely important facts about female unemployment: first, the huge size of the problem and second, its largely structural character. A revision of the European Fund could give greater

scope than ever before for action with regard to the position of women, but in fact I have expressed in committee — and have been supported therein by the members of that committee — my great disappointment that the Commission proposals have deserted the women's cause in that they contain no reference whatsoever to the position of women or to the problems they face in the regions of the Community. In my view and in the view of the members of the committee, this omission is unjustifiable. The Commission and the Council must show that they are prepared to confront the problems faced by women in the Community, for such action would prove to all that they wished to make equal opportunity a reality.

With regard to the massive problem of unemployment, female unemployment is not just a side issue. The Commission has made no specific reference to women or to young people, yet there are now relatively more young people and more women unemployed than there were in the 1960s and this upward trend is likely to continue well into the 1980s.

Like other members of the committee, I have tabled a number of amendments to the Commission proposals, and these I shall be discussing tomorrow when the vote is taken. Most of them concern the sex and age groups. I have tabled these amendments in the hope that the information that can be gathered by using these two approaches will prove useful: they will provide the Commission with a greater flow of information which must, of course come from the Member States. It is indeed necessary to see the impact of such programmes on the two sexes and on the different age groups.

I have said, Mr President, that female unemployment was largely structural. It is sometimes due to long-term shifts in patterns of industrial activity, as in the traditional textile-producing areas, where the decline of the textile industry has cost a large number of women's jobs. Such unemployment is also sometimes due to traditional social attitudes. The difficult economic situation which faces us all causes a number of women to believe that there is no point whatsoever in trying to look for work in certain regions because it is so difficult to obtain. Female unemployment represents a continual interaction between economic and social factors, and the proposed changes in the European Regional Development Fund will mean, as I have pointed out earlier, a greater coordination between national and regional policies, a greater concentration of resources and a more active role for the Community.

I hope the Commission will appreciate that the amendments tabled by my committee do not go against the spirit of its proposals. Their purpose is simply to enhance the Commission's proposals by making possible a sufficiently fine analysis with specific information on the employment prospects of both men and women and of the people in the various age groups.

de Valera

The women's committee has, as I have said, put a tremendous amount of work into this.

The outcome of this debate and of the vote tomorrow will have grave implications for the employment prospects of women. I therefore ask the support of every Member of this Parliament, as it is to us, the elected representatives of Europe, that women in these difficult economic times look for help and assistance.

President. — I call the Committee on Budgets.

Mr Notenboom, draftsman of an opinion. — (NL) Mr President, the Committee on Budgets believes that the reform of the Regional Development Fund represents a test for the Commission. Is the Commission capable of reviving European integration as it announced in its report on the Mandate of 30 May? We believe it is also a test for the Parliament, can it gain the Commission's acceptance for its views? This was demonstrated in last year's budget when some of the regional appropriations in Chapter 100 were blocked, and their release depends explicitly on how the ERDF Regulation is now reformed.

In our opinion — and there was a general agreement in the Committee on this — the very future of the Community is at stake. The fact is that we have reached the limit of our own resources, and the national finance ministers, along with many circles in the national parliaments, are making it perfectly clear that there can be no question of increasing our own resources until the Community has its expenditure under better control. In real terms, this means that the Community would have to prove that expenditure is administered better, more efficiently and more economically at Community level than at national level. This does not imply looking at the agricultural policy alone, and that is something we should bear in mind in this present amendment of the ERDF Regulation and in the amendment of the Social Fund which is soon to be debated. There are three reasons which made the Committee on Budgets condemn the quota system in principle.

Firstly, if there is to be efficient utilization of resources, a flat-rate distribution of loans is the very opposite of good financial control. In our opinion, the Commission should finance those projects and programmes which, judged objectively, offer the best guarantees for the development of a region. And if this means that the quotas fixed for a particular year are not used up, this is not as bad as wasting resources merely for the sake of fulfilling the quotas down to the last penny.

The second reason is that the reform is the first test in the process of restructuring. If Parliament gives in straight away and denies its principles for reasons of so-called *Realpolitik*, it will be putting a major question mark against European development.

And thirdly, it weakens the position of those on and off stage who are working hard to increase our own resources. Let's face it: over the next few years there will be little or no room for any noticeable increase in the Fund's finances, and that is why Parliament has every interest in increasing its opportunities of deciding on expenditure and supervising its administration. This may be achieved by giving the Commission more powers, since we are able to supervise the Commission under the budgetary procedure and, if necessary, by a censure motion and the discharge procedure.

This is, therefore, a question of Parliament's budgetary powers. In the past, with our Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, we have used those very powers in an attempt to gain a substantial rise in appropriations for the Regional Fund. It is now a case of labelling Parliament to improve the use of expenditure in order to obtain new resources. This is why we have always opposed the inclusion of conditions in the regulations which might curtail our budgetary powers. And that is why we cannot accept management committees which might appeal to the Council against Commission decisions. Fortunately, the amendments to this effect has been adopted by the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning.

However, the other amendments which we advocated have not been adopted, which I very much regret. None of them has been retabled, apart from one, we are pleased to see, by Mrs Boot. We would prefer not to argue — we would prefer to impress it upon fellow Members for once that the Committee on Budgets is not made up of amateurs, but that it is reminding the House of decisions taken in plenary. On several occasions the plenary assembly has said that the exact amounts must be fixed by the budgetary authority and not by Council regulations. This is also the case with exact quotas.

I hope that this amendment, too, will be adopted, for it is word for word the same as the amendment suggested by us, the Committee on Budgets, in our opinion to the Committee on Regional Policy, but which, probably with all good intentions, it did not adopt.

We also tabled an amendment to guarantee the additional nature of the aid. This was not adopted: however, another amendment in much the same spirit was adopted, and although we believe that ours was the better we are not here to argue but to help each other. The fact is, when the resources of the Regional Fund are supposed to benefit certain regions and are used instead by the individual States to fill their national coffers, they are of no use whatsoever to the region. It is reduced to an indiscriminate approach with the distribution of predetermined sums to line the purses of of the Member States, so that it ceases to be truly regional policy. The truly regional policy envisaged when the fund was set up in 1975 is not being achieved here, so we shall have to make do with a step in the

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right direction. We in the Committee on Budgets have not overlooked the fact that there are positive aspects, but we believe that we are failing to exploit all the present opportunities, and that we are missing the chance to strengthen our powers and to ensure that we can improve the very way in which the regional resources are utilized. This is what will be at stake in the coming years. This is what our colleagues in the national parliaments will expect of us, before they agree to increase our own resources. Then we shall have to prove that expenditure at Community level is carried out better, more efficiently and more economically — which, under this regulation, is not completely nor by any means adequately guaranteed.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Griffiths. — Mr President, at the start of my own contribution to this debate I would like to thank the chairman of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, Mr De Pasquale, for the patience and the great accommodation that he showed towards all members of the committee during the time we were discussing and debating the Commission's proposals for recasting the guidelines to the Regional Fund.

The Socialist Group broadly supports the Commission's proposals as they were amended by the De Pasquale report in our committee, I do not think that in committee we did anything at all to alter the principles upon which the Commission's proposals were based. Our amendments were in the main an attempt to make more effective the proposals of the Commission. We welcome the idea, for example, that the Fund should be concentrated much more in the weakest economies, that is of Greece, Italy, Ireland and the United Kingdom and too that there should be a widening of the non-quota part of the Fund. We note particularly the wording of the proposal that it should be up to 20% fixed annually because that, I believe, gives the Commission some flexibility in being able to differentiate between the needs or the demands made upon both parts of the Fund.

In arriving at the particular ideas that they did, one or two questions are posed as to the way in which information is made available to determine which countries, and which areas within countries, should be eligible for aid from the quota part of the Fund. Whilst we would accept the division which the Commission have made on this first occasion we would ask them, and the national governments, to make sure that the statistical information on which all these decisions are based, should be made as up-to-date as possible and should also be comparable between countries as far as regions are concerned. Here, of course, I am thinking in particular of the situation in the United Kingdom where many of our regional statistics are based on regions which are bigger than a number of Member States of the Community and we believe that if the

Regional Fund is going to be effective in its reformed form we will have to have better statistical information.

Mr President, we particularly like the idea in the Socialist Group of getting away from financing individual projects and trying to look at those regions in greatest need and then developing programmes specifically to aid them. We believe that nothing but good can come from an attempt to get the Commission, the national governments and the local and regional authorities concerned around the table to look at the problems of particular regions, to formulate aims to overcome those problems and then to introduce practical measures aimed at getting rid of them. We believe that this cooperation with local and regional authorities at the very beginning of any attempt to deal with the problems of regions is a major step in the right direction because in the end the people who are going to be most concerned with developing successful regional economies are the people responsible for those regions themselves.

We also like the idea of having a financial statement attached to the regional development programme because we believe that if there is a commitment at the very beginning of a programme from the national government, from the Regional Development Fund and from local and regional authorities or whoever else might be making a contribution financially to the programme, then we can be assured, as far as is humanly possible, that the money from the Regional Fund will be additional to what everybody else is putting into the programme.

We like too the idea of an annual report on the progress of the programme because we believe this is essential in helping to keep those concerned with the implementation of the programme on their toes. Of course, the more effectively and efficiently the programme moves forward, the more effectively the financial resources can be used.

As far as the non-quota section is concerned, we would highlight in particular the criteria which we feel are necessary for regions to qualify. These are that they should have been suffering from recent and serious problems of industrial decline, that they should be able to show that other Community policies are adversely affecting them, that there are in some areas trans-frontier problems, and perhaps that they are particular black spots which are assisted by national regional policies, although in this context we would hope that due regard would be given to the specific problems of regions and to the relative severity of imbalances in the Community.

We welcome too the continuing hopes of the Commission for the development of integrated operations. Once again, like the non-quota section, this part of the Fund is still in its infancy. It is suffering from teething problems. Nevertheless, we believe that the attempt

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should be made to get much more effective coordination, not just of the various Community funds and activities available to help the regions but also the national governments' own policies. The more effectively these can all be coordinated, the more effectively can those regions be helped.

We like too the ideas which the Commission is bringing forward and the amendments made in committee on the help for small and medium-sized undertakings. The idea of public or mixed-holding companies, credit lines to local banks, the transfer of technology at far greater speed so that small and medium-sized companies can benefit from it, aid for surveys and market studies, all these are ideas which we hope to see being taken up by the Commission and, of course, by the Council.

I would close with this remark, Mr President, that we hope that the House will see that it is not just the size of the Fund that counts but that we need a total approach of all policies to benefit the regions of our Community.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mrs Boot. — (NL) Mr President, as spokesman for the EPP Group today, I should first of all like to congratulate the rapporteur, Mr De Pasquale. He was very successful in getting the main points of the Commission's proposal accepted by the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, and he spoke a moment ago of a happy blend. I would hope that the plenary assembly will also adopt the proposal tomorrow.

The Commission's proposal to review the Fund regulation is, in many respects, a new stage in the development of Community regional policy, which involves finding a Community solution to regional problems. It must be pointed out, however, that the regional problems have very varied causes and require very different approaches. The Commission is never in a position to adopt these approaches on its own, and in fact it has no authorization to do so. Regional policy is a prime example of an area where cooperation between Commission and Member States is called for. The aim should be not only to find solutions providing better regional equilibrium, but also to achieve the best possible balance in cooperation between Commission and Member States. I believe that the proposals now before us are along the right lines and may be important for achieving the objectives of the regional policy, i.e. overcoming unacceptable regional disparities and enabling the weaker regions to catch up.

The Commission has come up with daring proposals on various points. I would just mention briefly coordination, geographical concentration, the gradual transi-

tion to financing programmes, the increase of the non-quota section from 5 to up to 20%, integrated development programmes, greater attention to local and regional authorities' own contributions and, last but not least, reinforcement of the institutional role of the Commission by transferring the decision-making powers on the non-quota section from the Council to the Commission. My Group agrees with all these points and will warmly support them.

The idea of coordination is certainly nothing new to the regional policy. In one of our Member States, the ministry responsible for regional policy is called the 'Ministry of Coordination'. At the 1972 Paris Summit, our heads of government undertook to coordinate their regional policies. In 1979 when the Fund was first reviewed, they set this principle down in a separate Council resolution. The principle has now been given a legal basis in the proposal for a regulation before us, and this represents progress, since coordination of economic decisions is all the more vital in times of economic recession or slower economic growth.

There will have to be more cohesion between the resources available for regional policy. It is of the utmost importance for the Commission to give priority to coordinating the Community's various finance instruments.

With regard to coordination with the Member States' regional policies, I believe that some Member States are being rather premature in fearing that the criteria governing their national regional policies will be affected. It would be useful if the Commission undertook a comparative study of the criteria used for national regional policies. The variety of regions requires a number of differing approaches.

Next, the concept of concentration. The ERDF resources are to be used in areas where the need is greatest. This idea too is not exactly alien to us, as it is also practised in development cooperation. No matter how much we talk about solidarity, the withdrawal of aid to a number of countries in the quota section is anything but easy. I would therefore ask the Commission to devote particular attention to a number of Parliament's amendments adding to the criteria for the non-quota section. I am thinking here of border regions, demographic causes and the like, which are explained in detail in the amendments. I believe that, if ERDF resources are withheld from areas like border regions, this may be seen as a snub to their own dedication to promoting cross-border cooperation, and therefore have a demoralizing effect.

On the subject of fixing quota percentages, my group supports the amendment by the Committee on Budgets to the effect that these percentages would have to have indicative value. This would mean our achieving two objectives: 1) Parliament would use its own powers in deciding on the annual budget, and 2) we would stress our intention of doing away with national quo-

Boot

tas which merely obstruct the development of a real Community structural policy.

Next, the transition to financing programmes. This is a positive step, as it means reducing the ever-increasing amount of paper work involved in processing dozens of individual projects. In addition, we can increase our grip on the principle of complementarity, according to which Community aid may be granted only in conjunction with national aid. However, much depends on the quality of the regional development programmes. As long as the Commission still has to send programmes back to the Member States so that they can do their sums again, we still need to give the matter consideration. I am thinking here of the United Kingdom. Fortunately, one region in the United Kingdom, York, has realized all this and has now itself sent a development programme to the Commission.

I should also incidentally like to point out that the regional development programmes and the annual report should serve exclusively as a means of obtaining resources and coordinating policies, and not as a supplement to the monitoring policy under Articles 92 and 93 of the EEC Treaty.

Mr President, may I ask the Commission to reconsider its choice of words in its discussions with the Member States on which of the specific three-year programmes under consideration should be selected? Is it not possible that, when the programme contracts were being introduced, the word 'contract' slipped into the draft regulation rather inadvertently? The Commission's right to decide on the granting of loans is a unilateral decision. It may well attach conditions to this, but it can never determine the programme itself in an agreement. I think that this would be declared null and void if it came to a legal dispute.

To sum up, Mr President, our group is, broadly speaking, happy with the Commission's proposal and hopes that, when it is implemented, it will produce more efficiency and better control of the Fund's resources. Only then can the Community regional policy play the integrating role mentioned in the Mandate report.

I should finally also like to point out that the many debates over recent years have resulted in the inclusion of a number of conditions in this draft regulation which we approve wholeheartedly. It is good that we are also discussing new proposals in today's debate. For example, on the subject of cooperation between Community and Member States, we should look at the German model of a planning committee made up of representatives from both *Länder* and *Federal Government*. We could perhaps use this as a model for cooperation between the Commission and the Member States. Only if this model is applied can we talk of truly cooperative coordination in drawing up overall outline plans. In addition, the German model has a built-in guarantee that neither the *Länder* nor the *Fed-*

eral Government can outvote each other. For this reason too it is a very suitable model. Moreover, Mr President, I believe that we are going to need a European Government in the future.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Harris. — Mr President, could I begin by also congratulating Mr De Pasquale. In presenting this report and handling the Committee he has shown the same scrupulous fairness which he always demonstrates as chairman. We thank him for it. Could I also thank the Commission most sincerely. Although I might appear somewhat critical later in what I say, could I applaud the Commission for taking what I am sure will be seen as a first real step towards building a genuine European regional policy. They are to be congratulated.

Up to now, as we know, the Fund has too often been regarded by too many Member States merely as something of a budgetary mechanism, as a means of getting some money from Europe to help finance the sort of schemes they would have implemented in any case. The Commission has tried very genuinely to get away from this approach and we applaud, in particular, many of its proposals, particularly its suggestion and its moves to involve local authorities more right at the beginning of the process. We also applaud its attempt to deal with the very vexed question of additionality, or rather non-additionality. Also we welcome the very real help that it is proposing or suggesting should be given to small and medium-sized businesses. Nevertheless, as I indicated, I do have some doubts on the details of the regulation. Of course these are inevitable. I have doubts actually on the proposed move away from project financing to programme financing. I think it is an excellent idea; what we really need to see is how it works in practice and we shall watch that with care.

And then, of course, there is the essential issue of concentration. Here let me make clear that my group completely supports the principle of concentration on the regions most in need and I think that the House is at one with us in that. But where we are critical, and where we have been critical in committee, is over the means employed by the Commission to make a comparison between the various regions. We realize the difficulties; we know the Commission has had to work on national statistics. We acknowledge this. Nevertheless, we believe that that approach has been flawed with some inconsistencies and particularly, at the first stage of the exercise, with hopelessly out-of-date statistics.

The Commission, of course, has not been comparing like with like. The regions, as envisaged by national governments, vary considerably in size. For example, they range from the south-east of the United King-

Harris

dom, which has a population of 17 million, to a particular region in Italy which has a population of a mere 114 thousand. You cannot make a true comparison, I believe, with such differences of population or size of regions. As the Commission knows, this approach has posed particular difficulties for the United Kingdom including the areas of the south-west and Yorkshire, Humberside and Corby.

Nevertheless, we do support the principle of concentration but this does make it very important that if there is going to be concentration in the quota section, then there must be flexibility and imagination in the non-quota section. I support very strongly the idea that we should have 20% of the Fund for the non-quota section and that the Commission should pay particular attention to the areas which will not benefit from the quota section but yet which do contain localities with acute economic needs. We all know of areas, particularly big cities, inside what are generally regarded as prosperous regions, which do have those acute economic and social needs and, indeed, are areas of stress. My group succeeded in getting amendments adopted by the committee drawing attention to these areas and I hope that in drawing up the programmes for the non-quota section the Commission will indeed pay particular attention to what we call the black spots.

So, Mr President, to sum up, my group warmly welcomes the Commission's proposals; we back them in principle: we will vote, certainly, for the De Pasquale report but, as I say, we do have some reservations about the details.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Damette. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I want to point out, first of all, that I am speaking on behalf of the French Communists. The Commission proposes a profound reform of the Regional Fund, both as regards its structure and as regards the ways in which it is implemented. In order to justify this, the Commission first serves notice that the Fund has failed to achieve its objectives, which no one can deny. During the period of rapid economic growth in the Community, regional disparities increased, and the present economic crisis has aggravated this tendency. Here, a solution is proposed: a bigger and more selective Regional Fund and the granting of loans according to Community criteria, and not on the basis of national criteria. This would mean that France would be pretty well excluded from the Regional Fund's purview. But, on the other hand, the Commission acknowledges that the damage done in the regions has been caused to a considerable extent by Community policies. This is obviously true of Lorraine and Wallonia, which have been reduced to penury by the Davignon plans. But it is also true of the agricultural regions. Clearly, the European Community is not re-

sponsible for the under-developed state of the Limousin region, but the worsening of the economic crisis in that region is indissolubly linked to the shortcomings of the Common Agricultural Policy where the produce of small holdings is concerned, and to the serious distortions caused by excessive recourse to imports.

If the economic situation in the regions is getting worse we must not look for the cause in the inadequacy of regional policies but rather, and principally, in the structural weaknesses of the sectoral policies. If we continue to penalize small holdings and destroy the European steel industry, we can throw as many billions as we like into the regional policies: in the end we shall see nothing but the failure of these policies.

This, however, is exactly what the Commission is proposing. More exactly, what it is proposing in place of a regional policy is an ill-considered response to the worsening of the economic situation, an attempt to approach the matter selectively and try to keep the most serious crises under control. We are asked to make massive increases in the non-quota section, which only exacerbate the damage caused in the regions by the Community's industrial policies, whereas, right now, we cannot even manage to spend all the money we have devoted to that section. Doubtless the Commission is envisaging even more serious regional crises in the event of an enlargement of the Common Market to include Spain and Portugal, and, with this in mind, the crutches are already being prepared. It is suggested that we should concentrate funds coming under the quota section in the worst affected areas, and that we should do this according to Community criteria. In other words, we are taking for granted that the regional imbalances will get worse, particularly because of the inadequacies of the Common Agricultural Policy and the regular infringements of its rules. We reject this attitude of regarding the economic crisis as a permanent fact of life. What the Commission is proposing is that we should keep the Regional Fund as a hospital for the most serious cases: our view is that it would be much better to prevent accidents occurring in the first place.

But, in any case, to attempt to define a regional policy according to Community criteria is patent nonsense: by their very nature, the regions are defined in terms of, and are located within, their own national area. Regional policies are national policies *par excellence*, in which the Community certainly has a role to play, but that role is one of consultation and encouragement. It would be illusory and dangerous to give the impression that the Community budget is capable of taking over the regional responsibilities of the national states. In fact, the use of Community criteria leads to a completely distorted impression that has scarcely any connection with the region in question. In reality, it would amount, as everyone is well aware, to subsidizing two Member States, which alone would absorb three-quarters of the Funds appropriations. This is unacceptable. The regions are being used merely as an excuse

Damette

for inter-state transfers of funds. Of course, in the case of Italy, there is a genuine problem, but a problem of a different kind, since the solution of that problem implies rather more a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and a fairer assessment of the importance of Mediterranean products. In the case of the United Kingdom the system proposed is quite simply absurd: the longer Mrs Thatcher carries on destroying jobs, the more money she will receive from Europe. In other words, whilst pretending to help alleviate unemployment we shall be subsidizing policies that destroy jobs. The ERDF is in reality nothing more than an instrument for effecting unjustified transfers of money to Great Britain. That is unacceptable from the point of view of plain common sense, and I shall add that it is obviously unacceptable for France, which would be excluded from such a Fund. As far as France is concerned, a Fund of that kind would be the equivalent of pouring the money down the drain.

What the Communist and Allies Group is proposing is that we should address ourselves to the real problems, to the sectoral policies, instead of attempting to apply soothing ointment to the regional pains caused by the failure of those same sectoral policies. The Common Agricultural Policy must be reorganized around Community preference. We must put a stop to the wholesale destruction of industries, in the fields of coal and steel and textiles. We must avoid further industrial disintegration resulting from an enlargement of the Community, when the previous enlargement has already led to an open crisis in the Community. What the regions have a right to expect from Europe is not emergency subsidies but economic, agricultural and commercial policies which will not undermine the very bases of their existence. A good regional policy would not do that. As for the rest, it is up to the Member States to look to their own responsibilities.

This is why, and I shall conclude on this note, our Group has tabled an amendment which proposes quite simply putting matters in a logical order, that is to say dealing first with agricultural and social policies before dealing with regional policies. In the meantime, we think that there is no need to carry out reforms in the regions, the more so as in reality the regions are only a pretext for solving problems of quite another kind.

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Maher. — Mr President, I believe that if this Community is ultimately to be a success, then we must

move towards Europe of the regions and Europe of the peoples rather than the Europe of the countries and the Europe of the governments, as it tends to be. That is why I regard this Commission report as exceedingly important and I congratulate the Commission on the progress that it has made and in responding to many of the wishes of this Parliament over the last few years.

I congratulate also Mr De Pasquale who has done excellent work not only in this report but in his chairmanship of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, and Miss de Valera who has contributed to the De Pasquale report in a very real manner.

I would, however, Mr President, in case I forget it later on, say to Miss de Valera that I think we have to be a bit careful in talking about what seems to be positive discrimination in favour of women. I feel that, whether we are women or men, males or females, we are people and that is how we should be looked upon — as people — and that there should be no discrimination against male or female on the basis of sex. In other words there should be equal opportunities for all. I think it is quite dangerous to call for positive discrimination in favour of women, as that would inevitably create war between the sexes. I just make that point in a spirit of friendship with Miss de Valera and as a help to the very excellent work that she is doing.

Mr President, of course it is vital for the regional funds, which are being made available from the European Community and which inevitably are scarce, to be applied in the most fruitful manner possible. I deplore what I see as a rather cynical attitude of governments in using these funds very often in a political manner putting a little here and there in order to meet the wishes of some political demand at a given time. By using what is commonly called the watering can effect, very little is achieved anywhere. I think we have got to ensure that we concentrate the funds insofar as it is possible and feasible to do so in order to get the maximum results in a given number of areas. Those areas ought to be the areas of the greatest deprivation. They are not, Mr President, as the funds are used at the moment. In my country funds are even being diverted into Dublin city where already there are too many people living. The same can be said of some other regions. The funds should be used in areas that are losing population, where people are leaving, where there are massive wide spaces where nobody lives, where facilities are not being used any more, where schools, churches, hospitals are being closed down because the people are leaving these areas. Surely the whole notion of the Regional Fund was to ensure that people would be retained in these regions and there would be a better distribution of population.

Mr President, it is vital also that the funds that are available from the European Community — that is the Agricultural Fund, the Social Fund and the Regional

Maher

Fund — be used in harmony, in order to achieve the best possible results in a given area. Too often we tend to use them as if they were coming from entirely different sources with no relationship between them. Sometimes the good effects of one fund is cancelled by the application or misapplication of funds from the other. So it is absolutely vital that in future we concentrate these funds. That means, Mr President, in my view that there ought to be national plans. There ought to be a plan for these regions elaborated by the national government together with the people on the ground who are going to be affected by the application of these policies and of course, the European Community. In other words, in future we should see a rational development in these areas, not just a one-off injection of funds but a well-prepared plan.

Mr President, I am very pleased that the Commission have taken account of the need of the far-away regions. For instance, there are regions very far away from this Community still owned by some of the countries of the European Community. I am very glad that these areas like Martinique and the islands owned by France, for instance, and others, can still qualify for regional aid. Some of us have seen the problems in these areas and I must say that some excellent work is being done.

Could I make a final point. Some people have the mistaken impression that you can somehow take resources out of agriculture to help develop a better regional policy. Now I warn against this. I think we have to be exceedingly careful. If we rob agriculture, if we take money from agriculture, we shall have to consider to what extent the areas that have been benefiting from the agricultural policy and which we wish to help through the Regional Fund are going to be in a situation where Peter has been robbed in order to pay Paul. We must be very clear about that. In any event, Mr President, if you are to take enough from agriculture to develop a real regional policy you would inevitably destroy agriculture. Maybe you would have a regional policy but then we would not have an agricultural policy because we would renationalize the European policy for agriculture. So I want to issue a warning here. What we need to do is to provide more resources, increase the contribution so that in fact we will have a regional policy that will finally correct the imbalance between the wealthy regions and those that are being depopulated. In other words we must ensure that the rich do not get richer and the poor do not get poorer and that we bring about a better balance.

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, may I join with all my colleagues who have spoken in this debate in thanking Mr De Pasquale for all the work he does for us all who serve on this excellent committee.

It is one committee, Mr President, where we tend to sing a united song. We sing in harmony because those of us in this committee really care about the future of this fund, and I am very honoured to be able to speak in the debate.

Many of the things we have been demanding in this committee — some of us for a very long time — have been met, such as the support for small and medium-sized businesses, the abolition of the absurd 10-job rule which was one thing I was always very keen on having scrapped, and a greater role for local authorities. This is a demand that is coming from every Member State. The desire of local authorities in all our Member States to be more involved in the way in which this fund is administered has almost become a Community-wide movement.

Also I welcome the transfer of decision-making in the non-quota section to the Commission and I would thank the Commission for their forward-looking approach to this problem.

Having said that, I have got, like many of the speakers, some reservations. Can we not use this great look at the Regional Fund to do something about additional? Would it not be a practical thing to encourage an aggrieved recipient to sue as a test case the government of the Member State which, in my opinion, fraudulently keeps to itself funds that should really be additional? I have tried to encourage recipients who are aggrieved to do this from time to time but I have never succeeded, such is the fear people have of the costs of lawyers — I speak as a lawyer. They are so afraid of the cost involved that no one will do it but I think if it was encouraged from all quarters, one test case is all we need to end this spectre that destroys a lot of what we want to achieve in the Regional Fund. It really must be stopped. Surely the Commission can use some of its muscle to try and get it stopped. This is something which unites the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning.

The next thing I would like to say is to echo the appeal of Mr Maher. Everyone is attracted by peripheries and islands. Travel brochures, if I remember from my knowledge of Americana, used to talk about far-away places with strange-sounding names far away over the sea. Well, that is fine. But these far-away places suffer in a way that is intolerable for this Community to put up with. They are haunted by depopulation. They are already depopulated. My area has eight people per square kilometre. For every one of these people has a threat hanging over him or her that can mean the death of yet another small community, which means turning a part of this Community virtually into a desert. That is a place where there are no people, it does not need to have dry sandy soil to be a desert. It is a desert if there is a glen with no people living in it where with the right policies there could be people.

I would suggest that the Commission look hard at the amendments in the names of Mr Harris and myself

Ewing

— Nos 46 and 47 — all of which deal with the criterion of depopulation. I would like the Commission, when they are summing up, to say if they are going to recognize this criterion and support these amendments in principle. Amendments Nos 93, 94 and 95 in my name and that of Mr Cronin all seek to gain recognition that one of the criteria should be that it is an area on the periphery which suffers from this threat.

Mr Kyrkos also has similar amendments because if anyone can understand the far-away places, I am sure it must be the Greeks whose islands suffer from depopulation in the winter. Now one thing I would ask the Commission to notice is that it is tending to give too much weight to the selection made inside a Member State of what areas should be assisted. In other words if the United Kingdom for example selects an area then it is selected by this Community. Sometimes the selection that has been made by the Member State is not worthy of the principles of the Regional Fund. If I could just give you an example: the whole of Scotland is one region and areas have been selected out. So I would ask that the Commission and all in this House support the amendments I have referred.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Gendebien. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, a poet once said: 'Woman is the future of man'. I shall say: the regions are the future of Europe, but we are, alas, still far from a Europe of the regions, and just as far from a Community regional policy.

I observe, in fact, that the Council and the regional policy committee have the final say in any important decisions regarding regional policy and their decisions are not subject to any form of democratic control. This is evident from Rule 31 of the new Regulation. So this means that we are still some way from a genuine Community regional policy. What we are faced with instead is rather a policy of the cash register, with the ultimate powers of decision in the hands of the Member States themselves, which are, however, the prime culprits when it comes to allocating responsibility for the decline of particular regions.

I now come to my second observation. I regret the decision to retain national quotas. It would have been better to assign an overall quota of 80% to the 'quota section'. What is more, we must denounce the vagueness with which the non-quota section is defined, the sum assigned to it is not guaranteed and the criteria of application are left to the sole discretion of the Commission, with, as a last resort, the final decision of the Council.

I now come to the major problem of deciding which regions should be aided. We say 'yes' to concentra-

tion, but 'no' to excessive concentration, which would mean that aid would be almost exclusively confined to two Member States and would turn the ERDF into an Anglo-Italian fund. This is a matter of some importance if we bear in mind that the ERDF will soon be provided with annual financing of the order of two thousand million ECUs. This kind of concentration of aid on two Member States only is the kind of thing that justifies all the talk of a two-tier Europe.

Let us, by all means, provide massive aid to the worst affected areas in these two countries, but why should we at the same time exclude other regions which have received aid in the past and whose situation remains extremely worrying, Wallonia for example?

This is why, ladies and gentlemen, I propose, referring to the Commission's own objective criteria, to add the following to the list of aided regions: Liguria, Languedoc-Rousillon, Walloon Hainaut and Corsica. This is the import of one of my amendments. These regions, which receive little aid from the States they are parts of, ought to be able to look to Europe and the ERDF for support and aid.

This also raises a fundamental question, and on this I shall conclude: I mean the question of official recognition of the regions by the Commission, recognition of the regions as bodies with whom the Commission can dialogue directly.

I therefore propose that we consider setting up a Council of European Regions, which would be a consultative body grouping the regions of Europe. In this way the regions could express their opinions on their needs and could air their views of regional policy in Europe. The provision of democratic checks on the management of the ERDF would mean that the voice of the regions could finally be heard in all clarity, and we should make significant progress in our task of constructing a united Europe.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall leave things there, as my time has now run out, but I shall come back in the near future to this question of setting up a consultative assembly of the regions in the form of a motion for a resolution.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Paisley. — I can wholeheartedly agree with much of what is contained, Mr President, in the Commission's proposals and in the resolution before the House. In particular I welcome the proposed geographical concentration of the quota section in regions such as my own with particularly serious structural problems, though I recognize that the concentration recommended is more apparent than real since the regions concerned are already guaranteed 78% of the Fund's resources, compared with 80% now envisaged for this new quota section.

Paisley

I also see merit in widening the scope of the non-quota section as this allows local authorities in my province to exercise initiative in applying for and spending funds which are now available to them under the quota section.

There is also much wisdom in the theory of greater cooperation of Regional Fund aid with other Community funds through integrated operations. However, while these concepts are laudable I find that in practice they lose a little of their seeming attraction. For example, we in Northern Ireland have had a pilot integrated operation scheme in Belfast which is supposed, by concentrated and combined effort, to breathe new life into our capital city. Yet to date we find that this fine concept has in practice been something of a disappointment in that, in the main, it amounts to nothing more than a gathering together into a single package of already existing plans and schemes. Thus its potential to bring additional and special aid to our blighted city has been largely wasted.

Now I know only too well that much of the blame for this rests not with the Commission or the EEC, but with the British Government which has so abused the integrated operation idea as to turn it into a medium for replacing rather than supplementing its own intended and necessary expenditure.

This leads me to deal with the one central and unsolved problem which surrounds all EEC aid to a region such as mine. This is the much vexed question of the lack of additionality. Fine schemes and new regional fund policies are commendable, but as long as the national government is able with impunity to retain in its central exchequer EEC funds given for priority regions, then the theory of Regional Fund aid will be divorced from reality. Only when EEC funds become genuinely additional to the spending of national governments can anything worthwhile be achieved. I would therefore have welcomed definitive proposals to tackle this glaring problem, but nonetheless, I join in supporting the resolution before the House.

President. — I call Mr Nikolaou.

Mr Nikolaou. — (GR) Mr President, I shall confine myself to four remarks from the Greek point of view, it being understood that we fully agree with those points in Mr De Pasquale's very important and thorough report to which I do not refer.

Firstly, geographical concentration. The principle of concentrating aid under the quota section on less favoured Community regions with serious structural problems is naturally a principle which we welcome. As regards Greece, however, we have certain reservations as to whether the 15.97% fixed for the Greek regions is sufficient, and we should once again like to register our disapproval of the exclusion of the Athens

and Thessaloniki regions from aid under the Regional Fund's quota section. Suffice it to say, Mr President, that in the most prosperous region of Greece, namely Athens, the average per capita income is 55% of the average per capita income in the Community as a whole and that the per capita income in the Athens region — and not in Greece as a whole — is less than that in eight of the ten EEC Member States.

Secondly, the coordination of policies. The Commission is urging that the new Regulation should include a special chapter on the coordination of national regional policies with Community policy. Our answer is that we are in favour of coordination but not of the government's being restricted in their choice of those measures which seem essential to deal with their regional and development problems.

Thirdly, the financing of the programmes. The Commission's basic proposal is to lay down a transitional period of three years to replace the individual projects by regional programmes. We are in favour of such a transition, but we think, Mr Commissioner, that a transitional period of five years would, for very many EEC countries, be more in keeping with the actual conditions which make such a transition necessary and right.

My fourth and last point is the development of local potential in the regions. The financing of avant-garde activities such as conducting studies, the setting up of common services for many technologically developed small and medium-sized undertakings, the improvement of organizational and management methods and the subsidizing of rural tourism are very positive objectives. But there is a slight contradiction here, since while the Commission is fostering the development of local potential, it is at the same time calling for the reduction of aid for infrastructure.

The Members of PASOK consider that investments relating to infrastructure are a fundamental and essential precondition for productive investments in the industrial sector. This view is dictated by the peculiarities of the Greek economy, which have been the subject of official statements by the Greek Government at Community level. We are aware that the reason behind the regional problems of those developed countries which have them is the difference in levels of development. For us, however, there is no point in trying to move industry and services away from the centre to the regions if there is no basic working infrastructure, and this remark applies not only to Greece but also to other EEC countries. As I said at the beginning, we fully agree with the points to which I have not referred, and I also should like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr De Pasquale for the knowledge and political subtlety with which he has dealt with the whole problem, thereby managing as far as possible to reconcile the differing views.

President. — I call Mr Kazazis.

Mr Kazazis. — (GR) Mr President, I also should like to congratulate the rapporteur, Mr De Pasquale, on the excellent report which he has drawn up, and I must praise its virtues and stress that I agree with it with certain reservations, which I shall deal with straight away.

The record of regional policy and the Regional Fund since its inception in 1975 makes us very sceptical, since it has not proved possible either to achieve harmonic development among the Community's regions or to reduce the enormous gap between the developed and the backward regions.

This being so, we are bound to note that the financial resources available to the Fund are totally inadequate for the application of a more active regional policy to the extent which is required.

I would further add that although the simple transfer of funds is far from being the correct solution, it is also true that without it the problem of the great difference in economic development between the north and the south of the Community cannot be effectively tackled.

I now come to the individual points.

My first point concerns Articles 4 and 27 of the proposed regulation, which seek to extend the section covering intervention without national quotas.

I do not think that, with such limited and inadequate financial resources at its disposal, the Regional Fund could cover the cases which could be dealt with by other actions and other Community resources without spoiling the Fund's capacity for pursuing its basic objective.

In my opinion there should be a clear difference in treatment between, on the one hand, occasional underemployment and fortuitous unemployment or decline — which are definitely not regional problems — and structural unemployment and underdevelopment and endemic backwardness on the other.

In addition to this, it is too early to increase the non-quota amount to 20%, and the limited experience which the Commission has gained from implementing such programmes is insufficient, and in any case it does not justify quadrupling the items. If the criteria are not extended, the funds will be utilized mainly by the rich countries of northern Europe, while the other countries, such as southern Italy, Ireland and Greece, which are faced with greater and more complicated problems, will not be able to put forward programmes because of the limited criteria.

The Commission, Mr President, must not give us something with one hand and take it away with the other, since this 20% constitutes the entire amount

which has hitherto been available for national quotas in the countries which are now excluded.

For this reason there will have to be an extension of the criteria set out in Articles 4 and 27 for eligibility for intervention under the non-quota section, so that the peripheral regions of the Community are also covered in the same way as third countries and particularly state-trading countries, which are similarly faced with more serious and complicated problems.

I should like to raise another point concerning the quota section. The amount proposed for Greece is both unfair and unacceptable for the following three reasons.

Firstly, Greece's budget has been based on a figure of 13%, which was, as you know, the result of pressures for political compromise.

Secondly, this 13%, which still applies today, was fixed at the end of 1980 as a temporary solution.

Thirdly, the 'linear redistribution' proposed mathematically by the Commission favours the countries with a high quota and does not take account of the actual needs.

President. — I call Mrs Kellett-Bowman.

Mrs Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, may I thank our chairman for his tact and patience in dealing with a highly spirited committee. May I also congratulate the Commission on bringing forward far and away their best proposals since 1973: the criticisms I have, Mr Giolitti, are in detail only.

Last time we introduced new regulations for the Regional Development Fund, the Parliament was unelected, and I regret to say that our recommendations went largely unheeded despite a lengthy conciliation process. One change we did achieve, however, was the abolition of the so-called direct link, which had led to absurd results in practice such as grants being made for servicing an industrial estate or building an advanced factory but refused for the road leading to it. So I was dismayed to see that the Commission, in Article 7, is virtually restoring the direct link, and I hope that Parliament will prevent this by supporting the committee amendment seeking instead to concentrate efforts on eliminating bottlenecks which constitute economic obstacles to recovery in the regions.

I cannot, however, agree to the proposal of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning that the Fund should set aside 15 to 30 per cent of its available resources for interest subsidies. This object can already be achieved through the European Investment Bank without depleting the Fund's meagre resources, which are already tightly stretched. Similarly, I oppose

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the committee's amendment to facilitate opening credit lines to local banks. As it stands in the amendment to Article 16, this could be an open-ended commitment and a severe drain on the Fund, and again this could be achieved through the EIB.

I strongly support the Commission's suggestion in Article 4(3), endorsed by the committee, that geographical concentration of the Fund's resources and effective cooperation between all Community instruments in the most disadvantaged regions is essential if we are to achieve any significant result.

Now for the first time we have what we have sought for the last seven years — statistics and objective criteria to decide which these regions are. In the first periodic report I have in my hand on the social and economic state of the regions, it is true that these statistics relate mainly to 1977, when employment and productivity were very different and that, as far as the United Kingdom is concerned, they relate to far too large regions, being based on Level 2 statistics, but the misery ratio of the percentage of unemployment and the ratio of the gross national product per head compared to the Community average constitute a highly relevant yardstick, if brought up to date. This should be the prime objective of our statistics department in this electronic age.

Since the countries with the greatest regional problems are precisely those which have the greatest difficulty in providing their national contributions to projects, I particularly welcome the new Article 24, which enables the Fund to advance 80 percent of the grant as soon as the project is started and to make further advances when at least 60 per cent of the project is completed. I hope that the Commission's efforts to make money received from the Fund additional to the money which should be spent in any event are successful.

I believe that the Commission has shown sound common sense in acknowledging, in the new Article 16, that there is very little foot-loose investment available at the moment and therefore greater efforts must be made to encourage indigenous industry in the regions. But I think the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning is going too far in its amendment to this article, and I hope the Parliament will stick to the Commission's text.

Bearing in mind the crucial importance of adequate infrastructure to disadvantaged areas, I cannot understand why the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning suggests in paragraph 7(2) of its resolution that limits should be placed on aid for infrastructure projects, and I hope that Parliament will remove this suggested limitation, as we suggest in an amendment from my group.

By and large, however, I believe the Commission has come up with some sound suggestions for bringing

the Fund regulation up to date, and I wish them well in their battle to get them through the Council. They will have us fully behind them.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Cardia.

Mr Cardia. — *(IT)* Mr President, Mr Commissioner, as we were reminded this morning, all the efforts expended under the aegis of the Regional Development Fund, which has encapsulated, at least so far, the Community's regional development policy, have not produced statistically appreciable results in the fight to reduce the gap between the most developed regions of the Community and the most backward ones.

This, however, is not because of any general inefficiency in spending the money, nor is it because of the existence of national quotas, but, rather, it is caused by the quantitative limits imposed on regional aid, by the fact that infrastructural projects are given precedence, by the generally deferred return on investment, by the non-structural nature of regional aid and by the lack of coordination and planning. The amendments to the Fund's Regulation which the Commission has proposed and which have been strengthened and enlarged by Parliament's Committee on Regional Development, in the shape of the De Pasquale report, have, indeed, the aim of making the Fund's activities more concentrated, more incisive and more productive of effects and endogenous development, they are also intended to make the Community more responsible in assessing aid projects and strengthen the role of the regional institutions in planning these projects.

Personally, I believe that concentrating the Fund's work in structurally backward areas of the community, increasing the appropriations available to the fund, shifting the accent from infrastructures to directly productive investments, promoting scientific and technological research in these backward areas, giving prominence to integrated planning and asking the regions to make organic and overall plans for endogenous development represent so many steps forward of considerable importance.

Of course, the decisive factor is that a firm distinction should be made between structural backwardness and the effects of the economic crisis, something that, at a time of recession, we unfortunately tend to overlook, as I think certain members of this House are doing when — with varying motives — they refer to criteria of efficiency, but, in reality, are promoting a shift of resources from the backward regions to the crisis points of economic difficulty and decline.

The important thing is that we should not confine ourselves to the purely procedural amendments we are talking about today, but, that we should proceed as

Cardia

soon as possible to set in motion more far-reaching reforms of the very nature of the Fund and coordinate and plan the entire economic and social policy of the Community, particularly of the enlarged Community, including the policy of cooperation with Mediterranean, Arab and African countries, for the fundamental purpose of eliminating the vast desert of structural backwardness represented principally by the southern and Mediterranean regions of the Community.

The resolution which has been submitted by the committee and by its rapporteur concludes with this recommendation. The present crisis of the Community — let none of us forget this — is largely the result of a growing gap between regions of the Community, of ever widening inequalities and of ever worsening injustices.

In voting for this motion for a resolution, the Italian members of the Communist and Allies Group is voting, above all, for a more united, more democratic and juster European Community.

President. — I call Mrs von Alemann.

Mrs von Alemann. — (*DE*) Mr President, if we consider in today's debate what the actual purpose of a Community regional policy is the answer is the levelling-out of economic inequalities within a society or region — both are important. Since the EEC was established in 1958, these inequalities have unfortunately increased instead of being ironed out. The underdeveloped regions, as we all know, almost exclusively have an agriculturally based economy. Their infrastructure is generally less developed than in the centres of high population. As a result, the people living in an underdeveloped region naturally have a very limited choice. They do not have the means of choosing the education, training or profession to which they are basically just as entitled as the people in the centres of high population.

I ask you, where are the training facilities for young people in general and for girls in particular in a region where, by reason of their sex, women and girls are already at a disadvantage because of the limited range of schools and therefore the lack of training opportunities as well, let alone jobs! We encounter these double and triple disadvantages, which we established previously in the Ad Hoc Committee on Women's Rights, again and again when dealing on the whole with regional policy and the possibilities of development in the Community at large. This is why we must support Miss de Valera's demand on behalf of the Committee of Enquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, namely that women and young people as a whole should be mentioned in this new report as well as in the new guidelines. It cannot simply be assumed that the problem will solve itself automatically if jobs are created across the board because, as I have already

said, the disadvantage suffered by women and young people combine and multiply, making life more difficult for one section of the population than we believe it should be.

What else does regional policy mean? It means solidarity between rich and poor regions, not only between rich and poor Member States. It is important for the regions, too, to understand what it means when one does *not* help the other, because the effect is a two-sided one. The depopulation of a region entails, on the other hand, vast problems, including financial ones, for a highly populated area. It means that all the problems facing an underdeveloped region — isolation and lack of infrastructure and training opportunities — also rebound on to the highly populated areas in a different way with the result that more money, which we as a Community simply do not have, has to be spent there.

To sum up, I appreciate the fact that Mr De Pasquale deals with these points in his report, although I have another comment to make in this connection: when you are examining the economic strength of a region and have to decide whether it is underdeveloped, you should not only take the unemployment figures into account. You must also consider, for example, the number of schools and other demographic and sociological factors, otherwise you cannot decide what means have to be provided to help the region to help itself. This is in fact the point: regions must be helped to help themselves.

Finally, this is why I have to agree with Mrs Kellett-Bowman. It is not simply a question of stimulating economic productivity and production; helping regions to help themselves also involves infrastructure measures to allow regions to cope with economic problems more easily.

President. — I call Mr Davern.

Mr Davern. — Mr President, I would like to follow those who spoke in favour of the Commission's proposals and also to compliment Mr De Pasquale and my own colleague Sile de Valera for their work and the depth of knowledge which they have put into these reports. I hope that the very acceptable and agreed basis on which the Regional Development Fund has been proposed to us both by the Commission and by Mr de Pasquale will have a very easy passage through the Council.

I am particularly in favour of the proposal concerning the geographical scope of the quota section. I welcome the fact that the structurally weak regions which have been identified according to common criteria have now been agreed on at least some basis. I know that Mr Harris made the comparison this morning between the south-east of England, with a population of

Davern

17 million, and a region of southern Italy which has a population of merely 100 000. I would ask the question, not why there should be that differences, because parts of southern Italy like parts of the west of Ireland, of Scotland and of Greece, do not have the road infrastructures, the telecommunications and other facilities to attract industry, and so industry goes to the cities, which are already, as has been said here, overcrowded.

I welcome of course, the role of the regional authorities in this connection. I believe, and I have said so before in my own area, that regional authorities should have direct access to Europe, and as Mr Paisley said this morning, the additionality of the funds in this scheme is an essential feature of creating Europe itself. It is a pleasure to see that improvements can be made to the regional scheme, but not, as has been said here already, to the work that should in any case be done by national governments. The regional scheme should speed up and add to what they do and act as an incentive to spend more national resources. In this way, we can speed up the process of developing regional policies in our own countries and, of course, of dealing with the problem of depopulation, which again affects us in the disadvantaged-area schemes under the common agricultural policy. I find that the Regional Fund and the common agricultural policy are so close together, are linked so deeply to the heart of rural Ireland, that they in fact go hand in hand. Nevertheless, when one takes a closer look at the proposals concerning the revision of the quota section and bears in mind the intention to reduce this section of the Fund by 15%, then it becomes more apparent that Member States such as Ireland would only receive a nominal increase in the proportion of guaranteed aid. For example, Ireland would receive 5.848% of the total Fund under the quota section, as opposed to 5.643% under the previous regulation. It should also be noted that despite substantial increases in the total resources over the years, the ERDF has failed even to prevent the gap from widening between the rich and the poor regions of the Community. The true Community spirit is therefore lacking: the more selfish nations — those who already have developed at more than three or four times the rate of the poorer nations — have in fact been acting selfishly and not in a true Community spirit. It is clear that the non-quota section, which has been increased from 5% to 20% of the Fund's total resources, provides the main hope of additional finance for the structurally weak regions; and as Mrs Ewing said this morning, for example, the areas of Scotland which seem so far away from the capital of their country will in fact be very much deprived if this non-quota section is not applied.

Having said this, however, it seems to me that the non-quota section proposed by the Commission would have a limited scope of application. My group has tabled a series of amendments in the name of my colleagues Mrs Ewing and Mr Cronin which seek to introduce greater flexibility into the system proposed

by the Commission, and I hope that those amendments will receive the House's support.

We fully accept that declining industrial regions often have severe problems, and, as Mr Maher said this morning, there is the complication of money being spent in Dublin when it was maybe more urgently needed, jointly in all those areas. Cities like Waterford, Cork or Limerick, centres which have been neglected over many years by successive home governments, could now apply for regional aid under the industrial aspect, but we would point out that the peripheral areas of this Community — Greece, Italy and others — are the ones that are most neglected.

I conclude, Mr President, by saying that my group colleague, Mr Cronin, was the rapporteur on the Commission's proposal for the introduction of the non-quota section. I hope now that this will be turned to good account and that the poorer regions will benefit from the kindness of the greater ones.

President. — I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Mr President, first of all I should like to congratulate Mr De Pasquale on his undoubted dedication to the task that he undertook in preparing this report. However, like previous speakers, I am afraid I shall not find very much joy in what is now being proposed by the Commission. It is quite clear from experience here in this Parliament and in the operation of the Regional Fund that despite the great hopes that were pinned to this particular fund and its operations over the years, it has failed abysmally to close the gap between the better-off nations and the poorer regions of our Community. In fact, not only has it failed to close the gap but the gap is constantly widening and will continue to do so, because it is quite clear that the size of the fund, even though in figures it may seem quite large, is in fact far too small and has been spread too widely to have any effect whatsoever in raising the standard of living or improving the whole social fabric of our poorer regions.

One of the omissions in both the Commission's proposals and the report now before us is that housing is totally ignored. I have an amendment down that would include at least a reference to housing, and the reason for this is that without housing our population in these poorer regions will dwindle and disappear and any efforts we may make in the future to provide work will fall flat since the very workers for whom we have been providing work will no longer be there and cannot be there. This amendment I would recommend to the Parliament for its support.

I would again, as I have done so often here before, make the appeal that we should look much more generously on this Fund, that we should do something really worthwhile. The gap is widening, the poorer

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regions, measured against the more prosperous ones, are now in the ratio of 1:6, and if and when our friends from Spain join this Community, it will have widened to 1:12. That surely is an indictment of the whole Community spirit and one which we cannot look on with any equanimity, either now or in the future.

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — *(NL)* Mr President, the proposed amendment of the European Regional Fund is in our opinion a step in the right direction, although it still does not produce an ideal situation. We are in favour of the planned cooperation between the Regional and Social Funds. The various instruments within the EEC — and I am thinking also of the European Investment Bank — which have the same aim will have to integrate their activities as much as possible. However, neither the Commission proposal nor Mr De Pasquale's report lays sufficient emphasis on the link between regional development and a reform of the agricultural fund. The fact is that the Community agricultural policy will have to increase its present attempts to protect the small farmer's right to exist. Once this is the case, the development of peripheral regional areas will also be promoted. There will also have to be integration with funds outside the EEC framework, such as the Council of Europe's resettlement fund, about which I submitted written questions to the Commission on a previous occasion. We also support the demand contained in Mr De Pasquale's resolution that a particular aim of regional development must be the promotion of alternative energy production techniques and environmental protection. These are part of the innovative sector of the jobs market and are sure, in the longer term, to make an enormous contribution to employment. The quota system is an obstacle to a Community policy benefiting the areas most in need of aid — in this I am completely in agreement with Mr Notenboom, rapporteur for the Committee on Budgets. We shall have to increase the non-quota section, thus enabling the aid measures to be further concentrated. I am glad to see that the Commission's proposed reforms are, to a certain extent, along these lines.

In granting aid from the non-quota section, where it can pursue its own policy, the Commission will have to take one aspect into consideration — the border regions. Although not all of these regions may, in comparison with the truly poor areas of the Community, be counted as underdeveloped, it is precisely there that there is a European awareness. It is precisely in these regions that European programmes of action are being developed across the borders, for which the countries involved often provide no more than inadequate aid. Resources from the non-quota section of the Regional Fund should be made available for financing cross-border action and development programmes.

This will stimulate the existing 'Euro-regions' and promote cross-border contacts which have, up to now, failed to materialize. The European ideal will thus be given a new lease of life.

A further comment on the employment aspect. I was astonished to see that the proposed reform of the Regional Fund does not contain any provision for projects aimed at thoroughgoing redistribution of employment. Neither for the Member States' programmes nor for the Community programmes are any criteria laid down to try to reduce working hours or introduce part-time work. For example, in Article 2 of the Commission regulation, I would have expected the Commission to make employment redistribution one of the conditions for the programmes, since it is in the weaker regions that unemployment figures are highest.

Finally, Mr President, a few words about the interim report by my colleague in the committee, Miss de Valera. It is obvious from Monday evening's debate that the status of reports by the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women must quickly be clarified. This committee adopted by amendments Nos 3 and 13 calling upon the report to assess the consequences which the implementation of the regulation would have on the situation of women. I hope that the House, too, will adopt these amendments. An assessment of this nature may seem complicated, but need not be so, as a mechanism is being incorporated into the policy to enable the effects which the implementation of the regulation would have on the situation of women to be taken into account.

President. — I call Mrs Fuillet.

Mrs Fuillet. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, let me first of all thank Mr Giolitti for having had the courage to tackle the reform of the ERDF.

Everyone here knows that when the talk is of reform, we must be very cautious and approach the matter very gingerly. It had to be done and it is being done: I will not go so far as to say it is being done painlessly. It is true that at meetings of the Regional Committee we have done a great deal of work on this topic. We should pay tribute to our Chairman, Mr De Pasquale, for his wisdom, his tenacity and his diplomacy.

Having now completed this preamble, I must address myself to the fundamental problems, without wishing to pun.

How can any of us remain indifferent when we know that this reform is intended to redress the imbalance between the various regions of Europe, by granting the largest amounts of aid to the poorest regions of the poorest countries?

For my part, though I willingly subscribe to this thesis, I should have liked someone to define beforehand

Fuillet

exactly what a region is in the context of Europe. But at this juncture no reply is possible: there are as many regional structures as there are Member States. Nevertheless we have tried to take the question of decentralization as far as possible, at least at the level of dialogue.

I had some difficulty in accepting another point, namely the criterion according to which the regions to be aided were selected. When we began work on this, the basic statistics dated from 1977. Finally, after considerable prevarication, we were given the data for 1979. This was better, but it was still not enough. Since 1979 many things have changed in our various regions, such as the rising unemployment rate, inflation, which helps to reduce the second criterion — I mean the GNP — the gradual decay of our industrial plant and the continuing flight from the countryside. Given such a state of affairs, how could anyone not be shocked that the threshold used to select the regions deemed eligible should have been fixed at 75, whereas the European average is 100? It seems to me quite arbitrary. Obviously, however, the threshold had to be established at some point or another. So, though I accept this guillotine method, I do so very reluctantly.

Nevertheless, I want to draw the attention of the Members of this House to the fact that in the regions which do not benefit from the ERDF's quota section, there are areas, zones or sub-regions — it doesn't matter how we call them — which would be entitled to receive aid from the Fund if, unfortunately, they were not located in so-called rich regions.

This is where the second aspect of ERDF aid should come into play — I am referring to the non-quota section. You will easily understand why it is vital that this part of the fund should be increased from 5 to 20% of the total funds available to the ERDF. Will it be really necessary, however, to wait for the Member States' governments to scrutinize at the map and find out for themselves where these zones are located, and then take the first step towards the first subsidy?

By means of the non-quota section of the ERDF we can redress one or two notorious injustices, particularly as regards small and medium-sized companies and small and medium-sized industries. Can the Commission say how many of these companies have so far received aid, as compared with the large companies which are better equipped to seek this aid? What kind of publicity does the Commission intend to give the Fund to make access to it better known? Will all the information media be used so that in every region of Europe every European citizen knows his rights? Or shall we allow the present situation, where everything is done by furtive string-pulling, to continue?

The ERDF is the fund which will do the most to help to reduce unemployment. The Social Fund also helps in the training of workers. But it is the ERDF, which, by giving new stimulus to the regional economies, will

be the real cause of any reduction in the number of total unemployed. The so-called 'integrated' operations, involving all the financial means available to the Community, should be reserved for those regions that are borderline cases as regards the granting of aid from the non-quota section, regions that straddle national frontiers and those regions which will have to suffer the consequences of the enlargement of the Community. The Regional Affairs Committee has given an example of reform. I hope that other reforms will follow, such as reform of the Social Fund and the Common Agricultural Policy.

If those reforms come to pass, ladies and gentlemen, a new Europe will be born. A Europe in which the European social area will become a reality, the Europe which all genuine Europeans are impatiently waiting for.

President. — I call Mr O'Donnell.

Mr O'Donnell. — Mr President, I too would like to thank Mr De Pasquale and Commissioner Giolitti for the excellent work they have done on this very important field of regional policy.

The Commission document and the De Pasquale report in my opinion laid the foundations for the formulation of a real, coherent and efficacious Community regional policy.

The de Valera report also adds an interesting dimension to this vitally important subject of regional development. We have before us today, Mr President, various new proposals for the future administration of the Regional Fund. These include new measures which have been advocated over the years by many people who have had practical experience of regional development.

The most important of these are firstly the concentration of the fund in the areas of greatest need.

Secondly, the formulation of integrated regional programmes designed to develop all the resources of a region — economic, social and cultural — the human resources as well as the physical resources.

Thirdly, there is a proposal for the coordination of the various Community instruments with national aids.

And, fourthly, there is the very vital and very important proposal for active involvement of local and regional authorities in the development of their own areas and regions.

I submit, Mr President, that these proposals represent a significant new departure in Community regional policy and offer new hope to the people of Europe's peripheral and most disadvantaged regions, such as

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Ireland, parts of the UK and the Mediterranean region. Of course, it must be pointed out that the implementation of these new measures will depend on the full cooperation of the national governments of the Member States. For Ireland the new Community guidelines offer a unique new opportunity by means of the proposed integrated development programmes of getting to grips with the problems of regional development, particularly in the Gaeltacht and in the four western seaboard regions from the northwest down to the southwest. It is especially significant that the thinking and methodology underlying the proposals put forward by the then Irish Government in 1975 for the establishment of a western development board were exactly in line with the proposals and the new approach which we are discussing today. I sincerely hope then, Mr President, that the Irish Government, in close cooperation with the Commission, will now proceed either with the establishment of such a board or some other similar organization which would be given responsibility for formulating and implementing a comprehensive western development programme. I sincerely hope also that the Gaeltacht authority will lose no time in formulating a similar programme.

In conclusion, once again, I wish to very sincerely congratulate Commissioner Giolitti and Mr De Pasquale and, indeed, to commend my colleague, Sile de Valera, on her report too. And may I honestly express the wish that the resolution before us today will form the basis for a dynamic new Community regional policy which will be effective in tackling the enormous regional disparities within this Community.

President. — I call Mr Pearce.

Mr Pearce. — Mr President, I would like to introduce Amendment No 99 in my name to the resolution contained in Mr De Pasquale's excellent report on the Commission's welcome and generally sound proposals for modifications to the Regional Fund Regulation. I think that in the resolution itself we should add a clearer statement than already appears there of our commitment to the notion of a regional policy, not only to help the deserving people in the poorer regions but also to secure better management of the economy in general by spreading prosperity more evenly across the Community. I think the resolution should underline more strongly the need to involve local communities, as many speakers have pointed out.

I think also it should stress the need to relate the giving of grants under regional policy to general economic policies. As an example of this, in the United Kingdom the government is bidding for the European Trade Mark Office to be located in the United Kingdom, but chooses London as the place where it should be put. This is nonsense. I believe that the British Government in that case would be far wiser to try to put it in one of the regional policy areas, and to use

regional policy criteria as a means of attracting it to our country and I believe that in this respect the British Government is not being consistent as between different parts of its own policy.

In particular, I want the resolution to contain two very strong criticisms of the way that the Regional Fund has been worked in recent years. I think it should draw attention to the sham, indeed to the shame, of the way that the additionality rules have been broken by a number of Member State governments, including the government of the United Kingdom. One British official explained to me that the British Government makes its own grants according to its own criteria. And after all that has been done, it simply tries to recoup the money that it has already spent from the ERDF as best it can. This is shabby and I do not like to be associated with something which has the same effect as an intention to cheat the system. I do not like that and I hope that this is stopped in future.

Finally, I would like the resolution to refer to the scandal of the lack of publicity given to regional grants in the United Kingdom. People do not know what money is coming to their own areas — like Merseyside which I represent part of. I am tempted to wonder whether there is not a deliberate conspiracy to conceal from the people of the United Kingdom what grants are spent in their areas and I urge upon the Commission that in future it takes much tougher action in Council and with Member State governments individually, and with the United Kingdom Government in particular, to insist that in future full and rapid publicity is given to grants made. People have a right to know what their money is being spent on. They are being deprived of the exercise of that right and I hope that in the future the Commission will be able to make Member State governments behave in a more proper manner.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, I should like first of all to praise the excellent report by Mr De Pasquale, the rich ideas contained in it and especially the notion that development is not a one-sided technical and economic matter but a complex social process which requires suitable political choices, and it is the Community which must make these choices.

In the very short time available to me I should like to draw attention to the points on which we disagree most fundamentally or which cause us concern. The non-quota section is being increased considerably in relation to the previous regulation and the criteria for Community intervention are being harmonized, and this understandably gives rise to the concern that such intervention will be geared to the really rich regions of the Community. Secondly, the attempt to limit ERDF aid for infrastructure projects will perpetuate the

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underdevelopment of certain regions, since without suitable infrastructure investments in economic activity are impossible. The 15.9% granted to Greece from the quota section makes no difference at all to Greece's share of the Fund's budget, and this despite the fact that it is generally recognized that Greece is a country with very acute regional problems. Our proposal to limit the non-quota amount is combined with our request to increase Greece's share to 21%. The regional problem of Europe, Mr President, is one problem and not two, as the Commission seems to think. It is the problem of the less developed regions, and even if certain developed regions are faced with problems, they are not comparable with the problems of underdevelopment, lack of infrastructure and low employment. We think that the activity of the Regional Fund must concentrate on these problems and not become a supplement to the Social Fund in dealing with unemployment.

President. — I call Mr Bonde.

Mr Bonde. — (*DA*) Mr President, I would like to ask the Commission to publish all its correspondence with Denmark and to give reasons for its interference in Danish regional development policy. In particular, I would ask the Commission to make known the criteria applied when subsidies for Schleswig-Holstein are approved and the basis on which the Danish State is forbidden from allocating regional development grants to the municipalities of Bredebro, Højer, Skaerbaek, Tønder, Bov, Tinglev and Løgumkloster.

In my view, the Commission's practice is a modern form of frontier rectification because although the boundary posts are not shifted such differences in scope for development are created that only an economic fool would set up a business north of the frontier. What is being moved is the companies, employment and the people.

When we joined the EC, there were 573 unemployed in the whole region of North Schleswig; today there are 14 328 unemployed in that area. Before we joined the EC, we considered it important to try to create lasting employment for the last few unemployed in the regional development areas, but after nine years in the EC, unemployed is 25 times as high in North Schleswig. We therefore find it very difficult to understand why the Commission is now intervening to prevent economic development. The competitive situation is already to the disadvantage of the Danish companies. If we take for example a new job costing DKR 2 million, the interest payments amount to DKR 170 000 per year in West Germany, whereas the interest payments in Denmark for the same job amount to DKR 382 000. Therefore, even if the Danes went to work with their wages already in their pockets, the German companies would still be in a more competitive position because in 1980 the interest rate was 8.5% in West Germany and

19.1% in Denmark. In 1972, the difference was not as great: 11.3% in Denmark and 8% in West Germany.

As far as I can see, the competitive situation has shifted in favour of German companies, but why is the Commission intervening to prevent subsidies north of the German border? This question is addressed to the Commission and I would like to have an answer to it during the discussion.

President. — I call Mr Treacy.

Mr Treacy. — Mr President, colleagues, I would like to join with those who have congratulated Mr De Pasquale on his excellent report on the amending of the Regional Development Fund Regulation and also compliment Miss Sile De Valera on her report on behalf of the Women's Committee.

The amendments proposed in both of these reports improve considerably the draft regulation. We are all agreed on the need for the Regional Fund and the need to revise its regulations in order to make it more responsive to the needs of the less-developed regions in our Community. However, we are all aware that the gap between the richest and the poorest regions in the Community has in fact widened since the inception of the Regional Fund, rather than narrowed.

Our failure to deal effectively with deprivation on such a large scale, especially the ever-rising tide of unemployment, with all its inherent sufferings and dangers, is a damning indictment of our inept policies to date. We have failed as a Community to measure up to our responsibilities and the confidence of our people has been shattered. Our prestige has reached a new low and our very existence as a viable economic Community is in jeopardy unless we quickly set about grappling effectively with mass unemployment and want on such an alarming scale. The signs of impatience, indignation and unrest are there for all to see throughout the entire Community, and we in this great democratic Assembly ignore these signs at our peril.

The Fund in its powers and structures is a limited instrument. The resources allocated to it do not allow it to use effectively even its limited potential. What is needed is a wider concept of policies for regional development. Essential is the creation of new structures designed to promote regional development, with particular emphasis on the improvement of infrastructure to offset the tendency towards greater centralization of economic activity. All Community policies should be subject to review by reference to regional policy criteria. Above all, a sufficient amount of resources must be available to finance the necessary policies. It should not be a question of having to limit essential developments because of inadequate funds. I support the proposals for the increase in size of the non-quota section and in greatest concentration of

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funds and resources on regions with specific serious structural problems which include Ireland, but do not believe that any Member State should be excluded.

In the Commission's proposal I particularly welcome the idea of integrated operations, the coordinated package of public and private measures and instruments in areas with particular problems. We already have pilot projects relating to Belfast and Naples and the Irish members of the Socialist Group have tabled a resolution calling for such integrated action for Dublin. There are indeed many other areas, in Ireland and in other Community countries, which can and should benefit from this kind of operation and we shall doubtless continue to press their claims with vigour and determination. However, I must add that I find developments relating to the present pilot projects very slow and piecemeal. The need is urgent and compelling, as many of us have seen for ourselves. Let the aid be accelerated; let us have positive action.

I can also welcome the emphasis on the role of local and regional authorities in the Commission's proposal which was even further developed in the amendments proposed by the rapporteur. Further, in the section dealing with the exploiting of the indigenous development potential of regions, I find the proposal in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises such as craft works and rural tourism particularly appropriate.

In conclusion, may I say that I believe the Commission's proposal and Parliament's amendments are deserving of our support and I commend them to the House.

President. — I call Mr Verroken.

Mr Verroken. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as one of the newest members of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning, I believe that it is my duty to express my genuine admiration for the report which the Committee has drawn up and presented to us.

I should like, in all modesty, to agree with what was said earlier — that the proposal before us constitutes a test, and I should be most apprehensive if it were not implemented. Should this proposal get no further than, for example, the Council, I fear that it would cause severe disillusionment, made all the worse for Europe by the fact that we have discussed it in such detail today. It has become commonplace to say that since Europe was created the poor countries have grown poorer and the rich countries richer. We should perhaps say instead that since Europe was created, instead of transferring employment to the poorer regions, we have primarily made a point of exporting the labour force from these areas. And now the countries which have imported the labour force are having to face the music, and I fear that the present critical outlook will only serve to exacerbate the situation.

A further misunderstanding which still persists particularly in the so-called richer areas will, I believe, have to be cleared up over the next few days. In our discussions of the distribution of prosperity, welfare and the regional policy, I think that we should remember to make it quite clear that, as well as the European regional policy, there is still room for a national regional policy aimed at ensuring — where no European aid is provided for — a certain distribution of wealth at national level, provided this does not contravene Articles 92 and 93 of the EEC Treaty. It must be made quite clear that regional policy should not be restricted to the policy of the Regional Fund alone.

As far as the Regional Fund is concerned, I believe — although I may be going too far — that it is misleading to pretend that the quota section, with its 80% guarantee, is something new, when the areas where these quotas are now fixed already had 80% before. This is not, in my opinion, where the innovation lies, but rather in that there should be coordination on policy, that other resources will also be directed to these regions in particular, that local government will also be involved more, that programmes will replace projects and that there will thus be a real policy approach. This, in my opinion, is the new aspect in the 80% quota guarantee.

One final point. It should not be forgotten that, although the so-called rich countries, such as Denmark, Germany, the Benelux countries and France, are excluded from the quotas, certain of their regions still qualify for the non-quota section, besides being covered by their own regional policies. I hope that we will be firm and clear-sighted and that we will restrict this non-quota action to genuine, new, structural cases, otherwise the aid from the non-quota section may well be dissipated and remain ineffective.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Mr President, although it would be impossible for me to agree with the views expressed by the Members from PASOK and the New Democracy Party on the positive results of Mr De Pasquale's report, I agree with Mr Delmotte's assessment that the problem is not one of setting up hospitals but one of radical treatment for the disease.

I should like to raise six basic points.

Firstly, Regional Fund aid is intended to distract attention from the disastrous effects on small and medium-sized farmers of the common agricultural policy and the proposed accession to the Community of Spain and Portugal. Consequently the real problem is one of restructuring the CAP, providing aid for Mediterranean products, increasing trade with the Socialist

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countries and recognizing the increase in production costs.

Secondly, regional aid is based on the principle of additionality. For Greece the problem is not whether it is to become the hotel of Western Europe or to pick up a few crumbs, but whether it can manage to achieve genuine industrial and economical development.

Thirdly, the Commission's proposal stresses the application of Community criteria to regional development programmes, which would even further reduce the Greek Government's scope for national planning.

Fourthly, with the distribution which has applied up till now, Greece has received, under the quota section allotted to it, 12.35% of the total aid. The new distribution means that it will receive 12.78%, i.e. an increase of 0.43%. The increase for Ireland is 1.82%, and for Italy and the United Kingdom, whose situation cannot be compared with that of Greece, the increase is 1.22% and 0.81% respectively. This constitutes clear discrimination against our country.

Fifthly, Athens and Thessaloniki are excluded from those regions eligible for aid, although their per capita income is lower than that in many regions which receive aid in other countries.

Sixthly and lastly, the quadrupling of the funds of the non-quota section from 5 to 20% of the total aid will work to the advantage of the strong countries which have greater revenue capacity and greater access to Community mechanisms. For all these reasons, we have serious reservations with regard to the report and the Commission's proposals, and we feel that it is not enough to recognize good intentions in the face of the tremendous problems which Greece is facing as a result of being dependent.

President. — I call Mr Almirante.

Mr Almirante. — (*IT*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Italian National Right I wish to tell you that I am fully in agreement with Mr De Pasquale's report. I am glad that this report has been approved by the Committee on Regional Policy and I hope that the Parliament will be prepared to approve it unanimously, so that we may avoid once again raising people's hopes only to dash them later, and so that we may finally adopt the right approach and see this problem through to its solution, in the interest not only of the poorest regions of Europe but also in the interest of Europe as a whole. Only if we eliminate social and economic imbalances and only if we create a climate of understanding, solidarity and sharing of responsibilities will Europe cease to be a geographical expression and this Parliament cease to be a debating society, capable of many fine words and sometimes even capable of sensible proposals, but absolutely incapable of

making decisive progress in the construction of a Europe of the peoples, a Europe of the nations and the States; a Europe of the peoples, let me emphasize, so that it may also be a Europe of nations, that is of traditions of civilization, and a Europe of States, that is to say, of solid political agreement.

Having said that, I should like to draw your attention to one or two aspects of the matter which I think are of vital importance; and I have no hesitation in saying that they are of particular importance for Italian interests, more particularly the interests of southern Italy, which elected me to this House with such a broad and unforgettable majority; I say this, because the presence of Italian Members in this forum would be pointless if the prime aim of those Members was not to attempt to heal those internal divisions between the north of Italy and the south which are at once the most characteristic and the most baneful feature of our existence as Italians and as Europeans.

First point. We want the Italian market to be protected against imports from the strong markets of the oligopolistic countries. I had no hesitation in saying that we want the Italian market to be protected, because what we are asking for is not protectionist measures for the benefit of the Italian market and to the detriment of other European markets. What we are, in effect, asking for is that a stop should be put to that inverted protectionism, which encourages the import into Europe of products from third countries (agricultural or industrial products, that is to say, citrus fruits or textiles), with the result that fundamental sectors of our agriculture and our industry are plunged into crisis.

Second point. We call for a wider and more serious use of the so-called 'integrated operations'. Wider use, firstly: apart from the integrated operation in favour of Naples, why not implement a similar operation in favour of Calabria or Basilicata? More serious, secondly: here in Strasbourg the word is that the individual operation for Naples is underway, but in Naples no one has so far noticed it; and Naples is literally dying of promises, because in certain parts of Italy and Europe cities, and even social classes, die more from unkept promises than from mere neglect.

Third point: we ask, as recommended in the report by the Committee on Regional Policy — this is the heart of what we are asking for — that the development of the backward regions and the rebirth of declining regions should, from next year onwards, be included in the Community budget; so that the Committee on Budgets may achieve, in binding form, that coordination of regional policy, development policy and other policies that is necessary to give the peoples of Europe at long last the proper, all-embracing guarantee that they are waiting for and in the name of which we were elected. Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, let us not forget that we are, first and foremost, the elected representatives of our respective peoples. I say this

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without any party egotism and without the slightest presumption: I am one of the elected representatives of the poor people of the south of Italy. And on behalf of those impoverished people I have for all of you a message which cannot be merely a message of hope but must also be a message of fervour and of goodwill.

President. — I call Mrs Lizin.

Mrs Lizin. — (*FR*) The Socialist Group wishes me to express its support for the amendments proposed by Miss de Valera and for the general aims of her report.

One of the priority aims of regional policy is to help with the problem of unemployment in depressed regions. In our view unemployment is not just one macroeconomic factor amongst others: the unemployment rate is a figure that is vibrant with social significance, since it stands for a number of men and women whose situation is intolerable.

Women are, by far, the section of the population in Europe, who are worst affected by unemployment and the proportion is greatest in the most oppressed regions. Would it be consistent of us to ask the Community to devote some thought to improving aid to women in the Third World — an extremely honourable aim — whilst at the same time we continue to wish that our regional aid should aim to create jobs for both men and women equally?

We believe that job creation of this kind should be proportionate to the job losses during periods of economic crisis that each of the two categories — men and women — have suffered.

But in our opinion the de Valera report is also, and perhaps even mainly, a report based on principle. It puts into practice our common desire, as a committee of inquiry, to act in the same way as the other committees at this Parliament, in all those areas where discrimination between men and women exists, or may exist.

Permit me, Mr President, also to say a few words in my capacity as a representative of Wallonia. Our hope is that eventually we shall see this reform help Wallonia to benefit from the Fund in proportion to its real difficulties. The Commissioner knows just how far this aim has been circumvented so far in Belgium. Leaving the decision-making to the State in a country as divided as Belgium is the worst possible situation, since the strong half of the country constantly and unflinchingly rides rough-shod over the weaker half. There is no doubt that Wallonia is the region which has the highest expectations in Europe of a European regional policy freed from the strait-jacket of national decision-making. Wallonia is also the region that has the highest hopes of finally finding in Europe an objective arbiter of disputes, something the Belgo-

Flemish State has never been in its eyes. If this is to be so, Mr Commissioner, you will also have to set up direct contacts with the responsible local authorities, that is to say, henceforth with the regional authorities and not with the central government. If you do that, you will be breaking new ground for the Community institutions and I'm sure the result will be a new dynamism.

(*Applause*)

President. — I call Mr Travaglini.

Mr Travaglini. — (*IT*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the legislation at present governing the Regulation European Regional Development Fund, which provides for the revision of those rules after an initial period of implementation, has turned out to be extremely well conceived and useful. In fact, whilst the work of updating the Community policies in implementation of the mandate of 30 May 1980 is making extremely slow progress and is lacking in incisiveness, the search for new aims and methodologies for our policy of regional development and re-equilibrium is moving in the direction of concrete conclusions, thanks to the debate we are engaged in now and the vote we shall hold tomorrow, and thanks also to the commitment which the Commission and our Committee on Regional Policy — and here I should like to remind you of the devoted and unremitting efforts Mr De Pasquale has made — have shown these last few months in making a common effort to provide this Community policy with a genuine power to reduce the backwardness of the poorest regions, which is the indispensable precondition for any advance in the process of economic integration of the regions of Europe.

The coordination of both national and Community regional policies in such a way as also to take account of the regional effects of economic and sectoral policies, the concentration of regional aid, the complementarity between aid provided by the fund and aid provided by the Member States, guaranteed by the gradual abandonment of the system of financing individual projects in favour of a system of financing entire programmes, suitably agreed upon, are all vital aspects of the new Community regional policy, which is destined without any doubt to raise the level of efficiency of the European Regional Development Fund's machinery of aid distribution.

The distinct separation of aid for regions suffering from serious structural underdevelopment from aid for regions which have recently entered into a process of industrial decline will be equally useful.

The motion for a resolution, in the form in which it has been drafted by the Committee on Regional Policy, represents a synthesis of the attitudes of the various political groups: it strikes a balance between

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trends which in some respects cannot but be divergent, given the aims of regional development policy, which must be considered as only one stage on the way to redressing the imbalances between the various regions of the Community.

The Community's regional policy must continue to be based on the imperative need to eliminate those obstacles that have always prevented the less fortunate regions from achieving an adequate level of development. So we must curb present trends towards an interpretation of the Community regional policy which, by shifting the emphasis in the direction of supporting initiatives connected with industrial restructuring would, in the end, completely alter the nature and the aims of the Fund.

We must, on the contrary, start to develop — along with other measures based on the ERDF — all the Community's sectoral policies, including firmly amongst their priority objectives the objectives of regional development and the correction of regional disequilibria.

As regards the new Regulation of the ERDF, which constitute the first serious step towards a new Community regional policy, I want to say that I am in agreement with the Commission's draft text, which should be improved by the amendments suggested by the Committee on Regional Policy, some of which are of great importance for the future development of the Community's work in this field. I shall simply quote those concerning Article 3, dealing with the aims of the fund, Article 7b, suggested as an addition, in favour of more appropriate support for productive investment, and Article 16 which is concerned with giving new importance to endogenous economic development of the regions.

I want to pay tribute to the Commission of the European Communities for a serious piece of work and for its consistent efforts, which took as their starting point the Commission's own communication of 1977, and which have developed along politically and culturally valid lines, even if the positive results of the Commission's work can only be found in the better use that is to be made of the ERDF's resources; which means only in one part of the regional development policy, which is a global policy, that is to say, which must be able to rely on contributions from all the sectoral policies.

For this reason I insist on the need to go much further. The Community, because of the distortions or shortcomings of some of its fundamental policies, has not succeeded in preventing the gap between the richer regions and the poorer regions from widening. If we do not amend the common agricultural policy while there is still time, if we do not implement once and for all a common transport policy, if we do not give the go-ahead, in all seriousness, to an industrial structural policy which will make use of the national and

regional complementarities that gap will widen and — precisely because of this socially and politically disruptive factor — any serious chance of completing the economic integration of Europe will disappear for ever.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Giolitti, Member of the Commission. — *(IT)* Mr President, I propose to be as brief as possible in answering the general questions raised during the debate, all the more so as I shall need a little time at the end to comment on the amendments, of which there are many — about a hundred — and some of which are also of general importance.

First of all, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to join wholeheartedly in the praise which I think everyone has voiced for Mr De Pasquale and Miss de Valera, for their reports and for the work of their respective committees.

Let me say immediately that the praise I have for them is not disinterested. Nor is it simply intended to reciprocate the praise given to the Commission, of which I am a member, for its proposals for reforming the Regulation of the Regional Fund. Its origin lies rather in my desire — I hope that I can say that everyone shares this desire — to emphasize Parliament's unanimity — I may add Parliament's and the Commission's unanimity the importance of regional policy. I think that such unanimity is extremely opportune, particularly now, as we approach the moment when we must take decisions concerning the Community budget.

Ladies and gentlemen, Members of the European Parliament, you have discussed in this House encouraging proposals for renewing and giving a new lease of life to the Community's regional policy. But we must be careful. It is my duty to say that, in my view, this Community regional policy is also in serious danger right now. What is more, we saw as much during discussion of last year's Community budget, when even Parliament's will — permit me to say so — weakened in this respect. Parliament did not insist on the increase in the appropriations available to the Regional Fund which everyone today is agreed in thinking both desirable and necessary. There is always a risk that, at times of crisis, regional policy may seem to be a kind of luxury, an expression of sentimental concern: we must help the poor.

The truth is that when we are going through a difficult period we must rather pay attention to the need to increase productivity and competitiveness, and this can be most efficiently achieved where the chance of a profitable return on investments is greatest. We must, therefore, be careful, because the present economic

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crisis could also result in a decline in interest, a decline in support for the idea of a regional policy.

We must, consequently, react against such a notion, as people did this morning during the debate, and we must remember what was said this morning when we take decisions on the budget concerning the volume of appropriations to be devoted to the Regional Fund. And, ladies and gentlemen, let us remember, at a time when we are emphasizing so much the need for investment, that this Fund represents the main instrument in support of investment which the Community has at its disposal. Even if the Fund's purpose is to keep up investment in the weaker regions, it nevertheless constitutes an instrument in support of investment generally: investment in infrastructures and investment in the productive sectors. Of course, I am absolutely in agreement on the need that has been stressed on all sides of the House to increase support for productive investments and to reduce the excessively high percentage of Community aid spent on infrastructure investment.

Our ambition, if I may say so — I say 'our', meaning all of us, because here too I observe that the Commission and Parliament are in agreement — is to carry out a genuine reform of the Community regional policy — I emphasize the word 'policy' — by revising the Fund's Regulation. But we are not simply confining ourselves to a revision of the Regulation. By amending the Fund's Regulation we aim to give greater substance and greater efficiency to the Community's regional policy. This is why we have put at the beginning of the new regulation those articles dealing with coordination. Parliament, for its part, has shown that it fully understands the reason for introducing this legislation on coordination by the importance it has attributed to the periodical reports, to assessing the regional impact of every Community policy and to regional development programmes. I shall not linger any longer on this matter because it seems to me that we are all fully in agreement.

Instead I should like to devote some time to the question which naturally causes the greatest perplexity and difficulty, even if, here too, it seems to me that the Commission's approach is broadly shared by Parliament. I am referring to the question of concentration. Since concentration is accompanied, in the nature of things, by a, let us say, reduction in the number of areas that benefit from Regional Fund aid, there is always someone who is not satisfied, and it is only reasonable that this dissatisfaction should be voiced. But we must be careful: the sort of concentration that we are proposing, as regards the section of the Regional Fund which is divided into quotas, is strictly linked to an expansion and a broadening of the non-quota section. If we have a non-quota section enlarged to a total of 20%, then, as well as carrying out a policy of concentration in the structurally backward areas, we shall be able to make use of a non-quota section of 20% in those areas that are suffering problems of

industrial decline or that are suffering — let us say — the negative repercussions of other Community policies.

Apropos some of the requests that have been made — and here I'm referring to some of the amendments — concerning the indicative value of the proposed quotas, the very fact of saying that these quotas only have an indicative value is tantamount to denuding this legislation on concentration of all meaning. A certain elasticity, a certain flexibility in interpreting these quotas results from fact that the quotas are implemented over a three-year period, are valid for three years and are equivalent to three-yearly averages in respect of the concentration of aid from the European Regional Fund in those regions.

One criticism to which I am particularly sympathetic — you may easily understand the difficulties I myself was in when drafting our report on the Community regions — turns on the fact that the statistics that we have available aren't terribly up to date. Of course, to refer in 1982 to statistics for 1977 or, at the very best, to 1979 statistics, may seem somewhat embarrassing, but I say 'may' deliberately because in actual fact it is not embarrassing. What are we trying to achieve by concentration? We are trying to identify regions and areas with structural problems. Does anyone think that structural problems, like those of southern Italy or Northern Ireland, which have been around for decades and even centuries have changed in the space of two or three years? Does anyone imagine that if statistics for 1981 and 1982 were available we should suddenly discover that during the last two or three years southern Italy and Northern Ireland had suddenly become prosperous and were no longer afflicted with structural problems? The simple truth is that we are still faced with structural problems, whether the statistics are 1977 statistics or 1979 statistics.

These statistics, which cover whole periods and not simply isolated moments, show us that structural problems are a perennial feature of the European scene. Is it reasonable to think that regions which showed no signs of structural decline in 1977-79 have suddenly, in the space of a couple of years, suffered structural decline? The answer is no. They may have short-term economic difficulties, but no one can say that a region which in 1977 had reached a certain level of economic development and which then declined by several percentage points during the following two years has, for this reason, taken on the appearance, or deserved the description of a structurally underdeveloped region. We call structurally underdeveloped regions those that have chronic problems of underdevelopment, which means problems that have lasted a long time, permanent problems, that can only be solved by a sustained effort over a long period.

This is why, since we have to make a sustained effort over a long period, we need to be able to rely on a predetermined quantity of resources. Hence the need

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for quotas. But we must be careful. According to this new philosophy, quotas are no longer attributed to individual countries, they are no longer national quotas but are attributed to whole regions, to groups of regions, and therefore they become regional quotas. This, too, is of by no means negligible importance, which means that this process of concentration is consistent with the context in which it has been placed, namely the reform of the Regional Fund, in particular by the transition to financing whole programmes rather than individual projects.

I now come to another delicate point though I must pass over many others, because of the limited amount of time at my disposal, and must confine myself only to those points that seem the most controversial.

In the first place, we have the question of additionality. Now we are certainly not satisfied with it. It is a problem which was already on the table when I arrived at the Commission at the beginning of 1977, and even now we are still not in a position to solve it, in spite of the combined efforts of the Commission and the Parliament. I think that at last we have found the right avenue of approach, which has been opened by this legislation on the financing of aid programmes. What do we mean by 'financing of aid programmes?' What is the meaning of the procedure which we call the 'programme contract procedure'? It means putting our cards on the table from the beginning: the person we are dealing with at national or regional level states what his share of the financing is to be and the Community states what its contribution is to be. At this point the Community's contribution, according to this new methodology, becomes additional, becomes part of an operation of co-financing, the part that is added to the proportion of the financing undertaken by the State or by the region, according to the situation.

I want to come back again to the general question of the importance we should attribute to the role of stimulus and support played by the endogenous resources — beginning with human resources — of the regions we intend to help. This inevitably involves the problem of active participation, awakening the local authorities and therefore their political representatives and their administrations to their responsibilities. This too is qualitatively a very important step forward, an essential aspect of the reform that we are proposing.

We are very attentive, Miss de Valera, to the problem that you and your committee have raised, and we can assure you that our next report will provide a more detailed analysis of what we have been able to do so far regarding the problem of unemployment among women, provided — this is an important condition which I must emphasize — provided we have available the statistics, the data and the analyses that we require. In the hope that the Member States will supply these vital prerequisites for any judgment and analysis, I can, as of now, assure you of the maximum interest on the part of the Commission, and the maximum readi-

ness to give the most attentive consideration to those important and serious problems which the De Valera report has so perspicuously brought to light.

Mr President, I now come to the amendments. I don't think I shall need much time, because in this reply I shall obviously confine myself to one or two general remarks on the main amendments, reserving the right to speak again if necessary at the moment these issues are voted on, should I be called upon to speak on behalf of the Commission on any individual amendment.

Apropos of so many detailed points set out in such a large number of amendments — more than a hundred — I should like to say that the Community cannot take responsibility for all the regional problems that arise in the ten Member States when these are trifling problems, such as the one that was drawn to our attention by a Danish speaker, a Member of this Parliament, who spoke on a question concerning the north of Schleswig-Holstein, the region between Denmark and Germany, which he discussed in connection with the level of Community aid. I shall answer these questions when I have had time to look at the available data. However, I reserve the right to give a written answer to the Member who asked me for elucidation. It is, however, clear that there is a whole series of problems that cannot be dealt with at Community level. The Community concerns itself with regional problems which relate to, or which threaten, its internal cohesion, the main questions of equilibrium within the Community; it cannot, on the other hand, concern itself with a problem concerning a particular area in a particular city, which may only affect a few tens of thousands of people. The Community must attend to regional problems that affect the equilibrium between the regions of the Community, and therefore — I repeat — the internal cohesion of the Community, that is to say, problems that have a genuine Community dimension.

That being said, as far as the question of coordinating the regional policies is concerned, Parliament asks in one or two of these amendments that the contents of the instruments used to promote this coordination should be completed by updating the periodic report, by strengthening the obligation to implement the regional development plans and by improving the information supplied on these matters to Parliament. On this point I can say that the Commission will accept the suggestions the Parliament has put forward.

Concerning the system of quotas, which I have already mentioned, one amendment calls for the elimination of these quotas. Obviously we cannot accept this amendment, and the remarks that I have already made on the question of quotas should explain why. As for the question of deciding which region should go into the 'non-quota section', we do not believe that the threshold, which we decided should be 75 as compared with a Community average taken as 100,

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can be amended. One only needs to consider what might happen if we did modify this threshold to see that the choice of that threshold is essential if the criterion of concentration is to be implemented efficiently and consistently.

A number of amendments concern categories of investment. In this respect the Commission shares the spirit of the motion for a resolution suggesting that we should aim for better balance in the Regional Fund's disbursements in order to make a better contribution to promoting investment that will create new jobs, as I said a short while ago in respect of the relationship between productive investment and infrastructure investment, particularly where small and medium-sized companies are concerned. The Commission reserves the right to look in greater detail at the percentages, or distribution keys set out in some of the amendments, because we have some hesitation in accepting some of the figures suggested. These figures must therefore be checked if we are to assess all the consequences they may have.

As far as the question of infrastructures is concerned, the Commission is not able to accept those amendments that propose making modifications in this field, given that it is a topic on which a very delicate compromise has been reached amongst the Member States and we wish to safeguard the measure of agreement amongst the Member States that we have achieved here.

As for the question of improving local development potential, I have already said that the Commission appreciates what the Parliament has said on this topic. We are prepared to examine one or two specific and detailed proposals set out in some of the amendments, for example, the proposal that a Community patent bank should be set up, or the suggestion that aid should be given to local applied research institutes. Our main responsibility, however, is to scrutinize the proposed ways in which these amendments can be put into practice, so that we do not find ourselves suddenly coming up against unforeseen difficulties. We cannot, on the other hand, accept tasks, such as financing holding companies set up by local banks, which go beyond the nature and the present structure of the Regional Fund and which should more properly be entrusted to credit institutions.

Finally, concerning specific regional development programmes, some of the amendments suggest including the so-called frontier regions, regions which are crossed by Member State frontiers, amongst the criteria used to decide the geographical area that comes under the 'non-quota section' of aid. Of course, we are aware of the importance of this kind of problem, provided, naturally, that the frontier nature of the region is

part of a general situation of retarded development or regional imbalance.

In some amendments, finally, it has been suggested that we should stress the criterion of what accompanies Community policies rather than the criterion of industrial decline where the use of the non-quota section is concerned. We are against this amendment, because if we were to accept it we should run the risk of distorting the Commission's proposal, which aims to see that the non-quota section which I have already mentioned and which is of great importance in connection with the proposal for concentration, is able to answer the needs of all the regions and, in particular, take due account of problems of industrial decline without bringing into the picture priorities, such as the one mentioned in the amendment that I quoted above, which would pervert the functioning of this non-quota section. The non-quota section takes on greater importance precisely because of the reform that we are proposing and because of the concentration that we recommend for the section subject to quotas.

These are my first and general remarks on this vast complex of amendments, Mr President. I think that in making them I have voiced the Commission's opinion on the main questions that have been raised and the opinions that have been proposed during this extensive Parliamentary debate, for which once again, I should like to express my appreciation and my thanks.

(Applause)

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr De Pasquale, rapporteur. — *(IT)* Mr President, I just want to thank all those members of Parliament who have spoken, and also Mr Giolitti, for his appreciation of the work done by our committee. I also want to say that the discussion has demonstrated that, though there are legitimate differences of opinion regarding individual points, there is a very broad consensus on the measures that need to be taken. I hope that this consensus will be properly reflected in the voting tomorrow. I also hope that the Commission will take to heart the main amendments which Parliament's committee has proposed, so that we can present a united, and therefore broader, front in any subsequent bargaining with the Council.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

(The sitting was suspended at 12.05 p.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

2. *Welcome*

President. — I should like to start by welcoming the members of the CDU Group in the Parliament of the Rhineland-Palatinate under the Chairman of their group, Mr Hans-Otto Wilhelm, and the President of the Parliament, Mr Albrecht Martin, who are sitting in the official gallery.

A large number of members of the government of the Rhineland-palatinate are also paying a visit to the European Parliament. I am particularly pleased at their presence here, and we are very glad that the involvement of the parliaments and governments of the German *Länder* is benefiting the activities of the Members of the European Parliament in their own country and at grass roots level.

(Applause)

3. *Statements by the Council and the Commission*

President. — The next item is the statements by the Council and the Commission on the European Council meeting of 29 and 30 March 1982 in Brussels.

I am particularly glad that the President of the European Council, the Belgian Prime Minister Mr Martens, has been willing and able to continue the tradition started by the British Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, of making a statement on the European Council that has just taken place. I therefore have particular pleasure in welcoming Mr Martens to this Parliament.

I call the Council.

Mr Martens, President-in-Office of the Council. — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is still fresh in all your memories that Mrs Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, took part in the proceedings of the European Parliament during its December part-session last year as Head of Government of the country holding the Presidency. It was the first time that this had happened since the decision of principle of June 1981.

It is a particular honour and special pleasure for me, in my turn and in the same capacity, to be able to report to you on the recent meeting of the European Council in Brussels.

I need hardly tell you that the atmosphere at that meeting was excellent, although this was also significant since the reason for it lies, *inter alia*, in the very nature of the European Council. Is it not, in fact, because of the regularity of the meetings of the Euro-

pean Council and the frank and informal nature of certain parts of them that the Heads of Government and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Ten get to know each other better, and an atmosphere is created which is undoubtedly an additional advantage for ensuring that discussions and negotiations proceed more smoothly?

The regularity and informality of the meetings also imply that they should not always be expected to result in world-shaking decisions. I do not think that the task of the European Council is greatly contested.

Since 1974 and up to and including the discussions which are now taking place both among the Ten and within the Parliament or outside it as regards institutional questions, the basic principles which determine the role and activities of the European Council have remained unchanged: to simplify, these are: political impetus, guidelines for the further construction of Europe, frank and informal exchanges of views and determination of official standpoints, where necessary, all this being situated within both a Community context and the framework of European political cooperation.

Many, even in the European Parliament, still have serious objections to the ambiguous nature of the European Council. I do not believe that the snake in the grass is to be found here. There is no doubt about the fact that the European Council meets both within the context of the Treaty, i.e. at Community level, and at the level of European political, or purely intergovernmental, cooperation. If some impetus or guidelines are given, these are always subsequently established in the correct form in accordance with set rules and procedures. I should like merely to refer to the most striking examples, i.e. the direct elections to the European Parliament and the setting-up of the European Monetary System.

Before discussing the meeting on 29 and 30 March 1982, I wanted to remind you of the general context within which the European Council works since, in my view, this is to some extent an answer to comments by those who claim that no far-reaching results were achieved and that once again decisions were involved, the content of which did not seem to suggest any great renewal.

And yet I can assure you that the European Council held an exchange of views in depth on the way in which we can all best combat the economic crisis.

I can also assure you that this exchange of views was not an academic discussion. Our concern was to ensure that our discussions resulted in something rather more substantial than a solemn statement of the great principles to which we all attach great importance.

Our starting point was the conviction that the economic and social recovery of Europe will depend partly

on the policies which we succeed in implementing within our various countries and on the scale of the Community as a whole, and partly on factors extraneous to the Community, which the latter does not control but which it must influence, the more so, undoubtedly, since it will be able to present a united front and a coherent strategy to the outside world.

Internally, we selected two major topics on which, whatever our differences of views over the economic policy to be pursued, we were agreed in saying that a special effort should be made: investment and employment. These two topics are closely interdependent: we know, and the Commission's report once again confirmed this, that investment efforts must be intensified in all our countries, since they are an essential condition for a recovery of productive employment on economically healthy bases in the medium term; but we are also aware that these investment efforts, which will require sacrifices of our peoples over several years, will have their effects on employment only slowly, and that in the meanwhile, specific measures have to be taken to remedy a problem which is likely to become socially intolerable, particularly among young people.

I need not recall the Presidency's decisions. You are all aware of the text.

I should merely like to go on to underline, as regards investment, that the European Council has requested a report by the end of June concerning trends in productive investment, which is currently still too low in relation to GDP, and on ways of dealing with this worrying problem. In addition the Council in all its various compositions is requested to reinforce Community policies in the sectors of industry, energy and research, on the basis of proposals from the Commission. In this connection, I can confirm that these problems will already form the subject of the meeting of Ministers for Industrial Affairs in May 1982, which will then be followed by other meetings.

As regards unemployment, the European Council recognized that its exceptional gravity called for specific quick-acting measures, more particularly concerning the vocational training of young people. On this particular point, I should like merely to quote the Presidency's conclusions: 'As a first step, the Member States would strive to ensure over the next five years that all young persons entering the labour market for the first time would receive vocational training or initial work experience within the framework of special youth schemes or contracts of employment.'

Here, too, as in the case of other specific employment measures, the European Council is requesting a report by the end of 1982. I should like to add immediately that as from May, and during the second half of the year, the Social Affairs Council will give priority to discussing these problems. The European Council also decided to give fresh impetus to the European Monetary System which has functioned well over the past

three years, since the stability of exchange rates appears more than ever to be a prerequisite for the further integration of the European economies and for the recovery of growth and investment. The EMS will retain the special attention of the ECO/FIN Council over the coming months, and a report on it will be made to the European Council.

Externally, we focused our attention on the preparations for the forthcoming summit of the industrialized countries in Versailles, in the hope that this summit can genuinely result in concrete conclusions which constitute the beginnings of a coordinated lowering of interest rates, a reduction in the volatility of exchange rates, greater integration of the Japanese market into international trade and a rapid resumption of the North-South Dialogue. The present level of real interest rates on the international financial markets is causing an appreciable drop in productive investment and is contributing to the worsening of unemployment. This trend is particularly worrying at a time when the adjustment of industrial structures and the resorption of unemployment call for an increase in the share of investment in overall demand.

It seems to me to be essential that the Community should bring all its economic and political weight, which is considerable, to bear on these various topics at the Versailles Summit.

To conclude my remarks, albeit provisionally, on the Community field, I would remind you that Prime Minister Papandreu provided further clarification of the memorandum on the problems arising for the Greek Government. The Commission will examine this document to enable it to be discussed subsequently at the level of the Council.

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In the realm of European political cooperation, the European Council was obliged to note that the lack of development in the situation in Poland was continuing to influence East-West relations. The Heads of State or Government once again called upon the Polish authorities to put an end to martial law, to release the detainees and to reinstitute a genuine dialogue with the Church and Solidarity.

(Applause)

As regards the possibilities for the detainees to leave the country, the Ten rejected any policy which would involve an infringement of fundamental human rights.

Views were also exchanged on the importance of trade relations with the Eastern European countries. These problems are to be examined in greater depth in mutual cooperation, and together with the United States and other OECD countries. You know that this

refers mainly to the Buckley mission from the United States in which the principal emphasis was on credit policy *vis-à-vis* the Eastern block. The adjournment of the Madrid meeting without any results being achieved, because of the situation in Poland, is a disappointment but the process begun by the Security Conference is too important for us not to hope that positive results can still be achieved when it resumes in November.

In any event it is in present circumstances unthinkable to discuss East-West relations without adverting to events in Poland, nor can we forget that another country, Afghanistan, is still living under intolerable Soviet occupation and suffering, among other things, a dramatic refugee problem as a result.

(Applause)

The European Council stressed most emphatically that the search for a political solution to this problem should be expedited. For the European Council such a solution can be found only on the basis of the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops and observance of the independence and sovereignty of free Afghanistan.

(Applause)

The European Council, which has expressed its condemnation of the negative attitude of the Soviet Union, continues to lend its support to any initiative which can produce a solution in accordance with the United Nations resolutions.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate the European Parliament on its Afghanistan Day initiative with which many governments have associated themselves.

It was obvious, following the French President's visit to Israel and the events on the West Bank, that the Middle East would be an important topic for discussion. A general feeling of concern was apparent. The clashes and skirmishes on the West Bank and in the Gaza strip and the resulting measures imposed by the Israeli authorities, the annexation of the Golan Heights, the tense situation in Lebanon — and, I may now add, the events in Jerusalem over Easter — are hardly conducive to the peace process.

The Ten are continuing to follow events in this region with the utmost attention, particularly in the light of the evacuation of Sinai. They remain prepared to make a contribution to bringing about peace. We will in any case have to make a further overall assessment shortly, bearing in mind the many new factors affecting the situation.

(NL) The situation in Central America is disquieting. Any initiative that can put a stop to the violence while complying with democratic rules and contribute to restoring peace in the area is welcomed by the European Council.

Having noted that the tension there stems from economic problems and social inequality, in this context the European Council has decided to step up Community aid for the development of Central America and the Caribbean.

The President of the Commission will not gainsay me when I tell you that new proposals in that respect will soon be submitted.

It goes without saying that no serious discussion of the elections in El Salvador was possible on 29 and 30 March.

I should also like to inform you of the report made by the President of the Council, Mr Tindemans, on his mission to Turkey.

The European Council expressed its appreciation of this mission during which it was brought home to the Turkish authorities how attached the Ten are to the restoration of democracy and the respect of human rights in that country.

In view of the statements made by the Turkish Government the Ten will do all in their power to contribute to a speedy return to democratic rule in Turkey, which implies the release of people detained for expressing their opinions openly, or for active participation in trade unions, and also an end to martial law.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words on transatlantic relations.

When I went to Washington in February with my colleague, Mr Tindemans, we emphasized the need to establish a dialogue both on political and economic topics. It should not be too rigidly institutionalized but should allow informal, open and candid discussion on a regular basis.

The idea, for which, as you know, support is not confined to the Belgian Presidency, was greeted with interest by our American partners. I think that this matter should receive serious consideration as a matter of urgency. Meanwhile, the European Council stressed the importance of developing the consultations between Europe and the United States more fully.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, when I set the achievements and failures of the European Council against each other the result is still reasonably positive.

On the general economic issues at any rate, we endeavoured to lay down pragmatic guidelines which were as practical as possible and which, we hope, will be thoroughly followed through.

On the political issues we take note of some clear stands, some of which constitute a further concerted effort by the Ten.

Martens

I should nevertheless be distorting the truth if I were to claim that the ghost of the now notorious mandate did not hover over the meeting. The topic cannot be evaded since nearly all the fundamental structures of the Community are affected by it.

It is difficult to imagine a more all-embracing Community exercise than to review the three chapters of the Commission document of June 1981, namely new and appropriate policies, the common agricultural policy and the budget problem. This is why the matter is so complex and politically so difficult.

It cannot be denied that, following the hopes initially raised by the Tindemans-Thorn compromise proposal on 23 March, some statements we heard at the European Council once again cast doubts on the possibility of reaching a speedy solution. Nevertheless, I hope that in the talks between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Commission which are shortly to be resumed, there will be enough European solidarity and European political will present to succeed in spite of everything.

The Belgian Presidency appeals for a show of solidarity and sense of European political responsibility on the part of each Member State, as has been so evident in the past few days, in order to resolve this mandate dispute — since this is what it is — within the shortest possible time, according to the resources and abilities of each.

(Applause)

President. — I should like to join the applause by thanking you once again most heartily for your statement. I hope that a firm tradition has been established by this, the second appearance of the President of the European Council before Parliament.

I would have liked to call the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, next. Initially it seemed that, in spite of a minor car accident, he would be present today but the effects have turned out to be a little more serious than was originally thought. I therefore accept his apologies for absence and wish him a speedy recovery.

I call the Commission.

Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as Mr Dankert has just stated, Mr Thorn was involved in a road accident on Monday evening which, happily, was not serious. He had hoped until this morning to be able to adhere to his timetable and be present today in the House to report to you on the European Council of 29 and 30 March. Unfortunately, as we have just been told by Mr Dankert, he was advised by his doctor not to make the journey, at least for a few days, and I will therefore speak in his place.

Mr Martens has just reported on the last Council and its conclusions. I endorse his analysis and assessment. The Commission shares his political conclusions and holds the view — since one cannot expect each of these periodic meetings to produce a revolutionary change in the Community — that this Council was beneficial, outstanding for the candour of the debates and for the fact that they centred on the most serious problems today confronting our Member States and their people, in particular the grave economic and social difficulties with which we are faced. All our countries must cope with the same slackening in the economy, the same structural challenges, the same alarming rise in unemployment, and the same common difficulties arising from divergent economic trends, for example in inflation, which are severely testing Community cohesion.

In the face of these common difficulties and development, our first task, our essential task, is to preserve what has been achieved within the Community, and it is a first source of satisfaction to note the degree to which Heads of State or Government have been aware of this aspect of the problem.

The importance accorded in their discussions to the promotion of the internal market is one reflection of this. The principal matter for consideration submitted by the Commission to the European Council was the Community's specific contribution to finding a way out of the crisis: systematically seeking common measures to combat the current difficulties and relentlessly putting the Community dimension to use for the benefit of our economies.

I do not wish to deal again in detail with the conclusions reached on this point, which reaffirm the need to take common measures and define procedures. Let me simply remind you that the Council has accepted the priorities which we proposed, namely the promotion of investment, the strengthening of Community policy on energy, industry and research, and the fight against unemployment, and has given the Commission the mandate to submit the proposals required for the pursuit of these objectives.

The Commission has taken the internal measures necessary to accomplish this task which, it must be added, is consonant with the work it has already undertaken and the proposals it has already submitted. I should like, if I may, to draw your attention to the similarity of the action taken by the European Council and that which we proposed in response to the mandate of 30 May, and particularly to all the programmes centred on what we have come to call the first chapter of the mandate, namely the structural policies of the Community.

At this point, I must again stress how urgent it is to complete the work under the mandate in order that the Community, having found its real priorities, may obtain with the minimum delay the instruments

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required to further its industrial and technological development, achieve independence in energy and complete construction of its internal market. This is what is needed for the Community to be able to make its specific contribution to the return, in our countries, of sustained and permanent growth, and for the re-affirmation of our industrial presence in the world. Both are stepping-stones to more jobs.

Of the conclusions reached at the Council, I should like to draw particular attention to that arrived at at our instigation concerning school leavers entering the job market for the first time. I do so because it will require exemplary cooperation and coordination of national and Community measures; and because, if we succeed in this enterprise — and we must succeed — we will have helped, by making known our true concerns and objectives, to bring home to the young people of Europe what the Community is really all about. The large measure of interdependence of the principle economic blocs in the world, particularly noticeable in the Community, which is heavily dependent on foreign trade, make it of special interest to us — and this House has often debated the matter — to organize a dialogue with our main trading partners, particularly the United States and Japan. With regard to the Versailles summit meeting, it is important that the heads of state or government should have clearly affirmed the need to reestablish a more satisfactory climate for international economic cooperation. In particular, I wish to stress the conclusions reached on interest rates, exchange rate fluctuations, relations with Japan, the North-South dialogue, and particularly the sentence in the conclusions which states that such cooperation must be based on a common definition of the obligations of each party. Provided that it accepts the need to take a firm line and derive maximum advantage from the weight which it carries, the Commission can defend our fundamental interests better than the Member States acting individually and remind all its trading partners of the need to return to a more balanced international economic system. I repeat that this depends on our willingness to derive maximum advantage from our weight, for the strength of our position *vis-à-vis* the rest of the world will be determined by our ability jointly to define convergent objectives and a common approach and tirelessly to pursue the work of integration. The example which most readily springs to mind is the European Monetary System. Consolidation of the EMS, the importance of which has been underlined by the European Council and for which the Commission has submitted proposals with which you are well acquainted, would increase our chances of influencing the course of international monetary affairs and gaining the agreement of our major trading partners to the type of organized cooperation which was debated here at the last part-session.

I have nothing to add to what Mr Martens said on the Memorandum submitted by the Greek Government, which the Commission will examine and on which it will report to the Council. Neither have I anything to

add on the discussion on the budgetary aspects of the mandate but, like you, Mr President, would like to point out that these discussions were not encouraging but that the Commission nevertheless refuses to accept defeat and endorses your desire and hope that the debates next week will see decisive progress made.

The European Council of 29 and 30 March also touched upon a certain number of problems regarding political cooperation. The Commission has been closely involved in this aspect since last October and the usefulness and effectiveness of its work was displayed by the recent demonstration of solidarity with the United Kingdom in the crisis with the Argentine.

On the question of Central America, the Commission already proposed last December that more effective action should be taken to seek a joint solution to the economic and social problems responsible in part for the serious political tensions in this region. It notes with satisfaction that the European Council has accepted the principle that the Member States of the Community should, within the limits of their possibilities, provide increased aid to Central America. The Commission is currently working on this aspect and will very shortly be in a position to add further elements to the proposal already made to the Council in December.

With regard to economic and political relations with the United States, which this Parliament has had the opportunity to debate on a number of occasions, particularly from the economic aspect during the last part-session, I cannot but endorse what Mr Martens has said on the need to increase mutual understanding through greater dialogue. The Commission has already had a number of contacts at the highest level with the American authorities, both during the visit to Brussels of Mr Haig, Mr Block and Mr Brock, and at the Key Biscayne meeting, which was attended by three Members of the Commission.

Thus we cannot but applaud the European Council's wish to see even greater consultation with our American friends. Need I add that we are convinced that the European Parliament has a major role to play in raising the awareness of its counterpart in Washington and that this Assembly can, as it has already done in the past, usefully help to clear up certain misunderstandings which stand in the way of better mutual appreciation of our respective problems?

The Commission is also closely following developments in Turkey and can only support the conclusions reached by the European Council following Mr Tindemans' mission and which have been outlined by Mr Martens. It shares with the European Council the hope that this visit will have helped to attain the objectives to which it, and the Ten, attach a fundamental importance.

Finally, as regards East-West economic relations, including the important question of exports credits for

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East European countries, the Commission is following events with particular attention, since the trade policy of the Community is involved, a field in which it has special responsibility.

To conclude, I should like to return briefly to what Mr Martens has said on the role of the European Council. Like Mr Martens, we attach enormous importance to these periodic meetings. Like him, we consider it normal for the political leaders of our countries to meet at regular intervals. But, like him, I feel, we wish the Council to safeguard its principal role as the 'think-tank' and driving force of our Community. What we, the Parliament and Commission, expect of the European Council is that it should fulfil this role; that we should feel the impetus generated by political leaders, and that this impetus should accord with what we ourselves desire and what, it seems to me, we are trying to achieve together in these long part-sessions.

The European Council can never become a substitute for Community decision-making bodies by taking spectacular decisions at each of its meetings. This is a fact which I have repeated just as you have repeated it in your opening comments. We do not expect the European Council to solve crises with the wave of a magic wand but it is duty-bound openly to translate into action the political desire of our heads of state to see Europe make progress both within its frontiers and abroad, and in its relations with our trading partners.

Mr President, the most important achievement of this European Council was the serious consideration given to the economic crisis and what Europe can do to help resolve it. And you will forgive me if I add that it is action and not words that is required, for it is by our actions that we will all be judged. You reminded us that the Council took place against the backcloth of the 25th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. Need I say that this anniversary also brings home to us the ground still to be covered, all the aspirations which have not yet been realized and all the enthusiasm we have to rediscover and which we have perhaps to some extent lost.

(Applause)

4. Agenda

President. — In response to enquiries, I should like to announce that I intend to make a short statement this afternoon, after the voting on the objections to urgent debate, on a visit by a Parliament delegation to the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. I prefer to make the statement at that time, since this will make it easier for the Council and the Commission to respond or react, while at the same time giving Members an opportunity to discuss the matter, if they so wish, in the subsequent

debate on the European Council. I hope that you agree with this procedure.

(The sitting was suspended at 12.50 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

5. Topical and urgent debate (objections)

President. — With regard to the list of subjects to be included on the agenda of Thursday 22 April for topical and urgent debate, the following reasoned objections have been submitted in writing in accordance with the second paragraph of Rule 48 (2) of the Rules of Procedure.

(The President read out the list of objections)¹

I would remind you that the vote on these objections will take place without debate.

I give the floor to Mrs Ewing, but I want to insist that the only point she can make in this context concerns in which place she wants her draft resolution.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, I am not asking for a particular place, just for any place. I do that because if this Community cannot regard the absence of discussion on one of its major industries . . .

President. — Mrs Ewing, the only point which was unclear was in which place you wanted your resolution. You have clearly informed me that you want it in any place. I think that is sufficient. We have to vote on it, whether we want to include it or not.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, as I have understood the Rules — and I have consulted your staff — I understand there is to be a vote. I further understand there can be no debate following anything I say, but I further understand this from your staff, that if I am not able to acquaint this Parliament with the issue, how on earth can this Parliament vote on it.

President. — Mrs Ewing, under the Rules there is no debate. A point of order concerns the procedure to be followed. You are entitled on a point of order to address the Assembly but a point of order can never be on the substance of the motion. That is why I have to take the floor from you.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, then in that case I am in order to ask for a roll-call vote on this matter to see who stands for fishing and who does not.

¹ See minutes.

President. — I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Mr President, may I on a point of order or of information ask the chair to tell the House whether in fact the motions proposed for debate tomorrow were agreed to by the seven group chairmen, of which we now find a number of group chairmen or their groups asking to have the order totally changed and to have two motions put in first and second above the four that were chosen.

President. — Mr Blaney, that is not a problem. A list is proposed. How it comes about is of no interest. The Assembly can change it and that is what we are trying to vote on now.

We start the vote with the request by Mrs Ewing to include the resolution on fishing.

I call Mr Hume.

Mr Hume. — Mr President, the net effect of this proposal would mean that a motion for urgency which has been before this House for several months and has been put back each month would be put back yet again. It is a motion of particular urgency given what is going on in the streets of Northern Ireland at the present time arising out of the use . . .

President. — Mr Hume, we can have no discussion. We shall proceed to the vote. It is quite clear what is in the resolutions. Every individual Member is quite capable of reading them and knowing what the importance of his vote is and we cannot have any explanations. I now suggest we proceed to the vote.

(Parliament accepted Mrs Ewing's objection)¹

This motion will be included as the last item on the list.

6. Statement by the President

President. — I must now draw to your attention a recent event, the seriousness of which I shall leave the House to determine.

Following Parliament's decision to send a delegation on a fact-finding mission to Pakistan, we have twice met with a refusal from the Pakistan authorities. There was a meeting in Luxembourg on 6 April between Mr Haqqani, from the Pakistani embassy in Brussels, and Mr Stahlschmidt, one of our officials, to discuss the fact-finding mission which was to be carried out by

Mr Israël, Lord Bethell and Mr Ripa di Meana. I quote now the minutes of this conversation:

Mr Haqqani wished to convey to the President of the European Parliament his government's view concerning the proposed mission.

His government felt that at this time such a mission could not serve any useful purpose and would probably not succeed in fulfilling its twin objectives of meeting leaders of the Afghan resistance movement and obtaining firsthand information on the refugee situation in the area.

The reasons for this view of the Pakistan authorities were, in essence, (a) that the Afghan resistance leaders were not based in northern Pakistan and (b) that leaders of the refugee community had reservations about meeting the delegation.

Expanding on this second point, Mr Haqqani said more specifically that some of the refugee leaders were concerned at the possibility of disturbing their close links with the Moslem and Arab world by agreeing to meet Mr Israël, in view of his prominent position in the Universal Jewish Alliance and his known views on the situation in the Middle East.

It is clear that upon receiving this information I have done my utmost to get further confirmation because I could not believe my eyes. I have made use of the services of the Council of Ministers and thanks to the good offices of the Belgian Government a few days ago we received the following telex from Islamabad:

Belgian embassy in Islamabad reports that the European Parliament delegation, comprising Mr Israël, rapporteur on the situation in Afghanistan for the Political Affairs Committee, accompanied by Mr Ripa di Meana and Lord Bethell, will not — repeat, not — be admitted to Pakistan if it includes Mr Israël.

According to the same sources, the schedule for the proposed visit will not be finalized until the Pakistan foreign ministry has been given assurances that the delegation will not include Mr Israël.

In view of the seriousness of the circumstances stemming from this attitude and its direct repercussions on the European Parliament's freedom to exercise its sovereign rights, especially with regard to the democratic inspection of the use of aid sent for humanitarian reasons to a third country, I was anxious to inform the House without delay about this blatant discrimination which the Pakistani Government seeks to apply with regard to a Member of the European Parliament . . .

(Applause)

. . . on the grounds of his political views and/or religious and philosophical beliefs.

¹ Objections (continuation): see minutes.

President

In view of the opinions which Parliament has long held, I must express on behalf of the House its indignation at this blatant and unprecedented discrimination in international relations.

(Applause)

The delegation will, of course, not be going to Pakistan.

I would ask the President-in-Office of the Council to convey Parliament's strong protest to the Council and thereby, I hope, to the Pakistani Government. I would also ask him to raise the matter with the Council so that the necessary steps may be taken.

I call the Council.

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the incident which the President has just described is indeed particularly serious. The Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Ten have not yet discussed it — as you will have understood — and cannot therefore adopt a joint position. But in view of the seriousness of the matter I will speak on my own account and as Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs and express my complete agreement with what the President of the European Parliament has just said. I will for my part inform my fellow ministers of the incident as soon as possible so that we can make a joint protest.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(FR)* Among all the tricky problems we have to cope with, Mr President, the most intolerable are those which are based on discrimination against the ideas and beliefs of those who have a job to do. In the circumstances, I endorse Parliament's view on behalf of the Commission and the House may rest assured that this stance will be supported by the Commission when the matter is under discussion at Council or political cooperation meetings.

President. — I announced this morning that Member's views on this matter should be voiced during the debate on the European Council.

7. Falkland Islands

President. — The next item is the Council statement on the Falkland Islands. I call the Council.

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentleman, the situa-

tion resulting from the invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentina on April 2 is a cause for great concern among the whole international community. The Ten have demonstrated their solidarity quickly and extensively with a unity which, in view of the principles at stake, must be emphasized. On April 2, the actual day of the invasion, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Ten condemned the Argentine military action on the Falkland Islands and made an urgent appeal to the Argentine government to withdraw its troops immediately and comply with the Security Council's call to desist from force and continue to seek a diplomatic solution. The Ten made their statement before the Security Council adopted Resolution 502 on 3 April. This resolution calls for an immediate end to hostilities and the immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falklands and for the Argentine and British governments to seek a diplomatic solution to their dispute and to respect the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter. The Community Member States on the Security Council of course voted for Resolution 502 and condemned the flagrant violation of international law. These Member States were the United Kingdom, France and Ireland. The Ten's first reaction has clearly shown that the Community is not prepared merely to accept a *fait accompli*. After Argentina had ignored the Security Council resolution and rejected the statement by the Ten, the statement of 10 April 1982 reaffirmed and clarified the Ten's position as announced on 2 April by indicating that the Ten attach the greatest importance to effective and immediate implementation of Security Council Resolution 502 in its entirety i.e. an end to hostilities, immediate withdrawal of all Argentine troops from the islands and a call for the Argentine and United Kingdom governments to seek a diplomatic solution. In the same statement the Ten announced that, in addition to a complete embargo on the export of arms and military equipment to Argentina, they would take measures to ban all imports from Argentina into the Community in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Community Treaties. The speed of this reaction and the scope of the measures taken against Argentina shows that the Member States of the Community are able — in spite of the doubts which have been expressed — to adopt the principle of Community solidarity and present a united front in the face of action against an area with which the Community has special ties.

In order to implement the political decision to ban imports from Argentina, the Member States consulted one another pursuant to Article 224 of the EEC Treaty and following the measures already taken by the United Kingdom on 7th April. In the context of these consultations it proved important to take urgent and uniform measures. The Member States therefore had recourse to a Council Regulation pursuant to Article 113 of the EEC Treaty and to a decision of the representatives of the governments of the Member States of the European Coal and Steel Community in

Tindemans

order to suspend the imports of all EEC and ECSC products from Argentina, which were to be brought into free circulation in the Community, from 16 April to 17 May.

They also decided however that, before the date on which these measures were due to end, they would again examine the situation and decide whether it was appropriate to extend, amend or perhaps revoke the measures. Transitional measures provided that the import ban would not apply to import documents already issued, to contracts concluded before the ban came into force or to goods already in course of shipment to the Community on 16 April. These transitional measures did not however apply to imports into the United Kingdom of products covered by the restrictive measures taken by the United Kingdom government on 7 April.

From the very beginning of the crisis the Ten made it clear that their reaction should not only be seen in a Community context and that, since the armed action by Argentine troops had caused great concern throughout the international community, the international community should be involved in the resolution of the crisis through the United Nations and outside that organization. The Ten have therefore addressed an appeal to other governments to support their decision so that Security Council Resolution 502 can be implemented in its entirety as soon as possible.

The attitude of the Ten was again clearly confirmed at the informal meeting of the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Ten which took place yesterday, 20 April. The conclusions of this meeting yesterday were that the Ten (1) confirmed their total solidarity with the United Kingdom, (2) called for full implementation of Security Council Resolution 502, (3) expressed complete approval for the efforts by the American Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, to obtain a peaceful solution and (4) supported further efforts by Alexander Haig.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the solidarity of the Ten in this matter cannot be in any doubt. During this crisis cooperation between Community institutions has been particularly good. The press release of the President of the European Parliament of 9 April also reflects this spirit of total cooperation. I am convinced that this spirit will also become apparent in your debate on this matter.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in what is essentially a political debate the Commission has asked to speak because it considers it part of its rôle to adopt

a clear position on any event affecting one of the Member States, and this is why it collectively adopted the following stance on 6 April.

The Commission of the European Communities condemns the Argentine's armed intervention in a British territory associated with the Community, in violation of international law and the rights of the Falkland Islanders. The Commission affirms its solidarity with the United Kingdom Government.

At the subsequent political cooperation meetings which it has attended the Commission has, as pointed out by the President of the Council, found that the Member States are unanimously resolved to implement the Security Council Resolution and take the necessary measures to this effect.

Since it was a question of trade measures were involved, the Commission had to assume the special responsibility conferred upon it by the Treaty of ensuring that Community powers are respected and guaranteeing the effectiveness of any Community measures taken.

The Commission has discharged this dual responsibility by submitting various proposals to the Council to allow the trade measures, whether relating to industry or agriculture, to be taken, and by joining in the decision on ECSC products. It felt it essential that once political consultations had taken place the measures be based on Community law and Article 113, since this is the only guarantee that the measures will be applied in the same spirit of solidarity in which they were conceived, past experience with Iran having shown how ineffective it is to take unilateral measures which at the outset are supposedly uniform in intent but ultimately reveal a wide disparity of approach. There can be no solidarity without consistency in the implementation of the measures decided at Community level.

These various measures were thus taken in liaison with the Presidency.

With regard to certain statements publicized in Latin-American countries, where the people have been misled into believing that the steps taken by the Community are nothing other than protectionist measures designed to protect the European market from Argentine imports, the Commission has and will continue to point out in the clearest manner that the Community is acting in accordance with a legal decision taken by the Security Council to counteract the military intervention which took place at the beginning of April.

I believe that this is a fundamental point which must be repeated.

In the eyes of the Commission, therefore, these latest developments have demonstrated that the Community is indispensable for the countries of Europe and that there can be no substitute for the efficient operation of

Davignon

the Institutions if the Community is to act effectively and in unison.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Veil on a point of order.

Mrs Veil. — *(FR)* What I want to say is that earlier a number of Members wished to raise points of order and were not given the floor after the extremely important statement by the President concerning the letter received from the Pakistan foreign ministry. In my view this is a matter of tremendous importance and those who wanted to speak should have been able to without getting mixed up in the debate on the European Council, even if they had no opportunity to put their names down.

I think they should be allowed to speak, at least on a point of order. Let me add that I am surprised that in his statement the President should mention discrimination on religious, philosophical or political grounds, since we have to be quite blunt in saying that this is racist discrimination. We devote time to attacking racialism in South Africa and when it affects people far removed from ourselves. Here one of our colleagues is directly affected by racist discrimination, so let's be bold enough to say so and to do something!

(Applause)

President. — If I follow the drift of what you are saying, Mrs Veil, you want a separate debate on this matter.

Mrs Veil. — *(FR)* Precisely, Mr President.

President. — Well then, let me put it to the House that in view of the importance of this matter we have a special debate on it today. We could, for example, shorten Question Time by three quarters of an hour and hold the debate between 7 and 7.45 this evening.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, this seems to me an important matter and a matter of urgency, and I do not see why the House should not decide to have an urgent debate tomorrow on this vital thing. Surely it is precisely what the urgent motions are for? I do think, despite its importance, we should regard Question Time as sacred.

President. — Mr Fergusson, I cannot propose to include it as an urgent debate tomorrow, because we have just decided on the urgent debate and the order

of priority in that debate tomorrow. I think the matter is — I agree fully with Mrs Veil — extremely important. I was looking for a way of debating the matter in the presence of the Council, which is also not a possibility tomorrow morning, and that is why I have made this proposal. I hope you can accept it.

I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — In order that the House may show due flexibility, would it not be possible to extend our sitting this evening beyond 8.30 p.m. in order to accommodate the point made quite rightly by Mrs Veil?

President. — Mr Cottrell, I have with difficulty reached an agreement with the staff to go on until 8.30 p.m., so it would be really a great demand to continue after 8.30 p.m., because then we should have to include a break because of the duration of working hours and that would make it late.

I call Mr Prag.

Mr Prag. — May I point out, Mr President, with the greatest respect that it is only because you made the announcement after you had dealt with the urgent motions that we are unable to include it in the urgent debates. Therefore I suggest you should be flexible enough to come back on the decision that was made, because we could not have taken any other decision, given the order of business that you determined.

President. — Mr Prag, the problem remains that the Council will not be there tomorrow and cannot participate in the debate.

I call Mr Beyer de Ryke.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — *(FR)* Mr President, while I do appreciate the views of our British colleagues who are anxious to maintain the tradition of Question Time, I also think that when another tradition, the tradition of tolerance and decency, is mocked as it has been by this Pakistani decision, Question Time can for once be upset . . .

(Applause)

. . . and if you ask me, this Parliament is entitled to change as it wishes, on this occasion, this tradition so that we can show our respect for a nobler and more important tradition which reflects the essence of our civilization.

(Applause)

President. — May I propose that the debate be held from 7 p.m. until 7.45 p.m.? In the meantime we will

President

see with the Staff Committee whether it is possible to continue after 8.30 p.m., for a further 45 minutes. I think, in view of the preparation of the debate, that we must decide now on this specific debate between 7 p.m. and 7.45 p.m. and you will get further information on the rest.

(Parliament adopted the proposal)

We can now resume the debate.

I call Sir Henry Plumb.

Sir Henry Plumb. — Mr President, following the statements by the President-in-Office of the Council and by the Commission on this extremely grave and important issue, may I first of all pay a very brief tribute to the work of Lord Carrington as Foreign Secretary.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

Over and above his major achievements in political cooperation, he made a particular impact in this House during the British Presidency and he was anxious to increase the influence of Parliament through the political colloquies and through Question Time. He was one of the finest British foreign secretaries of the post-war years and I am sure that colleagues here or at least the majority of them, join with me in hoping that he will be able to continue to contribute to the development of Europe in the future.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

Mr President, in the joint amendment which my group supports and which representatives of the majority of this House support, I believe that this Parliament has an opportunity to follow the other Community institutions in an outright condemnation of the invasion of the Falkland Islands by Argentina. Of course in preparation of this particular text we wanted a text which could have been signed by all groups in the House but, as you may know, from the Socialist Group and from Lady Castle in particular, there were difficulties in integrating certain aspects of the Socialist text. Paragraph 5 of that particular text was not acceptable to the other groups. It tried to place the aggressor, Argentina, and Britain on an equal footing which cannot be right at this particular juncture.

Nevertheless, the Argentinians cannot gain any comfort from this minor difference. Every quarter of this House must agree on an outright condemnation of the invasion of the Falkland Islands.

And so, Mr President, the invasion and the response to it will certainly prove to have been remarkable events. The invasion itself was outrageous because it took place while negotiations were continuing between the United Kingdom and Argentina over the Falklands and because such an invasion ran counter to

international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The response, Mr President, to this invasion has been no less remarkable. In Europe particularly we have seen a response which has shown Europe's institutions capable of exercising the kind of strength and the kind of unity and immediacy which many had thought impossible.

Only a few weeks ago the Community celebrated its 25th anniversary. Commentators on that event depicted a Community which was gloomy and depressed, incapable of reaching decisions. Could we have seen a clearer refutation of that than during the Falklands crisis?

Mr President, it is not for us to go over the basis of British sovereignty here, nor to recount the 150 years of history during which the Falkland Islanders have enjoyed uninterrupted occupation of the Falkland Islands. It is enough to say that negotiations over the Falkland Islands have taken place over the last 20 years and that even in February of this year it seemed as though the Argentinian claim to the islands could be resolved amicably and without recourse to military intervention.

The Argentine government was fully aware of Britain's position, as it has been for a long time: total firmness on the right of the islanders to determine their own future, but willingness to deal with the Falkland problem by means of negotiation.

So, we say: why then did they invade? The only conclusion one can come to is that in view of the appalling economic position of their country and the desperate effect of military rule on human rights of their people, a diversion was necessary. That diversion was provided by 1 800 Falkland Islanders who have lived peaceably for over a century next to their larger neighbour, Argentina. We have to hope for the benefit of the people of Argentina that their patriotic fervour over this issue does not last. The combination of economic sanctions and other forms of international pressure will soon begin to tell upon their economy, their jobs and their quality of life. As I say, it is not for us now to go into all the history of this particular dispute. The important matter for us is the examination of the Community's role in some of the broader issues which surround that.

Members will have noticed that in the text tabled by members of my group, we recognize the sacrifices which have been made by some Member States to enable the Community to take such forceful action so early on.

And I would like, Mr President, to reiterate that recognition here. In particular, one of the industries which will be affected is the footwear industry which receives hides from Argentina. One Member State had

Plumb

reservations about the legal basis on which the Community should act. Should there be Community action under Article 113 or should there be joint action by the Member States? In the end Community action was taken and it enabled a ban on Argentinian imports to be put into effect from 16 April.

Joint national measures would have taken much longer and they would have been difficult to coordinate. And so it is clear that the Community has taken a political step of great significance and importance.

But then this was the first invasion of Community territory or associated territory since the Treaty was first signed. We should not throw up our arms in amazement at what the Community has achieved in this particular case. Of course, there are plenty of instances where we would have liked to see the Community act as quickly and as forcefully as this in response to events elsewhere in the world, but that does not mean that Community solidarity is not a fact. Community solidarity is the backbone of membership and it is the reason why we find ourselves pressing for more action and more immediacy in Community affairs.

The response to the invasion of the Falkland Islands has shown to Britain what was shown in a different way to the original six during the 1960s: the Community can be outstandingly successful. It can provide a political and economic context for decision-making which is unequalled anywhere else in the world. For this reason, Britain will be consulting her partners in Europe as closely as possible throughout this particular crisis. In this way a common position and an effective action will be maintained until a settlement is reached.

Now, Mr President, there are some in Britain and in other Community countries who have questioned the role of the United States in this affair. People have asked why did the United States not join in with Europe in condemning this aggression and taking appropriate measures against Argentina. I would prefer to ask where else would Britain and Argentina have found an appropriate mediator at a time when negotiation was so important and yet so difficult. We must maintain the hope that the Haig mission will be successful. There is no other obvious route towards the peaceful solution for which we are all so anxious.

As to the nature of the negotiating position which either of the two main parties should take up, I would just say this in conclusion: it is not for us to dictate terms to either side. The Argentines are already in breach of a mandatory resolution of the United Nations. As for the British position, it has been made perfectly clear in the House of Commons and elsewhere that this dispute is more than an awkward trifle and a legacy of empire. It is about the international rule of law and the right of small nations to live in peace next door to larger neighbours. If the Argentinians were seen to benefit as a result of their military

aggression then the world would be even less safe than it is now. The use of force must not be seen to pay. Above all, the Falkland Islanders have a right to have their voice heard in all this. It is not significant that there are only 1 800 of them and that they live 8 000 miles away. The principle would be the same whether they were 18 000 or 180 000 miles away. The Community's action has shown that numbers and distances do not count when it comes to the defence of basic principles, and that is something which the British people should not forget. So let us hope that the value of the Community solidarity has been proven once and for all, and I hope all in this House will support the motion that is before the House in the name of the Liberal and Democratic Group, the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group) and my own group, the European Democrats.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Habsburg.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) Mr President, in a tense and dangerous international situation, two things are necessary: a clear and unequivocal stance on the part of those who wish to maintain peace without giving the aggressor a free hand, and solidarity on the part of free and democratic nations. This is a precept for survival, especially since Afghanistan and Poland.

Today, we are confronted with the events occurring in the South Atlantic, in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. In the past few days and weeks, the European Communities have had to adopt a position. We, the representatives of the people of Europe, must now for our part express the will and feelings of the Europeans. Our first task is to express our clear condemnation of this aggression — reminiscent of Hitler and Stalin — against a European nation. Europe cannot and must not allow *faits accomplis* to be created by brute force as solutions to territorial or political problems according to the law of the jungle and allow such action to be declared legitimate in an unscrupulous misrepresentation of the facts. We must recognize only what is achieved by way of free and peaceful negotiations. We must also practice European solidarity in a way which can be seen by all.

We are a family in which one must stand by all must stand by one. What the United Kingdom faces today can happen to any of us tomorrow. We should not now deal with all sorts of genuine or alleged unjust situations from history. We are confronted by what is happening here and now, and therefore it would be an unforgivable error even to appear to place the aggressor and his victim on a par.

The best form of protection for the weak and peace-loving is international law. In this century, it has been dangerously weakened. The clear concepts of justice

Habsburg

and injustice are pushed aside by political opportunism. We have got to remain consistent because it is a question of restoring the concept of legitimacy and legality in international life. Finally, we must realize, in the light of the events, that the tradition of the aggressors of the period leading us into the Second World War has not died out. Dictatorships fearful of their own downfall, which, for lack of a legal alternative, is tantamount to personal extermination, tend to throw all restraint to the wind as a last resort and make an attack on weaker neighbours. If we bow to the dictator in the case of the Falkland Islands, the policy of aggression will continue whilst our moral position and credibility are undermined.

I represent here a European nation which, in spite of the greatness of its past, has gone through a dark and bloody period in this century. We know what it means to live under a tyrant who commits terrible crimes in the name of his people. I would therefore ask everyone in this painful hour of Argentine history not to confuse the Argentine people with its dictator. Galtieri is not Argentina. Whilst firmly condemning aggression, we must express the hope that Argentina will soon return to its true democratic tradition. It is precisely because we love and respect the Argentine people that we must be unyielding in our opposition to the dictator, because any surrender of fundamental principles, as the history of Hitler has shown, will strengthen the hand of the dictator both at home and abroad and increase the danger to world peace.

President. — I call Mrs Castle.

Mrs Castle. — Mr President, the last thing I would wish to do would be to turn this important debate into a squabble between the British Conservatives and British Socialists. I welcome, as does the Socialist Group, the wide area of agreement which I think is felt throughout this House on the need to enforce two basic principles essential to world peace; first, that unprovoked aggression must be condemned from whatever quarter it may come, and secondly, that disputes must be settled by peaceful means.

But I cannot allow to go unanswered the calumny which Sir Henry Plumb has just launched against me. I am afraid that once again Sir Henry is out of date, even though I was talking to him only at lunchtime today, about the possibility, even at the eleventh hour, of our producing one joint resolution or at any rate one joint amendment on this important matter reflecting these two vital principles and concentrating the attention of this House upon them.

I explained to him that, far from the Socialist Group having wanted to go its own irrational way, I had spent hours today — I was excluded from the discussions yesterday — with the Liberals, with the European Democrats, the Christian Democrats, the Italian

Communists and others trying to thrash out a common text. And I have news for Sir Henry: We have a common text — all except for one paragraph. The Socialist Group also has tabled an amendment to the three resolutions that were before us yesterday. Our amendment is exactly parallel with the joint amendment because, after all, a lot of it reflects the wording which we wanted. I am glad to say that the joint text strengthens the reference to UN Resolution 502. I am glad to say also that the joint resolution has adopted the words of the Socialist resolution condemning unreservedly the invasion of the Falklands Islands. So we put a bit of meat into the joint amendment which Sir Henry said has now been tabled. But what is the difference between us? And I ask the House to mediate upon this. In the end, just the European Democrats could not accept our paragraph 6, which we felt was vitally important. May I read it to the House:

Believes that the withdrawal of all its forces by the Argentine Government in compliance with UN Resolution 502 and the halting of United Kingdom naval operations would enable a peaceful solution to be reached.

Can anybody in this House disagree with that? And how dare Mr Habsburg, who was at the talks and gave a clear indication that he would accept that phrase, now say the Socialist Group is trying to put the aggressor and the United Kingdom Government on a parallel?

No, what we are trying to say in the Socialist Group is this. We accept that the background to the Falklands crisis is complicated — long negotiations have gone on between successive British governments and the Argentine over it, no doubt long negotiations will go on again in the future — but what matters at this stage is that the Argentine Government should be taught that dictators who embark on military adventures in order to distract attention from the miseries and tyrannies they have inflicted on their own people cannot expect to have their faces saved at the expense of the international rule of law.

(Applause)

That is the starting-point of our resolution, and I would remind this House that the starting-point of this debate — I thought we were all agreed on this — is United Nations Resolution 502, passed by the Security Council on 1 April.

But you know, Mr President, some people do not seem to know what is contained in Resolution 502. Yes, I am glad to say, it demands the immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falklands. But it also demands an immediate cessation of hostilities, and it calls on the governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences in keeping with the Charter of the UN. And it is no good being selective about United Nations

Castle

resolutions — if we quote them, then we quote all of them.

Now it is heartening that this resolution was not vetoed in the UN Security Council and that support for its principles has come not merely from the Community but from a wide area of the globe. I believe we are united in this Assembly in demanding unreservedly — Socialist words, may I remind you — that the Argentine forces must be withdrawn. But we must also demand that a peaceful solution to this dispute must be found. And you know, if there were to be a war over this issue, it would not merely be a tragedy but an absurdity. It is not a question of Britain, as a former colonial power, hanging onto a small outpost of empire 8 000 miles away at any cost. Every serious newspaper in Britain, including *The Times*, which I have not got time to quote, has recognized that Britain must adapt itself to changing circumstances and that the whole question which we should be discussing today is how the Argentine threat can be removed without recourse to war.

It is here that the economic steps taken by the Community are so important — the embargo on imports and the ban on arms exports to Argentina. We agree that these have been invaluable. We want them extended for as long as necessary to ensure Argentina's compliance with Resolution 502. We warmly welcome the other demonstrations of political and economic solidarity from all over the globe — from Norway, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, among others. And there is no doubt either that we appreciate the efforts of Mr Haig, though we do point out that the United States could stop the Argentine in its tracks by the economic sanctions it could impose. What we believe in the Socialist Group is that it is economic, not military, pressure that we need in this situation if we are to get a solution by peaceful means.

I ask Mr Haagerup, who said that the words of paragraph 6 that I have read out were acceptable to him, what is his objection now? I ask Mr Habsburg how he can say this is to equate the aggressor and the defendant. Because we surely all know that part of a peaceful solution will be that when the Argentine forces are withdrawn British naval operations will stop, and to hesitate to endorse that is, I think, to do more harm to the British cause than anything else.

So I say that as long as the Conservatives and others quibble at the wording of paragraph 6, we cannot take their emphasis about a peaceful solution very seriously. Nor can we take their concern for the rights of the Falklanders very seriously when their concern for human rights is as selective as it has been shown to be this afternoon.

(Applause)

If it is wrong, as it is wrong, to hand the Falklanders over to — and I quote *The Times* — 'a singularly bru-

tal, military dictatorship,' it is equally wrong to hand other people over to it too. Yet on numerous occasions in this Parliament, when we in the Socialist Group, often with the support of the CDUs, have tabled motions condemning violations of human rights in the Argentine, other people have dragged their feet — notably the Conservatives — on our motion in July 1980. We have seen another example of this this afternoon, when the right wing of this Parliament united to push out of the list of urgent motions the most urgent of all — those dealing with the violation of human rights in South Africa . . .

(Applause)

. . . and the menace of the plastic bullet to children's lives.

We do not wish to have a selective morality. We stand united behind our comprehensive one.

(Applause).

IN THE CHAIR: MR KLEPSCH

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Moreland on a point of order.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I do not think I am normally known for my points of order, but as a point of clarification was that last speech on behalf of the Socialist Group?

(Cries of 'Yes')

President. — Several motions have been tabled. Mrs Castle has just spoken on one of them and she was speaking on behalf of the Socialist Group.

I call Mrs Castle.

Mrs Castle. — On a point of order, Mr President. I was speaking on our amendment to the three joint resolutions which we have tabled, just as other groups have tabled an amendment to the three resolutions.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — *(FR)* Mr President, it is not my intention to involve myself in an internal British debate on the Falkland Islands. I simply wish to remind our colleagues that two years ago I was one of the first to

Galland

stand up to show European solidarity with the United Kingdom by tabling a motion for a resolution on your contribution to the Community budget, arguing that the other countries should be able to understand your position and show solidarity. Today, I felt it necessary, for the purpose of solidarity, that someone other than the British should table a motion for a resolution, and my Group supported the motion in order to demonstrate the solidarity of the whole Community in this matter.

In the intervening period, as you well know, I have not been sparing in my criticism of the policy pursued by your country, particularly within the Community. And I wish us to learn a lesson from this experience, namely that European solidarity cannot be one-way. Whenever we consider that you are in need of solidarity, we will show such solidarity, and this is what we are doing today. What I would wish is that when you are asked for solidarity in other fields — and you are well aware of what I am driving at — you too should show such solidarity.

The reason for our tabling this motion for a resolution on the Falklands is simple: we feel that the attitude of the Argentine is unjustifiable under international law, that in this dangerous second half of the twentieth century we must defend peace by any means, and that the use of armed force must be condemned with the utmost vigour.

That is why we have condemned the attitude of the Argentine, support the UN Resolution and stand in solidarity with the United Kingdom. And, in our view, this European resolve, this solidarity we are demonstrating in your favour, is the most useful measure we could take collectively to stave off the as yet potential risk of war. The purpose behind our move is to exert pressure on the Argentine, back all the current initiatives for a peaceful settlement and endeavour to show that in the European Community solidarity is not an empty word, that solidarity can be found when the occasion requires, and that it can be effective.

I will conclude by saying once again: remember that at this time of crisis your friends have stood beside you! I hope that when we find occasion to need your solidarity we will not seek it in vain and be faced with an excessive show of nationalism.

(Applause from the right)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Lomas. — Mr President, we are in a very serious situation. The Argentinian troops are still in occupation on the Falkland Islands and the British fleet is drawing nearer as each hour goes by, with the possibility of an appallingly bloody conflict. So our main task today is, I think, to add our voice to those who

are urging a peaceful rather than a military solution to the conflict. This is why we fully support United Nations Resolution 502, which referred to both Argentina and the UK not using, or threatening to use, force. It really is unthinkable in this age of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction that anyone should be talking about a military solution. So I believe, and I say this emphatically, that the British fleet should be stopped now before it is too late and that we should call on all countries seeking a peaceful solution to apply stringent economic and financial sanctions.

Now it is all very well to go on as some British newspapers, I regret to say, have gone on about 'giving the Argies a bloody nose', about 'recapturing our islands', and all the other jingoistic and neo-colonialist rantings. The simple truth is this, that if we do not avoid this conflict . . . Do you want me to give way?

Mr R. Jackson. — To follow his advice would be, as Aneurin Bevan said, to go naked into the conference chamber.

Mr Lomas. — The simple truth is that, whatever Aneurin Bevan or anybody else said, if we do not avoid the conflict, then people will be killed and people will be maimed, and I tell you now that the attitude in some quarters of Britain today will change rapidly as soon as the first coffins are unloaded from British ships going back to the British Isles: any mood of flag-waving and jingoism will end pretty quickly then.

And what will happen if we do reoccupy the islands? Are we going to keep a massive military presence permanently in the South Atlantic? Of course not, it is a piece of absolute nonsense. There has got to be a negotiated settlement.

I am bound to say, Mr President, that the British Government bears a heavy responsibility for the present situation. Up to a few months ago, it was selling arms to the fascist government in Argentina: it was selling arms when they knew very well that the fascists were using them against their own people and were also planning an invasion of the Falkland Islands, for which the British Government was totally unprepared. While there were the ritual sacrifices of sacking three ministers — or resignations, if you like — the remaining ministers and particularly the Prime Minister still have a lot to answer for. It is a bit late in the day to discover now that the Argentinian fascists are not very nice people.

Finally, Mr President, one point about the future of the people of the Falkland Islands. Of course they must be given the right to self-determination, to determine their future. Anything else would smack of colonialism. But at the same time they cannot expect other countries to say that whatever they want —

Lomas

financial or military — will be met. That is nonsense. So we have to try to reach a settlement, whether we like it or not, with all the parties involved in this conflict — perhaps with the help of the United Nations, because the alternatives are really too awful to contemplate.

So I say finally to Argentina: Get your troops off those islands now. To the British Government: Stop the fleet now and let us get round the table again for a peaceful rather than a military solution to this problem!

(Applause from the left)

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Penders. — *(NL)* Mr President, just a few comments on this tragic affair. My group still hopes for a peaceful solution. War is by nature absurd, and particularly so over this matter, and I wish to dissociate myself completely from those who say that the honour of the British Navy demands that there should at least be some skirmishes. I want a peaceful solution and I am therefore grateful for the efforts of the American Secretary of State Mr Haig. In recent times we have often criticized the United States, and I therefore make these positive comments with all the more pleasure. The world has certainly got smaller. This sort of conflict is fundamentally wrong if only of the chilling thought that, during the confusion, others may seize the opportunity to take action somewhere else.

It is good that the joint motion tabled by various groups begins with an unqualified condemnation of the Argentine aggression. This is and remains the most important point. It is absolutely unacceptable that the principle of the peaceful settlement of differences, i.e. without using or threatening to use force, should be abandoned. There are too many areas of conflict in the world today and, silent acceptance of the Argentine aggression would mean that presenting the international community with a *fait accompli* would become a general rule of international law and international relations. This naturally cannot be allowed.

It is right that the motion states that the wishes of the Falkland islanders should be fully taken into account. I would add that in my group's opinion this does not necessarily mean that the Falkland islanders should be able to block a solution regarded as reasonable, and reasonable as regards the feelings of the islanders, by the parties involved — meaning for example Argentina, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Little has been said in recent days about possible resources in the sea around the islands. If this does have a bearing on the matter, then we feel that it is yet

another reason for obtaining a speedy and constructive settlement on the exploitation of resources on the seabed.

In conclusion one last comment: when this crisis, as everyone hopes, finds a peaceful solution, it must be a reason for all of us to work with redoubled energy at resolving the many remaining colonial and territorial conflicts in the world. Again we are sitting on the edge of a volcano, and I find it very hot, indeed much too hot.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Møller. — *(DA)* Mr President, I believe that all of us in this Group, too, endorse the energetic attempts at conciliation of the American Secretary of State in this difficult matter. I also believe that we are of a common mind that the British Government, the British House of Commons and all British authorities have behaved with dignity, firmness and assuredness in the matter.

We would like this issue to be solved on the basis of international law in accordance with the motion for a resolution. International law assumed new dimensions when President Wilson in his day introduced a proposal to create peace on the basis of the nation's right of self-determination. It is not a question in this case of the people of the Falkland Islands wishing to adopt a different nationality or to come under Argentine sovereignty. The people of the Falkland Islands must be asked and their opinions heard. All Britain's efforts and all Alexander Haig's efforts are aimed at this. The right of self-determination, therefore, should be the decisive factor under international law, and not the historical right some Argentines talk about. If history were the basis for law, Denmark would today be one of the largest States in Europe — possibly followed by Luxembourg. But we are not the largest, and neither is Luxembourg the second largest. We no longer rule over Great Britain, Sweden, Norway, Iceland or Schleswig-Holstein. We have had to accept the fact that we do not have a historical right — only the right of self-determination given to us by free elections at the end of the First World War.

Great Britain's attitude has been under discussion today, and a critical view has been taken of the line which the House of Commons has chosen to follow with regard to Mrs Thatcher's statement. I believe we should consider for a moment in this House the fact that no European State has done half as much as Great Britain for the right of self-determination and liberty since the Second World War, and I believe Mrs Castle has been a member of governments which themselves have done a great deal to put an end to all forms of imperialism without force. A gigantic area of colonial territory has been relinquished peacefully. No-one can therefore accuse the British of having warlike inten-

Møller

tions or of not wishing to try peaceful means. There is no backing for this in history.

From all our experience since the Second World War, we know that they have always used the channels of negotiation and mediation, and always applied peaceful means when winding up their empire. This case, however, does not involve winding up an empire but the question of whether a people wishing to remain British should have the right to remain British, rather than being occupied by a military dictatorship, and therefore I would like to close by saying that I shall feel completely at one with the President of Parliament, the Commission and the President-in-Office of the Council, when I vote for the motion for a resolution proposed by Sir Henry Plumb on behalf of my Group. We must solve this problem. We must solve it by peaceful means but without being critical of Great Britain, which is in search of peace.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Segre. — (*IT*) Mr President, this situation probably strikes all of us as slightly anachronistic and even absurd, as if we were watching the projection of an old film. But it is reality we have to contend with, and here we have an unacceptable act of force committed by the Argentine Junta, which must be condemned as firmly as possible.

The United Nations Security Council was therefore right to adopt Resolution 502, appealing for an immediate end to hostilities and the withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Falkland Islands and calling on the Argentine and United Kingdom Governments to seek a diplomatic settlement to their conflict and abide fully by the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter. Woe betide us in a world already torn apart by so many divergent forces, fraught with so many underlying international tensions and threats to peace, if resorting to force were to become accepted behaviour, because that would mean turning international relations into a sort of jungle and making them dangerously unmanageable.

We are well aware of the real nature of the Argentine regime, a regime which probably holds a record in today's world, as the Council of Europe also noted recently, for the systematic and brutal violation of human rights. We also know full well that when such regimes find their policies floundering and come face to face with their insuperable contradictions, they are often apt to embark on some foreign adventure, one of the aims being to create a consensus in this field, based on nationalism and pseudopatriotic feeling. It's an old tale, not only in Latin America but also here in Europe.

That is another reason why it was right for the European Community to react firmly and promptly. But it

is the choice of tactics, the application of economic sanctions — not the ban on exports of arms, which should have been stopped well before, as Mr Lomas has just pointed out, and not simply halted for a month — which makes us uneasy for reasons which our Group has explained more than once in this House, in other circumstances.

We do not intend, nor have we time today, to go back to the old discussion on the effectiveness of economic sanctions. But the very nature of the Argentine regime, which I pointed out before, forces us, mindful as we are of Italian history too, to remember that regimes of this kind often succeed in exploiting sanctions to consolidate their repressive and undemocratic policies by resorting to nationalism and xenophobia. Mussolini managed something of the sort around 1936, the Argentine generals are doing something like that now, and unfortunately it seems to be working again.

We also fully realize that this is a disputed point, even within our Group, where one or more independent-minded Members beg to differ. More generally, it is being disputed nowadays within the Italian Government coalition and in political, economic and social spheres in Italy. But precisely because the point is disputed — and not only in Italy — a firm, united reaction from the Ten is lacking on the political level, which is the main thing asked of them in the field of political cooperation.

In this respect what President Tindemans said is disappointing. What measures do the Ten intend taking on the political level to make the Argentine Junta abide by the Security Council Resolution? That we do not know, and perhaps nobody else does either, but we do not feel it is sufficient to lend support to the efforts of others, in this case the American Secretary of State, Mr Haig. We believe that the Ten have a particular role to play, especially in view of the real dangers inherent in the present situation because nobody can rule out as a matter of course the possibility that the situation may get completely out of hand and let things go further than anyone wants.

Consequently, our guiding aim must be to search for and safeguard peace, to comply with International Law, and to respect and safeguard the letter and the spirit of the United Nations Charter. Europe has a task to fulfil here to see that reason prevails, that violations of the law cease and the danger of a military confrontation is averted. Europe must make sure that the path to a peaceful and democratic solution is opened up and tolerance comes to the forefront, so contributing towards making our world free of any form of racism, colonialism or neocolonialism. That is the Europe we believe in and want to go on believing in, even if the grounds for hope are steadily dwindling, as could also be inferred from what Mr Martens said this morning about the latest, disastrous European Council. But to believe in such a Europe without there being an insuperable contradiction between what

Segre

should be and what is, it is now vital for there to be a far-reaching change in the aims followed up till now, a new awareness of, and self-awareness in, Europe and amongst Europeans, and a new conception of Europe and its role in the world.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Haagerup. — *(DA)* Mr President, the European Community is not neutral in the Falklands dispute, but this does not lessen our wish to avoid an armed conflict. We simply do not believe we would be making a contribution by trying to adopt a neutral stance, i.e. acting as mediators on the part of the Community.

There are several reasons for which the Community cannot remain a neutral and passive observer. Great Britain is a member of the Community, and the Falkland Islands are an associated territory, and the responsibility we shoulder in consequence is reflected by the joint motion my Group and I very much hope will be adopted by an overwhelming majority when it is put to the vote tomorrow morning.

In this motion, we clearly subscribe to a negotiated solution as the only reasonable outcome, but only a negotiated solution based on Security Council Resolution 502. I would like to ask all my colleagues and others to study the texts before us, and in particular the two amendments. They are very close to each other with very little separating them as Mrs Castle said, and I would like to say to Mrs Castle in particular that I cannot entirely accept her version of the discussions which were held mainly under my auspices and on the basis of a Liberal proposal drafted by Mr Calvez and Mr Galland of my Group.

However, I would like to add that there are many of us here in Parliament who have often been entertained and enlightened by the exchanges of views between representatives of the two British parties in this House. This has not least been due to the very strong and fine parliamentary tradition existing in Great Britain. But having said that, I would like to mention that quite a few of us deplore the fact that it has not been possible today to settle all differences, and I cannot hide my disappointment at the fact that what was evidently possible in the House of Commons between government and opposition, as far as the British parties are concerned, was not fully achieved in this House, even though quite a number of us tried to ensure this.

I would like to conclude by saying that, if Parliament declared that it was up to the parties to the conflict to negotiate other conditions than those laid down in Resolution 502, we would be undermining the efforts to achieve an equitable and peaceful solution. In the final analysis, our attitude is not based solely on solidarity with Great Britain: we have come out against the injustice which has been committed and against the

flagrant aggression by Argentina: this is the issue Parliament will be voting on tomorrow morning.

Mr President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr de la Malène. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to make a few remarks on this question to present the feeling of the Group of which I am Chairman.

The first is that the scale of the conflict which we are witnessing is extraordinarily disproportionate to its cause. We are sadly aware of a great number of cases of instability and tension in the world, justified to a greater or lesser degree, and here we have a crisis developing for a relatively minor reason.

Neither is the conflict consonant with the interests of the two countries. The Argentine and the United Kingdom have very substantial common interests which extend far beyond the conflict over the Falkland Islands.

This conflict is both disproportionate and deplorable and, if one leaves to one side the world's judgment made of the Argentine Government, is weakening the western world and the free world, as is proved by the reaction of the Soviet Union.

How has this imbalance and deplorable situation been arrived at? This is a very old conflict with which the two parties are well acquainted and which they have pursued. The matter has been put before the General Assembly of the United Nations. All agreed that the islands cannot exist in isolation from the mainland. A compromise solution should have been sought and found and yet — and not for the first time — we have ended up in a situation of conflict.

Having said that, the course of action embarked upon by the Argentine Government is reprehensible and must be condemned. No act of military intervention of this type can be condoned and we fully endorse its condemnation. But the United Kingdom and the Falkland Islands are part of the Community and we therefore naturally feel a particular duty to show our solidarity. We therefore support the embargo, with all that it entails in terms of imports and exports, and we must underline the extent of this duty when we see that Japan, a great power par excellence which, not feeling bound by the same solidarity, has not yet adopted the same position. This reveals the extent of political and economic solidarity.

May we be permitted to say, however, that although solidarity cannot be arrived at by negotiation, it clearly brings with it a duty of reciprocity. The commitment made by the Community is indivisible: you cannot accept what you find useful and reject what you find

de la Malène

onerous. This is also a lesson we have learnt from this solidarity which is vital to us.

I should like to conclude by saying that our Group considers a military solution out of the question. The conflict must be resolved peacefully and by economic and political means. We support unreservedly the efforts of the United States and the Secretary of State.

It is our hope that both parties will retain the necessary sang-froid in this affair and not add more fuel to the fire so that this conflict, which is already out of all proportion to its cause, does not worsen for internal political or prestige reasons and thus become even more difficult to resolve. We therefore appeal to the cold reason of both parties and ask them to seek a peaceful solution.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Bøgh. — *(DA)* Mr President, a month ago the EEC decided to impose a partial boycott on the Soviet Union. The intention was to punish the Soviets for the violations of human rights committed by the Polish Government. The public in Denmark were critical of the Danish Government for yielding to the wishes of the other EEC countries against their own convictions. For the sake of domestic peace within the Community the Danish Government gave its backing to the move, even though it did not accept that there was any basis for it in the Treaties. There is a tradition according to which Denmark and her nordic sister nations try to promote balanced détente throughout the world. It would therefore have been more natural for us if the violations of human rights within the western alliance had been examined together with the violations of human rights within the eastern alliance. I am thinking of the conditions in Turkey and Central America. As things turned out, however, the one-sided punitive measure directed at the east did not arouse any interest in our sister nations, especially Sweden and Norway. Instead, this move exemplified the way in which Denmark is slowly losing its nordic tradition and nordic partners, and this is a bitter state of affairs considering the solemn guarantees given to the Danish people that EEC membership would never extend as far as foreign policy.

On 16 April of this year, the Council took the new active EEC foreign policy one step further by issuing an order to its members to impose an embargo on Argentina. It might possibly be thought that this punishment of a government responsible for the most flagrant violations of human rights in modern times was the manifestation of a new EEC policy of conducting a balanced campaign for human rights wherever they

are violated. This, however, is not the case. It is not because of its crimes against humanity that the Argentine Government is being punished by the EEC. It is simply because it is preventing one of the EEC's largest Member States from maintaining its grip on the remains of an empire.

Mr President, whenever there is a discussion in Denmark on whether it would have been better to have a loose trading agreement with the EEC instead of firm membership, we are told that we would have been deprived of the influence we have at the conference table. This issue shows quite clearly that, for a small country, sitting at a conference table does not increase its influence: it reduces its independence.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Romualdi. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, listening to a lot of speeches today I had the impression that many of us have lost sight of the fact that the sole aim of us all — and commendably of the US Government too — in the Falklands, or Malvinas, Islands drama, the consequences of which may turn out to be unpredictably serious and far-reaching, must remain the search for a peaceful solution.

I do not intend, nor does time permit me, to recount the history of the Falklands. Furthermore, I could say nothing you do not already know or which could justify in any way their occupation by Argentine armed forces, even though there is no doubt that, geographically speaking, they are Argentine islands, conquered by virtue of Britain's gunboat policy, which now belongs to a bygone age, a left-over from colonialism, as the Argentines say, which is now completely absurd and unacceptable. Of course this does not suffice to justify an armed occupation, which we can only emphatically condemn in spite of the bonds of blood, culture and friendship tying us to the Argentine people. All the same, this does not prevent us from saying that some other sort of less impulsive reaction, less likely to endanger the general peace, on the part of the British government would have been more responsible.

The forty warships including two mighty aircraft-carriers and four ultra-modern atomic submarines which have set out from Britain for the open sea, to reconquer the Falklands, are both too much and too little. They are much more than is needed to win a war against the Argentine navy, and they are unfortunately much less than would be required to bring back the gunboat era, which has ceased to exist because it can no longer exist in the aftermath of a war which was won, but which has forced Europe to give up her ambitions of power.

And what is likely to happen now? Nothing tragic let us hope. We have stated on other occasions that the unity of the European Community is so important that

Romualdi

it is better to err united rather than go our separate ways. That is the case at present. Britain has taken the decisions it has taken, it has asked for Community solidarity, and we could not fail to give our unreserved support. But political solidarity and an arms embargo are one thing and economic sanctions are another. Unlike the former, economic sanctions are not measures which serve to encourage negotiations, as I have already pointed out; on the contrary, Mr Habsburg, they are only likely to aggravate the differences, make the Argentinian people refuse to yield and bolster the resolve of the rulers of that great country. Before such measures were taken, we should have thought twice, and may I add, it should be borne in mind that in spite of all the condemnations recorded, economic sanctions were taken neither against the Soviet Union at the time of the occupation of Afghanistan nor against the Soviet Union and the Polish government during the very serious crisis in Poland recently. What is the point of all this rash hastiness with Argentina now and all that circumspection with Russia before if we end up doing nothing about it, or rather we just go on unperturbed looking after our own interests in the gas pipeline business!

Before taking the grave decisions it had to take, the British Government called several extraordinary sessions of its own Parliament, and rightly so. Why didn't it call a similar extraordinary session of this House and ask us to express the solidarity our peoples feel? The end result would have been the same, the solidarity expressed and demonstrated by the Council and the Commission would have been just as real, but the European Parliament could have taken the opportunity of encouraging them to be firm in their moral and political condemnation of an unacceptable act of force and also warning them against countering it with another act of force, certainly more justifiable when looked at coldly in terms of international law but just as, if not more, outdated, alarming and dangerous politically. This could have been done not only with a view to reaching a peaceful solution which we all desire to a problem which has been dragging on for too long, but also for the sake of world security and peace, which certain people — and Mr Segre is well aware of this — have something to gain in upsetting.

President. — I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, I had hoped not to have to make this comment: that the House must now see, and her own group will notice, why Lady Castle gets excluded from joint talks and consultations. We heard from her and from Mr Lomas a sad and petty exercise in how to undermine the Community solidarity, which they resent, how to denigrate and dishearten their own forces and how to give comfort to the enemies of peace and human rights.

(Applause)

The House should note how far they stand from the more solid views of their own party at home and how close the text they wanted lies to what the Argentine junta requires in respect of the British fleet.

(Cries of 'Hear, hear!')

In these few minutes let me identify the elements which we should hang onto here. First, let me assert clearly the principle which has now, through the joint Community action, been demonstrated to the whole world, that a blow against one of us is a blow against all, whether that blow be economic or military or political. We in Britain are intensely aware of what is being done by our partners to help us. It is the biggest boost the Community has yet received in the United Kingdom. The Community's supporters there are deeply impressed. Its critics, its enemies, for the present, are silenced. Is there talk of a *quid pro quo*? Well, it will come. Not on a trivial matter of internal policy but when the going gets rough for one or more of our partners, mugged or battered or threatened by outsiders, our solidarity too can be relied on.

Second, may I stress that a peaceful solution remains almost infinitely preferable to the military one which may yet be forced on us. That is because for the sake of our relations with South America, but even more for the sake of the islanders, we must look far beyond the removal of the Argentine troops, which is a prerequisite of any progress.

An insecure future is no use to anyone. How could any Falkland Islander see the world as he used to once blood has been spilled over or around his home? How can he be sure that he would even want to stay there? The need for a long-term settlement is evident. By definition, it must not only take account of the islanders' wishes, it must also be acceptable to the British and the Argentinian people alike and to the future interests in that region of all nations.

We believe and hope that this solution is not beyond the wit of man although it may indeed prove to be beyond the dictatorial bunch which seizes other people's territory by force and rules its own people by terror. We need agreement but it is inconceivable to this House — where it is almost impossible to move without falling over human rights — that the islanders, let alone the islands, should be in any way subjected to the attentions of the kind of regime which pulls out your finger-nails.

Third, we must remember with whom we are dealing. Something has been said about using only economic pressure — perhaps with the US joining in in time — to enforce compliance with the UN resolution. We believe that all possible pressure for a peaceful settlement must be maintained. But I would only comment that the present Argentine regime has not shown itself to understand anything but force and the arguments of those prepared to use it if necessary.

Fergusson

Lastly, I must refer to the Soviet Union's role in this affair, which has underlined once more how close the practices of Communism and that of Fascism really are! The disregard of human rights, the use of torture, the denial of the individual, the manipulation of the masses, the flouting of international obligations and the readiness to use military force to subject sovereign nations to their will. No wonder Moscow is now seen to stand after all behind the junta which, in other forums, it takes such pains publicly to denounce. I commend the joint amendment to this House.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Denis.

Mr Denis. — (FR) When listening to this debate one cannot avoid thinking that the present situation would not have arisen had the United Kingdom complied with the 1965 UN Resolution calling for settlement by negotiation of this problem of decolonization, if the United Kingdom had paid heed to the non-aligned countries' combined call for decolonization.

Our basic attitude has remained unchanged: we are in favour of a negotiated settlement of the conflict and against recourse to force. We have supported the democratic forces in the Argentine in their struggle against the military regime since 1976. We are not deaf to their cry of 'If the Falklands are Argentinian, so are those who have disappeared' as they fight together to ward off the threat of a British military adventure, and for freedom.

And now, after six years, some of you have woken up and begun talking about human rights! But who will believe that the issue is one of human rights rather than of the enormous economic, oil and strategic interests which General Haig has been discussing with his two faithful allies and friends, the intransigent Mrs Thatcher and the head of the junta, General Galtieri?

It is of particular gravity that the Community should have hastily applied sanctions which were absent following the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, the annexation of the Golan Heights by Israel and the invasion of Angola by the racist regime in Pretoria, and should have done so at the risk of endangering relations with the whole of Latin America, which supports the Argentine.

What is urgently needed in our view is a peaceful and negotiated settlement arrived at within the framework of the United Nations.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Calvez.

Mr Calvez. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the European Parliament has always opposed the use of force and the perpetration of *faits accomplis*, irrespective of author. The world is following with concern the efforts of the American Secretary of State to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict between the United Kingdom and the Argentine which poses a threat to world peace.

I believe that we have reason to be pleased at the swiftness and firmness with which the Community has responded. With the unanimous support of the Member States, it has imposed a total embargo on exports of arms and military equipment to the Argentine and banned imports from the Argentine.

But we all know that the effects of these measures will not be immediate, and a race against time has started to prevent a naval battle. What we are faced with today is essentially a political problem. It is not a question of the verbal condemnation of the flagrant violation of international law represented by the Argentinian armed intervention.

Resolution 502 of the Security Council calls for the cessation of hostilities, the withdrawal of the Argentine forces stationed on the Falklands and a peaceful solution to the conflict. No State has the right to take the law into its own hands. The violation of international laws is a reprehensible act which endangers peace. The situation is grave.

The primary task of the European Community should be to do its utmost to avoid an armed conflict. The some 1 800 Falkland Islanders too have a right to state their wishes. What are their wishes? Probably to remain British. Would it not be appropriate to ask them what their wishes are? This is not a new idea, but it is one means of settling the dispute, even if universal suffrage does have its imperfections.

There is no need to unsheathe one's sword to settle the conflict looming on the horizon. I believe that the common front adopted by the Europeans, and the efforts of the United States, must help to ensure that the British fleet does not become an instrument of war, to bring home to the whole world that the Argentine presence on the Falklands cannot be accepted as a *fait accompli*, and to Buenos Aires that the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Final Act at Helsinki cannot be trampled underfoot.

I hope that Parliament will vote unanimously in favour of our motion for a resolution.

President. — I call Mr Blaney.

Mr Blaney. — Mr President, I was impressed by Sir Henry Plumb's concern for the Falkland Islanders'

Blaney

right to self-determination and also his concern for the desperate effects of military rule on the islanders — again the Falkland Islanders.

I am an islander from Ireland. We do not have self-determination. Worse still we have partition. Further, we have military occupation and we have law and order maintained by the use of plastic bullets (of the British Army) to shoot our children and our women. These are the facts and these are the things that make hypocrisy of everything that has been said here today, although much might be said for the merits of the case being made by various speakers.

To me as an islander from Ireland who has been treated as we have been treated down the years and are still being treated, the solidarity that is talked about in this Parliament in this Community is really a laugh, a cynical laugh, a hypocritical laugh, when one looks at what is going on in an island only a few miles from Great Britain rather at the same time as concern is being expressed over the events on the Falkland Islands which are 7 000 to 8 000 miles away. I would ask whether they are more concerned about the minerals and the oil that may lie around it than they are about the islanders who are on it. These are the sentiments I must express here today when the political manoeuvre which has just been used shows that you are not even prepared to contest here in debate the urgency of banning the bullets which have killed our children as recently as last weekend. You are the people who talk so glibly and are listened to so avidly by so many people around the world about your concern for human rights. A basic human right has been denied in Ireland over the centuries, that of self-determination. We are occupied, we are partitioned and you are the people who are perpetrating it. Take your medicine when you are being given it! Criticism is something you do not usually take and cannot take.

This is the situation, Sir, and that is why I, as an Irishman, totally and absolutely disassociate myself from your solidarity effort on behalf of the Falkland Islands and of the efforts of the United Kingdom to re-establish the colonialism imposed on so many places down so many years.

(Mixed reactions)

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — It comes as no surprise to the people of Northern Ireland that the speaker who has just addressed the House would be backing up a fascist regime in this House today.

(Applause from certain quarters)

Let me put it clearly on the line. Three of my constituents during the last three days have been killed.

They have not been killed by plastic bullets shot by the security forces defending themselves against rioters. They have been shot by the lead bullet of the Irish Republican Army. They have been maimed and bombed by the acid bomb, by the booby trap, by the rockets of the Irish Republican Army. And where do they flee for safe sanctuary? The flee for safe sanctuary to that part of Ireland that Mr Blaney represents.

(Mixed reactions)

I must say in this House today that there is the right of self-determination in Northern Ireland. And I would remind the honourable Member that when his part of the country left the United Kingdom the Parliament of that part of the country agreed that border, ratified that border and also lodged that border in the League of Nations, so it is an international border not under threat at all but accepted by the free democratic vote of a so-called freely democratic parliament.

Let me say in this House today that the Falkland Islanders are British by choice and not by coercion — just like the people of Northern Ireland. But the jackboot of military coercion is now being applied by the Argentine to them. Their constitutional choice and liberties are being savagely trampled under foot by aggression reminiscent of the excesses of Hitler and of the Communist dictatorships of our day. This is something that no part of the free world can acquiesce in. We must act unitedly and with determination to defeat the wanton aggression undertaken against those who share the values of freedom and liberty. I, therefore, welcome the economic sanctions imposed by the EEC against the Argentine and I hope that the EEC will not waver in the commitment they have made.

I might add, as a representative from Northern Ireland, that the Northern Ireland people understand fully what the Falkland Islanders are going through. We have a country neighbour who in its constitution claims jurisdiction over us and would like to coerce us as well, but we in Ulster can still say to them 'No surrender'.

(Mixed reactions)

President. — I call Mr Kirkos.

Mr Kirkos. — *(GR)* Mr President, the Falklands issue is a classic case of force being used by one country to settle its disputes with another.

From this point of view, we condemn the step taken by the Argentine Government and are in favour of a negotiated peaceful solution, despite the fact that Argentina's claims to these islands are stronger than those invoked by the United Kingdom.

British foreign policy is the last which can invoke international law. It upheld the latter whenever it

Kirkos

served its colonialist interests, but flouted it or tolerated violations whenever it did not. Thus it was that they tolerated, indeed encouraged, its violation during the Cyprus affair when Turkish troops invaded the island and occupied 37% of its territory.

Today, with the sending of an armada to recover a remote colony, Britain is risking involvement in an armed conflict, the consequences of which are unforeseeable. On the other hand, it would be wrong to ignore the nature of the Argentine regime, a military dictatorship which has suppressed the rights of the people and embarked upon an adventure outside the country as a means of diverting the attention of the Argentine people and relieving the tense domestic situation.

President. — I call Mr Beyer de Ryke.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in addressing you in my personal capacity on the subject of the Falklands I cannot but think of the title of the book by Gonzague Saint-Brice 'La Nostalgie, camarades' and of what Peter Ustinov wrote this morning in 'Le Figaro': 'Who would have believed that in this nuclear age a British fleet would put out to sea like the caravels of Elisabeth I, who would have believed his eyes when seeing the President of the Argentine, surrounded by three officers and two bodyguards in gala dress of the Napoleonic period, announce the annexation of these islands?'

But this nostalgia hides a number of realities. The recovery of 'Las Malvinas' is something desired by all Argentines, not just by the supporters of the regime. Their claims to the islands are not without substance. However, it is equally true that an occupation, even an unlawful occupation, which lasts for a century and a half also gives certain rights. Although Argentina has contributed more than Britain to the development of the Falklands, which the British greatly neglected only to rediscover them at the time of this major dispute, it is clear that the wishes of the Falkland Islanders cannot be ignored. And one would have wished that British ministers, so anxious, it seems, to prevent any military intervention, had taken heed of the information which they received on the military preparations. They would then have doubtless been able, by sending reinforcements, to stop President Galtieri from allowing himself to be carried along by those who, in the words of Albert Camus, have more enthusiasm than wit.

However, intelligence and calculation, although open to dispute and disputed, are not lacking on either side. For the Argentine, behind the Falklands there lies the problem of the Beagle Channel and of dividing up all the riches of the Antarctic. (Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the United Kingdom's best ally in this instance is General Pinochet.) For the United Kingdom, on the other hand, there is the question of Gibraltar.

The economic situation of the Argentine is bad, that of the United Kingdom not good. President Galtieri and Mrs Thatcher have staked their political survival on the Falklands. But the real stakes are much higher and I believe that it is the United States that has understood that the confrontation could turn into a North-South conflict: Latin America against Europe, with the Soviet Union as an unwelcome participant. 'Up the Russians' was the chant heard on the stands at Buenos Aires the other day when the Soviet Union scored a goal against Argentina. This is not merely an anecdote. The Soviet Union is placing its bets, taking a gamble, and has a real chance of winning. I cannot but repeat the words of Churchill 'Jaw, jaw, jaw and not war, war', and will vote in support of measures which will help to ensure the success of the Haig mission and, consequently, against any taking of sides.

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (*GR*) Mr President, when considering the Falklands issue attention must be paid to the voice of the Communist Party of Great Britain, because it is not tainted by jingoism and is balanced and accurate. I read in the *Morning Star* that the Communist Party of Great Britain is seeking the recall of the British fleet and an end to the 200-mile total exclusion zone imposed by the British. The threat to peace resulting from the British Conservative Party's policy is immense and could spark off a general conflict, possibly leading to the use of nuclear weapons. Many governments have refused to support the outdated claim to sovereignty over the Falklands, which constitutes the main obstacle to agreement. Let the signal be heard throughout Britain for the recall of the Royal Navy to its base, the evacuation of the islands by the Argentine forces and settlement of the issue by means of negotiations through the intermediary of the United Nations.

President. — I call the Council.

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (*NL*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I think I may say that it would be difficult to overestimate the significance and seriousness of the debate which has taken place today. We have discussed a conflict between two States in which armed force has been used. The Falkland Islands have been occupied by military forces. One of the parties in the conflict is a Member State of the European Community and its elected representatives sit in this House. I mention this in order to show that this is a particularly important and serious debate. After the first world war the League of Nations, and after the second world war the United Nations Organization, were set up for the very purpose of preventing conflicts between countries and, should such conflicts nonetheless arise, of settling them by peaceful means. In 1982 we are faced with a

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conflict in which armed force is being used. The Falkland Islands have been occupied — as I have said — and no appeal has been made to the United Nations or the International Court of Justice to prevent or settle the conflict, at least not at the moment since it is not wished to settle the matter via the United Nations.

This is a military act, an act of aggression, and we must have the courage to examine this matter and all its consequences in this House. If I say that Argentina has committed an act of aggression I am not saying anything against the Argentine nation and certainly not Latin America. I merely wish to indicate that soldiers have occupied the Falkland Islands.

The United Nations acted immediately. Let us recall the events. The Security Council dealt with the problem directly and as you know the discussions in the Security Council led to the adoption of a resolution which has been mentioned and quoted again and again this afternoon: the now alas well-known Resolution 502. But I will just say this: this conflict is as yet limited. I do not want to paint an alarming picture, but it could turn into a confrontation between East and West which could again poison the international climate — heaven knows in what way. What has the European Economic Community done? The Security Council immediately turned its attention to the problem and the European Community reacted without delay. Not a moment has been lost. What means are available to the European Community? When I presented the Belgian Presidency's programme to this House at the end of January, I said that economic power was the only power the European Community possessed. Others then said it has moral power.

Good, I accept that the Community also has moral power, but I will not enlarge on that. You know how much weight moral power has in our world when it comes to armed conflicts and I in no way mean this ironically. You know that might is generally regarded as right. The only power we have is economic power and the Community therefore used the means at its disposal, i.e. economic measures.

A friend in need is a friend indeed. This is a Dutch saying which we have in my country. The United Kingdom is a fellow member of the European Community. We must now really show that we will stand by the United Kingdom in difficult times and help her with all the means available to the European Community. I was sorry to hear a Danish member say to the House yesterday that the Community just meant increasing dependence and the undermining of Member States' independence. What would Denmark do if it were attacked and had to stand completely alone? It is the European Community that gives us the power to defend ourselves when we can no longer do so on our own.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, how should we now react? We must show our solidarity and we have

done that. We shall of course follow the matter closely since we must now show — and I think that we have already done so by our Community action — that we are not only an economic Community but also that political cooperation can lead to action and that we can act together politically whenever it is required of us. We have done so in this conflict and we shall continue to do so. Incidentally — but I should not forgive myself if I did not do this — I wish to pay a tribute to a fellow minister who resigned as a result of these events, Lord Carrington. During the time that I had the privilege to work with him in efforts to solve European problems and to increase the importance of Europe I always found him an excellent colleague, full of understanding and a convinced European who tried with us to make Europe into one of the great realities of this century.

We have spoken of solutions. After the declaration of the Security Council, the American Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, immediately took the initiative in order to mediate between the United Kingdom and Argentina. It was asked outside this House why the Community did not take any initiative. We could not take any initiatives. It was primarily the task of the Security Council and a member of the Security Council. The United States immediately took the initiative in order to mediate between the United Kingdom and Argentina. How could the Community have taken any sort of initiative at that moment, assuming that she had been in a position to do so with the same authority and with the same power of conviction? I must stress that Secretary Haig is using all available means to reach a peaceful solution. We all know how often the word peace is misused in international politics. In this case serious attempts are being made to bring the conflict between the United Kingdom and Argentina to a peaceful conclusion.

I wish to reply personally to one of the members who spoke in this debate. Mr Segre asked why no new initiatives were being taken by the Community. Ladies and gentlemen, if the Community were to attempt to take a new political initiative now, it would undermine and weaken Secretary Haig's efforts and instead of contributing to a solution we would make it more difficult, perhaps impossible, to find one.

The Council hopes that Secretary Haig's efforts will meet with success. But if they fail, then you may rest assured that the Council, acting either as a Community institution or in political cooperation, will do everything in its power to develop new initiatives in order to find a solution and prevent the use of armed force. Perhaps I might illustrate this by a French saying: *On ne peut pas courir deux lièvres à la fois*. As long as Secretary of State Haig thinks his efforts are not in vain we must support him. This was mentioned explicitly yesterday in the press release from the meeting of the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs. We set great store by the fact that he has undertaken these efforts and we support him in his present efforts.

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Mr President, I will conclude. Let our European Community, acting either as the Community or in political cooperation, show its solidarity and present a united front. This is the power of the Community and also the best means of solving the conflict and, if I may use an English expression here, let us show our solidarity in these great difficulties 'for better or for worse'. One of the Member States is involved in conflict and we are bound together in the Community. Let us prove that these are no idle words, that this commitment does not only apply in good times, but that we will show our solidarity with one of our Member States, the United Kingdom, at this moment and in these great difficulties. Let us not abandon or undermine European unity and our solidarity with the United Kingdom for any reason. May this be the conclusion of today's debate in the European Parliament.

President. — The debate is closed. The motions for resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

8. *Statements by the Council and the Commission*
(continuation)

President. — The next item is the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission following the European Council meeting of 29 and 30 March 1982 in Brussels. The following oral questions are also included in the debate:

— oral question (Doc. 1-72/82), tabled by Mr Bange-mann on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, to the Council:

Subject: Monetary union and future of the CAP

Is the Council aware of the contradiction between the stated desire to abolish MCAs and the recent introduction of new negative MCAs?

Does the Council not believe that monetary union is vital to safeguard the CAP and therefore the Community?

Does the Council not fear that too low an increase in prices will lead to an increase in national aids?

Does the Council not consider that, without greater convergence between the budgetary, monetary, financial and economic policies of the Member States, every fixing of farm prices will continue to be unfair for some Member States?

— oral questions, tabled by Mr Hänsch and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, to the Council (Doc. 1-73/82) and the Commission (Doc. 1-74/82):

Subject: Interinstitutional agreements

— having regard to the European Parliament's resolutions of July 1981 on 'relations between

the European Parliament and the Council of the European Communities' (PE 67.024/fin.), on 'the right of legislative initiative and the role of the European Parliament in the legislative process of the Community' (PE 64.646/fin.) and on 'European Political Cooperation and the role of the European Parliament',

— having regard to the fact that in its resolution on relations between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Communities, Parliament called on the Commission and the Council to notify it of the action taken on this report by the end of 1981,

1. Can the Council/Commission say what measures it has taken to date?
2. Is the Council/Commission prepared to submit to Parliament, in implementation of its decisions of July 1981, concrete texts embodying the interinstitutional agreements proposed in the resolutions of July 1981?
3. Does the Council/Commission not consider that the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome would be an appropriate date on which to present such interinstitutional agreements proposed by Parliament and drawn up by the Commission?

— oral questions, tabled by Mr Rumor and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), to the Council (Doc. 1-76/82) and the Commission (Doc. 1-77/82):

Subject: Unification of the Community

— Whereas the European Parliament has taken the initiative in adopting a series of interinstitutional resolutions aimed at increasing the power of the European Communities to take decisions and action under the existing treaties,

— whereas one of those resolutions, on relations between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Communities,¹ adopted on 8 July 1981 calls on the Council to draw up a report before the end of 1981 on the measures taken on the basis of that report;

1. What steps has the Council/Commission taken to comply with the request made by Parliament in that resolution?
2. What specific measures is the Council/Commission prepared to take to promote unification of the Community along the lines of the various institutional resolutions adopted by Parliament?

— oral questions by Mr Fanti and others to the Commission (Doc. 1-135/82) and the Council (Doc. 1-136/82):

¹ Doc. PE 67.024/fin.

President

Subject: Restoring balance between the Community institutions and strengthening the powers of the European Parliament

Whereas there is an urgent need to restore balance between the Community institutions and to strengthen the powers of the European Parliament;

Whereas, in the resolutions adopted in July 1981, Parliament carried out a detailed appraisal of the various aspects of the institutional problem, while putting forward a whole range of practical proposals for improving inter-institutional relations and strengthening the role of the Community under the Treaties;

Whereas, in particular, in its resolution on relations between the European Parliament and the Council of the Community,¹ Parliament called on the Council and Commission to notify Parliament of the action taken on this report by the end of 1981;

1. What action has the Commission/Council so far taken on the proposals contained in the resolutions adopted by Parliament and, in particular on those² concerning relations between Parliament and the Commission/Council?
2. Is the Commission/Council prepared to open the conciliation procedure forthwith on the new inter-institutional agreements called for in these resolutions?

— oral question (Doc. 1-70/82) by Mrs De March and others to the Council:

Subject: Termination of the Community's association agreements with Turkey

In view of the serious attacks on human rights in Turkey highlighted, in particular, by the mockery of a trial in which the death sentence is being called for in respect of 52 trade unionists, does not the Council think that it should, as a matter of urgency, express its total disapproval of the regime established by the military junta by terminating the Community's association agreements with Turkey?

I call the Council.

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I can reply as follows to the question put by Mr Bangemann. The Council is aware of the difficulties which the absence of monetary union entails for Community agriculture. However, it does not believe that the plan to abolish monetary compensatory amounts is in conflict with

the recent introduction of new negative compensatory amounts. In fact, closer alignment of the Member States' budgetary, monetary, financial and economic policies would allow the Community agricultural policy to operate more smoothly. When fixing farm prices in the present situation the Council seeks to achieve a fair result for all Member States and tries, on the basis of talks which are at times long and difficult, to arrive at a general solution which as far as possible provides opportunities for the gradual abolition of monetary compensatory amounts, which is indeed one of the Council's aims. With regard to the fear expressed by the honourable Member that national support will be increased, I would point out that irrespective of the decisions on prices the Member States are still subject to the provisions of Articles 92 to 94 of the Treaty and that under the system established pursuant to these Articles it is the Commission's task to take the necessary measures.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I hope you will allow me to make a joint reply to the three questions put to the Council concerning its response to the resolutions which Parliament adopted in July 1981 on the basis of the reports by Mr Hansch and Mr Van Miert. Even during the meeting between the foreign affairs ministers of the Member States and Parliament's enlarged Bureau of 17 November 1981 my predecessor, Lord Carrington, referred to the Council's initial reaction to the resolutions. Discussions on these have since been actively pursued, and at the beginning of this month the Council was able to state its position on a large number of points raised therein. This position was set out in detail in a letter to your President, who I believe has since received it. I shall merely mention those points on which the Council has outlined its position and in which existing procedures have in some cases been re-affirmed, i.e. the explanation of the programme by the President-in-Office, oral and written questions, the Council President's participation in meetings of the parliamentary committees, the optional consultation of Parliament, the renewed consultation of Parliament, Articles 32 to 36 of Parliament's rules of procedure, the handling of Parliament's resolutions, and information for Parliament on the response made to its opinions. In my view the procedures decided upon or, if they are applied more effectively, the existing procedures could bring about a steady improvement in cooperation between our two institutions. The various other points touched upon in this resolution are being studied further. Meanwhile, on 17 December 1981, the Commission submitted proposals to the Council to improve the procedure for consultation between Parliament, the Council and the Commission. These are now being examined by the Council. On 18 February last year Parliament adopted a resolution concerning its role in negotiating and ratifying treaties of accession and other treaties and agreements between the Community and third countries. This is also being examined by the Council. The resolutions adopted by Parliament also refer to a number of budgetary questions which Parliament feels

¹ Doc. PE 67.024/fin.

² Doc. 1-216/81.

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ought really to be discussed by the three institutions, and such discussions have in fact started today. The resolution in the Hansch report also contains a number of suggestions concerning the Council's working methods. With regard to this the Council points to the conclusions of the European Council concerning the report of the 'Three wise men'. Lastly, various proposals have been submitted in connection with the German-Italian initiative, and these are being examined on the basis of the procedure agreed upon for examining the draft of the European Act. These are the Genscher-Colombo proposals. To conclude, Mr President, I would once again emphasize that the Council is making a real effort to achieve a lasting improvement in relations between our institutions, in particular with Parliament. As you know, Parliament has submitted numerous proposals to the Council which it has examined *en bloc* because the subject matter is in most cases related. The Council is also examining how dialogue with Parliament can be continued most effectively, from the point of view both of efforts to achieve optimum results with respect to the essence of the questions discussed and of the most suitable procedure for achieving such results.

(FR) I would like at the same time to reply to the oral question tabled by Mrs De March and others.

On the question of the possible termination of the EEC/Turkey association agreement, I would refer Members to the statement on Turkey which I made to this House during the debate of 10 March of this year in reply to a question by Mr Wurtz.

On the broader issue of present relations between the Community and Turkey, I would remind you of the statement made before you this morning by Mr Martens, President of the Council, on the results of the latest meeting of the Heads of State or Government held in Brussels on 29 and 30 March last, during which the Turkish question was discussed. On that occasion I reported on my visit to Ankara on 19 March in accordance with the mandate conferred on me by the foreign affairs ministers of the Ten on 23 February.

When I met the representatives of the Turkish Government, I was at pains to point out the grave concern felt by the Ten on the problem of respect for human rights in Turkey and underlined the fact that Turkey should return to democracy as soon as possible, which means, in particular, that those who have been arrested because of their opinions or for trade union activities must be freed and that martial law must be abolished.

The Turkish representatives assured me that Turkey would return to democracy within two years at the latest. They stated that the referendum on the drafting of a democratic constitution would be held in November 1982, and elections would be held in autumn 1983 or at the latest in spring 1984.

The Council is continuing to follow events in Turkey with the utmost concern. As it has already stated, the Council expects that my recent visit to Ankara will help towards achieving the above aims, to which the Ten attach very great importance.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) Like the President-in-Office of the Council, I trust you will allow me to make a joint reply to three questions on institutional matters, that is the questions by Messrs Hänsch, Rumor and Fanti, since they relate to the same subject. Perhaps I might begin by reminding the House that at the end of last year, in October, the Commission submitted to Parliament an outline document which contained a detailed account of relations between the institutions and in which a positive response was made to the suggestions set out in the motions for resolutions tabled by Messrs Hänsch and van Miert in the July debate. Secondly, I would point out, as the President-in-Office of the Council has just done, that in December last year the Commission submitted a proposal to the Council and Parliament concerning the broadening, and also the improvement of the consultation procedure in the field of legislation. Both in our document of October and in our proposal concerning the improvement and broadening of the consultation procedure considerable account was taken of the wishes expressed by Parliament. Mr President, I would now like to outline briefly the Commission's position concerning a number of important points. Firstly, Parliament's own initiatives; I have already stated in discussions on this matter — and I shall repeat my remarks now — that the Commission welcomes positive initiatives and is prepared to recognize their true merits and thus evaluate them as constructively as possible. In practice this will mean that in very many cases the Commission will be submitting concrete and formal proposals on these matters. However, you will forgive me for pointing out that this naturally cannot mean that the Commission will be able to abandon its own prerogatives with regard to these initiatives.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the Commission's response to Parliament's opinions on Commission proposals, a subject which has been discussed repeatedly during recent plenary sessions and concerning which I stated this week that I think it likely that we shall be able to start discussions on the procedure to be adopted with the Bureau.

The 'suite à donner' issue is developing into a very lively political debate between the Commission and Parliament which I personally welcome. As far as the proposals to amend the Commission proposals are concerned, the Commission has recently stated that it is willing to accept some of the amendments and it is clear that the rules of procedure adopted by Parlia-

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ment last year, especially Article 32 *et seq.*, are an important and — in the eyes of the Commission as a whole — constructive contribution to discussions on these proposals between Parliament and the Commission. Here too, of course, the Commission will want to maintain its responsibilities with regard to legislation, as indeed it must, and must therefore remain free to assess the amendments adopted.

As far as information for Parliament and its involvement are concerned, the Commission's attitude has been completely open and positive. On a previous occasion I said that the Commission was prepared, when drawing up major proposals, to take account of Parliament's 'mood', and I have no doubt that the Commission will adhere to this. The members of this House and yourself, Mr President, cannot have failed to notice that members of the Commission increasingly attend meetings of your Parliamentary committees to explain the Commission's actions and policy plans. We feel this is a good way of carrying on dialogue with Parliament in the practical work of legislation.

Mr President, the central theme of the reports by Messr Hänsch and van Miert and also on the three questions under discussion here today, is the conclusion of agreements between the institutions. The Commission believes that such agreements can and should be concluded, and that is why the Commission submitted the formal proposal I mentioned to the Council and Parliament last December. The Commission can only hope, in view also of the information just given by the President-in-Office of the Council, that the Council's handling of this proposal will soon result in tripartite discussions between the Council, Parliament and the Commission in order to deal with the proposal and have it adopted in the near future. I believe that if the three institutions are prepared to consider the new proposals seriously and to act upon them Parliament could acquire real influence in the field of legislation, and that is precisely the aim of the Commission's proposal.

Finally, a comment on the role of Parliament in the negotiating and conclusion of trade agreements and accession treaties. The Commission has repeatedly stated that it is prepared to come to an agreement with Parliament and the Council on the practical improvement of the present procedures, as a result of which Parliament may be more directly involved in the drafting and conclusion of trade agreements. In the very near future the Commission will also make a statement on this to the two other institutions. Three points will be dealt with. Firstly, the extension of the Luns/Westerterp procedure to cover multilateral trade agreements and agreements in all fields. Secondly, the consultation of Parliament on agreements following their signing. And thirdly, if Parliament rejects an agreement by a sizeable majority, the Council would be prepared to engage in political dialogue with Parliament before the agreement is finally adopted.

Mr President, that is how the Commission has reacted or will in the near future react to the debate on the institutions held by the House last year. I would say in conclusion that this by no means marks the end of the Commission's efforts; indeed, it is a point of departure for further practical improvement in relations between the institutions and Parliament's position in those relations.

IN THE CHAIR: MR MØLLER

Vice-President

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Van den Heuvel. — (NL) Mr President, once again the outcome of the latest Council meeting was a great disappointment to the Socialist Group. The story is slowly becoming all too familiar.

A few months ago the Council was unable to resolve the problem of the British contribution, farm prices and surpluses. Following a pattern which we are gradually getting to know, the Council of heads of State or government referred these problems to the normal Council of foreign affairs ministers, who were urgently requested to seek a solution. However, as we might perhaps have expected, this was also unable to get Europe out of trouble. The guarded optimism shown by the President-in-Office of the Council this morning cannot hide the fact that at the Council meeting of 29 and 30 March a solution was once again deferred.

This further failure is a great disappointment to us socialists because unless the Community's budgetary problems are resolved, it will be impossible to tackle the problem of unemployment in the Community, a problem which — and here I quote the President-in-Office of the Council — may become socially intolerable, especially for the young. That is indeed so, Mr President, but I would add that it would also be intolerable for women. The vast majority of young people now out of work are girls.

There is perhaps one encouraging development, and that is the Council's decision to devote a special meeting to unemployment, during which special measures will have to be worked out to improve the employment situation. But if this meeting is to have any hope of success, it must be adequately prepared. I cannot stress this point too strongly. We must not allow another mammoth session to be announced with great ceremony by the President-in-Office of the Council only to let it turn into a complete fiasco as happened last

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time, mainly because of lack of preparation of the agenda.

At the fourth conference of the European Trade Union Confederation now in progress in The Hague, unemployment is a central issue. European workers are looking expectantly to the Community, but sadly Mr Mitterrand's proposal of a few months ago and the idea of the '*espace social europeen*' have not been received very enthusiastically by his counterparts in the Ten — not so far, at least. The special Council meeting on unemployment must examine this proposal seriously. I repeat, European workers expect more from the Ten than rhetoric. They want work and social justice. That is precisely what the European Trade Union Confederation in The Hague is discussing today. We expect the Community to work out joint solutions, since isolated national measures cannot right our difficulties. I include among these the measures decided upon by the Council in vague terms as an initial step and which, it must be assumed, imply the separate development of special programmes for the young. Europe must fulfil the expectations of the majority of the population — and that is still the workers.

With regard to the European Monetary Fund, the only comment by the Council on the EMS was that it has worked satisfactorily for the first three years. What was not pointed out was that the second phase of the EMS should have begun in March 1981. How long will it take before the Member States reach political agreement on this second phase so that there is a firmer basis for improving the European economy? The Council's statement made no reference to the more effective use of the ECU on the money market. We hope that other countries will soon join the EMS and thus strengthen it both internally and externally. Let us be honest, there are no technical problems preventing the extension of the EMS; progress is impeded solely by a lack of political will.

My Group shares the Council's concern about the situation in the Middle East. We are forced to note with dismay that the Begin government is showing no sign of making an all-out effort to achieve a peaceful solution, a solution which, as expressed in the declaration of Venice, would open the way to recognition of Israel's right of existence while taking account of the political aspirations of the Palestinians.

In our view the comments of the President-in-Office of the Council on Turkey are totally inadequate in view of the seriousness of the situation. Parliament has issued clear statements on developments in that country on several occasions. Progress towards a return to democracy in Turkey, to which the President-in-Office referred, is far from satisfactory — to put it mildly. I found the replies which Mr Tindemans just gave to the oral question by Mrs De March equally unsatisfactory. Clear proof of the present situation in Turkey is provided, among other things, by the arrest of the former

Prime Minister, Mr Ecevit, and a large number of other people including trade union members and members of the peace movement. Mr Tindemans also drew attention to this, but I very much hope that he will do more than in the past to take stringent measures to apply pressure on the Turkish government.

As far as relations between the Community and the United States are concerned, I am prepared to join the President-in-Office of the Council in emphasizing the importance of dialogue between these two parties, but I wonder whether Mr Tindemans' statement that Europe was sympathetic to US policy on Central America represents an effective contribution to such dialogue. I don't know on whose behalf he made this statement — he was President-in-Office of the Council at that time also.

The Socialist Group has no reason at all to keep quiet on the situation in Afghanistan or Poland, nor to deny that the situation in those countries poses a serious threat to international security. We have repeatedly maintained that the Soviet Union's behaviour in those countries should be roundly condemned. Nonetheless — and we have also stressed this point on a number of occasions — we believe that Europe must continue with its policy of detente. It is particularly unfortunate that as a result of these events, nothing has so far been achieved by the Conference on Security and cooperation in Madrid. But we must do our utmost to continue and intensify East-West dialogue. The talks due to be held between Reagan and Brezhnev offer some cause for hope in this field.

Mr President, our aim is to halt the siting of further nuclear weapons in Europe, a development which must be seen as an escalation of the arms race. Lest there be any misunderstanding, I am referring to the siting of weapons on both sides. The Community must continue to strive for detente for the sake of peace primarily because the people of the world and of Europe, on whose behalf we are working here, must not be given any reason to believe that in a world where people are dying of hunger every day so much is being spent on armaments. I hope, Mr President, that the Council will be particularly mindful of this need.

President. — The agreement with the staff committee is that today's sitting should close at 9 p.m. This debate is to be followed by the debate on the visit which was to have been made by a delegation of the European Parliament to Pakistan. I propose that the speaking time for that item be fixed as follows: 5 minutes for each group and a total of 5 minutes for the Non-attached Members.

Since there are no objections that is approved.

Question Time will therefore start at 7.45 p.m.

We now continue the debate. I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Croux. — (NL) Mr President, on behalf of the European People's Party I would like to comment on the statements made by the President-in-Office of the Council and on the report he presented this morning. If I were to summarize our feelings, I would say that President Wilfried Martens has performed a difficult task well. Indeed, he had a very difficult job to do, but he tackled it most successfully. Why the difficulty? Because the results of the Council meeting were a disappointment, at least for us, and this was certainly the case after the communiqué was issued; our disappointment has now been tempered somewhat by the explanations of President Martens. Indeed, the Council carefully avoided the difficult problems now facing the Community, and that is all the more unacceptable at a time when the Community is going through a serious crisis. The problem of the mandate has not been dealt with, the question of the British contribution has been deferred, etc.

Secondly — and there is a danger that this is becoming a habit — the Council has been making fine-sounding declarations, but has not come up with any practical and concrete programmes of action. Perhaps that is not entirely its role — and I shall return to that in a moment — but its declarations have been much too vague and sweeping. While the Council in its communiqué said that unemployment should be tackled more vigorously and that unemployed young people should be trained, the Commission, through Mr Ortoli, pointed out discreetly but very clearly that the Commission had long been submitting concrete proposals for action programmes, as had Parliament, but that the Council had never paid sufficient heed to them.

The third thing which disappointed us, although our feelings are mixed, concerns the European Foundation, and I now address the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Tindemans, since this must be very dear to his heart. Although the Foundation came into being as a result of an idea which he expressed in his report on European Union of 1975, it is not sufficiently European, being too inter-governmental. My colleague, Mr Pedini, will take up this point in a moment.

What gives us cause for a certain amount of satisfaction and optimism is attitudes to political cooperation. History has its moments of drama, and a few days after the Council declarations the Falkland's crisis erupted and provided proof — as has been abundantly emphasized today — that rapid joint action can be taken. I would like briefly to comment in passing on this, Mr President. Some people have said that Europe's solidarity which has come to the fore on this issue should not be a one-sided affair, in other words if Europe shows solidarity with the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom is expected to show solidarity with Europe, also when Europe is in trouble. We believe that there should be no confusion between financial and economic problems on the one hand and, on the other, problems which are far more deeply

bound up with important human, moral and political issues which are characteristic of the Community and which also affect world peace in general. We certainly want to avoid doing this, but I would like to say that while we accept that financial and economic problems are on a different level from the fundamental problems I have just outlined, we do feel that these fundamental problems serve as a basis for action in the economic and financial spheres. That is the history of the European Community. The Community's founding fathers were concerned not so much with financial and economic problems as with solidarity and individual and human values in Europe. Their actions stemmed from this basis. That's how it was yesterday, that is how it must be tomorrow, and that is how it must be today. We should appeal to all those in responsible positions in government, as well as those who meet in the Council, to remember this. I have said that President Martens has carried out a difficult task well, and I have also said how difficult it was.

I would now like to make a few very brief remarks on his statement. I shall deal firstly with the institutions, secondly with economic affairs and thirdly with political affairs. With regard to the institutions, President Martens dwelt at length on the Council's position, but we are wondering what in fact the Council's position is. What is the purpose of holding a Council meeting like the one held in Brussels last month, if so little comes out of it? Even more importantly, what is the Council's legitimacy if it does not apply what has been said since 1974, namely that it would play an important part in Europe's development? I would just like to quote what the President-in-Office, Mr Tindemans, wrote about this in 1975. I quote from the French text which I have here before me: *Et, dans ce cadre, les chefs du gouvernement utilisent collectivement l'autorité dont ils disposent sur le plan national pour donner, au sein du Conseil européen, l'impulsion nécessaire à la construction européenne et rechercher ensemble l'accord politique qui permette de maintenir, malgré les difficultés, une progression dynamique.*

It is not enough to give guidelines in an academic spirit: they should help to create a policy, a political strategy, with objectives backed by political instruments.

For us, progress implies political action aimed at the building of Europe. I do not have to remind President Tindemans of this. His words are of great historic importance. I repeat them only for the sake of public opinion, the Council and for Parliament. New initiatives are being discussed at the moment. As everyone must know by now, the Cercle Chateaubriand has come up with some new ideas concerning the Council. These will be discussed in detail in the coming weeks and months. We are following all these developments with great interest, for it is our wish and intention that the Christian-Democrats, that is the European People's Party, should initiate new measures aimed at

Croux

European union in the second phase of the European mandate of this directly elected House.

My second point concerns the economic sphere, and I would like to mention the measures announced to combat unemployment. Unemployment among young people is of particular concern. Five million Europeans under the age of 25 are out of work. My colleague, Mr Brok, will discuss this topic in further detail, and I shall not dwell on it here. I would just like to make one comment: when we observe the same phenomena of unemployment and crisis in all Member States, regardless of the economic policies pursued, when we listen to the debate on inflation versus deflation, increased supply versus increased demand and so on, when we ask ourselves how can we reconcile our concern for social well-being and solidarity with our concern for individual incomes, we wonder whether sufficient thought is being given to the future. Surely the future of Europe's youth deserves a higher priority in the scale of values determining social and economic policies?

Thirdly, political cooperation, in which important issues are at stake. We are pleased about what happened a few days later in connection with the Falkland Islands and we feel that the time has come, partly because of the Falkland crisis, for the Community — and that includes Parliament — to give greater consideration and adopt a more consistent approach to our position in the world.

All too often we project national party-political conflicts on a worldwide geopolitical scale. Of course, that is basically wrong and leads us nowhere, as far as Europe's role in the world is concerned. We must once again consider our principles, our respect for the individual, the safeguarding of human rights under all circumstances and respect for social justice, since peace is impossible unless social justice is secured. I think the following is a good analysis of what is going on in the world: too few of us in this European oasis realize that outside our small Community 133 armed conflicts, in some cases bloody wars, have taken place since the Second World War and that the Third World also spends large amounts on armaments. We should devise our own European approach to this problem, and I believe that our policies should be considered in the light of the crises we have witnessed in recent times. We expect, and have a right to expect, that the European Council — as well as the Council of Europe and of the foreign affairs ministers meeting in political cooperation — will come up with measures in which Parliament can participate.

President. — I call Mr Fernandez.

Mr Fernandez. — *(FR)* Mr President, since Mrs De March who was to put an oral question on Turkey is not here, I would like to ask you what progress made

in that country justifies your expressing confidence on your return from Ankara. Did your stop in Ankara do anything to alter the situation there, the arbitrary arrests, the torture, the muzzling of the press, lawyers and trade unions, the dissolution of political parties and the imprisonment of their leaders? The answer is no! There is not the slightest sign of any liberalization, on the contrary. As a culminating insult to your visit Mr President, Mr Ecevit has been thrown into jail once more for having dared to express a few ideas in public.

Mr President, we can only note that all you have brought back from Turkey is vague promises applying what is more, to two years time! That is why we consider it necessary and urgent for the EEC-Turkey association to be suspended, as you are called on to do moreover by the resolution approved recently by this House at the instigation of the Communist group.

This House has devoted a considerable number of hours to various countries in Europe and Asia. The Turkish issue, which has been avoided and sidestepped today, really goes beyond what is bearable. We consider that this is causing the Community to lose all its credibility in the human rights field.

In other areas of international politics, Europe doesn't come out any better. When children are fired upon by the army in territories occupied by Israel, it is no mere friendly scrap, Mr President. Europe has a duty to express a firm condemnation, and not simply make a declaration laying the blame on both assailants and victims. Europe's reputation is hardly enhanced by such behaviour.

Nor can we pass over the European Council's silence on two issues where Europe has special responsibilities. The first relates to the North-South negotiations since Cancun. They have still not begun this year, owing in particular to moves by the United States. It is up to the EEC to act firmly and perseveringly. The European Council should have made a clear declaration on the matter. The second issue relates to South Africa, with its apartheid regime, the numerous aggressions it has perpetrated and its occupation of Namibia in violation of United Nations decisions. The EEC, which prides itself in having achieved a model of cooperation with the developing countries, cannot allow such obstacles to delay Namibia's independence. We consider that the European Council should have called for the speedy application of United Nations Resolution 435.

To conclude, Mr President, we are compelled to note that your attitude with regard to cooperation and human rights is not impartial, but discriminatory. The drama facing the Turkish people cannot be swept under the table, and Europe must not blemish her honour by hiding the truth!

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Mr President, we have heard plenty — especially from Mrs Van den Heuvel and Mr Croux — about what used to be known as the summit meeting and which, since the end of 1974, has become institutionalized as the European Council, an institution which I am almost tempted to refer to as a *perpetuum immobile* and which has turned into a para-Treaty institution — or perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a praeter-Treaty institution. I am pleased to see that Mr Croux is still here in the Chamber, because he can at least listen to what I have to say, which is more than can be said for Mrs Van den Heuvel. It does seem to have become a habit among certain ladies to turn up to speak but not to stay to listen to what others have to say, and that, in my opinion, is a bad thing, Mr President. So I am pleased that Mr Croux is still here, because it means that I can at least tell him that I agree with a great deal of what he said.

There is one point I should like to make following on from a rather light-hearted remark made by Mr Martens, who said that we should not always expect great things of the European Council on the grounds that it was required to meet regularly. As we say in the Dutch vernacular: 'Why not have another bit of what you fancy?' Of course, you could approach things from the other angle and begin by saying that the European Council should only be held if . . . and I am very pleased to see Mr Tindemans nodding at this suggestion. It all depends on what approach you adopt. I should like to ask Mr Tindemans whether it would not perhaps be better to hold a meeting of the European Council only once a year or at most twice a year, because then each of the two Member States holding the Presidency of the Council could organize one meeting of the European Council. My preference would be for the spring and autumn, because then we could take a look forward at coming events and review what has happened throughout the year. We should then perhaps be getting a little closer to the kind of general policy guidance which the Council is in favour of. After all, it is impossible to have a general stock-taking exercise three times a year. The only definite thing to come out of the Council is the European Foundation.

But — and here I should like to take up a point made by Mr Croux — is it not a little odd that we should be footing the bill for this inter-governmental institution? That is, after all, what it boils down to, at least to a great extent. Where is the rhyme or reason in that? Would it not have been better to have based this new institution on Article 235, in which case Mr Tindemans' brainchild would have been imbued with rather more Community spirit? As it is, the European Foundation is something of a bastard child of the Member States. In most cases, those who conceive a child are responsible for paying for its upkeep, but in this case, the institution has been conceived by others and we are footing the bill — a kind of surrogate maternal situation.

The question now is whether the European Foundation will bring Europe closer to the man-in-the-street. Will it not in fact be an elitist, cultural institution? This week we have made some progress on the Euroclock and a Europassport is now in draft. Before long we shall have Europost, Euromoney, Euro-driving licences, a Eurotunnel and perhaps one day even a Euro-marriage licence. Perhaps the upshot of all this will be Eurocitizens.

And, of course, let us not forget the Spaniards and the Portuguese. The accession of these two countries is an important matter, especially with a view to the next direct elections in 1984. But the Spaniards and the Portuguese themselves should be given a better chance to work towards this end, and it is with that thought in mind that I should like to ask Mr Tindemans once again, as a matter of urgency, what date has been pencilled in for accession.

We have heard quite enough about what the Council has failed to achieve, and I have nothing to add on that score.

A reasonable solution to the British question cannot be found by whittling away at the common agricultural policy. Any such solution must be part and parcel of new policy sectors, such as a clear policy on energy and research. Can there be anyone, Mr President, who is not worried about the employment situation and who is not concerned about the terrible plight of 10 million jobless, half of those young people? The pundits all agree that the unemployment situation may even be exacerbated by the introduction of computers and automation, and that view is shared by the current Dutch Prime Minister. So prospects at the moment are poor — at any rate, certainly not rosy. And now Mrs Van den Heuvel has got up and asked the trade unions — and it is something I have always stressed too — what they intend to do at European level. Fortunately, something is now being done, judging by the conference in The Hague. There is general agreement that problems — be they agriculture, energy or employment — can only be solved on an international basis. Any schoolboy will tell you that, if the Germans continue to work a 40-hour week, and if we reduce working time to 39 hours, the inevitable result will be factory closures on one side of the border.

I am drawing to a close, Mr President, the Socialists are very much in favour of a 'social space'. In pre-Mitterand days, they were very much opposed to a 'legal space' as proposed by the government. To end on a note of harmony, Mr President, I should like to say on behalf of my colleagues from the Liberal Group that we are so convinced of the need for harmony that we believe there is a need for both a social space to tackle the unemployment problem and a legal space to tackle terrorism in the interests of Europe as a whole.

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Lalor. — Mr President, it is rather difficult to follow such an entertaining, informative and harmonious contribution as we have just had from Mr Berkhouwer. All too often I feel that we merely pay lip-service to the conclusions of the proceedings of the European Council. I have examined the Presidency's conclusions and while the agreed and negotiated text covers a large area of Community activity, I feel that the final response to the serious problems facing the Community is rather inadequate.

In particular I feel that the response to the serious decline of farm incomes and the need for realistic farm prices falls, of course, far short of requirements and merits a far more detailed examination than appears in the Council's conclusions. In fact the only direct reference to agriculture is contained in the section dealing with policies within the Community. Even then, the significance of the Community's only real policy, namely the common agricultural policy, is not rated worthy of particular attention. Instead the Council states — and I quote 'The industrial, energy and research policies and the agricultural policy are amongst those where the Community dimension could make the greatest contribution'.

The conclusions go on to say that the Commission has been asked to make proposals to reinforce these policies and that a report should be drawn up for the Council meeting at the end of the year. There is absolutely no indication as to the direction in which these proposals should go, with our farmers forced into a limbo as a consequence of the fact that no agricultural prices have been fixed for the current farming year. I should like to know how agricultural guidelines can be realistically proposed. What is to be the basis of the Commission's proposals for agriculture? Is it to be the out-of-date price agreements for the farming year 1980-81?

In this regard I listened today to my friend Sir Henry Plumb expressing his appreciation of the solidarity and the support that Britain has received from the other nine members of the Community. He drew attention to the fact that in this our silver jubilee year the show of solidarity was outstandingly successful and went on to say that Britain will be consulting her colleagues throughout this affair. Let me express the hope that when the Prime Minister gets round again to consulting with her colleagues on this affair she may turn her attention to that solidarity and follow that expression of solidarity by showing some little 'give' in relation to resolving the problems that she herself has created over the last couple of years.

Now, I want to join with Sir Henry Plumb in expressing regret at the enforced resignation of Lord Carrington who had given such great service to the Council, as Mr Tindemans said a while ago. We have in my group frequently drawn attention to the need to take immediate action to resolve the unemployment problem. Such action must take particular account of the

very high number of unemployed young people in our Community. The number of young people, proportionately, in Ireland is the highest in the Community and we are very concerned that the Community should define its social policy in terms of an employment policy.

The Council calls for specific quick-action measures in response to the gravity of the unemployment situation. We have known for several years that unemployment was becoming a major crisis in the Community yet the reality of the situation is that in the past the Council has failed to come to terms at all with it — there are almost three times the number of people unemployed in the Member States as there are inhabitants of my country. Yet only now are we calling for specific quick-action measures.

The Council has now requested that Member States should take measures concerning more particularly the vocational training of young people. To this I give my wholehearted support. But it is necessary to issue a warning against overoptimism about the final effects of vocational training if the training undertaken does not lead to permanent jobs. Quick-acting measures must seek to provide appropriate long-term employment.

Finally I want to join with my colleague Mrs Ewing in expressing our regret that no Council action whatsoever has been taken with a view to a fisheries policy. I hope that the House will cooperate with me in similar situations.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Pannella. — (FR) Mr President, could I be so immodest and naive as to think that I may be heeded by the Council, heeded and not simply heard, in the 160 seconds granted to me? Hardly Mr President, as moreover I have no backing and there is no reason for me to hope that the Council or even the Commission may give my arguments any consideration.

I am afraid that the reports we have been listening to once more show a frightening lack of foresight and forethought in Community policy.

There is not a word, Mr President, about the decimation and extermination by famine in the world! And why not? Because the Council will not even discuss the subject, thus willingly putting up with the Commission's obstructivism in the House as it has been doing ever since the arrival of the new Member of the Commission.

I have one more comment to make. Mr Tindemans told us he had been listened to during his trip to Tur-

Pannella

key. Does he deserve my compliments if a few hours after he left, the Junta further toughened its savage policy in respect of one of the leaders in that country who had unwisely thought probably foolishly for six months that he could use the junta to get back into power?

Mr President, I notice that there is a total disregard and apathy concerning the holocaust of our times. That is why I must end by saying that the only significant point I saw in the Council's statement was its all-too-elegant silence on this issue.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to say how much I appreciate the fact that the Belgian Prime Minister, Mr Martens, is with us today in his capacity as President-in-Office of the Council. He is thereby continuing and strengthening the initiative taken by Mrs Thatcher in January.

Mr President, the recent meeting of the European Council was hardly characterized by agreement on possible solutions, to say nothing of decisions reflecting a new sense of dynamism within the Community. The mandate of 30 May, the issue of agricultural prices, the British contribution to the budget, the steadily increasing rate of unemployment, the impending trade conflicts with the USA and Japan, the political tension in Central America, the Falkland Islands and Poland were all discussed, but solutions were pretty much conspicuous by their absence. To my mind, the problem with the European Council is the fact that the necessary range of instruments is not available, in addition to which there is perhaps insufficient political will and 'national solutions' tend to dominate. In my view, the central problem is the lack of a fresh sense of European impetus to get the train back onto the rails. The only positive aspect appears to be the fact that the Community has not fallen apart, but not much more than that.

How long can this kind of thing go on? To be sure, we are going to get a report on investment as an economic catalyst, and there is going to be a report dealing with the problem of interest rates; thought is also being given once again to the convening of a new Jumbo Council, but I would say that, without clear and specific proposals on the part of the Commission and in the absence of a mandate from the Member States, there is not very much point in all this. The sick man of Europe is not going to be restored to health again by the application of a piece of sticking plaster here and an aspirin there.

We now have the Versailles summit in June to look forward to, and I should like to ask Mr Tindemans what European ideas will be in the forefront there. It seems to me, after all, that if we in Europe are tending

more and more to stress the need to adopt a more independent stance *vis-à-vis* the United States — which does not need to be a bad thing in itself — an absolute *sine qua non* must be that Europe itself should exhibit a greater sense of unity and dynamism. The fact is that, if Chancellor Schmidt or President Mitterrand visit President Reagan, their complaints about American monetary policy are listened to politely, but no real notice is taken of them. The result is that these heads of State — who, after all, wield a good deal of power — return empty-handed, which just goes to show that the individual approach is doomed to failure. The Community as such is clearly in a more powerful position because the fact is that we can achieve results, but only if we adopt a joint approach. The same applies to our relations with Japan. Incidentally, the links between European political cooperation and the substance of the Treaties of Rome are becoming increasingly clear, including in this respect. That point applies to our interests in the Middle East, our energy interests and our political interests. It also applies to Central America, because what is at stake there is our relations with the United States.

Allow me at this juncture to say a few words about Turkey. On this point, the European Council made a clearer pronouncement than has been the case so far, and that is something I welcome. What is required is a return to democracy and respect for human rights. But I should also like to urge Mr Tindemans to make the point that the process must also involve the release of all political prisoners — including many trade union officials — and the termination of the state of emergency. The European Community would be well advised to exert all the economic and political pressure at its disposal towards this end.

Mr President, for the sake of brevity, I should just like to make the point that I go along with what Mr Dankert had to say about Pakistan and with what Mr Tindemans said about the Falkland Islands and the conflict with Argentina.

President. — I call Mr Didò.

Mr Didò. — (IT) Mr President, it is certainly worthy of note that the President-in-Office of the Council should have come to this House, for the second time, now, to inform us of progress made in the European Council meeting, even though such visits are likely to turn into another formality with little real effect on the overall decision-making capacity of Community institutions now that steadily worsening paralysis has set in.

I also understand President Martens' caution when he expresses a moderately positive assessment of this Council. Moreover, an evaluation of this sort could be assented to if things were running smoothly and normally within and without the Community in the

Didò

economic, social and political spheres. We all know however that this is not the case, however the situation is looked at. While admittedly we cannot expect earth-shaking decisions to be taken at every European Council meeting, as Commission Member Ortoli emphasized, the extreme gravity of the present situation in particular in the social and internal policy fields owing to the frightening increase in unemployment, justified our expecting much more than what has come out of it, which amounts practically to complete failure.

This situation, with its reports of dramatic problems, and the fact that real decisions needed by the end of this year on a series of issues, not the least important being the finalization of the monetary system, are being deferred is frankly unacceptable and certainly does not justify even a moderately positive assessment. We repeat that this sort of behaviour from governments is absolutely unacceptable.

The problem of unemployment which I would like to consider for a moment, cannot be shelved any longer. It calls for the speedy working out of a European employment plan, based on interrelated, concurrent measures involving the abandonment of restrictive monetary and credit policies, the preparation of a qualitatively different economic development plan, backed up as I said by common policies, the implementation of shortened working hours and the reform of the labour market. There is a lot of discussion of a boost in investments and an increase in productivity to beat international competition, but we must find the courage to declare that every increase in productivity in a restructured industry means that hundreds of thousands of workers are replaced by machines. It is therefore up to Member States and the Community itself to guarantee jobs for the unemployed, whose wasted productivity is eating up an ever increasing proportion of public funds.

There is a need for special employment and training programmes, to be financed by either funds being spent on social welfare, or if necessary special taxes. The problem involves young people, but not only this category. It affects many workers who have become redundant, those who have never found work, women, the handicapped and to a certain extent even old people. It is significant that the Commission intends preparing a proposal relating to a five-year guarantee of employment and training for young people between 16 and 18 years of age. We will be considering this proposal, hopefully in the near future. Nevertheless I would like to point out that this Parliament has already approved a series of proposals aimed at encouraging employment, which are still to be transformed into actual directives. I also want to remind you of one particular proposal, approved practically unanimously by the Committee on Social Affairs and Unemployment, to set up regional employment agencies, linked to the European Social Fund to create new jobs, to which I hope the European Commission will

give due consideration, to this proposal as well as to those supported on various occasions by the Socialist Group in this area.

Mr President, to conclude I would like to say that there is no need to waste further months examining or considering which measures should be approved. Action should be taken on the basis of the proposals, studies and analyses already existing, and they are quite sufficient, because finding a solution to the employment problem is the real test of the value of the European Community and of Community solidarity.

President. — I call Mr Blumenfeld.

Mr Blumenfeld. — (DE) Mr President, it is probably no coincidence that three groups of this House should have submitted requests to the Council and Commission about the European Community's decision-making powers. For us it is a question — and I believe I can speak for the House as a whole, or at least for my group — of consolidating the European Community's decision-making instruments and capacity of action within the scope of the Treaties of Rome, and secondly a question of the very much stronger supervisory powers and overall contribution of the European Parliament in the decision-making processes with regard to the other two institutions: the Council and Commission, which have been waiting for decisions and negotiation for some nine months now.

Parliament's forbearance is at an end after over nine months of waiting. We are grateful for the answers the Council President, Mr Tindemans, has given us but not satisfied. As an experienced parliamentarian, who sat on these benches with us for many years, he will understand what I mean. The simple mention of the *ad hoc* meeting of November 1981, which took place almost by chance as part of an important manifestation, on the part of the Council of Foreign Ministers, of its desire for closer cooperation with the European Parliament, is not and cannot be good enough for us as an answer. In your answer today, I think you slightly overstated the importance of this meeting of 17 November. But the subject of our petitioning and demands of 8 July, December and February of this year, as presented in the last report on our powers during preparations for enlargement and negotiations with third countries, was negotiations on an interinstitutional basis. We would now like to see the trilogy you mentioned, Mr President of the Council, once and for all at the negotiating table.

The situation cannot remain as it is, with Parliament adopting resolutions on this subject, which is a highly important and urgent one for all of us in the Community, so that you can examine them and then declare to us in a speech that you thought this and that was right and the rest goes into the waste paper basket. I exaggerate a little, Mr President, but this is the feel-

Blumenfeld

ing which Parliament has had in the past few years with regard to the budgetary matters which were discussed yesterday and the day before. I can see that we are still not taken seriously by all members of the Council and governments and this is what gave rise to our enquiry.

To Mr Andriessen, who spoke for the Commission, I would like to say that he gave us a highly constructive answer to our request to the Commission. We now look forward to the negotiations in the coming weeks and thank the Commission very earnestly for its constructive attitude in a matter of singular importance to Parliament.

President. — I call Mr Efremidis.

Mr Efremidis. — (*GR*) Mr President, being unable or unwilling to put forward suitable solutions to the Community's economic and social crisis, the European Council has seen fit, perhaps as a diversionary tactic, to make pronouncements on international political questions as well. Thus, in connection with the Atlantic alliance, we find the European Council simply expressing satisfaction at President Reagan's declarations on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the EEC and avoiding the slightest hint of criticism of the high American interest rates and the more or less systematic onslaught of the dollar against European currencies, which threatens the interests of Community countries. On the other hand, on the question of East-West relations, the European Council, except for a number of remarks made by the Greek Prime Minister, is guilty of high-handed intervention in the internal affairs of Poland, is restricting trade relations with the USSR and is sacrificing the interests of the Community and of détente by the position it has adopted at the Madrid conference in order to toe the Cold-War line dictated by the Reagan administration. As to Afghanistan, it has ignored the proposals of the Afghan Government for a political settlement to the question, and, by a distortion of the facts puts the blame on the USSR for the rejection of the Community proposals, whereas it is the government of Afghanistan itself which has rejected them — justifiably, indeed, as these proposals attempt to ignore the Kabul government.

With regard to the Middle East, the Council avoids any mention of the murder of dozens of unarmed Palestinians or any condemnation of Israel's dangerous expansionist policy on the West Bank and the Golan Heights and has failed to call on the interested parties in broad, general terms to avoid the use of force in the Lebanon.

On the question of Central America there has been no condemnation by the European Council of American imperialism as being responsible for the sufferings of the peoples in the region, with its blatant intervention in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Cuba and its threats of

open armed intervention. Furthermore, the European Council's appraisal of Mr Tindeman's visit to Turkey and the report he made is unacceptable. The junta's promise of a referendum, some sort of democratic constitution and elections, at which the European Council expresses satisfaction, is a repetition of the deceptive scenario played out by the Greek junta and the recent bloody electoral orgy in Guatemala and El Salvador. This attitude of the European Council towards the Turkish junta, which is torturing, murdering or locking up its political opponents, is not the result of political naivety. It is due to a conscious attempt to avoid any condemnation of the regime and build it up as a base for attacking the Socialist and Arab countries.

Finally, Mr President, we are astounded at the conspiracy of silence in the Council on the tragedy of Cyprus, despite the fact that the Greek Prime Minister has repeatedly raised the question at the last two meetings of the Council.

President. — I call Mr Romualdi.

Mr Romualdi. — (*IT*) Mr President, it is to my sorrow that I note once more that the European Council meeting has failed to meet its main objectives, which on the economic level were basically to agree on strategies and guidelines to meet the challenge from Japan, the United States and the other major industrialized countries at the forthcoming Versailles summit.

In the field of political cooperation all that was done was to take note of the continuing tragic situation in Poland, with another heartfelt and unrealistic call for Jaruzelsky's government to proclaim the end of the state of emergency and resume talks with the Church and Solidarity. And that is all, or rather next to nothing or even less, because it just goes to show how powerless Europe is before this problem.

Any change in the rigid and frozen state of East-West relations has been shown once more to be completely out of the question by the failure of the Madrid Conference on the results of Helsinki, a conference which unfortunately has nothing to say about security or cooperation. In the meantime however, there is continuing concern for Turkey, where people seem to have done wrong in putting an end to a frightful wave of terrorism and having set the country on the road towards democracy, admittedly still authoritarian and imperfect, in the hope of achieving a free regime without anarchical and irresponsible features of the previous one.

Nothing new was said of our policy in the Middle East, where tension has reached dramatic levels, and practically nothing new was said of our policy relating to the distressing events in Central America.

Romualdi

President Martens, to whom we owe our thanks for his speech, said that the results of the summit were in his opinion 'neither especially good nor especially bad', which is precisely what Maupassant said of life, in the conclusion to his famous novel *Une Vie*, 'neither as good as one might have hoped nor as bad as one might have feared'. We would be happy if that were true, but unfortunately to judge from the number of signs and negative reactions Community action evokes in public opinion in Europe, we are forced to be much more pessimistic than he was.

President. — I call Mr Van Miert.

Mr Van Miert. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, like Mr Blumenfeld, I should like to take this opportunity to refer back to the three documents, the three questions which have been tabled with regard to reports which were adopted last year. The resolutions coupled with those reports put forward various proposals for strengthening the position of Parliament, albeit within the terms of the existing Treaties. That was, in other words, the very minimum that should have been practicable in the course of this legislative period for a Parliament which has been directly elected for the first time and thus has a sense of legitimacy. The actual procedure proposed was based on an inter-institutional agreement between the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission with regard to definite steps to be taken towards improving cooperation between these institutions, culminating in a situation in which the European Parliament is given more room for manoeuvre, something to which it undoubtedly has a right.

During the debate in question, the spokesmen for the Council and the Commission made no bones about their sympathetic attitude to a number of the proposals, and indeed, they reiterated their views on a number of subsequent occasions. But the fact is that, up to now, almost a year after the debate — and bearing in mind that this House asked for some positive result to be achieved by the end of last year — next to nothing has been done. Of course, I take it that certain steps have been taken and that the Commission has shown a certain amount of goodwill, but I must say that the answer we received from the Council today was extremely disappointing. This has nothing to do with you personally, Mr Tindemans — after all, we all know that you yourself have in the past put forward a whole series of proposals, which unfortunately were all too often a dead letter — but the real point is that the Council clearly has no serious intention of making progress along the proposed lines. What you have just read out on behalf of the Council — I am quite sure it did not represent your own personal view — was simply a rehashed version of all the things the Council has been saying for years now, but it was at the same time a slap in the face for Parliament. I therefore believe that it is time we had some clarity as to whether the

Council is genuinely prepared to do something, or whether we are always going to get the same kind of reaction as you got to your report, Mr President, which — as an ex-Foreign Minister so cynically said — got a first-class burial. I get the impression that the proposals — and they are perfectly realistic proposals — put forward by Parliament are going to quietly disappear in the Council's drawers and that, whenever anyone asks a question about them, we are going to be spun the same old yarn about the Council continuing its examination of them. Let me repeat, then: the Council's answer was completely inadequate and showed not even minimum respect for these realistic and sensible proposals on the part of this House. For that reason — among others — I therefore call on those responsible to initiate discussions on this inter-institutional agreement as soon as possible. Next week, the Political Affairs Committee will be discussing a number of procedural proposals, and I hope, Mr President, that you will be able to persuade your colleagues in the Council to set to work seriously on these discussions before your Presidency comes to an end.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to conclude with a few general remarks on the European Council. I really feel bound to comment on the fact that it is now apparently seen as a success if the Council manages to comprehensively side-step the problems and to evade all the vital issues. As far as I am concerned, that kind of thing most certainly does not count as a success. It is more like an abdication of responsibility than a courageous attempt to tackle the outstanding problems. Again let me say, Mr President, that I am not getting at you personally so much as the way in which the Council has set about things recently, and that includes the European Council.

One final point — we have heard a lot here today about unemployment among young people. Is it not about time, if we want to show our people that Europe has any meaning at all, that we did something more than just talk about proposals and suggestions? Here too, and despite the various statements trotted out again by the President-in-Office, little or nothing of substance has been done. Again, on this very specific and so vital point, the Council has shirked its responsibility. In conclusion, Mr President, I hope that you will be able to persuade your colleagues to achieve positive results over the coming months rather than just go round and round in circles as they have so far.

President. — I call Mr Bournias.

Mr Bournias. — (GR) Mr President, it is unfortunately an open secret told by both friends and enemies that the Community is going through a great economic and social crisis, which has occupied the Council both at its meeting on 29 and 30 March 1982 and in political cooperation, as well as in the relations of the

Bournias

Member States with each other and with the other Western countries, particularly the United States of America. Indeed, during the celebration to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, emphasis was rightly placed on what has been achieved in a quarter of a century in the economic and social field and on the progress made towards union despite difficulties caused by the oil crisis, but the question which remains unanswered is the following: are all the governments willing and able to pursue a coordinated policy to overcome the economic crisis affecting all the countries, so as to give some hope that the poorer countries will move towards the richer ones and to eliminate the fear that the richer countries will become more like the poorer ones? Will unemployment, especially youth unemployment, inflation and monetary instability be combated, will the opinions on agricultural policy come closer together and will there be productive investments which will bring a genuine economic revival during the present decade? What is the Community's strategy with regard to all these problems? Will it be one of decisions or one of words and pious wishes? It is true that since the beginning of the year Mr Thorn, in numerous speeches during our debates, Mrs Thatcher, during her statement on the results of the United Kingdom presidency, and Mr Tindemans, in his opening address as the new President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers, have promised us new inner-Community measures and an attempt to improve international cooperation, and fortunately today's announcements by the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Martens, allow us to be optimistic, since beyond the difficulties and the differences which separate us there is a common desire to continue the struggle to remove the barriers and solve the problems which have accumulated.

We Greek Members of the European Parliament from the New Democracy Party, the party which took Greece into the Community, shall join in this struggle because we believe in the need for political cooperation between the free nations of the West.

President. — I call Mr Pesmazoglou.

Mr Pesmazoglou. — (*GR*) Mr President, the message which emerges from this evening's debate is that there is disappointment and condemnation of the European Council's failure to take the basic decisions which the peoples of Europe are waiting for, decisions which will serve their interests and meet their expectations.

I should like to make three very brief remarks.

Firstly, the fight against unemployment is directly linked with overcoming the economic crisis, and this can be achieved, Mr President, mainly by taking action through the procedures and institutions of the European Community. The European Council which met at the end of March was unable to take decisions

on certain basic problems, even though the conditions were ripe. I should like to refer to the proposal by the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, that an initiative be taken on productive investments. Such an initiative would be extremely important, and I welcome and stress the support given to this plan by the Belgian Prime Minister and the Belgian Government. It is unacceptable, however, that objections should be raised and doubts expressed by other Member States of the European Community, mainly with regard to budgetary problems. These problems are becoming more complicated and widespread with the lasting economic crisis. On the other hand, if we overcome the economic crisis through Community action, these problems will be reduced, and I should like to take this opportunity of stressing the importance of regional development where such a plan is concerned.

The subject of my second remark is the lack of transparency surrounding important political problems in the context of political cooperation. The position with regard to Turkey and other countries of Central America are inconsistent with the principles governing the European Community.

Lastly, my third remark is a positive observation. The Belgian Foreign Minister and President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers stressed the European Community's immediate reaction in declaring its solidarity with the United Kingdom in its dispute over the Falkland Islands. This was a positive position, and I definitely consider that such a decision of solidarity with the United Kingdom will meet very wide approval.

However, I am bound to express, Mr President, the Greek people's condemnation of the continuing lack of clarity and the weakness of resolve in denouncing a similar situation which exists in Cyprus following military action, an invasion and a continuing occupation of the Island in violation of all the United Nations resolutions.

President. — I call upon Mr Brok.

Mr Brok. — (*DE*) Mr President, my dear colleagues, I would like to make a few remarks on the subject of unemployment following the last meeting of the European Council, although I am aware that it is not to Mr Martens and Mr Tindemans that my criticism should be directed. We have seen the European Council, Council of Ministers and Commission giving each other sanctimonious advice and instructions on this matter without drawing up any specific proposals or steps to deal with unemployment. This has been the case for some time now, in spite of the 10.5 million unemployed in the European Community, and this situation is becoming intolerable.

Whenever unemployment is discussed, it is mostly in a context in which the European Community hardly has

Brok

the means required to solve this problem properly. Social policy action is no doubt necessary, but the problem can at the most be mitigated, but not solved, by social policies. However, with the limited resources available, such as the Social Fund, there is hardly any prospect of doing this really effectively.

In the debate on unemployment, we should at long last concentrate on the means which the European Community has in fact at its disposal: for instance, the extension of the European monetary system, as well as, for example, a well-functioning internal market generating greater competitiveness for our industry in the Common Market. We should not be driven to panic in the face of unemployment since this would again only lead to more shortsighted protectionism, causing an even greater increase in unemployment in the European Community.

We must abandon our hostility in the technical sector, which prevents us from combining our efforts in energy, technology or communications policy to achieve international competitiveness. In these sectors we see consumption instead of investment and unproductive maintenance subsidies instead of forward-looking measures.

There is a real need for initiatives here to encourage young entrepreneurs with tax measures to invest in the future. We also need worker participation in production-financing capital to ensure investment in the sectors of the future.

The whole thing becomes even worse when individual governments prevent the further development of the European economy for shortsighted ideological reasons. This has become clear in the case of France, which has had to abandon its own stance to some extent in the face of job trends. When I then look at the path followed by the largest party in the German Government at its party congress, I have to say that it is heading exactly in the wrong direction and thus making it more difficult to maintain jobs in Europe.

President. — I call Mr Kallias.

Mr Kallias. — (*GR*) Mr President, the European Economic Community is at a critical turning point in its existence. It has become clear that small steps are no longer sufficient. The time has come for a fundamental change in our psychology and in our attitudes and for bold decisions about the future — and here I am thinking of our approach to the final straight leading to political union. I believe that such an enterprising step would make it possible, and psychologically easier, to find a solution to such major problems as internal rivalries and chauvinism. But, at a time when courage is needed, what we see today is a disturbing apathy and we must investigate and identify its causes and do everything possible to extricate ourselves from this impasse.

There are some other factors which cause concern. For example, neither the Commission nor the Council of the European Community has taken action on the resolutions of the European Parliament concerning an increase in the powers of the European Parliament with specific reference to the recognition of its legislative initiative and its role in European political cooperation. It is my wish — I cannot be sure of this but at least I can hope — that the spirit of the European Parliament will be felt in all the other bodies of the Community and that Parliament will give clear expression to the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of Europe. I pray, Mr Tindemans, that, before your term of office as President comes to an end, you will give clearer evidence of your firm faith in the need for political unity in Europe.

I now come to the question concerning the situation in Turkey. Unfortunately, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Turkey and violence are familiar bedfellows. The internal situation, arrests, convictions, executions, crude violations of human rights, torture, the suppression of trade unions, of the free Press and of political activity have again led this Assembly to express its disapproval of the Turkish regime and to call for the termination of the Community's association agreement with Turkey.

These actions stem from the Community's belief in democracy, from the ideology of all the European powers which share that belief and also from the fact that dictators are encouraged by complacency and are not to be taken seriously when they announce the timing and method of the forthcoming end of their dictatorship. Moreover, Turkey is spending very little or none of its economic aid on the economic advancement of the suffering Turkish people, but is rather directing it towards the creation of special armed forces equipped with landing craft and with these forces it has what I see as the arrogance to threaten a Community country — Greece, which, while not being afraid of anyone is a peace-loving country and a staunch defender of the international rule of law.

I think that my remarks about Turkey represent the views of all my Greek colleagues in the New Democracy Party.

President. — I call Mr Pedini.

Mr Pedini. — (*IT*) Mr President, honourable members and President Tindemans, the Christian-Democratic Group was very pleased to note the establishment of a European cultural foundation among the achievements of the Brussels summit. This is a very important event. We need not only European universities and European institutions specifically focusing on culture, but also a secular arm of the Commission and Parliament to motivate schools and cultural bodies already existing in the EEC to work towards 'European' goals.

Pedini

This idea was first raised in this House many years ago by President Martino whom we remember so well. It was taken up by yourself, President Tindemans at the Rome summit in 1975, and has resurfaced today. We are a little worried though, Mr Tindemans, that in your capacity as President of the Council, you might be behaving, through no fault of your own, like those students who fail at the June examination session and turn up at the October session without having put in any more work than before. I mention this because we feel that there is something lacking in today's plan too. We still have reservations about it since the idea remains to have an inter-governmental institution. Witness the fact that the Act instituting the Foundation was signed by the Prime Ministers as representatives of the individual nations on the very day the ministers were celebrating the Community's successfully reaching its silver anniversary in the presence of the Belgian King and Queen. President Tindemans, the Foundation must be freed as quickly as possible from the trammels of national interest. The Parliament must be able to keep an eye on the work of the Foundation, we must have the feeling that it is our creation. The Foundation should be given over to the Community, of which the Council of Ministers certainly plays an essential part. Besides as we have seen, even the European schools and the University Institute in Florence are lacking in something precisely because they lack Community spirit. While approving this project, we also want to show our concern as an encouragement to fuller Community control of the Institution which is about to be set up.

To conclude, let us also hope that the forthcoming Council of Education Ministers may also make some serious progress in the cultural sphere, which not only Europe but the whole world is waiting for. President Mitterand has just been welcomed to Japan by a great Japanese writer who said to him 'Bring us France but above all tell us of Europe'. In connection precisely with the question of employment for young people Mr Brok spoke of such warmth, I hope that a Council of Ministers dealing with cultural and artistic matters will follow on from the Education Ministers Council. Remember that such activities serve not only to create culture, but also a new exhilarating sort of employment for young people.

IN THE CHAIR : MR DANKERT

President

President. — I call the Council.

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should

like to begin by expressing my thanks to all the Members who have spoken in this debate. At the start of what I regard as an answer, I should like to stress that, on most of the points which have been brought up here, I am speaking on behalf of the Ten, and I should like to thank those Members who appreciated that fact. I am thinking in particular of the remarks made by Mr Van Miert and Mr Brok and of what Mr Pedini and others were getting at. I am therefore speaking on behalf on the Ten.

To begin with, I should like to stress that this is only the second time in the history of this Parliament that the Prime Minister of the country holding the Presidency of the Council has put in an appearance here to report officially on the outcome of the meeting of the European Council. That is, in my opinion, a positive development. I have already heard it said today that we are thus consolidating a tradition; I should not like to comment on that — apparently, one such move constitutes an experiment, but two already constitute a tradition. Let us hope that we are indeed establishing a good tradition.

I have selected a number of points from all those made in the course of this debate, and I intend to discuss them in more detail. The first of these — and how could it be otherwise, in view of the fact that this is a report on a meeting of the European Council — is the institutional issue: what is the position now regarding the European institutions? We have had criticism not only of the results of the last European Council, but also of the role, the working methods and the importance of the European Council itself. Perhaps I may be allowed to strike a personal note here. As Sacha Guitry said, the personal note is a detestable thing, but I was present at the European Council, or rather the last summit meeting held before summit meetings were renamed the European Council in December 1974. Whether or not the name 'European Council' was a well-chosen one is something I would prefer to leave in abeyance for the time being. I personally would have chosen some other title, but at least everyone in this House knows what is meant by the European Council.

The aim was — and this point was reiterated later by an influential politician who did not exactly have French as his mother tongue — that the meetings of the European Council should be routine meetings; in other words, the aim was to avoid all the razzmatazz surrounding such summit meetings and subsequently meetings of the European Council. The real point was to arrange meetings at which Heads of State or Government could meet in an intimate atmosphere, have an exchange of views on the major problems and possibly pass on guidelines to the Council or the Councils. The important thing was to avoid the element of spectacle on the grounds that otherwise, there would be masses of reporters and cameramen in attendance and expectations would be raised to the point at which they could not possibly always be ful-

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filled. The original intention was therefore by no means to make the European Council into the kind of institution at which major decisions were taken or to make it into a kind of court of appeal set up to pronounce on the problems which had proved insoluble at ordinary Council level, so as to come up with a solution after all — at the eleventh hour, as it were. That is the kind of situation the Heads of State or Government wanted to avoid from the very start and — I must admit — their efforts have not always been crowned with success. Too much attention is concentrated on the meetings of the European Council, as a result of which the expectations are much too high. Secondly, there has never been any real agreement as to the rightful role of the European Council. What, after all, is the true mission, the true vocation of the Council? Perhaps that is something which can be defined at future meetings of the European Council.

Still on the institutional issues, mention was made in the course of the debate of the European Foundation. In the report on European Union which I drew up in December 1975 at my erstwhile colleagues' behest, I recommended the setting up of a European Foundation with the aim of using the resources at the Foundation's disposal to strengthen the sense of oneness in Europe, to give people more of a feeling of belonging to the same Community and — at some future time — to the same Union, and to heighten people's appreciation of the institutions, their methods of working, the proposals put forward and the decisions made. I would also add that another aim was to increase the grass-roots pressure on the national parliaments, the European Parliament and the politicians to get something done at European level and in the interests of Europe by the judicious application of the available resources. The idea of a European Foundation has had an uncomfortable passage. As Mr Pedini rightly said, a solemn declaration was made at a great ceremony held in Rome that, to mark the 25th anniversary of the initiation of the Schuman Plan, a monument should be set up in the form of the European Foundation. That was in 1975 or 1976, 25 years after the milestone of 1950. It is now 1982, and only now has the document been signed setting up the European Foundation, the deed being done at the ceremony held in Brussels to mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome. I can understand the attitude of some Members of this House who have realized with some regret that the Foundation in its present form does not fully aspire to the aims that we originally had in mind — and I mean 'we' in the plural. Despite the fact that nothing more has been achieved to date, I would like to say that what we have has a good deal of potential.

When, in 1970 — and I hardly dare say this now that Mr Davignon is present — we made a start with political cooperation on the basis of the report he himself produced, a lot of people were very chary of this kind of extra-Treaty European cooperation. Many felt at the time that the proposals put forward did not really amount to very much. We now realize, however, that

European cooperation is becoming more important every day and may perhaps yield substantial fruit at some time in the future. After all, we are now examining the Genscher and Colombo proposals and, at one of the recent Council meetings, a request was put forward for specific proposals to be submitted by 24 April. As you can see, then, there is growing potential here too. I very much hope that the same kind of thing will happen with the Foundation, even in its present form. In fact, I hope that the Foundation will eventually take the form we originally conceived for it. I believe in evolution, and I therefore hope that the Foundation will one day assume a form in accordance with our original intentions. I should like to say to Mr Berkhouwer that whether or not the Foundation will make the man-in-the-street more conscious of Europe as such depends to a very great extent on the activities of the Foundation, whether it adopts the right approach and whether it genuinely succeeds in reaching the European man-in-the-street and bringing the idea of Europe home to him.

We have heard mention here of the European Monetary System and the possible strengthening thereof. I should just like to point out very briefly that the EMS was discussed, among other things, at the May meeting of the Council of Ministers of Finance and Economic Affairs.

A number of speakers referred to relations between the European Parliament and the Council, and I was particularly concerned about what Mr Blumenfeld had to say on the matter. If he, with all his experience here in this House, feels obliged to express such a sense of disillusionment, he must indeed be very depressed. Parliament itself has produced a number of reports seeking ways of improving relations between Parliament and the Council, ways in which Parliament can be given more importance and ways in which its own activities can be improved. In most cases, through, the conclusion is that the problem must first be examined or is already under examination.

(FR) While I am on this point, I should like to stress that, when I say that the Council is currently studying a number of institutional proposals drawn up by Parliament, the fact is that the Council has not yet completed its examination. I would assure you most explicitly, however, that the Council has given serious consideration to the resolutions and the texts approved by this House and that it is endeavouring to adopt a positive stance. I would add — and this is something you know yourselves — that the situation is complicated by the fact that several of your suggestions overlap with other proposals, such as those put forward by Mr Genscher and Mr Colombo, the Commission's own proposals and those approved by yourselves as part of the conciliation procedure. If you feel that I am deliberately keeping quiet on this point, please do not take this as meaning that nothing is happening. On the contrary, I feel encouraged when I see the way in which

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this problem is being examined at the moment, and the progress made so far in the matter.

I would also add that, thanks to the conflict over the budget, we have at last found a good method of improving relations between Parliament and the Council. As you know, conflict has broken out for the third time between the European Parliament and the Council on the question of approval of the budget by Parliament. You may say that it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the fact is that it is thanks to this conflict that the Council has now decided — as you will be aware — to take the case before the Court of Justice to see once and for all what procedure should be followed. I would prefer not to comment on the matter for the moment. On the other hand — and I should like to make this point most explicitly — the Council has declared that the time has now come to engage in a dialogue with the European Parliament. When I brought up the question of the very heavy burden resting on the shoulders of the minister responsible for budgetary affairs, who has only little time available to devote to his presidency of the Council of Budget Ministers, the Council — that is to say the Council of Foreign Ministers — immediately responded by saying that they did not have the budget minister in mind at all; given that the dialogue was essentially a political matter, it was felt that the President of the Council of Foreign Ministers should engage in the said dialogue with the European Parliament and the Commission. Thanks to the sympathetic response received from the President of this House and the President of the Commission, that method has now been decided on.

We had a meeting today at which we agreed on the major aspects of this dialogue. It is still too soon to reach a conclusion, but we did agree to meet again in May and June in the hope of reaching a conclusion sometime in June. So long as the positive spirit in which today's meeting was conducted is maintained, I hope to be in a position, before the Belgian Presidency comes to an end, to announce the conclusion of a genuine and positive agreement.

(Applause)

(NL) A number of Members have rightly referred to the unemployment problem. The real question as far as I am concerned is why we as a Community have so far failed to come up with an anti-crisis policy at European level. That is the real question being asked by people who perhaps do not know so much about the European institutions and who often fail to understand our jargon, but who nonetheless are imbued with a European spirit and are convinced that any solutions to the problem must be found first and foremost at European level.

There are three reasons, the first one being of an ideological nature. Of course, there are bound to be differ-

ences of opinion on economic policy, budgetary policy, inflation and employment policy.

Secondly, there is insufficient will to pursue a determined European anti-crisis policy. Thirdly — and I am addressing myself specifically to the economists here — there appears to be uncertainty as to which way to turn. After all, who would claim at the moment to know the right solution or the right policy for leading us out of the economic crisis?

In my opinion, these three factors are contributing elements in the paralysis and stagnation which are currently rife throughout Europe. If you are prepared to bear these factors in mind you will find it easier to understand what Mr Martens is getting at.

Two decisions were taken at the last meeting of the European Council: firstly, all possible encouragement is to be given to investment in the productive sector — and I would stress the last part of that sentence. What I mean by 'all possible encouragement' is that all the Community instruments will be put into effect and that the Member States will be called on to match this effort at national level. Secondly, special measures are to be taken with regard to young unemployed persons, the aim being to improve vocational qualifications by way of training or to make facilities available for on-the-job experience. These special measures will enable young people to work part-time and give them the chance to gain experience.

We have also heard reference to the Jumbo Council, which we had hoped to be able to convene during the Belgian Presidency. I have established the necessary contacts with a view to convening a meeting, but there is a certain reluctance to convene such a meeting without due preparation, and that is something I fully appreciate. There are two central issues: the question of what can be done for small and medium-sized undertakings in Europe, and the problem of unemployment among young people. No decision has been taken so far on this Jumbo Council. While it is true that serious consideration is being given to the idea, it may be that it would not be a good idea to convene such a meeting at a time when the Belgian Presidency is drawing to a close. I can tell you, though, that it has become apparent from contacts I have had with my Danish colleague that, if the Jumbo Council does not meet under the Belgian Presidency, the Danes are prepared to do everything in their power to convene such a meeting during the second half of this year.

Reference has also been made to our relations with the United States. Mr President, there is nothing new about these relations despite the impression that may have arisen following the visit paid by Mr Martens and his Minister for Foreign Relations to the United States. My report on European Union has a good deal to say about relations between the European Community and the United States, including the fact that there is an urgent need to define these relations as

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quickly and as clearly as possible. The more experience I have of the European Community and the world economy, the more I am convinced that it is essential for us to find the right forum within which the Community and the United States can discuss economic and political problems. Allow me just to give you two examples of what I mean: the Middle East and Central America.

Although the Community bears no direct responsibility for Central America, the European Council issued a communiqué on the subject following its latest meeting, proposing that the Community should offer more aid to the countries of Central America. Mrs Van den Heuvel attributed to me a remark on the situation in El Salvador which I never made. I know exactly who made the remark, and I am very sorry to have it attributed to me. The fact is that the Community has decided to make more economic aid available to Central America. In view of the statement made by Mr Colombo in the United States and a statement made by Mr Genscher on relations with the United States, I believe that we must give very serious consideration to these relations in the context of political cooperation. It would be a good thing if we could find a forum for discussing such problems and possibly developing new joint initiatives.

Reference has also been made to the mandate, and I have no need to tell you that we are all concerned about the future of the Community as a whole. Unless we find a solution to the problem of the mandate, there is indeed a very real danger of a major crisis developing. It is a pity that Mr Thorn was prevented by an accident from being here today, because — as you know — we are looking together into ways of solving the problem of the mandate. What the mandate amounted to was not that we should put forward fresh proposals, but that we should examine ways of extricating ourselves from the current mess. Should that prove to be an impossible mission, it does not necessarily mean that the Thorn-Tindemans mission has failed, but simply that there is no longer sufficient will in the Community to find a solution. Mr President, allow me to comment briefly on the question of the North-South Dialogue. We are fully aware of the importance of the North-South Dialogue and of the obligation resting on the industrialized countries to do something. However, we also feel that the Eastern European countries have certain obligations in this respect and should not be ruled out of the Dialogue.

(FR) I should like to say a few words specifically to Mr Pannella, who complained that the Council — that is, Mr Martens and myself — had said nothing about the terrible problem of world hunger. Once again, Mr Pannella is trying to put the blame on us. I should like to tell him — but of course, he knows it already — that the Commission is devoting very serious attention to this matter and that the proposals now being drafted by Mr Pisani are the best I have ever seen. For the very first time the problem is being tackled at its

root causes, and the policy Mr Pisani is proposing to combat the dreadful scourge of world hunger is well-founded and serious-minded and is, in my opinion, capable of dealing with the problem, in part at least. But the reason why Mr Pannella complained about the Council's silence is probably because Mr Pisani's ideas do not concur with Mr Pannella's on this point.

As regards Turkey, I should like to reiterate what I already said to the Political Affairs Committee. The mission I was charged with fulfilling by the Council was not to carry out an enquiry in Turkey. How could I possibly have done so? How could a single person carry out an enquiry in a country with 40 million inhabitants and which covers three times the area of France? I had no chance to visit the prisons, nor did I attend any trials. My mission was to inform the Turkish authorities of the feelings of the European Community and of the Council and to explain to them our concerns and what we expect from Turkey, such as its acceptance of reforms, the organization of a return to democracy and respect for human and trade union rights. That is precisely what I did, and I have reported back on the response I met with in Ankara. I was able to speak not only to the Head of State, to ministers and members of the committee drawing up the new constitution, but also to the victims of the present regime. I had contacts with Mr Ecevit and Mr Demirel; I had contacts with lawyers and I was informed as to the defence facilities available to persons who have been charged or arrested; and — let me repeat — I have reported back to the Council, which has issued a communiqué on the situation in Turkey and which is following developments very closely.

We have noted only the one positive reaction so far, which is that the government has now confirmed the date for the referendum on the new constitution. Otherwise, we shall be following events just like you, and I am quite sure that the Council will be organizing an exchange of views on the situation in Turkey and will, if necessary, be taking sensible steps to convince the Turkish authorities of the need to revert to democracy as quickly as possible.

(NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, those are the main points I thought I should discuss here. They relate to the sense of concern which you feel and to the problems on which you wanted to hear the Council's answer, so that you are kept posted as to what is being discussed at the moment in the European Council and by the Council of Foreign Ministers and what is going on there. I should like to thank you for taking part in this debate.

President. — I should like to thank you, Mr Tindemans, for your extensive replies on the topics raised. As President of this House, I am constantly tempted to keep an eye on the clock, but I believe it is also important to have a genuine exchange of views. I shall also try to arrange for you to answer a number of questions

President

in Question Time, since I know you have come prepared for that.

I am particularly pleased that the Commission is willing to renounce its right to be called in view of our shortage of time. I think this procedure is quite justified since there were in any case not many questions addressed to the Commission.

9. *Visit by a European Parliament delegation to Pakistan*

President. — The next item is the debate on the visit by the European Parliament delegation to Pakistan, on which a number of statements were made this afternoon by myself, the President-in-Office of the Council and the representative of the President of the Commission.

I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Ripa di Meana. — *(IT)* Mr President, on behalf of the Socialist Group I would firstly like to express our very sympathetic solidarity with Mr Gérard Israël in the face of the revolting racist and anti-Semitic discrimination to which he was subjected by the authorities in Islamabad, on account of 'his name and origin' as the latest communication from Pakistan was disgracefully worded. The incident is extremely serious, and cannot simply be allowed to rest with a formal protest because it may constitute a dangerous precedent not only for relations between the Parliament and third countries, but even for current relations within the international Community. Such discrimination, which is being practised today against an elected representative of the French people, might in the future affect diplomatic staff and officials of international organizations in Pakistan and elsewhere. The European Parliament must take action in the next few hours to uphold the principle at stake with extreme firmness, as well as calling on the Commission in Brussels to reconsider in the next few hours together with the Pakistan Government the relations between the latter and the Community.

For our part, we cannot conceal the resentment and indignation we feel today at this shameful statement from the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The European Parliament has done and will do everything in its power to provide political and moral support for the Afghan resistance movement and ensure Afghanistan's return to the status of a free, independent and non-aligned nation.

Mr Martens acknowledged the political and moral supremacy of this House this morning. It is tragic that such an offensive measure should be announced precisely today by a representative of Pakistan, which is the most exposed and vulnerable country following the Soviet invasion of that country. Its territory has

been overrun by more than two million Afghan women and children in forced exodus, a flood of humanity to whom Pakistan has always shown generosity and afforded a providential refuge, despite its meagre resources. The very enormity of this act, coupled with its sheer political thoughtlessness, leads me to hope that there will be a change of mind in Islamabad in the next few days.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Blumenfeld. — *(DE)* Mr President, the EPP Group, for whom I have the honour of speaking, like the previous speaker, is shocked by the behaviour of the rulers in Islamabad.

What are the facts? A small delegation from the European Parliament or rather its Political Committee with Mr Israël as its rapporteur, had a mission to accomplish which was humanitarian in the true sense of the word: that of investigating the fate of the Afghan refugees in the charge of the Pakistan Government. Their task was to help them but this has been prevented for the moment by what I can only call stupid action on the part of the Pakistan Government.

The European Parliament has always stood up for peace, freedom, justice, tolerance and solidarity, and always will. It will, I hope, never falter in its determination to defend itself whenever it, as a whole, or we as individuals, are attacked.

Apart from military aggression and terrorism, religious fanaticism and racism are the worst characteristics and frequently the motive force of many areas of our human society. But we must not allow these base instincts to raise their heads again, as in the past, or gain acceptance.

I have already said that the government in Islamabad's foolish decision, which reeks of racial discrimination, speaks for itself. However, the government has in fact only harmed itself because it has failed to realize that with this refusal to the delegation from the European Parliament, it has destroyed any possibility of international aid reaching its fellow moslems from Afghanistan — and this was in fact the aim of the delegation of Gérard Israël and his colleagues.

The European Parliament in its large majority will not, I hope, relax its efforts to help the refugees and victims of Soviet aggression from Afghanistan and continue to support them in the future. At this present moment, however, the Pakistan Government will have to be reminded that it will receive an appropriate response for its attitude, not only from the European Parliament but, we hope, from the other institutions of the Community as well. I therefore agree with what my colleague has just said: we hope the Commission

Blumenfeld

will review the economic, financial and other contractual agreements with Pakistan as quickly as possible.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Lord Bethell. — Mr President, it causes me very great distress this evening to be forced to conclude that Pakistan, a country with which my own country has strong historical connections and many of whose citizens reside in my country, indeed in my constituency, is now ruled by an anti-semitic government.

This is a situation that has arisen quite contrary to the principles laid down by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan and quite contrary to the principles laid down in the Holy Koran which enjoin on Islamic followers to pay particular respect to Jews and Christians who are known as the People of the Book.

This is something which has been made quite clear by the Pakistani authorities in the past few days. It is not the political views of Mr Gérard Israël that have caused him to be banned by the Pakistani Government. Another view has been put forward from Islamabad. It is not his position on the Arab-Israeli dispute or anything that he has done, it is the fact of his name and his origin, and these words appear in communications that have passed between Islamabad and Brussels. The name and the origin are quoted by the Pakistani Government as the reason for the refusal to accept him as a delegate from this Parliament to the government of Pakistan. And what more shameful pretext could be put forward than that?

(Applause)

My submission will, I feel, be approved unanimously by this European Parliament.

Let us be sure that it is not the Afghan refugees who have made this decision; although some may whisper that this is the case. Mr Israël, indeed all of us, have met Afghan refugees, Afghan freedom fighters and have had the best of relations with them here and in other places, particularly in Florence a few weeks ago with Mr Ripa di Meana. It is the Pakistani Government that has made this decision and has made it in formal communications.

I hope that will not persuade the European Community to reconsider the humanitarian aid that is given by our Community and by our Member States on a bilateral basis to the Afghan refugees. Tens of millions of units of account are given every year by our countries to the Afghan refugees and rightly so and I hope that this terrible incident will not prevent that happening in the future. But it will have very serious consequences.

In the first place it will mean that our work in the European Parliament on behalf of the *jib'ad* will be thrown into severe confusion. Our mission to Pakistan will be stopped. Mr Israël's report will be delayed and relations between the Council and Pakistan will be severely damaged by what has happened.

And I predict also that relations between the United States and Pakistan — very important connections — will also be damaged by what has taken place. So I am delighted by what the President-in-Office said earlier this afternoon and to hear that this matter will be put before the Pakistani Government if agreement can be found on Monday, as I confidently hope it will.

Pakistan, Mr President, has done magnificent work in the past in supporting Afghan refugees, housing them and feeding them. But it cannot, under this government, be considered to be a civilizing influence in the world until it recognizes that all its own citizens and all European citizens are equal, irrespective of their name and their origin.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Chambeiron. — (FR) Mr President, like all Members present at the beginning of this afternoon's session, I fully appreciated the serious tone of your statement informing us of the refusal to let one of our number set foot on Pakistan soil.

It goes without saying that if an intention to discriminate in respect of race, religion or politics underlies the motives of the Pakistani authorities (and I can only go on the information given us), I can state in no uncertain terms, that no member of the Communist and Allies Group will stand for it.

I can say this all the more emphatically, Mr President, as everyone in this House knows that we were against sending this delegation to Pakistan, and since we have always clearly expressed our opposition to resorting to such delegations or these self-styled campaigns to defend human rights, which unfortunately are only too often political smoke screens. We were quite frank about it at the time and you will therefore understand how much stress I am laying on my words. While I still have the floor, Mr President, I would like to point out that there are certain conventions in international relations which this House sometimes seems to lose sight of. I have often wondered if it was proper to disregard some of these conventions and, say, decide to send a delegation to a sovereign country without taking the elementary precaution of finding out whether the country concerned, whatever country it is, would receive it. I think that is a lesson we must draw from this deplorable incident.

Chambeiron

That is what we think of this matter and that is all I have to say about it.

(Applause)

President. — Mr Chambeiron, in my capacity as President of this Parliament, I feel it is my duty to reply to what you have just said. The issue has nothing to do with a European Parliament delegation being welcome or not; as far as the Pakistani Government is concerned, that was an established fact. The problem is that the ban applies to a member whose name was mentioned.

(Applause)

I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Galland. — *(FR)* I want to say thank you to all of you for having reacted so vigorously at this base attack and for organizing this debate at the prompting of Simone Veil and on a proposal from you, Mr President. There are occasions, as you have clearly seen, when 45 minutes of question time are worth giving up.

The Liberal and Democratic Group's initial reaction was one of deep sorrow and disbelief. Yet the Pakistani Government has stated and restated three times this month that a European Parliament delegation inquiring into the problems of Afghan refugees would not be welcomed if Gérard Israël was a member of it, in view of his Jewish origin and his membership of a French-based Jewish cultural organization. History goes on repeating itself on this frightening planet, and we are in a better position than anyone on this old continent of Europe to make a stand against anything which reminds us in any way of what happened 40 years ago.

Our reaction as an institution and the debate this evening are symbolic, and they must sound a warning to all. We cannot be content with rhetoric, choice phrases and flights of oratory. There must be some tangible political follow-up to this situation which the Pakistani Government has brought about. Of course, we must approve a motion for a resolution which we will ask the Council to pass on to the Pakistani Government. We can be sure however that they will not be swayed by a mere resolution. We must take things further and ask the Commission what economic measures the Community can take in retaliation against them. Our ten Governments must also be asked to review closely the bilateral relations they have with Pakistan.

I will no doubt be told that things are less simple and black and white in the diplomatic, economic and cultural fields, and that international relations force States into making concessions which we Parliamentarians lose sight of all too easily when we start speaking. If by mischance I were to hear this sort of argu-

ment, I would repeat once more that we don't have the same idea about politics. I cannot engage in diplomacy nor grant concessions to a cynically racist State, and Pakistan has shown us how it looks at international relations by banning the European Parliament delegation because Gérard Israël is Jewish.

This House cannot possibly show any leniency in the face of anti-semitism. We cannot provide aid nor cooperation for Pakistan any longer. In the face of Pakistan's intolerance and racism, we will stand up for freedom and human rights, and when Pakistan makes demands on us, we will say we have no money, except of course for direct aid for the Afghan refugees. The whole world must realize that Europe will follow the highest of her instincts and react whenever the spiritual, moral and philosophical values she embodies, and holds dear, are attacked. All the Arab countries must realize that our attitude would be the same if a Muslim member of this House was subjected to such unbelievable discrimination. Shame on the Pakistani Government for having sewn the star of David back on Gérard Israël! Like most of you here, I am not Jewish but I know that many members of the European Parliament would, like myself and the whole Liberal and Democratic Group, be proud to wear that Star!

(Applause)

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Lalor. — Mr President, first of all let me say that I am pleased that you, as President, found it possible under the Rules to act so speedily and to enable us to have this discussion here tonight in order to give us the opportunity of condemning this horrible decision by the Pakistan Government.

We in this group were horrified today when we heard you, Mr President, delivering your message and reading the telexes that you had had restricting our delegation going to Pakistan. I stress this group, because naturally we in this group know better than any others the tremendous qualities, humanity and sincerity which Gérard Israël possesses. He has become well known in our group and in fact I think I can say in the whole Assembly as our human-rights man. He was the natural, logical and automatic choice of the Political Affairs Committee to investigate the plight of the Afghan refugees from USSR aggression in Pakistan. It is amazing that Pakistan who should so generously offer shelter to unfortunate refugees from Afghanistan on the one hand, should, on the other now introduce such racial anti-semitism and discrimination.

Parliament must insist on denouncing this insult. Our Member of Parliament represents the French nation, and we must now show our 100% solidarity with the French electors in exercising their right to be repre-

Lalor

sented in this Assembly by any representative of any sect or religion that they choose.

It is absolutely shocking to be told that our colleague, Mr Israël, is not acceptable because of his name or origin.

I have the highest respect for Lord Bethell and for Mr Ripa di Meana. They were all three very highly qualified ambassadors from this Parliament. But, I know that in no way do I take from the qualities of the other two when I say that nobody was more qualified on human grounds than Gérard Israël to go as one of our three ambassadors in this regard. It is sad that, because of this outbreak of racialism, this very worthwhile mission cannot now take place.

In fact, Mr President, unfortunately it is the Afghan refugees who will now be the greatest losers.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Pannella. — *(IT)* Mr President, I would not like to waste too much of your time and my own by repeating what I feel about this incident and for Mr Israël, as you are aware of that. Of course we must condemn the incident and back up our words with action, but please, Mr President, be a little more discreet and little less grandiloquent! Let us keep our sense of proportion. The matter is very serious all right, but why pretend such blushing innocence, such shockability and high moral indignation? Do try and grow up!

Mr President, isn't it the official view of things here, that political democracy is fine for the Italians today now that they are somewhat emancipated, but not for those in the 1930s; that it is perhaps a good thing now for the Spanish, but not for the Turks, not for the dagoes, the blacks nor the yellow races, that would just be Utopianism! We are sometimes told that doing something to avoid the death of thirty millions is being over sensitive. But if we wait for Edgar Pisani to produce a new Gospel, they will be dead in the meantime!

Mr Galland has just discovered that the Pakistani regime is racist and anti-Semitic. What then, can be happening to the Jews over there? Do we have to wait until we are spat upon, until the principles of our Parliament are treated with contempt before taking action? If the Pakistani Government treats Mr Israël and the European Parliament like that, quite probably there are pogroms going on in that country!

If the principle of tolerance is not acknowledged by all peoples, how can you suddenly be surprised that they are so badly behaved? I think our problem, Mr Presi-

dent, is to get it into our heads once and for all that we cannot treat the Turkish Junta with kid gloves! We must show tolerance of course. We must give the Junta a chance to abide by the promises it made to Mr Tindemans and others. In the meantime however there is torture going on, people are being done to death in body as well as in mind. That is why, Mr President, we must make it clear once more that peoples and individuals have a right to tolerance and democracy, and must be demanded. We cannot suddenly wake up to their importance in the southern hemisphere simply because the murderous Argentine generals all of a sudden look like dispossessing 1 800 subjects of Her Britannic Majesty of the Falklands, Lord Bethell. Personally I am all for liberty, the Falklands and the 1 800 Falklanders. Anti-national as I am, I think the Argentines would have everything to gain from English Common Law rights rather than being ruled by the generals. But these generals are your allies, in Turkey as in Argentina, they are your friends and your business associates. So stop being hypocritical, Mr President. Lofty tones are fine in moments when history is really being made, but not when poses are merely being struck to try and offset everyday frustration and hypocrisy.

President. — I call Mrs Macciocchi.

Mrs Macciocchi. — *(IT)* Mr President in view of this very serious exhibition of racism and anti-Semitism, I do not think it would be a bad thing to relax for once the iron rules of procedure, which sometimes end up stifling highly justified feelings of indignation, and for this House to approve an urgent, solemnly worded, resolution demonstrating our unanimity.

At the instigation of the Socialist Group, Mr President, yesterday afternoon we began drawing up a motion for a resolution to be tabled today. It has now been signed by many members, from practically all the major political groups in the House.

The resolution declares that Gérard Israël's banning on account of the name he bears and his origins is an unacceptable expression of racism and anti-Semitism. It then goes on to state that this conduct damages our independence and our dignity and that of this Parliament, whose political prerogative to act and safeguard human rights is thus questioned for the first time in its history. This incident also undermines the fundamental rights and duties of the members of this Parliament.

We therefore call on the Commission to re-examine the relations between the Community and the Pakistani Government in the light of this serious incident, and hereby request the President to pass on this motion for a resolution we have tabled to the foreign ministers meeting in political cooperation for them to draw the necessary consequences.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, the Commission expressed its feelings on this matter quite clearly a little while ago. They concur with those expressed again this evening, but I think that the Commission should make a statement since several speakers have called on the Commission in connection with the draft resolution to reexamine relations between the Community and Pakistan.

This is what I have to say. Firstly, the Commission considers that the incident which has just occurred is a serious one and when there is a serious incident, some thought must be given to the state of relations between the Community and the country involved in the incident. This will be done as quickly as possible, and the outcome will be made known in accordance with Parliament's wishes, to the committee which undertakes to deal with the matter, be it the Political Affairs Committee or the Committee on External Economic Relations.

Secondly, there is one point which I would like to make clear as of now. Action is being taken by the Community to aid refugees from Afghanistan and there is no doubt that this action is fully justified. We have to make sure that this aid, as well as the food aid granted to Pakistan, is properly handled, because this aid stems from efforts to assist persons who are in a particularly distressing situation. I therefore think that the question put to us relates to what I call 'advantages granted to States in connection with our general economic relations, affecting the management of these States, and not to particular measures concerning persons in an especially delicate position.'

Since I have the floor, I cannot resist taking the opportunity I am afforded of saying a word to Mr Pannella, who as usual has mixed up the various subjects being discussed, to point out to him that I do not think it is appropriate to refer constantly to the fact the Commission in his opinion has not proposed in a very concrete and precise manner measures to combat world famine. It is not proper to pretend that the proposals being considered mean that the Commission, as well as the Community or this Parliament, is unconcerned about the lot of hungry people! I do not think it is warranted and I wanted to tell him so.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

President. — The debate is closed.

Let me thank the Commission and everyone who took part in the debate. I wish to thank the Council as well,

and also the interpreters who were kind enough to let us hold this debate which was not down on today's agenda.

10. Question Time

President. — The next item is the second part of Question Time (Doc. 1-112/82).

We start with questions to the Council.

I call Question No 62, by Mr Godikas (H-794/81):¹

On 21 November 1981 two Greek subjects, Nikolaos Vassias and Kostis Mavros, were refused permission to enter Denmark by the Danish authorities on the grounds that they had not got enough money. In fact, the two Greeks had brought the maximum foreign currency allowed by the Greek state.

Subsequently, they were refused permission to contact the Greek Embassy in Copenhagen and were then taken in handcuffs to Copenhagen Airport Police Station where they were held for 38 hours and then forced to return to Budapest. No explanation was given.

This act on the part of the Danish authorities is a clear infringement of Community regulations and of the Treaty of Rome.

This report was published in the newspaper 'Elevtherotipia' on 1 December 1981; Greek public opinion was justifiably outraged.

What measures do the Foreign Ministers envisage to force the Danish Government to pay compensation to these Greek subjects for the financial loss they suffered and the humiliation they underwent, and what can be done to prevent similar occurrences in future?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council — (NL) Various texts adopted pursuant to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community define the conditions under which persons who may avail themselves of these texts can enter another Member State. I have in any case been informed that the Danish authorities have opened an enquiry into the case mentioned. That enquiry is still going on. I should further like to point out that in any event it is for the Commission and not for the Council to ensure compliance with Community law.

Mr Godikas. — (GR) Despite the tactfulness of the President-in-Office, the answer is totally unsatisfactory. If the matter is one for the Commission, the secretariat should have arranged for it to be for-

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-79/81), converted into a question for Question Time

Godikas

warded. I am greatly concerned that two Greek subjects should have been treated in this way by a Member State of the Community, and I insist on my question. If the President-in-Office thinks that this is a matter for the Commission, I reserve the right to put the matter to the Commission, but the moral aspect involved is of extreme importance, and I think that at some stage all of us here will have to come out with the truth.

President. — I call Question No 63, by Mr Eisma (H-795/81):

Is a Jumbo Council to be held under the Belgian Presidency and, if so, what preparations does the Council intend to make to ensure that, unlike that held under the Dutch Presidency, this Jumbo Council will yield satisfactory results?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) When the Belgian Presidency's programme of action for the first half of 1982 was presented to the European Parliament, the document submitted by the Belgian Presidency to the Members of the European Parliament stipulated that 'the holding before the end of June of a joint (so-called 'Jumbo') Council dealing with economic, financial and social problems at one and the same time could also be considered in the context of practical solutions to the social problems currently facing the Community'. No decision has yet been taken, and it was acknowledged that preparations for such a meeting would have to be as thorough as possible in order to ensure a successful outcome. However, it was noted in the Presidency's conclusions concerning the European Council of 29 and 30 March that a special meeting of the Council would be studying specific measures for promoting employment. Might I add that my recent answer indicated the circumstances under which a Jumbo Council might be held.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) In view of the discussions that have taken place since I put my question down two months ago, the President-in-Office's reply comes as no surprise to me at all. However, I wonder why the President-in-Office announced in January that he was considering a Jumbo Council when it now looks certain — or at least fairly certain — that we cannot expect to see any such Jumbo Council in the first half of this year. We must be realistic, and it looks to me as though we should be grateful if we got this Jumbo Council by the end of the year. Has it emerged over the last few months that there are no signs of a Community solution to the problem of unemployment? Or is the reason perhaps that the Commission is not in a position to submit concrete proposals to such a Jumbo Council? Or is the Council afraid, in view of the factors the President-in-Office has just mentioned — the ideological vacuum, the lack of resolve, the mood of

despondency — that this Jumbo Council would be nothing more than play-acting?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) As I pointed out before, the programme submitted by the country holding the Presidency amounts to a statement of intent, but such a programme cannot be imposed. All the discussions we have had in the meantime indicate that the preparations for such a Jumbo Council require a lot of time and cannot be rushed. It would indeed be unfortunate if such a Jumbo Council were to fail because of inadequate preparation, and we are doing everything we can to ensure that this Jumbo Council is held as soon as possible. In the course of this afternoon I also mentioned that I understand that Denmark, which will be assuming the Presidency after Belgium, will not be dropping the idea of a Jumbo Council should none take place under the Belgian Presidency.

President. — Since they are on related subjects, I call simultaneously Question No 64, by Mr Moreland (H-768/81):

Does the Council agree that the Community's demonstration projects are of considerable value to industry and the development of energy policy?

and Question No 70, by Mr Seligman (H-773/81):

Given the latest knowledge of worldwide gas and oil resources available to the Community's domestic and industrial consumers, will the Council take all necessary steps to ensure that proven industrial processes for coal gasification and liquefaction are available to meet the need when natural gas and oil supplies begin to decrease, or to cope with a sudden disruption in supplies?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, with your permission, and that of the authors, I shall give a joint reply to Question No H-768/81 put by Mr Moreland and Question No H-773/81 put by Mr Seligman.

The Council agrees with the honourable Members about the importance and urgency of this matter, including the coal gasification and liquefaction projects. It is for this reason that the Council has asked that the European Parliament should deliver its opinion on this urgent matter during the current session.

Mr Moreland. — Does the President-in-Office realize that we have a situation in which the Council at its technical level is accepting and approving a volume of demonstration projects but at its political level is not accepting a budget so that these projects should be undertaken, and that this looks bad for the Community's public image? Can he assure us that this situ-

Moreland

ation should not occur and that he will use his efforts to resolve this situation?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) What the honourable Member says is not quite true, since the Council is prepared to take all the necessary legislative measures to enable the proposals to be implemented.

Mr Seligman. — The President's reply was a very neat way of turning the blame back on Parliament for the delay in this matter, but I do not think that should be allowed to kill the subject. I do feel that the Council is not giving sufficient importance to coal liquefaction and gasification, because not only their economic value is vital but their strategic value in case of supplies of oil or gas being cut off are very important. We must have an alternative supply for motor fuel and gas for industry. Therefore I hope the Council will give much more importance to it quite apart from the procedural problem of the Parliament holding up the procedure.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The Council needs Parliament's opinion before it can reach any decision. That is why I have asked for Parliament to let us have its opinion as soon as possible.

On the other hand, while I am aware of the importance of the gasification and liquefaction processes, these are long-term projects. In the near future, we cannot expect them to make any significant contribution to safeguarding the Community's energy supplies. According to the Commission's forecasts, by the end of the century coal gasification and liquefaction may account for about 1% of the Community's total energy consumption.

President. — I call Question No 65, by Mr Prag (H-783/81):

What action has the Council taken in respect of Parliament's Resolution of 18 December 1980 (paragraph 11) urgently requesting 'the creation on a permanent basis of a Community disaster relief unit to intervene urgently in the event of disasters, at the request of the governments concerned, and including specialized technical units from the armed forces of the member countries', what discussions have taken place with other international bodies and what have been the results?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Insofar as the action suggested by the European Parliament's Resolution of 18 December 1980 falls within the competence of the European Communities, it is up to the Commission in the first place to submit a proposal to the Council if appropriate.

Mr Prag. — Since the Commission generally does not submit proposals to the Council when it thinks it has no chance of getting them through, maybe there is some interaction there between the two. There usually is. But would the President-in-Office agree that in all recent cases of natural disasters, inadmissible delays in relief work, in the distribution of essential foodstuffs, temporary shelter and medical supplies from the main collection points to the stricken areas have occurred because of lack of appropriate transport and equipment and of the people to use them? And does he know that exactly that happened in the case of the Italian earthquake of December 1980, resulting in much unnecessary misery and suffering? And finally, is the Council, as all too frequently, waiting for another appalling disaster to occur before deciding once again to do nothing to have comprehensive counter-measures ready in advance?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) In the case mentioned by the honourable Member — the earthquake in Italy — the action taken by the Italian authorities and the Community was exemplary. What I have just said does not therefore quite correspond to the truth.

On the other hand, the Commission has never submitted any proposals on this matter, and it is not quite clear to what extent the Community is responsible for such affairs.

In reply to a similar question put to the Commission by Mr Prag at the March part-session the Commission stated — and Mr Prag must be aware of this — that it did not currently have any plans for examining the feasibility of creating such a unit, but that it would shortly be publishing a report on mutual cross-frontier medical support in the event of disasters. This matter has not yet been discussed under political cooperation.

President. — I call Question No 66, by Mr Lomas (H-806/81):

In the Official Journal of the European Communities No L 6, Vol. 25, dated 11 January 1982, it is shown that consignments of skimmed milk powder were sent as food aid to a number of countries, including the repressive dictatorships of Uruguay, Chile and Haiti.

This shows that the Council is not concerned about the political position of governments when they decide to send food aid.

In view of this, why is the Council still refusing to approve the sending of food aid to Vietnam, and will the Council reconsider its position in view of the urgent need for such aid?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) One of the Community's chief concerns is to ensure that aid is granted only where it has a genuine

Tindemans

prospect of reaching the persons in need. In some cases, aid is not given direct to the countries concerned but to international or non-governmental organizations, which guarantee its correct distribution. This was the case with the aid for the people of Uruguay, Chile and Haiti under the 1981 programme. The Commission channelled supplies through the International Committee of the Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations. No food aid has been allocated to Vietnam since the 1980 programme, as the Commission has submitted no proposals to that effect to the Council. However, in view of the extremely serious health situation obtaining in Vietnam, the Commission recently granted humanitarian aid totalling 300 000 ECU as a contribution to the activities of non-governmental organizations.

Mr Lomas. — I understand, of course, that Mr Tindemans and the Council would want to have full assurances that any food aid that was sent either direct or through the organizations would reach the people and be properly distributed. It is proper to ensure that this is what happens. But is he aware that some of those NGOs — Oxfam, the International Red Cross, the United Nations Food Aid Programme — are all sending food aid to Vietnam, as indeed are a number of countries separately? All of them are absolutely satisfied that the distribution is being done in a proper manner. Indeed, I sent details of all this to the Commission in order to help them to try and pressurize the Council into agreeing to distribute the aid. So what I would like to ask the Council is, would they have a look at all this overwhelming evidence that the aid is being distributed in a proper manner and if they are satisfied with that would they then reconsider the position?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The Commission has not proposed any further food aid for Vietnam since 1979 — undoubtedly because it has considered all aspects of the problem, including the views expressed at the political cooperation meetings. The Community's food aid programmes for 1980 and 1981 thus contained no allocations for aid to Vietnam, nor is there any such allocation in the 1982 programme currently being studied by the Council. On 2 March 1982 the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, reiterated that the EEC would not send any food aid to Vietnam before the political situation in Cambodia was settled. I might add in this context that Vietnam has sent its Minister of Foreign Affairs to Europe and that I met Mr Co Thatch yesterday morning to discuss this matter with him personally. I shall be reporting to the Council on my talks with him.

Mr Balfé. — Thanking the President-in-Office for his reply, it has been very interesting to hear of his meeting with the representatives. Could he assure us now that he will be at least hoping that the Commission does put forward a proposal for food aid and that fol-

lowing this meeting he will be happy to commend it to the Council?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) May I remind you that I am speaking on behalf of the Ten. I said just now that I shall be reporting on my talks with Mr Co Thatch yesterday — probably next Monday or Tuesday. It is then up to the Council to decide on the attitude it wishes to adopt. As I said in my earlier reply, it is for the Commission to submit a proposal.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) In view of your previous reply on the subject of Vietnam, in which I noticed you made a clear distinction between regimes which are to be condemned, but which do not commit aggression, and those which do commit aggression, can one take it that there is a Community policy to the effect that food aid is not granted to countries which commit aggression, but a certain amount of aid is granted to countries which do not commit aggression.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) May I repeat what the President of the Commission, Mr Gaston Thorn, stated on 2 March 1982, namely that 'the European Economic Community will not send food aid to Vietnam as long as the political situation in Cambodia has not been settled'. That is what Mr Thorn said. For the benefit of Mr Habsburg, I might add that the Community's rule up till now in the case of 'doubtful' regimes — to put it that way — has been to take precautions to ensure that the aid granted benefited the population and did not represent a trump card in the hands of the regime.

Mr Efremidis. — (GR) In view of what Mr Tindemans has said, I should like to put a supplementary question. The President-in-Office suggested and insisted that no humanitarian aid be granted to Vietnam because of the situation in Cambodia. Quite apart from one's own views on this matter and apart from the question of guarantees, I should like to ask the following.

Does this refusal to grant humanitarian aid to the people of Vietnam amount to a punishment, so that people are condemned to hunger and misery, despite all they went through in the war and despite the fact that the countryside has been depopulated and turned into a lunar landscape? Is that the Community's policy? Is that a humanitarian policy? Not even the President-in-Office could doubt that this aid does in fact reach the people of Vietnam. May I therefore ask for a specific reply as to whether the EEC or the Commission has decided to punish a people and condemn it to hunger and misery simply because they do not like the policy being pursued by the government of that country.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I would repeat that Mr Thorn's statement referred of course to aid given

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direct to the authorities of the country in question. I have just pointed out that our policy is to provide aid which benefits the people and not the regime.

Secondly, as I said in my initial reply, in view of the extremely serious health situation currently obtaining in Vietnam, the Commission recently decided to grant emergency humanitarian aid to the extent of 300 000 ECU as a contribution to the activities of non-governmental bodies.

President. — I call Question No 67, by Mrs Ewing (H-809/81):

Will the Council state what action it proposes to take on the resolution on the situation in Southern Africa which was adopted by the ACP-EEC Joint Consultative Committee on 4 February 1982 following the joint ACP-EEC fact-finding mission to the front-line states?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) I am sure the Council of the Communities will be impressed by the resolution on the situation in Southern Africa drawn up by the ACP-EEC Joint Committee at its meeting in Salisbury last February. I shall therefore confine myself to the points concerning the Council's position. The Council is conscious of the unacceptable aspects of the policy pursued by South Africa, as highlighted by the resolution of the Joint Committee, and it intends to give every possible Community assistance to the countries of Southern Africa which suffer under this policy to help them cope with these difficulties and cooperate amongst themselves. Thus, in the area of financial and technical cooperation — in addition to the usual possibilities offered by the Lomé Convention — specific efforts have been made to assist the ACP states of Southern Africa because of the special situation in that region. To begin with, the Community undertook, at the Maputo Conference in 1980, to give considerable financial support to the countries belonging to the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). Pledges of financial support were also given by Community Member States. Then, when Zimbabwe acceded to the Lomé Convention, the European Development Fund received a large increase in the amount allocated to regional cooperation, an extra 30 million ECU having been earmarked for this purpose. Under the second Lomé Convention the seven SADCC countries which are members of Lomé can be expected to receive a total of approximately 460 million ECU, about 70 million ECU of which will be allocated to regional projects and measures relating to communications, industrial and energy investment, training and rural development.

Finally, the countries of Southern Africa also receive extensive food aid from the Community.

Mrs Ewing. — May I thank the President-in-Office for the answer he has given to my question. May I ask him to accept that those of us who were in the front-line-States mission and attended the Zimbabwe Conference are aware that great hopes were raised in Zimbabwe because I think never before was the ACP-EEC partnership, perhaps the greatest partnership in the world, ever so hopeful of the solidarity of the EEC-end of the agreement. And while I am very delighted about the expressions of financial intention, may I ask the President-in-Office if he would now mention the other aspects of the resolution, the solidarity with the other clauses in it regarding sanctions and so on. If he cannot give me a detailed answer this evening, could I ask in all seriousness that if he wishes to consider this, he will, in courtesy, offer a written answer as to which parts of the resolution the Council is prepared to implement in this year of the sanctions against South Africa and which parts the Council will not be able to go along with.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I can give you a reply to that when we come to deal with the questions you have put down under political cooperation. I shall therefore have occasion to reply to your question in a few minutes' time.

Mrs Ewing. — We know in advance that we are not going to get to that because our time is limited. With all respect I would ask that we do not get an evasive answer. We could at least have had a fuller answer. You are really saying that you are not going to have to answer the later question.

President. — If we do not get round to your question, you yourself have asked for a written reply. That is one way your question could be answered.

Mr Boyes. — I hope the President-in-Office of the Council will answer *my* question. We all know the nature of the regime in South Africa and despite the problems with this regime which applies apartheid, we member countries supply it with aeroplanes, supposedly for internal defence purposes. Would he tell me what safeguards Member States demand when supplying aeroplanes for so-called internal defence purposes and when those planes are not actually used for internal defence, but for aggression against other independent States such as Angola, what sanctions Member States take, and whether or not they would be prepared to attempt to recall any aeroplanes that have been supplied to that regime?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) This is another question for political cooperation and is thus not one for which the Council, as such, is responsible.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) In view of the interesting remarks in reply to Mrs Ewing's question, and of the

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equally interesting written reply the President-in-Office may be supplying, I should like to ask the following. Why is it that the meetings of the European Council and the foreign ministers have discussed a whole range of problems from Afghanistan to the Middle East and Central America, but never the problem of South Africa? Does the fact that it is not discussed mean that the European Council or the foreign ministers consider that, at present, human and civil rights in South Africa are not being violated to such an extent that the Community has to express its political concern — something it is always ready to do on other matters?

Mr Tindemans. — (*FR*) Belgium has held the Presidency since 1 January. Since the matter raised by the honourable Member has not yet been the subject of any written statement I cannot answer his question.

President. — I call Question No 68, by Mr Cousté (H-813/81):

While calling for an early start to negotiations on greater freedom to provided services within the framework of GATT, the United States is resorting to anti-dumping measures and other measures directed against Community exporters to counter the subsidies received by the latter. Does the Council intend to adopt a firm stance on this matter?

Mr Tindemanns, President-in-Office of the Council. — (*FR*) The Community too is opposed to any policy of dumping. Where steel is concerned, it is of the opinion that the US industry's difficulties are not attributable to Community exports but rather to the economic situation in the United States. As regards export refunds for agricultural products, following the Tokyo Round these were acknowledged to be compatible with GATT provided that they were not used in such a way that a contracting party appropriated an unfair share of the world market. There can be no doubt as to the Community's will to adopt a very firm stance in the disputes in which it is currently engaged with the United States on steel and agricultural exports.

Mr Cousté. — (*FR*) I should like to thank the President-in-Office for his reply, which meets my own concern and that of all the economic circles in the ten Member States. So the firm stance is there. The real problem, Mr President, is to know what means you are going to deploy to make it evident, and I think the House would be interested to learn something more about the means, since we are all agreed on the objective.

Mr Tindemans. — (*FR*) The Community will resort to all the means available under GATT if the Ameri-

can proceedings against sales of European steel should prove to be incompatible with the GATT code on subsidies and compensatory levies. If necessary, the Community will raise this question in the OECD Steel Committee, since the American action infringes the 1977 agreement.

President. — Since they are on related subjects, I call simultaneously Question No 73, by Mr Pasmazoglou (H-837/81):

How does the Council assess the causes, duration and impact of the reduction in the price of oil, and what policy is being considered with a view to exploiting this situation?

Question No 69, by Mr Deleau (H-815/81):

The energy statistics of the European Community for the first nine months of 1981 show that its internal energy consumption figures were 6.6% lower than for the corresponding period of the previous year and the net energy imports were 17% lower.

What strategy does the Council intend to adopt in order to ensure that this trend continues?

and Question No 72, by Mrs von Alemann (H-719/81):

In this Programme of Action for the first six months of 1982, Mr Tindemans maintained that 'we are undoubtedly deceiving ourselves if we think we can forthwith create a real common energy policy along the lines of the common agricultural policy, even if the present difficulties have to a certain extent encouraged the convergence of the initiatives taken individually by the Member States'.

If the Council believes that a common energy policy is desirable, which steps does it intend to take in order to set it up?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (*NL*) With your permission and that of the authors, I shall give a joint reply to the three questions.

Firstly: on 16 March 1982 the Council of Energy Ministers discussed three new Commission communications concerning a Community energy strategy, i.e. investment in the rational use of energy, the role of solid fuel and the nuclear aspects. The Council agreed to continue its exchange of views on these communications at the next meeting of energy ministers and to take decisions on the draft recommendations accompanying these communications.

Secondly, the current fall in oil prices brought about by a fall in energy consumption coinciding with overproduction of oil has not diminished the need for a

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permanent reduction in energy consumption in the Community. To this end the Council has taken a series of decisions on energy saving, the rational use of energy, the setting up of a rational structure of energy prices and the substitution of other fuels for oil in electricity production. It must, however, be stressed that since the energy balances in the Member States differ widely in structure from one energy sector to another, it would be illusory to attempt to create right away a real energy policy similar to the common agricultural policy. Nevertheless, the Community has tried and will continue to try to help bring the existing energy structures in the various Member States closer together.

Mr Pasmazoglou. — (FR) I appreciate the answer given by the President-in-Office.

What I would like to know is how the fall in oil prices could be used to advantage in economic policy. The fact is that, for years now, the increase in oil prices has been considered a major cause of economic stagnation and inflation.

What possible approach does the Council think should be followed in order to take advantage of the current fall in oil prices, which is expected to last for at least a few years?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) On 9 June 1980 the Council adopted a resolution on the Community's energy objectives for 1990 and on the convergence of the policies of the Member States. This resolution envisaged a drop to 0.7 — taking I as the figure before the oil crisis — in the mean ratio between the rate of increase in gross consumption of primary energy and the rate of increase in GDP, a reduction in oil consumption to approximately 40% of gross consumption of primary energy, and 70 to 75% of primary energy requirements for electricity production being met by solid fuels and nuclear energy. These objectives appear to be within our grasp, with the exception of oil consumption, where the figure is expected to be 43% in 1990 as compared with 53% in 1979.

Nevertheless, oil consumption fell by 8% in the Community in 1980, and by 8.9% in 1981. Imports of oil have fallen from 472 million tonnes in 1978 to 433 million tonnes in 1980 and even less in 1981. As far as electricity production is concerned, the figure is expected to be 77% in 1990 compared with 60% in 1979.

Mr Seligman. — I am sure we are very impressed with the reduced consumption of oil that has been spelled out by the President-in-Office, but does he think that this is going to continue if the price of oil continues to fall, when surely the consumption of oil will go up again, and we shall be back on the same roundabout, and does he not think that something should be done to stabilize the price of oil and in this way prevent

people dropping their projects for finding alternative fuels? If we do not do that, we shall just have oil prices going up again, and we shall be back to unemployment and recession and everything else.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) My reply was based on the studies already carried out, and I was able to say that the objectives I listed seemed to be within our grasp, except for oil consumption. That is therefore the only answer I can give you on the basis of these studies.

Mr Blumenfeld. — (DE) I am grateful for the President-in-Office's statement that the Council does not intend to serve up an energy policy on the lines of the agricultural policy, since that would undoubtedly be a great mistake. To take up what Mr Seligman said, should the Council not remember that there are market forces at work in the whole energy economy, and that prices for supplies of energy will therefore continue to fluctuate as they have fluctuated in the past, so that the whole thing cannot be forced into a corset. The only alternative to rising oil prices is thus nuclear energy.

Mr Tindemans. — (DE) The Ten have never denied that. That is a fact which the Council recognizes.

Mr Moreland. — I would like to follow the last two questioners and suggest to the President-in-Office that if he looks at the three documents he referred to that were discussed at the Council, he will see the warning signs for the future in terms of our dependence on imported energy resources and possible shortages near the end of the century. Is he not concerned in this context that we are falling short of our objectives in the Community — objectives that the Council has agreed in terms of the development of nuclear energy and in terms of the objectives laid down in 1975 for coal production in the Community?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I can only repeat what I have just said — that the objectives I mentioned seem to be within our grasp, except for oil consumption. I did in fact see the warnings to which the honourable Member referred, but as a mere mortal I can only base my remarks on these studies.

I shall never forget how impressed I was at the time by the studies published by the ECSC in — I think — 1954 or 1955 on a possible shortage of energy. Since then, all the things forecast in these studies have not come to pass, and the current situation bears no relation to the studies made at that time. There is nothing I can do about it — in the world we live in we have to rely on these scientific studies, and I have no other sources.

President. — I call Mr Boyes on a point of order.

Mr Boyes. — I would like a definition from you, Mr President, on the word Question Time. Your official has just notified me quite correctly, according to the Rules, that if you want to take over a question, notification has to be given before Question Time. On this occasion, we are having questions to the Council and then we are having another set of questions to the Foreign Ministers. Normally on the order-paper it says one hour for one set of questions and 30 minutes for the second set of questions.

Does that mean that you define Question Time as the two sets of questions, or is there one Question Time for the Council and one Question Time for the President-in-Office? I would like a definitive definition, because I would like to challenge the interpretation of that Rule.

President. — Mr Boyes, you are aware that Question Time is divided into two parts. You are also aware — I announced it a short time ago — that we are in a particularly difficult situation today, and we had a major debate on this point. I would therefore ask you to appreciate that we cannot spin out Question Time indefinitely. The staff have been extremely understanding, and I think we too must make an effort.

We turn now to questions to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

I call Question No 80, by Mr Alavanos (H-818/81):

Mr Tindemans, President of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the European Communities, at the Madrid Conference on 9 February 1982, showed such concern for 'human rights' that he effectively supported the coldwar, anti-socialist opinions of the USA, which is seeking to boycott the Conference and generally undermine the spirit of détente.

Can the President therefore state — within the context of his concern for human rights — what measures have been taken to guarantee human rights in Northern Ireland where the United Kingdom — a Member State of the EEC — clings to power and stolidly violates human rights through the army, brutal force and oppression? And how does he justify the association of the European Communities under the Lomé Convention with countries ruled by reactionary regimes which have slaughtered their people as is the case, for example, in Numeiri's Sudan, Mobutu's Zaire and other countries?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (FR) The internal policies of the Member States are not discussed in European Political Cooperation. As regards the signatories to the Lomé Convention, it should be noted that this convention does not give the Ten any special responsibility as regards the

internal situation in these countries. However, it is well known that the Ten condemn violations of human rights wherever they occur.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) I am amazed at the President-in-Office's reply. I cannot believe that the Ten do not have a special responsibility with regard to what goes on in their own countries or in associated countries, but that they do have a special responsibility with regard to what goes on in a country which, after all, belongs to a different alliance. That first of all.

Secondly, to make the task of the President-in-Office easier, may I ask him what criteria apply to the Ten's interest — an interest which is sabotaging the Madrid Conference on human, civil and other rights? What are the criteria? Perhaps the number of victims? Then why the interest in Poland and not in Northern Ireland? Has anyone counted the number of dead in Northern Ireland since Bobby Sands? Perhaps *when* they died? Only a short time ago, however, an Irish Member told us that three of his compatriots were killed by plastic bullets last weekend. Perhaps the outlawing of other parties? In Sudan, however, the Communist Party is banned, and Communists are being murdered in prison. Finally, perhaps the criterion is the sending of foreign troops? In Poland there has been no such intervention, whereas that is what is happening in Northern Ireland. I should therefore appreciate a reply by the President-in-Office.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I shall not reply to the speech the honourable Member has just made. I would simply point out that Poland signed the Final Act of Helsinki like all the rest of us, and that this Act gives official recognition to human and trade union rights.

Secondly, as far as the countries of the European Community are concerned, both countries and individuals can always appeal to the Court of Human Rights here in Strasbourg if there is any infringement of human rights.

Thirdly, as far as countries outside the European Economic Community are concerned, Members are aware that if there is any systematic violation of human rights, procedures are available in the context of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations.

Mr Prag. — Does the President-in-Office not think it would be useful if Mr Alavanos learned some facts about the matters he raises instead of wasting this Parliament's time asking questions which contain unmitigated and undiluted drivel?

Mrs Ewing. — I am just rising, because I thought you were getting near the end of Question Time, to put a question of clarification. Am I right in thinking, from

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the answer I got from the President-in-Office to my question on the resolution, that I shall get a full written answer under the further question I have down, No 85, along the lines I requested?

President. — Mrs Ewing, we shall proceed as we always do, i.e. taking the questions in order. As I said before, if you do not get a reply now you will receive a written reply.

Mr Efremidis. — (GR) The President-in-Office replied that the Council showed an interest in Poland, in particular, because it has signed the Final Act of Helsinki. However, we are all aware that this Act was also signed — and it was one of the major signatures — by the United Kingdom, which is violating both the spirit and the letter of the Act every day in Northern Ireland. This was thus nothing but a threadbare excuse to avoid answering the question. I should like him to be more frank, since I believe him to be honest and a patriotic Belgian and a responsible statesman from a small country which has fought for human rights. In view of that, I should like him to give a frank answer without taking account of the size and strength of the present-day United Kingdom — just an honest answer.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I have just given you the reply. Since it is Member States of the Community that are involved, one can always appeal to the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

President. — I call Question No 81, by Mr Adamou (H-819/81):

Mr Tindemans, President of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the European Communities, at the Madrid Conference on 9 February 1982, showed such concern for 'human rights' that he effectively supported the cold-war, anti-socialist opinions of the USA, which is seeking to boycott the Conference and generally undermine the spirit of détente.

Can the President therefore state — within the context of his concern for human rights — why thousands of Belgian steelworkers were subjected to mounted police charges in Brussels on almost the same day that he was holding forth in Madrid on trade union rights in the socialist countries? And what has happened about the 'Berufsverbot' in the Federal Republic of Germany where, in recent years, 4 000 persons have been dismissed from their posts in public services and organizations simply because of their political beliefs?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (FR) The honourable Member will be aware that the internal policies of the Member States are not

discussed in the context of European Political Cooperation. I can only repeat that.

Mr Adamou. — (GR) Mr Tindemans' reply reminded me of a saying we have in Greece and which is very apposite: 'No-one mentions ropes in the hanged man's house'.

In other words, when we have what happened in Belgium to the steelworkers, when we have what is happening in the Federal Republic of Germany with the notorious *Berufsverbot*, when we have what is going on in the other countries, how can the representatives of the EEC talk about violations of human rights in third countries in view of what is going on in their own countries?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) At this point I should like to reply in my capacity as Belgian Foreign Minister. I should like to protest most strongly against what has just been said; it is unworthy of the European Parliament. There can be no talk of violations of human rights as far as the Belgian steelworkers are concerned.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) I should like to put a specific question. May I ask the President-in-Office — who was present in Madrid and raised the question of Poland as an excuse for boycotting the Conference — why it is that the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, while they had at least sufficient grounds for raising the subject of violations of human rights in the countries of NATO and the EEC, did not do so, while the subject was raised by the countries of the EEC through the intermediary of Mr Tindemans, as a reason for boycotting the Conference? Perhaps the Soviet Union has a different conception of détente.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) In Madrid I was speaking on behalf of the Ten. It was my colleagues, the Ten, who asked the President-in-Office to speak on their behalf, i.e. on behalf of the Member States of the Community. I therefore reject this personal attack.

President. — Question No 82 by Mr Efremidis will not be called, since item 39 on the draft has been upheld.

Since the author is absent, Question No 83 will be answered in writing.¹

Mr Efremidis. — On a point of order, Mr President.

I know how carefully you apply the Rules, and you were applying them carefully on this occasion as well

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-79/81), converted into a question for Question Time.

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in wishing to drop discussion of my question. Unfortunately, however, despite your being so careful, you may not have noticed that my question has two parts: one part concerns the Turkish regime and its oppression of the Turkish people, and on this point we did in fact have an answer from the President-in-Office when we had the debate under item 39. However, there is a second part to my question, concerning not only what the present Turkish junta is doing to oppress the Turkish people, but what it has been doing for the last eight years to oppress the Cypriot people by occupying 40% of its territory etc. Nothing was said on that point when we discussed item 39, and in fact the word Cyprus was never mentioned. That is why I should like the President-in-Office to reply to the second part of my question.

President. — I understand your question and would reply as follows. You say that you tabled a question which has two parts, but the fact is that you tabled one question and not two. If I may quote the Rules of Procedure — and you were so kind as to say that I applied them strictly — the situation is that ‘Questions shall not be accepted for Question Time at any part-session if the agenda already provides for the subject to be discussed with the participation of the institution concerned’.

Your question may thus have two parts, but that does not alter the fact that it is one question. It has been dealt with. If you feel it has not been dealt with adequately, you need only table another question.

I call Question No 84, by Mr Kyrkos (H-6/82):¹

The ambassadors of the four countries which decided to take part in the peace-keeping force in Sinai (France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands) confirmed in a joint demarche vis-à-vis the Egyptian Government their countries’ intent to carry out their decision ‘within the framework of the agreements between Egypt and Israel’.

We would point out that the initial decision was taken in the spirit of the Venice declaration, which spirit now appears to have been forgotten. We believe that there can be no solution to the crisis in the Middle East unless the right of the Palestinian people to their own state is recognized and the PLO take part in the negotiations to achieve stable and peaceful coexistence between all the states in the region. Do the foreign ministers consider that the Venice declaration still forms the basis of Community policy, and do they support the Fahd initiative so that it may be carefully examined by the interested parties with a view to finding a solution to these dangerous daily tensions?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (FR) In their statement of 23 November the governments of the United Kingdom, France, Italy and the Netherlands made clear their reasons for taking part in the multinational force in Sinai. At the same time, the Ten published a declaration on this participation. This declaration does not represent a departure from the principles laid down in the Venice Declaration. The Ten have welcomed Prince Fahd’s proposals as representing a positive contribution to efforts to find a peaceful solution in the Middle East.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) As regards the continued validity of the Venice Declaration there are some slight differences of emphasis amongst the foreign ministers. I would remind you of the statement by Mr Cheysson during his visit to the Middle East, which cast further doubts on the present value of the declaration. I would also draw attention to the fact that there were some differences of interpretation as regards the decision for the four countries to participate in the peace force, and one of these differences concerned the attitude of the Greek Government. There is thus widespread confusion on this matter, and I would ask the President-in-Office to enlighten us — particularly in view of current events in Palestine, with the persecution of the Palestinian people — as to whether the Community is abiding by the view which it recognized the existence of the PLO.

My question, Mr President, is whether the view is still that the Community can launch an initiative, the cornerstone of which will be the recognition of the Palestinian people’s right to self-determination.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) Firstly, Mr Cheysson’s visit to the Middle East was in his capacity as French Foreign Minister, so that anything he said about the Middle East had nothing to do with political cooperation between the Ten.

Secondly, Mr Cheysson was informed us that his words were wrongly interpreted.

Thirdly, the Venice Declaration has been restated in its entirety.

Mr Galland. — (FR) On reading the question in the form it is put, i.e. ‘unless the PLO take part in the negotiations to achieve stable and peaceful coexistence between all the states in the region’, do you think that, in view of Articles 19 and 22 of its Charter, which call for the destruction of the state of Israel, the PLO can be a factor for coexistence in peace and stability?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I have every respect for Mr Galland and his knowledge of the problem, but he is well aware that I am speaking here on behalf of the Ten in the context of political cooperation. It is there-

¹ See Annex.

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fore not for me to express personal feelings or opinions. In the terms in which you phrased it, this question has never been discussed by the Ten in the context of political cooperation.

President. — Question Time is closed.¹

I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I do not think this sitting should end without the Parliament putting on

record the fact that we have noted that the President-in-Office today has had to endure a much longer day than is usual for the President-in-Office, and indeed he looks as fresh as the moment he started. He has given us two of, I think, the best speeches that we have heard in this Parliament, and he has been remarkably nimble and quick on his feet in Question Time. Many of us feel that the work he is doing as President of the Council does great credit to the Community; but in particular I would like to record the enormous pressure we have put him under today.

*(Applause — The sitting was closed at 9.15 p.m.)*²

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-92/81), converted into a question for Question Time.

² See Annex.

ANNEX

Questions which could not be answered during Question Time, with written answers

*I. Questions to the Commission**Question No 1, by Mr Ansquer (H-619/81)*

Subject: EEC Romania trade relations

Following the first meeting of the EEC-Romania Joint Committee, what measures does the Commission intend to propose to remedy the situation where Community exports to Romania are stagnant while imports from the latter are increasing?

Answer

It is true that the recent pattern of trade between Romania and the Community is not entirely satisfactory for the latter, since the trade deficit has amounted to 75 million EUA and approximately 100 million EUA in the first seven months of 1981. It should be pointed out however that the trade balance was constantly in the EEC's favour between 1970 and 1980.

The Community mentioned this change in the pattern of trade to the Romanian authorities at the first meeting of the EEC-Romania Joint Committee. There was a positive outcome to this meeting which allowed the problems to be better defined.

The Romanians were first of all reminded of the provisions of the agreement on industrial products pursuant to which Romania undertook to develop and diversify its imports of Community products at a rate of increase not lower than the increase in its imports from other GATT members. The Community was also critical of the parts of Romanian legislation on the compensation procedures which hinder EEC exports to Romania. These procedures require Community exporters to purchase Romanian products in exchange. The Community obtained an assurance on this point to the effect that the Romanian authorities would adopt a more flexible approach in applying the legislation, especially in the case of small and medium-sized firms.

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Question No 4, by Mr Cecovini (H-694/81)

Subject: Harmonization of copyright laws

The Commission is presumably aware of the considerable differences that exist within the Community as regards the freedom of expression of writers, the assistance they receive and their remuneration. To remedy this, what measures does it intend to propose with a view to unifying or at least coordinating copyright laws?

Answer

Social security arrangements for writers differ tremendously, which is true in the case of all self-employed persons. There are also differences with regard to the protection which copyright laws should provide as a basis for remunerating creative work of a literary, musical and artistic nature. The Commission hopes to publish this year a memorandum analysing the current position regarding copyright and performing rights and outlining in general terms the Community measures to be taken. In the case of writers as of compos-

ers, the basic task will be to adapt national copyright laws to progress in the techniques of reproducing and transmitting writing, sound and pictures.

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Question No 9, by Mr Balfe (H-758/81)

Subject: Meetings between the Commission and South African officials

How many meetings were held during 1981 between Members of the Commission and officials and other people representing the South African Government, and how many meetings were held during 1981 between officials of the Commission and officials and other people representing the South African Government?

Answer

There were two meetings in 1981 between Members of the Commission and representatives of the South African Government. In both cases these took the form of protocol visits by His Excellency Mr Meyer, appointed Ambassador to the Communities at the end of 1980, who presented his letters of credence to Mr Thorn on 16 March and paid a courtesy visit to Mr Haferkamp on 15 May.

As for Commission officials, the Director-General for External Relations, with responsibility for contacts with third countries, had about a dozen meetings with officials of the South African Mission to the Communities during 1981.

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Question No 11, by Mr Paulhan (H-812/81)

Subject: Decline in farm incomes in the European Community

Given a decline in EEC per capita farm incomes in 1981 of 4.2% in real terms (which, added to the reduction over the two previous years, amounts to 24% since 1978), what proposals does the Commission intend to make to halt this downward trend?

Answer

The Commission shares the honourable Member's concern over the decline in incomes and it was for this reason that it proposed a substantial increase in support prices, as well as other measures, for the forthcoming year. In addition, the Commission has just made proposals to support the incomes of milk producers by adjusting the coresponsibility levy. This should free about another 120 million EUA for farmers who are most affected.

The most recent results published in the index of incomes by sector show that in 1981 incomes of people employed in the agricultural sector increased by an average of approximately 8%, which meant a decline in real terms of about 2%. On the basis of the same calculation, the cumulative decline in real income since 1978 is 11%.

The Commission would stress that these average figures conceal significant differences between Member States and between types of agricultural holding. It is the Commission's view that its farm price proposals should make a useful contribution towards the improvement of incomes in farming.

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Question No 13, by Miss de Valera (H-840/81)

Subject: UN report on cancer

Has the Commission carried out an assessment of the United Nations' recent report on the causes of cancer, in particular the implications for workers in chemical, insulation, mining, gas and chromium industries and if so what are the views of the Commission?

Answer

1. The Commission has been concerned with occupational carcinogens for many years.

The first Directive on an occupational carcinogen was that of 1959 establishing safety standards for ionizing radiation, completed in 1962, and revised several times since then.¹

The 1978 Directive concerned the protection of the health of workers exposed to vinyl chloride monomer.²

2. A more global approach to occupational carcinogens was contained in the Council Resolution of 29 June 1978 on an action programme of the European Communities on safety and health at work³ which contains two priority actions which make specific reference to occupational carcinogens.

3. The 1980 Directive on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents at work⁴ covers all agents, including eleven specifically named agents, seven of which are carcinogens (acrylonitrile, asbestos, arsenic and compounds, benzene cadmium and compounds, nickel and compounds, and carbon tetrachloride), for which individual directives shall be established, setting limit values and other specific requirements.

The Commission has already sent to the Council a proposal for an individual directive on asbestos⁵ and proposals on the other carcinogens will be made by the Commission in due course.

4. As concerns those carcinogens for which it is not possible to establish exposure limits, proposals regarding the limitation of the use of the agent at the place of work are a first consideration, followed, if necessary, by a general or limited ban on the agent in cases where use of the other means available does not make it possible to ensure adequate protection.

5. As regards a specific strategy to be adopted at Community level for occupational carcinogens, the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health protection at work is currently drawing up an opinion which it is expected to submit to the Commission later this year.

6. As regards research the Fourth ECSC medical research programme on the effects on the health of workers of physical and other occupational factors at the workplace includes studies relating specifically to workers in the iron and steel sector and in coking plants such as the study and prevention of specific health risks, including the risk of broncho-pulmonary cancer as well as the identification of the hazards associated with potentially harmful substances such as nickel chromium and other substances used in alloys.

7. The Commission has, therefore, been very active in this field, and has initiated several important actions on occupational carcinogens.

A number of recent reports have appeared which deal generally or in part with this subject. The Commission welcomes all such reports which support and lend weight to the

¹ OJ L 246 of 17. 9. 1980.

² OJ L 197 of 22. 7. 1978.

³ OJ C 165 of 11. 7. 1978.

⁴ OJ L 327 of 3. 12. 1980.

⁵ OJ C 262 of 9. 10. 1980.

work that the Commission has already undertaken and, of course, intends to undertake in the future.

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Question No 20, by Mr Van Miert (H-788/81)

Subject: Basis of assessment for VAT on gold transactions in Belgium

What is the Commission's attitude to the Belgian Government's decision to lower the basis of assessment for VAT on gold transactions to 1% from its present level of 6%, bearing in mind that Belgian law as it stands contains no provision for a VAT rate of 1%?

Answer

The decision of the Belgian Government to lower the rate of VAT on gold transactions from 6% to 1% is not, in principle, in conflict with the Sixth Directive on VAT. The Sixth Directive establishes a common system and a uniform basis of assessment for VAT but leaves the Member States free to establish the actual rates of taxation. The only limitation on the freedom to fix rates is that any reduced rate should be fixed so as to allow full deduction of the tax applied at the preceding stage (this is provided for by Article 12(4)).

Since the incidence of VAT at earlier stages relating to operations on monetary gold is fairly slight, this condition would appear to be met.

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Question No 22, by Mr Deleau (H-816/81)

Subject: Possible recourse to Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty in matters of trade policy

The Commission is justifiably proposing that the Community should invoke Article 23 of GATT in order to increase pressure on Japan. Could not Articles 85 and 86 of the EEC Treaty also be applied more resolutely?

Answer

In proposing to the Council that Article 23 of GATT be invoked, the Commission was aiming to implement a procedure, internationally accepted, whereby it is possible to challenge the measures and practices of a contracting party (contrary to the general agreement or not) which would result in another contracting party's being deprived of the benefits accruing from trade negotiations between governments.

With regard to Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty, the Commission reiterates the position it adopted in its opinion on Community imports of Japanese products covered by the Treaty of Rome.¹

The measures which fall into the framework of trade agreements between the Community and Japan, as well as the agreements imposed on Japanese firms by the Japanese authorities, are regarded as measures of external trade policy which are not covered by Article 85. In the case of the measures adopted in January 1981 by the Japanese Govern-

¹ OJ C 111 of 21 October 1972, p. 13.

ment in the machine tools sector, the Commission therefore felt that they were not covered by Article 85.¹

However, the application of Article 85 cannot be excluded in principle in the case of private agreements which have been adopted unilaterally by Japanese firms or after consultation with the corresponding European firms. Nevertheless, any implementation of Article 85 with regard to private agreements involving certain sectors and certain Community countries would need, in order to be realistic, to be viewed in the overall framework of the measures implemented in the various Member States, and in the sectors in question, to eliminate or narrow the trade gap between Japan and the Community.

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Question No 26, by Mr Griffiths (H-852/81)

Subject: Marketing of breast-milk substitutes

Will the Commission prepare legally enforceable proposals to govern the marketing of breast-milk substitutes, given the violations of the international code on the marketing of breast-milk substitutes revealed in the United Kingdom by the War on Want report *Breast or Bottle?*

Answer

1. The Commission has already informed the House of its position on this problem. Briefly, the Commission is working on a proposal for a directive on baby food to cover the composition and labelling of these products and some aspects of advertising. This is an extremely complex and difficult area. It will therefore be some time before this work is completed. Details are to be found in the answers to Written Question No 411/81 by Mr De Gucht and in the minutes of the sitting of 15 October 1981 where they concern Mrs Castellina's report on the recommendations of the World Health Organization on baby food.

2. Furthermore, Community manufacturers are at present trying to come to a fairly wide-ranging voluntary agreement to prevent the occurrence of certain practices which may justifiably be criticized. The Commission welcomes these efforts and hopes that they will be brought to a successful conclusion.

3. The scope of the abovementioned Commission proposal will naturally depend on the success of the industry's self-discipline. If, insofar as problems can be overcome in this way, legislation can be reduced to a minimum.

4. It is thus too early to give a conclusive answer to this question. At all events, Parliament will, in due course, be consulted on the Commission's proposal, which will state precisely what must and can be the subject of Community legislation. We will then have an opportunity of considering this extremely important problem together in greater detail.

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Question No 27, by Mr Radoux (H-853/81)

Subject: Commission participation at the meeting of industrialized countries in June 1982

Has the Commission received its usual invitation to participate in the talks to be held at the abovementioned meeting? If not, how does the matter stand at present?

¹ OJ C 264 of 15 October 1981: answer to Written Question No 210/81, by Mr Glinne.

Answer

The President of the Commission has been officially invited to take part in the economic summit of industrialized countries which will be held at Versailles on 4-6 June 1982. His personal representative is, as usual, playing an active part in the preparations for this meeting.

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Question No 28, by Mr Delatte (H-855/81)

Subject: Dairy products

On 14 December 1981 the Commission issued a reasoned opinion addressed to the French Government concerning the protection of dairy products in which it adopts a clear stance in favour of the marketing of dairy product substitutes manufactured from raw materials imported under special arrangements from third countries.

Does the Commission consider this opinion to be compatible with the spirit of the Treaty, particularly Article 39 thereof, and with the need to promote Community dairy products and to ensure genuine consumer protection and freedom of choice?

Answer

The Commission has been dealing with the issue of breast-milk substitutes for years. A reasoned opinion in accordance with Article 169 of the EEC Treaty was submitted to the French Government on this matter on 24 December 1981. Formal proceedings are pending.

An answer is in prospect from the French Government but it has not yet materialized. If this answer brings no new viewpoints, the Commission sees no reason to consider the various aspects of Article 39. The views of the Commission which were outlined in its reasoned opinion can only be reiterated.

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Question No 29, by Mr Welsh (H-859/81)

Subject: Subsidization of the man-made fibre industries

Will the Commission undertake an investigation into allegations that the Italian man-made fibre industry is maintaining an artificial level of capacity through a series of direct and indirect State subsidies which are contrary to Article 92 of the Treaty of Rome?

Answer

The problem of the direct or indirect aid which the Italian man-made fibre industry is said to be receiving to maintain its production capacity artificially has been considered by the Commission, particularly since special monitoring of measures to assist this sector in the Community was introduced in 1977.

The Italian Government has not submitted any special aid projects to the Commission or informed it of any cases in which regional or general arrangements have been introduced to the benefit of the synthetic fibres sector. In fact, in answer to a question from the Commission, the Italian Government stated that no aid of this kind had been granted. High-

level talks are taking place this week with the Italian authorities on the adoption of general legislation on industrial expansion and tax relief for companies in the chemical sector, of which the man-made fibre industry forms part.

A specific problem arising in this sector is that most of the companies concerned are public or mixed undertakings. In any financial action it may take, the government may therefore be acting as the owner of the company concerned or as a public body.

In the latter case, such actions may well include some element of aid, particularly in view of the very different situation in the market concerned. The Commission is at present considering these actions, which may include such an element of aid and may therefore come within the sphere of application of Article 92 of the EEC Treaty.

This again illustrates the importance of transparency in financial relations between Member States and public companies, which was also the Commission's reason for adopting the directive on transparency.

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Question No 30, by Mr Clinton (H-861/81)

Subject: Variable premium on beef

Is the Commission satisfied with the operation of the variable premium system for beef established by Regulation No 3084/74?

Is the claw-back provided for being implemented satisfactorily?

Does the system interfere with competition in intra-Community trade?

Answer

The Regulation referred to by the honourable Member is no longer valid and in fact it refers to export refunds in the beef sector. The detailed rules for the application of the slaughter premium for adult bovine animals are laid down in Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1380/81. This Regulation in Article 7 provides that the United Kingdom shall take all the necessary measures to ensure that in appropriate cases an amount equal to the premium granted is recovered. The Commission is satisfied that this Regulation is being implemented satisfactorily and that the system does not interfere with competition in intra-Community trade.

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Question No 31, by Mr McCartin (H-862/81)

Subject: Development of coal mines

Tests carried out at the Arigna coal mines (Co. Leitrim and Co. Roscommon — Ireland) indicated that the low grade coal there can be used for electricity production. In view of the importance of reducing the Community's dependence on imported energy supplies, can the Commission say what grant assistance can be given to the Irish authorities for the development of these coal mines?

Answer

The Commission is only able to grant assistance for the development of coal mines through loans with interest-rate subsidies. The investments financed by these loans must

meet specific technical and economic criteria¹ and can only be granted for underground mines.

However, all other investments in the coal industry may be financed by Community loans at normal rates of interest, but these loans are only granted to undertakings and not to public authorities.

The low grade coal to be produced at Arigna has to be used for steam raising. It will be produced from open-cast mines. The Community will therefore only be able to grant loans at normal rates of interest for this investment. Negotiations are taking place on this subject between the Commission and Arigna.

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Question No 33, by Mr Harris (H-3/82)

Subject: Flag-of-convenience fishing

Is the Commission aware that nearly 60 Spanish fishing boats have now been re-registered in the United Kingdom so as to gain access to European Community waters and that this form of flag-of-convenience fishing has brought protests from a number of Member States including France and Ireland, as well as from the fishermen of Cornwall and Devon? Now that Her Majesty's Government has said that it is concerned about the practice and is 'urgently considering' whether it can take action, will the Commission introduce measures in conjunction with Member States to tackle the problem on a Community basis?

Answer

It has been confirmed to the Commission by the UK authorities that a number of ex-Spanish fishing vessels (currently about 50), have been re-registered over the last year as UK vessels by British companies and that these are predominantly Spanish crewed.

At present, the registration of fishing vessels falls within national competence and therefore the Commission is not entitled to take any direct action.

The responsible UK authority, i.e. the Department of Trade, has to ensure that owners, whether individuals or companies, of fishing vessels are properly entitled to claim British registration within the terms of the Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats Registry) Order 1981 and that vessels at all time comply with the rules that such registration imposes.

The Department of Trade is closely investigating those companies where there may be reason to doubt their eligibility for registration and has informed the Commission that it will remove from the register any vessel belonging to a company which does not qualify.

The Commission is furthermore informed that the UK Departments for Fisheries, which are also very concerned about the re-registration of foreign fishing vessels, are considering whether further measures need to be taken.

Taking into account in particular the consequences that re-registration could have on the adaptation of the Community fishing fleet to the existing catch possibilities, the services of the Commission are examining the desirability of action at Community level.

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Question No 35, by Mr Moorhouse (H-9/82)

Subject: Romanian exports to the Community

Will the Commission confirm its preparedness to link admission of increased Romanian exports to the Community to progress in human rights in the Socialist Republic of Romania?

¹ These criteria were published in OJ C 79 of 29 March 1980.

Answer

1. The Commission points out that a decision limiting imports from a third country, as described by the honourable Member, can only be adopted under Community law by the Council.
2. However, the Commission is conscious of the problem of human rights and has condemned the violation of these rights wherever they occur.

The honourable Member will be aware that the Community, through the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and recently the meeting in Madrid is actively involved in examining how the signatory States to the Helsinki Final Act implement its provisions. During this examination the situation with regard to human rights in Romania, a signatory to the Final Act, has also been analysed.

The Commission would also draw attention to the fact that, as part of the negotiations on the conclusion in 1980 of two trade agreements with Romania, it indicated to the Romanian authorities the concern of both the European Parliament and the Commission with regard to certain violations of human rights in Romania.

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Question No 37, by Mr Kyrkos (H-15/82)

Subject: Censorship of an article on the change of government in Greece

Since when does the Commission allow its organs to censor articles relating to the internal affairs of Member States? For instance, the magazine *Europe*, published in Washington, refused to carry an article by Mr Lesley Finer relating to the change of government in Greece.

Answer

The Commission has sole responsibility for the publications produced by its departments and it is therefore the Commission's job to assess what is published. In the case referred to by the honourable Member, there is no justification for talking of Commission censorship.

In the light of recent events the Commission decided to reappraise its publications policy and in this regard it felt obliged to exercise stricter editorial control from Brussels and to assess more carefully the contents of publications produced by some of its external departments.

In the course of this assessment the Commission departments have in fact had occasion to question the usefulness of publishing certain articles in Community publications. In this context it is the Commission view — in accordance with its constant opinion in the past — that it is in no instance the task of the Commission to express opinions on the political decisions of the governments of the Member States and that, as a result, this stance must also be reflected in the publications for which it is responsible.

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Question No 38, by Mr Prag (H-18/82)

Subject: Discrimination between the Member States in the prices charged for vehicle spare parts

The Commission has recently declared its intention to investigate the clearly illegal discrimination which takes place on the part of vehicle manufacturers with regard to the prices

at which they sell cars in the different Community countries and noticeably the high prices charged in the United Kingdom. Will it tell us the present state of any investigation it may be carrying out into another effort at sealing off the UK market for vehicles, i.e. the sharp discriminations in the prices of spare parts, which, for example, cause a British car, the Mini metro, for example, to be graded in Group 1 for insurance purposes and equivalent cars such as the Fiat Panda, Citroën Visa in group 3 under which a much higher premium has to be paid? These discriminations have already been in existence for far too long. Is the Commission genuinely determined to get rid of them?

Answer

1. The honourable Member rightly draws attention to the fact that the sales prices not only of new cars but also of parts vary considerably from one Member State to another. This is particularly clear from a comparison of prices excluding taxes and other levies.

The Commission has already stated its position on such price differences in its answers to parliamentary questions by Mr Griffith (H-722/81)¹, Mrs Walz (1358/81)² and Mr von Hassel and Mr Müller-Hermann (393/81)³. The Commission wants to see freer competition among Member States in the spare parts sector. This has been its practice when administering the competition rules contained in the EEC Treaty since its decision of 13 December 1974 in the BMW case⁴.

It will also bear this aim in mind when it draws up its proposal for a regulation on the exemption of sales and customer service contracts in the automobile sector. The draft proposal was recently submitted to the members of the Advisory Committee on competition and dominant economic positions, and thus to the Member States. The European Parliament has also been informed of this draft proposal.

2. A more detailed investigation will be required to establish whether insurance premiums in the United Kingdom for cars imported from other Member States are unjustifiably higher than for British vehicles and the extent to which this practice is incompatible with the provisions of the EEC Treaty⁵. An investigation of this aspect has been started following the honourable Member's question.

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Question No 39, by Mr Kazazis (H-21/82)

Subject: Increased rates of reimbursement for Greece under the EAGGF Guidance Section

Paragraph 39 of Commission Document COM(82)10 final on the fixing of prices for certain agricultural products (1982-83) states that the Commission will submit, before 31 December 1983, a proposal for applying in Greece the same rates of reimbursement as applied in Italy within the context of socio-structural directives.

Given that the socio-structural directives issued in 1972 expire on 19 April 1982 and are due to be extended, and whereas the agricultural structures of Greece are the most deficient of all the Member States, does the Commission intend to avail itself of the opportunity to extend the validity of the socio-structural directives and submit a proposal providing for an increase in the rates of reimbursement for Greece under the EAGGF to the level applied in the Mezzogiorno?

¹ Verbatim Report of Proceedings, February 1982, p. 21.

² OJ C 47 of 22 February 1982, p. 23.

³ OJ C 338 of 28 December 1981, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 29 of 3 February 1975, p. 1.

⁵ See Commission statement, *The European Automobile Industry*, Supplement 2/81 to the Bulletin of the European Communities, point 92, pp. 47-48.

If not, what is preventing it from doing so?

Answer

A Commission proposal concerning the extension of the period of validity of the socio-structural directives until the end of 1983 is currently under discussion by the Council.

The Commission is hopeful that, if the financial problems associated with such an increase of this policy before the end of 1982. In the review of the structural policy which must, of necessity, take place in the interim period, the question of an increase in the rate of financial participation by the EAGGF, Guidance Section for certain common measures up to the level already applicable in the Italian Mezzogiorno, will also be considered for Greece.

The Commission is hopeful that, if the financial problems associated with such an increase can be overcome at the same time, this question can be resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

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Question No 41, by Mr Van Aerssen (H-23/82)

Subject: *Note verbale* of the Commission of 11 March 1982

On what authority did the Commission attempt to deliver the abovementioned *note verbale* to the Turkish Embassy in Brussels?

Answer

The delivery of a *note verbale* is the internationally accepted practice which allows States or international organizations to communicate. In this instance, the honourable Member is presumably referring to the *note verbale* of 10 March 1982 by which the Commission sought to convey to the Turkish authorities the concern which it felt, and which was also felt by various bodies which had approached the Commission, over the arrest of the legal figure, Mr Apaydin, and 44 other Turks.

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Question No 42, by Mr Newton Dunn (H-24/82)

Subject: Internal disaster aid

What was the key difference that caused the Commission to refuse aid following severe flooding in Lincolnshire in the United Kingdom almost a year ago but which led it to award aid to the south-west of England recently?

Answer

Official information received by the Commission indicated that the adverse weather conditions which affected certain parts of the United Kingdom including Lincolnshire at the end of April 1981 did not constitute a natural disaster with exceptionally grave and far-reaching effects for the population.

The damage recorded by the British authorities in 1981 concerned loss of production and did not reveal any elements of hardship affecting the population's survival and livelihood.

This was the basis on which the Commission decided at the end of May 1981 not to grant any aid.

However, the catastrophic weather in the south-west of England at the end of 1981 and beginning of 1982 caused damage on a scale which could not be compared with that recorded for 1981.

The British authorities officially recorded not only loss of agricultural production but also, and in particular, adverse effects on the livelihood of the individuals concerned as well as serious hardship.

The Commission considers that only the second category of damage is eligible for emergency Community aid under Chapter 69 of the budget.

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Question No 44, by Mr Eisma (H-29/82)

Subject: Action taken by the Commission on Parliament's opinion on the proposal for a directive concerning the assessment of the environmental effects of certain private and public projects¹

Since it is not clear from the annex to the minutes of the sitting of Monday, 8 March 1982 (see Annex I, page 2, French version) whether or not the Commission also accepted Amendment No 12 by the Committee on the Environment to Article 8 of the above proposal, can the Commission confirm that it did accept the amendment and, if so, state when it intends to publish the amended text?

Answer

Amendment No 12 was adopted in principle by the Commission and the essence of it was incorporated in the amendment to Article 10 (2) of the original proposal for a directive concerning the assessment of the environmental effects of certain private and public projects.² This amendment was forwarded to the Council of Ministers on 6 April 1982 in accordance with Article 149 (2) of the EEC Treaty.³

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Question No 46, by Mr De Goede (H-36/82)

Subject: Execution without trial in Surinam

Can the Commission state what consequences the execution of death sentences without any form of trial in Surinam will have on development aid?

Answer

The Commission has followed recent events in Surinam with keen interest. In the Commission's view there are certain factors which give reason to believe that the execution of Sergeant-Major Hawker, who was injured, will remain an isolated incident and that trials in future will be conducted in the appropriate legal fashion (i.e., before an ordinary mili-

¹ Weber report (Doc. 1-569/81/rev.).

² OJ C 169 of 9 July 1980.

³ COM(82) 158 final.

tary court, with right of appeal). There are no plans for altering the development aid programme for Surinam.

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Question No 47, by Mr Croux (H-37/82)

Subject: Competition in respect of public works contracts in Belgium

Mr Damseaux, chairman of the Walloon Executive in Belgium, has stated in an official document that his Executive will not approve the allocation of public works contracts to contractors from the Flemish community in Belgium. Does the Commission not consider that this conflicts with the European Community's fundamental rules on competition? What steps does it intend to take in this matter?

Answer

It was only through the question by Mr Croux that the Commission learnt of the letter from the chairman of the Walloon Executive announcing that no public works contracts would be allocated to contractors from the Flemish community in Belgium.

The principal yardstick for assessing this case in accordance with Community law is Council Directive 71/305/EEC of 26 July 1971 concerning the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts.¹

This Directive applies to all public works contracts worth more than one million ECU and is intended to promote genuine competition in this field. To this end, it coordinates and lays down specific rules for the award procedures for public works contracts. Articles 23 to 27 of the Directive list all the criteria for qualitative selection which must be fulfilled if contractors are not to be excluded from the award procedure. These criteria are intended to ensure that the contractors competing for the contract satisfy certain legal requirements and possess certain financial, economic and technical resources. Article 29 lays down the criteria for award of the contract, i.e. either the most economically advantageous offer or the lowest price.

All these are objective criteria. In principle, there is no scope for the introduction of additional criteria of the kind proposed by the Walloon Executive and which have nothing to do with the subject of the contract.

Under these circumstances, it must therefore be assumed that implementation of the proposed special criteria would conflict with the provisions of Directive 71/305/EEC.

The Commission has therefore contacted the Belgian authorities with a request for information and comments.

A more detailed examination and assessment of the entire matter — if necessary on the basis of further Community regulations in addition to the one already mentioned — can only be carried out once the situation has been fully clarified and all the relevant views are known. The Commission therefore reserves the right to give a final assessment of the whole matter at a later stage.

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¹ OJ L 185 of 16 August 1971, pp. 5-14.

Question No 49, by Mr Cottrell (H-41/82)

Subject: Salmon stocks

There is a continuing threat of salmon depopulation in British waters as a result of over-fishing of salmon stocks, particularly with regard to the use of monofilament nets. Severe problems are arising in the rivers Tweed, Tyne, Tees and Severn due to this practice.

Noting the need to preserve the North Atlantic salmon, will the Commission seek to ban monofilament nets, perhaps as part of the common fisheries policy, and encourage Member States to do the same within their territorial waters?

Answer

1. The Commission is aware of the decrease of salmon stocks in the main rivers of the United Kingdom as well as in those of other Member States.

2. It has been scientifically assessed at international level (ICES) that distant water fisheries reduce the quantity of salmon returning to home water rivers. This quantity is further reduced by the fisheries at sea in coastal waters, such as those operating with monofilament nets.

Environmental factors also contribute to the decrease in the stocks of salmon.

3. The Commission is not, however, aware of any scientific study at international level indicating the effects on salmon stocks of monofilament net fisheries but is prepared to consider the desirability of requesting that such a study be made by the relevant scientific body.

4. As has been indicated in the answer to Mr Provan's oral question No H-22/82, the Community has taken a series of steps to limit catches at sea, and furthermore, the Commission considers that the regulation of catches in the waters adjacent to the rivers from which the salmon originates is best left to the local authorities.

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Question No 50, by Mr Lomas (H-45/82)

Subject: Nicaragua

What is the Commission's attitude towards aid for Nicaragua, and particularly the re-scheduling of debts to Member States, and is the Commission intending to increase its aid, in view of Nicaragua's economic difficulties?

Answer

After the fall of the Somoza régime (19 July 1979) the Community as such rapidly gave substantial aid to the devastated country, amounting so far to a total of 27 million EUA, of which 20 million EUA for food aid. With this aid in the form of grants, the Community is obviously also contributing towards Nicaragua's balance of payments. Consequently, it is not a creditor and is not a party to the negotiations on the rescheduling of Nicaragua's external debt. The Commission is aware of the enormous problems involved in the rebuilding of Nicaragua and is resolved to continue its aid to that country.

In its resolution of 30 March 1982 the European Council agreed that the aid granted by the EEC Member States and by the Community itself, for the development of Central America and the Caribbean, must be coordinated and increased as much as possible. The

Commission is currently drawing up a proposal on this matter, It is envisaged that Nicaragua will be a beneficiary under these new measures.

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Question No 51, by Miss Hooper (H-47/82)

Subject: Secondments from national civil services

Does the Commission have a policy to encourage secondment of staff from a national civil service to the Commission, and, if so, what numbers are involved?

Answer

In May 1976, the Commission approved the principle of an exchange scheme between staff of the Commission and of the public services of the Member States, in order that both parties should be better informed about the tasks, the structure and the workings of the other, and thus to promote closer cooperation.

To date, 112 national officials from 9 Member States have been detached to 19 different services of the Commission, and 23 officials of the Commission have been detached to public administrations in 6 Member States. Periods involved range from 3 months to 2 years.

In the light of the positive value of these exchanges, and the recommendation of the Spierenburg report that the scheme should be reinforced, the Commission will shortly be examining detailed proposals to develop and extend the scope of this scheme.

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Question No 52, by Mr Christopher Jackson (H-49/82)

Subject: Right-hand-drive cars

There is evidence that car manufacturers who normally supply right-hand-drive cars to Continental dealers (e.g. for sale to diplomats) refuse to supply such cars for sale to private individuals, or impose unreasonable conditions such as extra-lengthy delivery times or substantial extra charges to discourage private purchasers. In the opinion of the Commission would such actions be likely to contravene the provisions of the Treaty of Rome?

Answer

It may well be possible that the EEC competition rules are infringed where restrictive agreements or concerted practices between manufacturers, their approved agents, importers or dealers lead to the refusal to supply certain specifications of motor vehicles or to other hindrances. Thus, as a result of systematic refusal of or other hindrances to the supply of models with certain specifications, motor vehicle distribution agreements could be deemed to have been applied abusively.

Further to information received and to a considerable number of complaints made to the Commission, a series of investigations has been initiated by the Commission on the basis of Regulation No 17/62 to establish to what extent the practices mentioned by the honourable Member are compatible with the provisions of Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty. The Commission hopes to be in a position to draw the conclusions from these investigations shortly.

Finally, the Commission would refer to the reply which it gave on 18 November 1981 to a similar question by Mr Dalziel (question No 48-H-550/81, OJ Annex No 1-277, pp. 211/212 of 18 November 1981).

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Question No 53, by Mr Pintat (H-51/82)

Subject: Research in Europe

Can the Commission indicate what percentage of gross national product is devoted to research by the Member States of the Community?

Answer

The 1981 edition of the annual report on the public financing of research and development in the Member States of the Community, which is due to be published by the statistical Office of the European Communities in the next few months, provides the following figures to indicate public spending on R&D as a percentage of gross domestic product in 1980:

D	F	I	NL	B	UK	IRL	DK	EUR 9
1.14	1.13	0.47	0.97	0.62	1.11	0.49	0.45	0.98

The Statistical Office is not yet in a position to collect data on the private sector. It can nevertheless be estimated that the public and private sectors in the whole of the Community spent slightly less than 2% of GDP on research and development in 1980.

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Question No 54, by Mr Maher (H-52/82)

Subject: Coastal erosion

In view of the serious situation arising as a result of the encroachment of the sea in certain regions of the south and south-west coasts of Ireland, would the Commission be prepared to make finance available to have a study carried out in order to determine how best to combat this very serious problem?

Answer

As far as the problem of coastal erosion in the Community is concerned, the honourable Member is referred to what the Commission said to Parliament on this matter on 19 June 1981.¹

With regard to the specific problem of the coasts of south and south-west Ireland, the Commission has not yet received any request to finance a study of coastal erosion and how to combat it in these areas.

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¹ Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, Report of Proceedings from 15 to 19 June 1981, No 1-272.

Question No 55, by Mrs Squarcialupi (H-58/82)

Subject: Conquering TB by the year 2000.

A hundred years after Robert Koch's discovery of the TB bacillus, tuberculosis, although drastically reduced, has not been eradicated in the industrialized countries and has become widespread in the underdeveloped countries, where it was carried, together with other infectious diseases, by the white man, and where each year it is responsible for the death of at least three million people.

Just as it has been possible to eradicate smallpox simply by carrying out mass vaccinations, the WHO has set itself the target of overcoming TB by the year 2000.

But in order to overcome tuberculosis it is necessary, above all, to solve the basic problem of undernourishment, and this requires substantial further expenditure and/or more programmes.

How does the Commission propose to contribute to the achievement of the WHO's target of conquering TB by the year 2000?

Answer

The Commission understands that the aim of the World Health Organization programme on tuberculosis is to reduce the levels prevailing in the developing countries by the year 2000 to those currently prevailing in the developed countries. The campaign will be based on an expanded programme of immunization, such that all children will receive immunization by the year 2000.

The Commission's role with regard to the problems arising at Community level in connection with vaccines — it should be remembered that the Ministers for Health agreed at their meeting in 1978 that these problems should continue to be dealt with as before by the World Health Organization and the Council of Europe.

Within the Community, tuberculosis still remains as an important and critical problem, and although the Commission is not carrying out any specific work on immunization, nevertheless the Commission is keeping a watchful eye on the problem of communicable diseases in general, and the side effects of immunization in particular.

Concerning the problem of malnutrition, the Commission would like to refer the honourable Member to the debates centring on 'Hunger in the world' which have been held in Parliament over the last two years, and which will continue when the follow-up report by Mr Michel is debated, hopefully in June 1982.

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Question No 56, by Mrs Ewing (H-59/82)

Subject: Accession negotiations with Spain — Fisheries.

Will the Commission make a statement on the present state of accession negotiations with Spain with particular regard to fishery negotiations?

Answer

On 23 July 1980 the Commission forwarded to the Council its first communication on the fisheries sector in Spain.

This communication broadly describes the features of the Spanish fisheries sector and makes an initial assessment of possible future problems.

The Council has not yet begun consideration of the Commission's communication because some aspects of the common fisheries policy are still in a state of flux and may undergo major changes in the near future.

Spain made a first statement on fisheries at the fifth meeting of the Conference of Ministers (21 July 1980).

In that statement, Spain indicated the main sectors in which its fisheries activity is based and described its basic features, stressing the importance of fishing to some regions where it is the main source of income. The cornerstone of the statement was the call for equal access to and use of Community fishing grounds and of fishing rights as they stood on 31 December 1976.

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Question No 57, by Mrs Scrivener (H-60/82)

Subject: Revival of the 'hard sell' system.

There has been evidence over the past few months of a revival of the hard sell system by certain publishers.

Time Live International, for instance, has on several occasions used a method which consists of offering consumers recently published works for free inspection.

Under this system the consumer must return a 'free inspection coupon' to the publisher; experience has shown that these coupons are not always actually signed by the person to whom the work is then sent, or that the signature — and this can be proved — is of no value. It is also conceivable that in some cases the publisher himself 'fabricates' these 'free inspection coupons'.

This enables the publisher to send the book to the consumer and then to bill him for it if it has not been returned within a period of ten days.

The consumer is thus obliged either to take the trouble to return the book, or to agree to pay for it, failing which he may, in some cases be faced with recovery proceedings brought against him at his own cost.

Can the Commission make enquiries with a view to putting a stop to such unacceptable advertising and trading practices?

Answer

As already stated by the Commission in its answer — which the honourable Member might be aware of — to a similar written question, the practices referred to are examples of instances whereby the regulations which exist in most of the Member States are deliberately flouted. These practices are contrary to all general rules of debt law and Community consumers are comprehensively protected against such practices by national legislation. It is the Commission's view that a remedy would not be found more speedily if it were to make enquiries.

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Question No 58, by Mr Enright (H-61/82)

Subject: Artists' resale rights.

Why has the Commission abandoned the idea of adopting a Community directive concerning artists' resale rights? Why is the Council of Europe preparing a draft European

convention which may solve the problem but without reference to the Commission? Is it not the case that the Commission is hiding behind the coat-tails of the Council of Europe in refusing to consider further a directive concerning artists' resale rights?

Answer

In its communication to the Council entitled 'Community action in the cultural sector'¹ of 22 November 1977, the Commission first put forward the idea that resale should be established in those countries where they did not already exist by law.

The Commission has certainly not abandoned this idea. It is still convinced of the need to remove the inequality between artists in countries where no resale rights exist and artists in countries where artists and their heirs are entitled to part of the financial proceeds from resales.

Secondly, the Commission decided to ask the Council of Europe to join with it in extending resale rights for the following reasons:

1. these artists' rights will have greater effect, the wider the geographical area in which they apply;
2. in particular, a wider area of application will weaken the objection often made to their general introduction within the Community countries alone: namely that their art markets would be less competitive than those (including at least one very important one) of the Council of Europe countries;
3. the question of resale rights offers an excellent opportunity to promote the widely desired cooperation between the Community and the Council of Europe.

Lastly, it should be stressed that a European convention on resale rights in no way precludes, but rather facilitates, the subsequent adoption of a Community directive on the matter, at the appropriate time.

Question No 59, by Mr Pattison (H-63/82)

Subject: Report on polluting effects of radioactive discharges from the Windscale Nuclear Complex.

Is the Commission aware of a report published recently in London² concerning radioactive discharges from the Windscale Nuclear Complex on the Cumbrian coast of Britain, into the Irish Sea, which affect communities in Ireland, and northern Europe, as well as in the UK; and what measures does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure the end of this activity, and how soon can it implement them?

Answer

The Commission has only read press accounts of the report to which the honourable Member is referring.

The Commission assumes that the Government of the United Kingdom will ensure the observance of the provisions of the Council directive of 15 June 1980 laying down basic safety standards for the health and protection of the general public and workers against the dangers of ionizing radiation. There is no reason to fear that the population is exposed to radiation in excess of the admissible level. There is therefore no reason for the Commission to take action.

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¹ Bulletin of the European Communities, Supplement 6/77, points 29 and 30.

² See *Irish Times*, Monday, 5 April 1982.

Question No 60, by Mr De Gucht (H-64/82)

Subject: Refusal of subsidies by the Walloon authorities.

Does the Commission consider that any refusal on the part of the Walloon authorities to grant subsidies for public works on the grounds that they are to be executed by a Flemish contractor is incompatible with European regulations?

Answer

On the assumption that the honourable Member is referring to the same matter covered by Oral Question H-37/82 by Mr Croux, he is referred to the answer which has been given to that question.

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Question No 61, by Mr Collins (H-65/82)

Subject: Payment to the retiring Commissioner Michael O'Kennedy

Will the Commission say what justification there is for the recent substantial payment of UKL 40 000 to the retiring Commissioner Michael O'Kennedy? Can they say whether they believe that his 14 months service to the Community was so valuable that this payment was warranted and do they not agree that such a payment must be understood as offensive to the millions of people who are unemployed in the European Community at this time?

Answer

The Commission has the honour to inform the honourable Member that no payment of UKL 40 000 was made to Mr O'Kennedy on his departure.

Mr O'Kennedy having resigned with effect from 11. 3. 1982, his rights will be fixed according to the rules determining the emoluments of the President and Members of the Commission.¹

The Commission requests the honourable Member to refer likewise to the answer to Mr Balfe's written question 1071/80² and Mr Newton Dunn's verbal question H-542/81.³

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*II. Questions to the Council**Question No 74, by Mrs Lezzi (H-838/81)*

Subject: Cultural cooperation between the Mediterranean countries

In recent months Mr Jack Lang, Mrs Melina Mercouri and Mr Vincenzo Scotti — the Ministers for Cultural Affairs of France, Greece and Italy respectively — speaking on

¹ Regulation No 422/67/EEC, 5/67/Euratom, OJ L 187 of 8 August 1967, p. 1, last modified by Council Regulation (Euratom, ECSC, EEC) 1416/81 of 19 May 1981, OJ L 142 of 28 May 1981, p. 1.

² OJ C 288 of 6 November 1980, p. 25.

³ Official Journal of the European Communities, Debates of the European Parliament, No 1-278 (p. 165) of 16 December 1981.

behalf of their various countries have repeatedly called for specific action to promote and develop cultural cooperation between the Mediterranean countries.

What steps has the Council of Ministers for Cultural Affairs of the Member States taken so far to give fresh impetus to cultural cooperation — which has an important role to play in getting under way again the Euro-Arab dialogue in a wider North-South context — and further to foster cultural relations between ACP and EEC countries?

Answer

The Council has received no Commission proposals in the areas mentioned by the honourable Member. At present, the Council does not therefore envisage holding a meeting of the Ministers responsible for culture in order to discuss these matters.

In the context of the Euro-Arab dialogue the two sides have approved the publication of the minutes of the Venice seminar on the ways and means of cooperating to promote awareness of Arab culture and language in Europe. There is also to be technical assistance for the creation of an Arab centre for vocational and teacher training. A symposium on relations between the two civilizations is scheduled to be held in Hamburg in 1983.

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Question No 75, by Mr Van Miert (H-839/81)

Subject: Institutionalized links between the EEC and the United States

What practical steps does the Council intend to take in the light of the statement made by the President-in-Office of the Council following his working visit to the United States, to the effect that 'consideration should be given to the establishment of permanent links between the EEC and the United States, possibly of an institutionalized nature'?

Answer

The Community and the United States, together with the other major industrialized partners, including Japan in particular, have a special responsibility for the smooth functioning of the world economic and commercial system and the solidarity of the Western alliance. It is clear that the disagreement which has recently developed may have serious consequences in this respect.

It highlights the fact that each of the partners must show more awareness of the possible consequences for the others of certain decisions which it may be induced to take in the economic, commercial, or monetary sphere.

While there is machinery for regular consultations between the Commission and the US Administration (supplemented by regular meetings between a delegation from your Parliament and the US Congress) it may be asked whether this machinery should not be strengthened. It was along these lines that I personally made a number of remarks in Washington, and these remarks tie in with comments made by some of my colleagues, in particular, Miss Flesch, Mr Colombo and Mr Genscher.

At its recent meeting in Brussels on 29 and 30 March 1982 the European Council discussed this situation and adopted the following conclusions:

- first, it stressed the importance for it of links with the United States and its attachment to further development of consultations between Europeans and Americans;
- secondly, it stressed that it looked to the Versailles Summit at the beginning of June to institute increased cooperation between the major industrial partners, particularly in the field of interest rates, exchange rates and the strengthening of North-South rela-

tions. At its May meeting the Council will be discussing proposals to this end for the Community to submit to its partners.

A number of practical steps have therefore been taken but I personally am convinced that we should pursue the matter further.

If the European Parliament so wishes, the Council is ready to participate — in the person of the President-in-Office — in a debate on the links between the Community and the United States.

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Question No 76, by Mrs Hammerich (H-863/81)

Subject: Finance from the Community budget for meetings on security matters

Does the Council agree that there is no legal basis in the Treaties as they stand for the action by the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament in setting up a subcommittee on security matters, and will it therefore prevent the use of Community funds for that purpose?

Answer

The Council would first point out that each institution must act within the limits of the powers conferred on it by the Treaties.

The Council further notes that:

- pursuant to Rule 97 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, a committee may, in the interest of its work and subject to prior authorization by the enlarged Bureau, appoint one or more subcommittees;
- pursuant to Article 142 of the EEC Treaty and the corresponding Articles in the other Treaties, it is up to the European Parliament to adopt its Rules of Procedure;
- pursuant to Article 18(2) of the Financial Regulation, 'the requisite powers for the implementation of the sections of the budget relating to the European Parliament, the Council, the Court of Justice, and the Court of Auditors are recognized by the Commission as being devolved upon these institutions'.

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Question No 78, by Mr Balfe (H-25/82)

Subject: Travel concessions

Will the Council list for each Member State as at 1 January 1982 the nature and extent of any travel concessions either in cash or in kind, made available by the individual Member States to Members of the European Parliament?

Answer

The Council does not have the information requested by the honourable Member.

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Question No 79, by Mr Albers (H-54/82)

Subject: Financial aid to UNRWA

Is the Council prepared to increase financial aid to UNRWA with a view to preventing the closure of the Palestinian refugee camps?

Answer

The Community and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) concluded a new Convention on 8 March 1982 on aid to refugees in the countries of the Near East. This Convention, which covers the period 1981 to 1983, involves an initial period of one year, and may be extended with or without amendment, by agreement between the two Parties. It provides for supplies in kind and payments in cash to UNRWA, to be used for the basic rations programme and the food support programme.

For the initial period, the supplies in kind involve 29 743 tonnes of wheat flour, 884 tonnes of skimmed-milk powder, 3 900 tonnes of butteroil and 6 086 tonnes of white sugar. The payments in cash involve a flat-rate payment of 35 dollars per tonne of product actually received as basic rations, and a contribution of 3 million ECU to the running costs of the food support programme.

The Council has not at present received any proposal from the Commission for an increase in financial aid to UNRWA.

The honourable Member will undoubtedly also be aware that UNRWA receives substantial contributions on a bilateral basis from the Member States as well. The Council is aware of the financial situation of UNRWA and it will take a keen interest in any proposals which the Commission may see fit to submit.

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*III. Questions to the Foreign Ministers**Question No 83, by Mr Penders (H-824/81)*

Subject: Europe-America friendship treaty

What is the attitude of the Ten towards the suggestion put forward by Mr Colombo in Washington on 18 February 1982 that a friendship treaty should be signed between Europe and America in order to consolidate democracy and cooperation, and how does this suggestion tie in with the Genscher-Colombo plan for joint action by the Community?

Answer

The suggestion that the Italian Foreign Minister, Mr Colombo, put forward in his speech on 18 February 1982 for a Euro-American friendship pact strengthening democracy and cooperation has not yet been discussed in European political cooperation.

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Question No 85, by Mrs Ewing (H-808/81)

Subject: ACP-EEC resolution on the situation in southern Africa

Will the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation state whether they support the resolution passed at the meeting of the Joint Consultative Assembly in Zimbabwe on 4 February 1982 following the joint ACP-EEC fact-finding mission to the frontline States?

Answer

The Foreign Ministers of the Ten meeting in political cooperation have not considered the resolution adopted by the Joint Committee of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly in Zimbabwe.

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Question No 86, by Mr Caborn (H-831/81)

Subject: Elections in El Salvador

On Sunday, 28 March 'elections' are to be held in El Salvador, 'elections' from which the majority of the people and their representative political organizations will be excluded. In view of the fact that these 'elections' are not democratic and will not solve the divisions within the country or legitimize the Government, will the Ministers state what steps they have taken to bring pressure to bear on the United States of America to realize the futility of these planned elections?

Answer

Within the framework of political cooperation the Ten are continuing their exchange of views and information on the elections of 28 March in El Salvador. They are not yet in a position to formulate a unanimous view on this subject.

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Question No 87, by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (H-850/81)

Subject: Situation in Guatemala

The Guatemalan régime of Romeo Lucas Garcia is applying an escalating policy of terror particularly against lay preachers and missionaries. To date one sixth of Guatemala's priests have been forced to leave the country, 32 catechism schools have been closed and a number of missionaries have been abducted and/or murdered. What practical steps do the Foreign Ministers intend to take in order to help call an immediate halt to the policy of terror and repression in Guatemala?

Answer

This question is no longer topical since the régime of General Lucas Garcia was overthrown on 23 March. The Ten are nevertheless following with a keen interest the development of events in Guatemala where it appears that the takeover by the new régime is viewed with great hope. The Ten have noted the new régime's statements on the resto-

ration on peace. They hope that the announced reforms will be carried out speedily and that they will contribute to a lessening of the tensions which the country is suffering.

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Question No 88, by Mr Gawronski (H-854/81)

Subject: Future of the European judicial area

Are the Foreign Ministers aware of reports to the effect that an Italian terrorist has been released in France for reasons which remain unexplained? If the reports are true, does it not consider that serious harm has been done to the plan for a European judicial area?

Answer

The Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation have not exchanged views on the case referred to by the honourable Member. He is undoubtedly aware that no legal instrument creating a European judicial area has yet come into force because of the failure of the Ten Member States of the Community to reach a consensus.

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Question No 89, by Mr Israël (H-2/82)

Subject: Suppression of terrorism

What is the situation as regards ratification of the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism by the Member States of the European Community? To what extent has the European Agreement on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Dublin Agreement, come into force? Is the Council planning to take action in this important field?

Answer

The European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism was signed in the context of the Council of Europe on 27 January 1977. The convention came into force on 4 August 1978. It has been ratified by four Member States of the Community: Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom.

The Dublin Agreement was signed on 4 December 1979 by all the Member States at that time in order to allow the application of the convention among all the Member States of the Community. The agreement has not come into force as it has not yet been ratified by anyone.

The Ten have often given voice to their views on international terrorism.

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Question No 90, by Mr Moreland (H-5/82)

Subject: Relations with the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)

Do the Ministers support any official contact between themselves, or the Council or the Commission and the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) including the provision of any Community funds to that organization?

Answer

Within the framework of political cooperation the Ten have not considered the question of official contacts between SWAPO and the Ten.

As regards relations with the Council and the provision of Community funds, I would refer the honourable Member to the competent authorities of the Community.

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Question No 92, by Mr Rieger (H-34/82)

Subject: Adjournment of the CSCE follow-up conference in Madrid

Can the Foreign Ministers indicate what initiatives they intend to take to contribute to the successful resumption of the CSCE follow-up conference in Madrid which has been adjourned until November 1982?

Answer

With the adjournment of the CSCE follow-up conference in Madrid the European Council has paid attention to the meeting. It is a matter of regret for the Council that violations of the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki — of which repression in Poland is a particularly serious example — may prevent a positive outcome in Madrid and may jeopardize the whole CSCE process. The Council felt that the adjournment of the Madrid meeting was necessary in order to safeguard the CSCE process, to which the Ten are deeply committed. The Ten are still hoping for the adoption of a meaningful and balanced text.

The Council has also expressed the hope that the circumstances will be more conducive to a positive outcome when the meeting resumes in November. To this end the Ten will continue to maintain close contacts, just as they have done during the previous stages of the Madrid Conference. They will also have contacts with allied and with neutral and non-aligned countries.

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Question No 93, by Mr De Goede (H-35/82)

Subject: Death of four Dutch journalists in El Salvador

Can the President comment on the horrible death of four Dutch journalists in El Salvador and the circumstances in which it occurred? What approaches have been made to the government of El Salvador as a result of these events?

Answer

It must be stated that the subject as such has not been discussed by the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation. The President is deeply shocked by the tragic death of four Dutch journalists in El Salvador on 17 March. Regretfully he is not in a position to offer an explanation of the circumstances of their death.

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Question No 94, by Mr Fanti (H-38/82)

Subject: Serious acts of repression by the Israeli Government

Do the Foreign Ministers not think that the serious acts of repression committed by the Israeli Government against the Palestinian mayors and people in the West Bank, which flagrantly violate international law, call for the adoption of a firm stance by the EEC?

Do they not also think that the increase in tension between Israel, the PLO and the Arab countries caused by these incidents requires a determined revival of the European Middle East initiative?

Answer

The European Council reviewed the situation in the Middle East at its meeting on 29 and 30 March. It was gravely concerned by the serious incidents on the West Bank and made an urgent appeal for an end to the dangerous escalation of violence and repression. The European Council condemned in particular the measures taken against the Palestinian people, such as the dismissal by the Israeli authorities of democratically elected mayors, and the violations of the rights and freedoms of the inhabitants of these territories. Following Israel's action over the Golan Heights, these measures can only damage the prospects for peace. The Council also reiterated the Ten's repeated determination to help find a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

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Question No 95, by Mr Lomas (H-46/82)

Subject: Nicaragua

What is the Ministers attitude to the reports in the British press that the United States has a 19 million dollar programme for armed raids into Nicaragua to destabilize Nicaragua's economy by destroying power installations, bridges, etc., and has the Council opposed this plan and, if not, will it do so in the interests of peace and stability in Central America?

Answer

The Ten have not discussed the press reports to which the honourable Member refers but are nevertheless deeply concerned about the increasing tension in Central America. In its declarations of 30 March 1982 the European Council stated that it welcomed any move which could put an end to the violence and contribute to the restoration of peace in the area by means of dialogue and in respect for democratic principles and human rights, at the same time safeguarding national sovereignty and the wishes of the peoples.

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Question No 96, by Mr Michel (H-48/82)

Subject: Assessment of the first four years of application of the code of conduct for European undertakings and subsidiaries established in South Africa

With reference to paragraph 11 of the resolution on Southern Africa adopted by an overwhelming majority by the Joint Committee of the ACP-EEC Consultative Assembly on 4 February 1982 in Salisbury, are the Foreign Ministers in a position to give an assessment to the ACP and EEC of the four years of application of the code of conduct for European

undertakings, their subsidiaries and branches established in South Africa, aimed at dismantling the provisions and practices of apartheid in places of work, and also of what remains to be done in implementation of this code?

Answer

The Member States of the Community have published two statements on the code of conduct for European undertakings and subsidiaries established in South Africa. An initial declaration by the Nine on 28 July 1980 was followed by a second declaration by the Ten on 17 December 1981.

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Question No 97, by Mrs Le Roux (H-50/82)

Subject: Israel's policy of annexation in the occupied territories

Within the framework of the EEC-Israel agreement, and having regard to the Euro-Arab dialogue, can the Ministers state, in the light of current developments on the West Bank and in the Middle East, what line they are able to adopt, in particular in the United Nations, with a view to bringing the most effective pressure on Israel to induce her to put a stop to repression in the occupied territories and to abandon her policy of annexation of those territories?

Answer

For several years the Ten have made known at the UN the principles underlying their position on the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. At the ninth emergency session of the General Assembly in February 1982 the Ten reaffirmed that there must be an end to this occupation as part of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement, that the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 applied to all these territories, that Israeli settlements in the Arab territories which have been occupied since 1967 — as well as any changes to the status and demographic structure of these territories — were illegal under international law and contrary to the principle of the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by war as stated in Resolution 242, and that these settlements were seriously hindering prospects for peace in the area.

The Ten stated that pending a peaceful settlement the military occupation was a temporary situation which in no way entitled the occupying power to annex the occupied territory or to apply there its legislation, jurisdiction and administration.

SITTING OF THURSDAY, 22 APRIL 1982

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| | | | | <i>Mrs Schleicher; Mrs Scrivener; Mrs Weber; Mr Alber; Mr Prout; Mrs Le Roux; Mr Collins; Mr Protopapadakis; Mr Verroken; Mrs Schleicher; Mr Kyrkos; Mr Eisma; Mr Narjes (Commission); Mrs Weber</i> | 250 |

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IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 10 a.m.)¹

President. — I call Mr Boyes.

Mr Boyes. — Mr President, you misunderstood my point of order yesterday and I should be glad if you would answer the question I put to the enlarged Bureau for a definitive ruling namely, whether questions to Council constitute one period of Question Time and questions to the Foreign Minister acting as the President of the Foreign Ministers constitute a different Question Time. As you are aware, yesterday I tried to ask a question during the second part of Question Time. Your officials ruled that according to the Rules, Question Time began when we started questions to the Council of Ministers. But I would suggest to you that the second period of Question Time constitutes a separate Question Time and it ought to be possible to give notice of replacement of a questioner for the second period of Question Time. So I would like you to get a definitive ruling whether there is one Question Time or two Question Times on Wednesday.

President. — Your request will be dealt with, Mr Boyes. It will be submitted to the enlarged Bureau.

I call Mrs Ewing on a point of order.

Mrs Ewing. — On a point of order, Mr President. May I make a suggestion, that in fairness to this House, we should divide the time available for urgent debate by the number of urgency motions scrupulously so that moves in this House to avoid the discussion of plastic bullets will not succeed. As we all know this device has been used in this House. I was not a party to it because when I requested to be placed on the list I stated that I was not asking for a specific place on the list and I am quite happy to be last on the list. But I am asking that we divide the time and that we have a vote on this equally among the number of urgencies. It seems to me eminently fair. This House is used to rationing its speaking time and there is no reason why it cannot exercise the discipline required. All the groups could do it. We could divide the number of hours available by the number of resolutions and give everyone a fair opportunity. This would prevent certain interests from stopping a certain discussion. It is not good for democracy in the last analysis to try and stop discussion on a topic.

(Applause)

President. — The agenda was drawn up yesterday, Mrs Ewing, and it is no longer possible to change it.

Mrs Ewing. — Further to that point of order. I am not asking for a change in the order paper, Mr President. With all respect to you, Sir, I do not think you have

¹ Approval of minutes — Documents received — Texts of treaties forwarded by the Council: see minutes.

Ewing

quite answered my point. My point is that you have the order paper here; that there is no reason whatsoever to refrain from putting to the House a proposal that I see around me as getting quite a measure of support, namely that you divide the time reasonably into the number of urgencies. Everyone can have their say. It is not unreasonable. In fact to refuse my suggestion is unreasonable.

President. — Mrs Ewing, there is a total speaking time available to those who are going to speak this morning. If everyone keeps to the time, we shall manage to comply with the principle you are advocating. Rule 48 (3) states:

The total speaking time for the groups and non-attached Members shall be allocated in accordance with the procedure laid down in Rule 65 (2) to (4) within the maximum time for topical and urgent debates of three hours per part-session.

We are in fact talking about the total speaking time.

I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, I did try to make this point of order yesterday but was heedlessly disregarded by the Presidency. Could we in fact refer to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions the manner in which we choose topical and urgent debates and the whole procedure thereof? It gets us into problems every single session.

President. — Very well, Mr Enright.

President. — The motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-142/81) by Mr Blaney and others on plastic bullets has been withdrawn.

1. Votes¹

President. — The next item is the vote on four motions for resolutions (Docs 1-128/82, 1-133/82, 1-140/82 and 1-141/82) on Argentina.

I call Lord Bethell.

Lord Bethell. — Mr President, before this vote on the Falkland Islands, I wonder whether you are aware that in the diplomatic gallery there is the head of the Falk-

land Islands' Government and a member of the Falkland Islands' Executive Council.

(Applause)

President. — I have received two amendments seeking to replace the four motions for resolutions by a new text.

I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Mr President, I note that you are intending in fact to deal with so-called 'amendments' Nos 1 and 2 by Mrs Castle and Mr Galland respectively as if they were real amendments. This is, as I see it, impossible, since an amendment is a modification to a resolution or part of resolution. However, an amendment cannot simply replace four entire resolutions. This would require a procedural motion or a new resolution on which we would vote and which would then render the other resolutions superfluous. Thus, as I see it, an amendment is not the correct instrument to be used in this case.

President. — Mr De Goede, I refer you to Rule 53 (2) of the Rules of Procedure:

An amendment may seek to change the whole or part of a text, and may be directed to deleting, adding or substituting words.

The amendments we have here seek to amend the whole text, and this is in line with the Rules of Procedure.

I call Mr Fanti.

Mr Fanti. — *(IT)* Mr President, I request a separate vote because we support a ban on arms exports to Argentina but we are against blocking imports from Argentina.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

(Applause)

2. Combating youth unemployment

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-137/82), tabled by Mr Brok and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), on combating youth unemployment.

I call Mr Brok.

¹ The report of proceedings gives only those parts of the vote which gave rise to speeches. For a detailed account of the voting, see minutes.

Mr Brok. — (*DE*) Mr President, my dear colleagues, sometimes our attention should be focused not only on things happening in remote parts of the globe but on the specific problems of young people in Europe.

(*Applause*)

As we saw yesterday during the vote on urgent debate some colleagues' commitment to humanity is so great that they have not much commitment left for the people themselves.

Youth unemployment is, I believe, the most urgent problem facing the European Community, as far as youth is concerned. Of our 10·5 million unemployed, 40% are young people without any real prospects for the future, because they often have no vocational training. This is where, I believe, we must take the necessary action.

Yesterday when listening to Mr Tindemans, I realized with a shock that the detailed consultations on combating youth unemployment may not be held early enough to come within Belgium's Council presidency because the Commission has evidently made lengthy speeches so far but have not yet presented a detailed programme which is effectively ready to be adopted and put into practice. This is why, in my view, we must make it clear in a request for urgent debate that the Commission and Council must be committed to taking specific decisions on this issue in the next few weeks, and not sometime in autumn. Youth unemployment is not a new development and it would be disgraceful for the European Community if its institutions had to admit that they had no proposals on it.

In our resolution, we call upon both the Commission and the Council to take action as soon as possible, and we have also presented some specific proposals on this. I need not go into detail about them here as you have got them in writing. Apart from normal steps to combat unemployment, special steps must be taken to combat youth unemployment. They must be based on practical requirements and formulated in cooperation with the business sector because there are signs which have been clearly confirmed by statistics, such as those of OECD, that youth unemployment is proportionally the lowest in countries with practice-based training. It is time we had a clear commitment on this issue and followed up our many years of discussions on youth unemployment with practical proposals and action.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Viehoff. — (*NL*) The Socialist Group would be the last to deny that youth unemployment is an extremely urgent problem. Indeed, it has repeatedly drawn attention to this point in recent years, it has called on the Commission and Council to do something about the situation and has criticized the Coun-

cil, which claims to be deeply concerned about the problem but does nothing about it in the budget. However, we do not quite see why it should be more urgent today than it was, for example, last year. Be that as it may, the resolution has been tabled and we have no intention of voting against it. Nevertheless, I should like to make a few comments. Simply improving education based on existing work will hardly go anywhere towards solving the problem of youth unemployment. To suggest that it would, would be deceiving not only the young people but ourselves as well, since if we think we can solve the problem by simply continuing along the same lines, we are obviously mistaken. New paths must be opened up on a large scale in addition to the measures which have already been proposed here in Parliament in connection with unemployment. As we see it, the solution put forward. In paragraph 6 of the resolution is not a real solution. There is a great danger that cheap or free labour would supplant other workers — which would mean that the unemployment problem had not been solved but merely shifted from young people to other categories. I have tabled an amendment, i.e. No 5, which is in my name only since it was tabled at short notice. However, my entire Group supports this amendment and we hope therefore that it will be adopted. For the rest, my Group intends to vote in favour in this motion for a resolution.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr McCartin. — Mr President, the first thing about youth unemployment is the sadness of the fact that when young people leave school and do not get a job for two or three years, they get the habit of collecting social welfare, of being able to obtain a living without having to work for it. This is dangerous and is one of the worst aspects of youth unemployment.

Another thing I will say about it is that youth unemployment is not the sort of phenomenon that people tend to think it is. It is only natural that in a period of slow economic growth and unemployment it should be the young people coming onto the labour market who are the ones to suffer.

My third point is that a few years ago, when housewives who before had accepted their role as working in the home started to get jobs and came freely onto the labour market — as they had a perfect right to do — we did not understand that unless their work created an extra demand for extra goods and so on, we should not in fact see that buoyancy on the labour market and on the markets generally that would enable us to offer full employment. This has not happened, and instead we have the situation where women continuing to work in the professions and in the public service in my country have certainly excluded young people.

McCartin

My final point is that, at the moment, while we talk about the idea of work-sharing, every person in my country who is working is forced through his employment to maintain another person who is not working. Now if we have already accepted the principle of sharing the money, we should not be squeamish about the principle of sharing the work. I think it is a far healthier and more natural thing to share the work than to have one half working and the other half living off them.

Finally, we have a particular problem in Ireland because of the high percentage of young people coming regularly onto the labour market. That is why we had so many Irish Members yesterday speaking in favour of a stronger Regional Fund for the poor areas. In Germany and France, you can see the end of the problem; you can see a situation in the next decade where younger people will not be coming onto the labour market in such numbers. In Ireland, however, we have the prospect of renewed emigration. This problem is so extremely urgent for us because of our high dependency rate and because of the fact that the traditional tendency is towards emigration, not within Europe, but to Canada, Australia, and the United States of America. That is what is happening to the young people on whom we have spent money for their training and education, and we are extremely worried about it.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Hutton. — I would like to congratulate Mr Brok on putting this motion down. Contrary to views expressed in this House yesterday, this is not an esoteric subject — this is an urgent subject and I am ashamed that it was not instantly recognized as such by all shades of political opinion in this House. Mr Brok's motion very rightly gives priority to the role of training in combating unemployment among young people in our Community. His second paragraph in particular I would like to draw your attention to, Sir, for it makes the vitally important point that it is urgently necessary to bring training into line with technological developments.

Mr President, through the fat years of the 1960's a great many young people trained themselves in some pretty weird subjects and they obtained for themselves some pretty thin skills which simply cannot be marketed now. I think that the conditions in which we are now living have rather shown up the folly of that approach by young people but I do not believe that Member States have fully caught up with the change that has overtaken them. I do not believe that all the Member States have yet grasped the essential importance of providing sufficient openings in the skills which employers want.

Mr President, my colleague Robert Jackson rightly drew attention to the priorities which this Parliament sets for the 1983 budget and I hope that he will follow me a little later and tell us something a little more about his principal priority, which is employment. I ought to say that I think the most important thing we can do is to create the climate for employment in this Community, the climate in which employers will create jobs. I agree to some extent with the spirit of Mrs Viehoff's amendment, but it does not tell us what we really need to know about government investment, and that is, that government investment will not create jobs by flinging money at job creation, it will create jobs by putting government contracts in the hands of private firms. Mr President, I am very pleased to support Mr Brok's motion this morning.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Bonaccini. — *(IT)* Mr President, the serious, complex and important nature of this problem has been stressed more than once in this Chamber, right from the early days of this Parliament after its election by direct universal suffrage. I therefore feel I am right in thinking that we all agree about the general principles involved. But if you ask me, it is a mighty big step to go from this point to reducing the whole problem during this part-session to an impromptu statement on the matter as it is and so thinking that we can come up with a solution just like that in the few seconds at our disposal.

We had an opportunity — and I mean the debate on the mandate of 30 May, a debate which was voted out by the House — when we should have discussed the proposals put forward by Mr Richard. Quite honestly, a piecemeal lumping together of problems, which is what we get with this motion for a resolution, is not the right answer.

This is why we are asking for this matter to be referred back to committee, so that it can be considered in a proper manner without party pressure.

President. — If I have understood you correctly, Mr Bonaccini, you are asking for referral to committee pursuant to Rule 85.

(Parliament rejected the request for referral to committee)

I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Calvez. — *(FR)* Mr President, the reduction of unemployment in Europe must be our major priority, but youth unemployment is unfortunately not the only problem at which our resolutions must be directed. Youth unemployment is without doubt a very impor-

Calvez

tant element, but the interests of all workers are at stake. It is thus essential to coordinate employment policy at Community level and, in particular, have a very clear picture of employment trends in the various sectors of our economy during each coming half-year, since prevention is always better than cure.

What the Commission should present to us is a proper strategy. And the authors of the resolution will, I hope, not take it amiss that we have tabled a number of amendments to their text. We have done so purely out of the desire to find an effective means of combating unemployment. Although we agree with the diagnosis of the problem, we are perhaps less agreed on the medicine to be prescribed. But all our efforts must combine to reduce the excessively high inflation rates in several Member States and, in particular, as our former colleague, Mr Tindemans, was saying here yesterday, increase the proportion of national budgets devoted to investment in productive enterprise, especially the energy sector and the renewal of industrial plant. We would also welcome details of the strategy the Commission intends to adopt to fight unemployment in the light of the trade policies pursued by such countries as the United States, Japan and the countries of Asia. Finally, since the major priority of the 1983 budget is to be the creation of jobs, we feel it would be appropriate to use the supplementary appropriations in the European Social Fund for the purpose of promoting vocational training. This is an absolute necessity.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Mr President, the resolution before us is a very fine thing, but it is somewhat unrealistic in that it arouses too many hopes that the problem of youth unemployment will be solved, and this cannot be the case. Taking more account of the requirements of the labour market in education and extending the number of jobs will certainly alleviate the problem of youth unemployment to some extent, but will by no means solve it. What we find lacking in this resolution, therefore, is attention to the problem of preparing people, during their schooldays, to make sensible use of their free time. This would be of greater benefit to a large proportion of future unemployed school leavers. Young people will have to be prepared for a period of less or no work. It will be difficult to change the present-day mentality which still thinks in terms of full employment, but we will have to start with young people. Working less should be regarded less as a disgrace in the future, and this is one of the points which should be borne in mind in our youth unemployment policy. This resolution also fails to mention the relationship between youth unemployment and part-time work or reduced working hours. It is with young people that a start should be made on introducing shorter working hours and other measures aimed at job redistribution. Finally, Mr President, the hope which is expressed in this resolution, i.e. that a

Jumbo Council will be convened in the near future, was yesterday shown, in the statement made by the President of the Council and in the Council's answers during Question Time to be a vain hope.

Mr President, I should like to conclude by saying that we are obviously not opposed to this resolution, but we do feel that it is incomplete.

President. — I call Mr Horgan.

Mr Horgan. — I support this resolution in broad terms although with reluctance because I believe that although the sentiments it expresses are sincere, it also provides us with an almost classic example of failure to see a social problem in its correct perspective.

Most talk about youth unemployment is the language of fear, dressed up in the rhetoric of concern. We treat the young unemployed as if they were the carriers of a mystery virus. We isolate them for longer and longer periods in the all too sterile environments of educational institutions, training schemes and the like in the hope that the disease will disappear as mysteriously as it came. When they have escaped from these sanitary surroundings we further exclude them from our view by making it as difficult as possible for them to show up on the unofficial unemployment statistics — a way of solving a problem by making it invisible.

The problem is, of course, that many of these responses have positive aspects. It is vital for society that we should develop our educational systems, our training, but the efforts to reform these systems have only rarely been informed by real vision, by a readiness to trust young people and to develop in them the concepts of autonomy and independence and the spirit of critical appraisal. After all, how can a society that is itself authoritarian, hierarchical and characterized by massive inequalities of wealth and power, hope to develop without paying for institutions devoted to the encouragement and development of the independent, critical and free spirit? Why are we still surprised, pained even, when the young whom we have schooled for 12 years or more in the grammar of dependency, respond with the fractured syntax of revolt?

Above all, we have to face a number of essential realities: youth unemployment is not just, as this motion has it, the predominant problem for a youth policy, it is the predominant problem for social and economic policy as a whole. And it is a problem not because, as the motion states, it brings social, economic and structural consequences, but because it is the result of a social, economic and structural situation from which we religiously avert our gaze.

In this context, I must appeal for more realistic and more fundamental approaches to the problems that are expressed in the resolution, not least in my own coun-

Horgan

try of Ireland. We have the fastest-growing young population in Europe. Even in the palmy days of the 1960s we had an unemployment rate of 6-7%. For us the problem is more urgent than anywhere else. Our country is in a real sense a crucible of the future.

The solutions are not simple — it is easier to point to those which have failed. Of course, as Phili Viehoff's amendment states, socially responsive and productive public investment is an essential part of the response. We should also be thinking of giving more money to young people themselves, for cooperative experiments in job creation. Of course, some of it will be wasted, even misspent, but have not their elders wasted and misspent a thousand times more and how will they learn except by their mistakes?

One thing is certain: as long as we persist in treating youth unemployment as the cause of social and economic problems instead of recognizing that it is essentially a symptom, not a cause, we will fail and the verdict of young people on our efforts, when it comes, may not be a kind one.

President. — I call Mr Van Rompuy.

Mr Van Rompuy. — (NL) I am pleased that this Parliament is showing more interest in the problems of youth unemployment and I should therefore like to give my support to the motion for a resolution tabled by my colleague Mr Brok. I also welcome the fact that at the European Council all the Member States called for measures involving supplementary vocational training or provision for temporary or permanent jobs to be provided for young persons between 16 and 18 years of age. The Council of Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs also made a number of interesting suggestions on 12 March. However, I regret that there are at present very few instruments which the European Community can use in a real fight against youth unemployment. It would therefore be deluding ourselves to assume that the European Community could completely solve this problem at this stage. We should, I think, be wary of giving the public the impression that Europe can really cope with the problem of unemployment at this time. This is not the case.

It will only be possible to solve the problem of youth unemployment in due course if we manage to revitalize the economies and create new and lasting jobs in industry. This will require productive and profitable investments and structural changes in sectors and undertakings with growth prospects. We must increase investment and reduce production costs: only this can result in new and lasting jobs. For this reason, we must, in the medium term, fully implement the strategy proposed in the Fifth Programme and the Member States will have to follow to the recommendations. In addition, however, a number of specific measures, which are also mentioned in the motion for resolution

by Mr Brok, must be introduced. We must spend more on education, vocational training and retraining and for this reason, the European Social Fund must be increased so as to avoid a situation whereby more of this Fund would have to be spent on young people and less on others. The entire Fund must be increased since at present barely 15 000 million Belgian francs from this Fund are allocated to the combating of youth unemployment, and this is far too little.

There must also be increased support from the Regional Fund to structurally weak areas with high levels of youth unemployment. However, this in itself will not be enough and we must also develop a strategy at European level for a reduction in working hours accompanied by a corresponding reduction in purchasing power or a reduction in working hours which is made possible by increased productivity and restriction of the rise in incomes in real terms. This is how we can create jobs.

Finally, I would like to put in a word for part-time work as is also advocated in the opinion by Mrs Desouches, and early retirement. I am pleased, therefore, that this problem is being discussed here today. We must also urge for a Jumbo Council to be held in the coming month, so that the European Parliament can make its own contribution towards solving this the most dramatic social problem of this generation.

President. — I call Mr. R. Jackson.

Mr Robert Jackson. — Mr President, I would just like to say a few words to my friends in the Group of the European People's Party and especially to my colleagues in the Committee on Budgets, Mr Adonnino and Mr Langes. I hope that they are listening to this.

I support Mr Brok's important resolution this morning. I hope Mr Brok is listening too. I support his resolution. It is an excellent one, and I hope that this means that the European People's Party is going to join the Liberals, the Socialists and the Conservatives this evening in supporting the proposal from the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment the proposal for a 130% increase in Social Fund spending for training and for job creation. A solid vote from the Parliament for a precise target will be crucial in putting real and effective pressure on the Council for practical budgetary measures to combat youth unemployment which is the subject of this resolution. I think that all of us in this House will be looking to see how the European People's Party votes this evening on this resolution.

President. — I call Mr Adamou.

Mr Adamou. — (GR) Mr President, the consequences of the economic crisis in the EEC countries are very

Adamou

painful for Greece, particularly as regards employment.

There are between 220 000 and 250 000 unemployed: 100 000 building workers, 20 000 ship workers, 20 000 metal workers, 10 000 textile workers, with a similar situation in other sectors. 62% of them are young people under 29 years of age. Only 75 000 receive official assistance, but to be eligible for such assistance an unemployed person must fulfill many conditions. Above all, he must have worked for at least 18 months. What is more, there are thousands of qualified school leavers who fail to get jobs. The present Greek Government has been able to provide jobs for only 2 500 of them. The rest are waiting around with no hope of finding a job in the present economic situation.

As for the motion for a resolution, although it has some positive points, we shall not be voting for it because the group which has tabled it is largely responsible for the terribly high unemployment. We agree with Mr Bonaccini that this proposal is a diversionary propaganda ploy.

President. — I call Miss de Valera.

Miss de Valera. — Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of my group, the European Progressive Democrats, I would like to comment on the resolution to combat youth unemployment. In Ireland we have the largest population of young people in the European Community. The unemployment situation in Ireland for young people therefore deeply concerns me and I fully support the fact that youth unemployment is a priority objective for the Community.

If we are to tackle the problem we must be aware of the likely trend and nature of employment in the future. This must take into account the fact that youth unemployment affects both males and females. Any measures that are proposed at Community level must take account of the need to promote employment training for both sexes. The European Council at its March meeting asked Member States to take measures concerning more particularly the vocational training of young people. As a first step the Member States said that they would strive to ensure over the next five years that all young persons entering the labour market for the first time would receive vocational training or initial work experience within the framework of special youth schemes of contracts of employment. The Council was requested to report back to the European Council at the end-of-the year meeting on the measures adopted to this end, both by the Member States and at Community level. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I certainly agree with this proposal, and what is more I would like to see this proposal being carried out.

On behalf of my group, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank Mr Brok and his supporters for putting down this very important resolution and we are very happy to support it.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I am grateful to Mr Brok for having initiated this debate and I am grateful to him also for the resolution that he has proposed. I am not so grateful to him for the terms in which he moved it, and I propose, therefore, to answer some of the specific criticisms. I think it is perfectly fair, Mr Brok, that you should make the criticisms; it is also fair that I should answer them.

I totally reject, on behalf of the Commission, the allegation which was implicit and, indeed, explicit at some stages, in your opening statement that all that we have been doing, faced with the problem of unemployment in Europe, is sitting down and making, in your own words, lengthy speeches. Nothing, with respect, could be further from the truth. Not only do I totally reject it, I slightly personally resent it because, as far as I am concerned, since I have been in this job, which is now 15 months, the one subject which has obsessed almost the whole of my working day has been what on earth can the Community do to combat a situation in which we have 10.5 million unemployed in Europe and the number is still going up.

I merely say to Mr Brok that to categorize a situation in which the Commission has proposed a set of detailed proposals for a strategy to combat unemployment in Europe, in which it has gone to the European Council and in fact got the European Council a few weeks ago to accept the very principle that Mr Brok is now advocating, as sitting down doing nothing and merely making lengthy speeches, with great respect, is I think a misuse of language and a travesty of the truth. We started with the Joint Council last year. We hope to get a Joint Council, towards the end of this year, under the Danish rather than the Belgian presidency in order, so to speak, to dot the 'i's and cross the 't's and actually take concrete decisions.

Having said that, may I say something nice to Mr Brok. As far as his resolution is concerned I welcome it very much as part of a continuing commitment and the sustained action of this Parliament on the issue of unemployment and particularly of youth unemployment.

Let me just say one other word about it. I do not think that one should view youth unemployment as somehow or other being a separate issue, apart from the question of unemployment in general. I think some of the comments that have been made in the course of

Richard

this debate — I take the point Mr Horgan made that in fact youth unemployment in a sense is a symptom and not a cause — are quite right. I take the point that somebody else made in the course of this debate that we need actually to put much more money into job creation. I take the point very strongly and, indeed, welcome the point made by Mr Jackson that he wants to give me a 130% increase in my budget. I am delighted. Not only would I like to accept it, I assure him and the House that if he gives it to me and the House gives it to me and the Council gives it to me, I would be able to spend it without any problem at all. We would be spending it on creating jobs and, indeed, specifically on trying to deal with unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular.

I therefore welcome very much the proposals made in point 7 and point 10 of the resolution which call for a significant increase in Social Fund resources for youth unemployment. I think this would be an initial move in the direction of a youth guarantee, as we described it in the Commission's earlier paper on job creation, and was agreed in general principle by the European Council last month. Our detailed proposals on the whole concept of a youth guarantee and an integrated training provision for the 16-18 year age group are being finalized by the Commission at the moment. They will be out in the early summer. At the same time, of course, our proposals on the review of the Social Fund, which will be submitted shortly, will also aim to make the Social Fund a more appropriate financial instrument to implement Community policies on youth unemployment and job creation.

Mr President, much more imminent is the forthcoming meeting of Education Ministers on 24 May. I am very optimistic — and I hope Mr Brok will take this as some evidence of movement and of urgency on our part — that at that meeting there will be a decision to launch a second series of actions on the transition from education to working life, paying particular attention to the relationship between schools and the local community.

Now let me say a word about the need to encourage entrepreneurial skills among young people, as well as a basic knowledge of new technologies. I think that need is general, and I think that need should be accepted and I think the Community should put money into it. I think a specific action programme on training in new technologies will be produced by the Commission in the next month. As far as the other aspects of job creation are concerned, they are central to the work that we are doing. Following the Jumbo Council last year and indeed again Mr Brok might be interested to know, some detailed proposals are in fact to be considered by the Standing Committee on Employment at the beginning of next week.

Now the motion for a resolution, Mr President, being debated today restates a number of useful principles in the preamble and then goes on to make a series of

demands, some of which, perhaps, are not absolutely and closely related to current Community action, but with the general thrust of which I find myself in agreement.

I think it is necessary to distinguish between the problems of ensuring a basic social and vocational preparation for young people and the more general problems of stimulating job creation and economic development in the regions most affected by the crisis. Regional Fund resources, for example, are not allocated with reference to the rates of youth unemployment. The Commission would doubt also that the lack of capital constitutes a major obstacle to enabling young people to obtain economic autonomy, as set out in point 5 of the resolution. I must say, as a priority group, I do not think I would give unemployed graduates the same high priority that Mr Brok would.

But, finally, Mr President, I may reiterate what I said at the outset, that despite some of the somewhat abrasive words I may have used — this is after all a parliament and if one cannot use abrasive words in a parliament it is difficult to know where one can use them — I welcome the thrust of the resolution. I welcome the continuing interest that Parliament is displaying in this problem and I hope that the next time we come to discuss it I may even be able to satisfy Mr Brok that I have done something more than make lengthy speeches.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

3. EEC-Cyprus trade agreement

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1085/81/rev.) by Mr Herman and others on the negotiations for the second stage of the EEC-Cyprus trade agreement.

I call Mr Herman.

Mr Herman. — *(FR)* In 1972, the EEC and the Republic of Cyprus concluded a trade agreement comprising two stages, each of five years, which was to lead to a customs union agreement after 10 years.

The negotiations on the second stage of the trade agreement were scheduled to take place in 1977 but have still not started, the Council not having been able to agree on the negotiating brief to be given to the Commission. The trade agreement expired in 1981 but was extended by both parties until 1 April of this year, and unilaterally, that is by the EEC, until 30 June

Herman

1982. It was therefore already urgently necessary last month to press the Council to take a decision. But our Parliament itself has not been able to find the time to debate the matter, despite two attempts to do so. It can rectify this omission today and vote by a large majority, and I hope even unanimously, in favour of our motion for a resolution calling upon the Council with the utmost insistence to grant the Commission the brief for which it has been waiting for many years. It is time to meet our commitments to Cyprus which has respected the commitments it itself has given; it is time to do justice to our Cypriot friends whose feeling of being a part of the stream of European development and civilisation has never faltered.

It is my hope that the Council will not turn a deaf ear to this urgent request, particularly since the objections to acceptance raised by two States are minor objections, given the small quantity of products in question in relation to demand in the Community, and that these objections thus stem solely from ulterior motives regarding Spain and Portugal's entry into the Community.

This week, Parliament has hosted the visit of Mr Ladas, President of the Cypriot Parliament. I am sure that nothing could give him more pleasure than a massive vote in support of this motion which would provide a good basis for continued good relations with the Republic of Cyprus and the Cypriot people.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Papantoniou. — *(GR)* Mr President, the impasse which has arisen in connection with the system of trading relations between Cyprus and the European Community for 1982 and 1983 has created a serious political problem. As you know, 40% of Cypriot territory is under Turkish occupation, 200 000 Greek Cypriots have been driven from their homes and the fate of 1 619 persons is unknown. Important economic activities came to a standstill while the Association Agreement did not pass into the envisaged second stage in 1977. Subsequently the Agreement was extended on several occasions and in November 1980 the Community made concrete undertakings to negotiate the trade arrangements for the next two years in 1981. 1981 has passed, the summer of 1982 is approaching and the Council has not even issued negotiating directives to the Commission.

This situation is unacceptable for the following reasons: firstly, the plight of the Cypriot people calls for support and assistance, not economic sanctions. Secondly, Cyprus offers the Community an excellent opportunity to prove the sincerity of its declarations on the opening up of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, especially when we consider that Cyprus is

perhaps the most European part of this geographical area. Thirdly, the few agricultural products which interest Cyprus are of marginal significance compared with the global production and consumption of the Community and it is unthinkable that the trade arrangements with Cyprus should be used as negotiating card in the solution of internal Community differences. Finally, Cyprus, in contrast with many developing countries, offers preferential trade arrangements to the Community, this being one of the basic reasons why the value of its imports from the Community are three times that of its exports.

Mr Herman's motion for a resolution misses the central issue of the negotiations. It simply calls on the Council to grant at last negotiating directives to the Commission. An indictment of the obstruction practiced by the Council is the least contribution the European Parliament can make to resolving the impasse afflicting the trade relations between Cyprus and the European Community.

For this reason, the Socialist Group will vote for the resolution. Mr President, as regards Mr Taylor's amendments, they introduce discriminatory elements into the territory and the population of the Republic of Cyprus which are unacceptable under the terms of international law and which run counter to a whole series of decisions of the Security Council of the United Nations.

The Community must maintain relations with the Republic of Cyprus as a single and united entity.

For this reason, the Socialist Group will vote against Mr Taylor's amendments.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Kallias. — *(GR)* Mr President, the history of the links between Cyprus and the European Economic Community is familiar and has been examined by Mr Herman. I should like to thank Mr Herman very warmly for his report and for his survey of the ancient civilization of Cyprus. It is regrettable that the Council did not issue negotiating directives in time. The envisaged agreements were not signed in time. Thus the trade arrangements in the Association Agreement with Cyprus set out in the Protocol of 19 December 1972 have lapsed and the situation today is that they have been provisionally extended to 30 June. Thus it is essential to vote immediately on the motion for a resolution which calls on the Council to grant the Commission negotiating directives to renew and expand the trade arrangements with Cyprus.

The motion for a resolution was drawn up after a visit by the President of the Association Council, Mr Herman, following a decision of the enlarged Bureau. Mr

Kallias

Herman was able to ascertain on the spot the widespread active interest in effecting the Association Agreement and in signing the trade arrangements which will be in the interest of both parties. I was glad to see that just yesterday the President of the Cypriot Parliament, Mr Ladas, was here and that at a meeting chaired by Mr Herman was kind enough to provide valuable information concerning the relationship between the European Community and the Republic of Cyprus, its attachment to Europe and the present situation on the island.

An additional reason for paying special attention to and taking an active interest in the Republic of Cyprus is that we are speaking of a tormented country which eight years ago was subjected to Turkish occupation which, unfortunately, persists today. Cyprus is struggling to heal the wounds opened up by the foreign invasion and to tackle the tragic problems resulting from existence of 200 000 refugees, the military occupation of 40% of its territory and 70% of the wealth of the island and the real anguish of thousands of families in their ignorance of the fate of 2 000 missing persons who were arrested by the Turkish army.

I was astonished by the amendments tabled by our colleague Mr Taylor. They fly in the face both of the realities and the general policy of the European Community.

I am certain that the motion for a resolution will receive the full support of all the members of the European Parliament.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Spicer. — Mr President, I think we in this House are all, or should be, friends of Cyprus, and with that sentiment behind us, I warmly welcome this resolution put forward so ably by Mr Herman. Because it should express the disquiet that we all feel that with regard to Cyprus, what has happened within the Community is that we have said: 'This is too difficult, therefore we will put it in the pending tray and we will do nothing about it.' I consider that to be a disgraceful attitude. After all, we are dealing with an association agreement which dates back to 1971; and in my view it is incumbent upon our Community to do all it possibly can, not only to update the trading arrangements between ourselves and the Republic of Cyprus, but also to do all we possibly can to try and bring the two communities of Cyprus back together again.

It is in that connexion that I welcome this so very much. So could I just say on a personal point, what I feel about the two amendments put forward by Mr Taylor? I can quite understand that many people may object to those amendments, and it may well be that

the House will reject them; but I do think they emphasize one point — that when we talk about Cyprus, we are talking about all the people of Cyprus. Any trade agreement must be seen to take account of the interests of all the people of Cyprus, and it would be quite wrong for us to try and discriminate between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. They are all, above all, Cypriots, and those of us who have known that lovely island for the last 20 or 30 years have so much regret that the divisions that exist today do exist. We can only hope that they will be repaired in the future.

I give the full and hearty support of our Group to Mr Herman's resolution.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Kyrkos. — *(GR)* Mr President, I would like to thank Mr Herman and the other members for the valuable words they have said on this subject. Both the Commission and the Council have shown incredible inconsistency as regards Cyprus — and this, I think, testifies to the utter contempt which the representatives of the Community feel in connection with this subject. I shall go straight to the question. Do the Council and the Commission perhaps believe that Cyprus is responsible for the invasion it has suffered and that it deserves to be treated with such contempt? Why during all these years have they shown absolutely no interest in this tragedy? Has anyone in this House — saving a few exceptions — or have we as a Parliament shown any grief as regards the tragedy of the 200 000 refugees in their homeland? Has anyone shown concern for the anguish of 1 200 families who every day live with the hope that they may see their missing relatives?

And so today after so many years we find ourselves faced with an incredible inconsistency on the part of the Community authorities in dealing with this problem.

I shall put the question again. Does the Commission perhaps feel that Cyprus is to blame for the occupation? This is a question which demands a clear answer.

(Applause)

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Pesmazolou. — *(GR)* Mr President, it is our legal, moral and political duty to put an end to the irregular situation which has been brought about by the delay in renewing the Agreement. It is our legal duty because this delay runs counter to an agreement of the European Community and I am sure that the European Parliament will not accept violations of this kind.

Pesmazoglou

It is our political duty because it is the least contribution we can make in opposing the unacceptable situation which was created in the island after the Turkish invasion of 1974, and it is our ethical obligation to the dead, to about 2 500 missing persons whose fate it is impossible to ascertain as a result of the Turkish activities which have delayed and rendered impossible the work of the international commission set up for this purpose; finally it is a question of conscience for Europe as a whole.

I would like to stress that the recent observation made by my colleague, who said that this agreement relates to the entire Cypriot people, is true and essential, in so far as all the Cypriot people — both communities — consider that they belong to a single state with a single legal personality. The Community has entered into contractual relations with this single state and all attempts to create the impression that there are two separate states run counter to the spirit of international law and to the interests of the Community.

Recently, Mr President, this Parliament promptly approved by an overwhelming majority the resolution expressing the complete solidarity of the Community with Great Britain in the crisis which arose after the Argentinian invasion. It is the Community's duty to show similar solidarity in the case of the other grave violation of international law which has existed in Cyprus since the Turkish invasion of 1974.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Marshall.

Mr Marshall. — Mr President, this whole Association Agreement is a sad and sorry story of wilful delay by the Council. Now I know that the British Government regards it as one of the tragedies of the UK Presidency that we could not get to the second stage of the Association Agreement during that time. By the Agreement of 24 November 1980, the second stage should have started on 1 January 1982. All that has happened is that the first stage has been extended until the end of June 1982. What happens thereafter no one knows, and this makes planning almost impossible for the farmers and traders of Cyprus.

Whilst the Community tarried in proceeding to the second stage, Cyprus has shown an enthusiasm for a customs union which is the eventual third stage of the Association Agreement. We must remember that Cyprus imports three times as much from the EEC as she exports to us, and that the economy of Cyprus is heavily intertwined with that of the Community. Exports from the Community to Cyprus provide many jobs within the Community. The risks to Community employment from proceeding to the second stage are almost negligible. There would be a small increase in imports from Cyprus, which would mean almost

nothing to the Community but would mean a great deal to the economy of Cyprus.

We must remember that in Cyprus the enemies of the West have frequently tried to curry favour with the Cypriots: let us not by our inertia encourage them to go any further. Anyone who has been to Cyprus must be impressed by the energy and initiative of her people. She wishes to increase her links with the Community. Let us encourage her. Let us demand action of the Council, whose motto in this matter, as on so many other issues, seems to be *mañana!*

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — *(GR)* Mr President I would like to make two observations on the motion for a resolution:

Firstly, it is unacceptable to combine the trade and economic relations between the European Community and Cyprus with political conditions and we regret to see that this has been done by the representative of the British Conservatives, at a time when his country and his party bear very grave historical responsibility for the bloodshed and the present tragedy in Cyprus.

We would like to believe that there also exist in England other political forces, we would like to believe that the representatives of the British Labour Party in the European Parliament will refuse to align themselves with this essentially devious proposal put forward by the representatives of the British Conservative Party.

A second point we would like to stress is that if Mr Herman's motion happens to be approved, this does not absolve either the European Community or — particularly — the European Parliament. Community countries bear serious responsibility for the situation in Cyprus and the first requirement is political support in the attempt to internationalize the Cyprus problem and to implement the decisions of the United Nations. We feel that despite the positive importance which any other measures may have they may finally serve merely as an alibi.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, the Commission is grateful that this subject has had an airing this morning. It is an important one, and, if I may say so, it is quite right that the Parliament has considered it with urgency and indeed with some sympathy.

The Commission regrets that relations between the Community and Cyprus are not at present established

Richard

on a proper contractual basis. As the Council has been unable to give the Commission a negotiating brief to define trade arrangements for 1982 and 1983, the Community has been obliged to renew unilaterally the trade arrangements which expired on 31 December last year — and this despite the fact that the Commission did its utmost throughout 1981 to see that satisfactory negotiating directives could be adopted by the Council in good time.

It is true, I think, to say that the Council did not spare its efforts either, as the Commission readily acknowledges. It devoted several meetings to discussing the negotiating brief. Unfortunately, it proved impossible to define a Community position, because certain Member States wished to link the Cyprus question to the solution of a number of internal problems within the Community. The Commission has always expressed regret at such a link being made. We have on many occasions reiterated, and do again today, our desire to see the Cyprus question dealt with on its own merits.

However, Mr President, taking heart from the support which Parliament can give it, the Commission intends to pursue its endeavours in this matter. We aim, in particular, to prevent Cyprus being penalized because of the Community's internal problems. It is essential, in our view, that the Commission is given a negotiating brief before the unilateral measures expire and that those negotiations can produce trade arrangements which will last until the end of 1983, satisfy the expectations of our Cypriot partner, but at the same time take account of the interests which the Community's Mediterranean countries may wish to preserve. We hope this deadlock can be broken before the end of May and that contractual relations with Cyprus can be restored in the spirit of the Association Agreement which the Community has concluded with that island.

Finally, may I say that despite the blandishments of some of the Members who have spoken in this debate, I think it would be right for the Commission to confine its answer to the important, but relatively narrow, point which Mr Herman had raised. I do not think it would be right for me today to comment on some of the broader issues which have been raised, particularly by some of our Greek colleagues in the course of this debate.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

4. *Demonstrations by young Europeans in the capitals of several Warsaw Pact countries*

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-143/82) by Mr Adonnino and others on the peaceful and non-violent demonstrations by young Europeans in the capitals of several Warsaw Pact countries.

I call Mr Adonnino.

Mr Adonnino. — *(IT)* Mr President and honourable colleagues, this House was distressed and upset at the news received on Monday 19th concerning the arrests and the measures taken restricting personal freedom in many cities in eastern Europe. These measures affected citizens of other countries, who were demonstrating quite peacefully. They wanted to draw the attention of those countries' governments to the terms of a resolution of this Parliament and to a manifesto drawn up by leading scientists on the critical problem of world famine and the need to respect the rights of individuals guaranteed under the Human Rights Charter and the Helsinki Agreements, and to get them to take a stand on these issues.

In conjunction with many other members, I tabled this motion for a resolution with a request for urgent and topical debate since I am convinced of the need to make solemn protest at the conduct of the governments concerned and to demand the immediate release of the citizens arrested. The news today, and it is now the 22nd, once more mentions prolonged detentions in Prague, silence about one demonstrator in Budapest and serious difficulties continuing in East Berlin.

It is inadmissible for governments and regimes, which applauded similar demonstrations in western countries on other occasions where there was not even any violent reaction from governments, to react so differently and so forcefully when such demonstrations occur on their territory. Hypocrisy of this sort cannot be tolerated and deserves to be severely condemned, just as the solidarity of the free peoples of Europe, as voiced by their Parliament, must reach out to the citizens hit by these harsh measures. That is why we are asking for the young demonstrators being held in custody to be released immediately, and we call on the Commission and the Council to do their utmost to achieve this.

These events cannot fail to focus the attention of all once more on the problem of all the people suffering throughout the world, dying of hunger or disabled as a result of malnutrition.

This House has taken a stand on this issue. For a start it has stressed its seriousness as a human problem, and consequently a general political question, quite apart from any budget considerations. Obviously everything

Adonnino

possible must be done to translate, albeit gradually, an undertaking in principle into concrete terms which may have a real effect on the problem.

These are the reasons why I am calling on you to approve our motion for a resolution.

(Applause from certain quarters)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Van Hemeldonck. — *(NL)* Mr President, one of the lessons which we, as members of the European Parliament, can learn from young people is that they are showing ever increasing solidarity with all the inhabitants of this world, including the Third world. The cynicism of the arms dealers and the speculation on the part of the multinationals in the food industry are met by the indignation of young people, who are horrified at the hunger in the world which results from enormous food surpluses being simply discarded and phenomenal sums spent on the arms race. Demonstrations in countries refusing to grant food aid to developing countries have resulted in arrests, including that of a young Belgian in Prague. Any persecution or arrest of a person simply for openly and peacefully expressing his opinions, in whatever country it may be, makes a mockery of democracy and is totally unacceptable to us Socialists. The Socialist Group therefore strongly protests and calls for the immediate release of the detainees while at the same time expressing its admiration for the high ideals and courage of the young demonstrators.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Veronesi. — *(IT)* Mr President and honourable colleagues, I would like to give you a few details to clarify the discussion on behalf of the Italian Communist Party. During the debate on the 1982 budget, we voted in favour of the initial requests for food aid for the poor countries. If I remember right, some other political groups voted against the initial requests. Secondly, we supported Italy's commitment towards the poor countries in the Italian National Parliament. Thirdly, the Italian Communist Party took part officially in the demonstrations in Rome on Easter Sunday. Fourthly, we have criticized the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries for their record in this field, but we have also criticized the United States for its attitude towards the North-South issue, which resulted in the failure of the Cancun Conference.

As a party we have drawn up a charter for peace and development which constitutes an overall commitment to tackle Third World problems. We are declaredly for the freedom to demonstrate and consequently against any unacceptable restrictions which are not compatible with the Helsinki Agreements.

We note the way this motion for a resolution, tabled on the 16th and exploited for an event occurring on the 19th, has been turned to account, though obviously not by all its signatories. That seems to point to Community financing of an astrology programme. Perhaps Mr Richard can provide confirmation.

The motion for a resolution does not take account of the overall complexity of the problems involved, and the attitude taken by some groups is somewhat ambiguous. Januslike behaviour of this sort is really not on. For these reasons, Mr President, we will be abstaining from voting on this motion for a resolution, as well as on the one on Lebanon, if I can give an explanation of vote on the following motion in anticipation, because we perceive an inadmissible duplicity in that case too. One cannot get all worried and upset about some things and forget or pass over other events of equal importance occurring in the last few days and which therefore call for the same measure of responsibility from all groups.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Pannella. — *(FR)* Mr President, I should first like to set Mr Veronesi's mind at ease. There must certainly be a mistake somewhere, since we tabled this motion for a resolution on 19 April at 7.50 p.m. Your remarks, Mr Veronesi, show the state of discomfiture in which you find yourself and which I deeply regret. It was my belief that all the groups in this House would be in agreement on the two main elements of this motion. First, that we should do what is incumbent upon us in response to the denial of the right of non-violent and peaceful demonstration to the young people who were demonstrating in Moscow and elsewhere in support of the European Parliament resolution, as we were, in Rome, Mr Veronesi, when your Party and my Party marched together. Secondly, Mr President, this Parliament clearly wishes to underline that it has not changed its mind on the objectives set out in the European Parliament Resolution which the 73 Nobel Prize Winners have now taken up and which these young people, at their own risk, are courageously and proudly bringing to the attention of the whole world; and it emphatically urges the Community to take the measures proposed in our motion.

I thus believed that a unanimous vote was possible. You have told us, Mr Veronesi, that you will not take part in the vote. We find this extremely regrettable, especially since we cannot accept your grounds for not doing so. Why refuse to pass a motion simply because other Groups which we do not esteem will do so? We might as well have conducted this debate at a different level.

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Israël. — (FR) Mr President, we must not resign ourselves to accepting the manner in which the Soviet Union treats the question of human rights, and each time we are given the opportunity to express our opposition to such treatment we should take that opportunity.

We have such an opportunity today. We must affirm that we take the Helsinki Agreements seriously, just as others in East European countries take them seriously. Everywhere, one finds committees set up in support of the Helsinki Agreements. We cannot see how these people can find vindication for their actions if we, for our part, do not provide such affirmation. This is why what the young people under the guidance of Mr Pannella are doing is so important, and I am absolutely delighted at what is happening. By being imprisoned, by being treated severely, these young people are proving that the freedom to express ideas as defined in the Helsinki Final Act is utterly disregarded.

I must add that speaking to the people of the Soviet Union is much more useful than speaking to the leaders of the Soviet Union. The young people there are in no case committing acts of subversion; on the contrary, they are content to demonstrate that they have some of that freedom which is the prerogative of young people the world over and, in acting in this open manner, deserve all our respect. We will therefore vote in favour of this motion.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I can be very brief indeed in answering this today. I merely want, on behalf of the Commission, to express our support for, and indeed our solidarity with, the thrust of this Resolution insofar as it refers to a denial of human rights and to breaches of the Helsinki Agreement. I do not think it is necessary, Mr President, for me in this Assembly to state that the Commission remains, as ever, deeply committed to the cause of human rights and respect for human rights. This particular issue was raised during the course of the political cooperation discussions at the Madrid Conference, when the Presidency made a statement on behalf of the Ten expressing concern at the failure to implement the Helsinki Final Act on Human Rights.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

5. Situation in Lebanon

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-121/82) by Mr Donnez and others on the situation in Lebanon.

I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — (FR) Mr President, when we asked for an urgent and topical debate on Lebanon, we were unfortunately well aware of how much urgency there was. I would like to pay tribute to my friend Georges Donnez for having been the moving spirit behind this motion for a resolution to which he would have spoken had he not been forced to go to Paris for an important meeting. We are sorry that administrative haste misled us into the mistake, I repeat, misled us into failing to enlist the support of some of our colleagues, such as Olivier d'Ormesson, whose devotion to the Lebanese cause is well known.

Yesterday Israel bombed south Lebanon, and some people in this House will naturally take advantage of this to condemn the effects while ignoring the cause. We asked for the urgent procedure before yesterday's incidents because we know that this escalation in violence is inevitable in Lebanon.

Several of us went to Lebanon at the beginning of this month. We came back sickened by what we saw and what we could feel the future holds. In the face of the international community's hypocrisy, we wanted the European Parliament, on which the Lebanese rest much hope, to show its determination, prod our smug consciences and shake up our lethargic diplomats and our listless governments.

Here we have an occupied country put to the fire and sword, which miraculously refuses to lapse into despair. We saw the Lebanese drama with our own eyes, the omnipresent Syrian invader and oppressor, growing more tyrannical every day, and the occupying Palestinians, who have turned this Asian land into an entrenched camp, drawing this country, once called the Switzerland of the Middle East, into a bloody war which really doesn't concern it.

We cannot possibly save Lebanon today, but minimum action is urgent and necessary. First of all, this should aim to restore the territorial integrity of Lebanon and the sovereignty of its government. Is it too much to ask for Lebanon to be given back to the Lebanese, of all cultures and creeds? You see we were witnesses to the new situation which was imposed following the strife between the Lebanese, which was the excuse for occupying the country.

It is true that a Lebanese resistance has now come to the fore. This does not only involve the Christians, who were disgracefully made out to look like an obstacle to national unity. This ever more evident resistance also involves Shiite and Sunnite Moslems, who have risen throughout Lebanon against the Syrian and Palestinian occupying forces.

These are not inherently opposed to each other. They are united in their will to restore the territorial integ-

Galland

ity of their country, form a sovereign national unity, and go ahead with free elections. The president of the Republic of Lebanon is to be elected before this summer. The presence and influence of the Syrians made the organization of free elections impossible for the moment, and the Lebanese refuse to have a president imposed on them by the Syrians. Lebanon's slogan is ballot papers, no bullets.

Let us make our influence be felt. We can put ourselves at their disposal as an institution, if their whole community wishes, to help them to recover their freedom and a democratic way of life.

Whatever the first step is, be it a referendum on the future they want in Lebanon or free legislative and presidential elections, it can only be the first step in getting the peace process moving in this tormented country.

Of course the Syrian occupation must cease. The Palestinian refugees cannot be thrown out, but they must come to regard Lebanon as a land offering them asylum and not an occupied country to be used as a military base. Lastly, the Israelis must take account of all the facets to the drama in Lebanon over and above their own problem, and do their utmost to abide by the cease-fire signed on 24 July last year.

Lebanon is a challenge to us to look beyond our individual problems. There can be no doubt that a settlement to the Lebanese problem would augur well and provide a better basis for the restoration of peace in the Middle East.

The voice of the European Parliament carries weight for all Lebanese. Let us not weaken it by quarrelling amongst ourselves. Let us make the good offices of this House available to Lebanon and the international community, if that can help get the necessary democratic process in action, with the agreement of all concerned. The difficulties are enormous. They require us to show our goodwill and set our scepticism aside. The restoration of democracy and peace seemed an impossible task in Zimbabwe, and yet the miracle took place and still continues. Peace and democracy are possible in Lebanon. This is a worthy cause for the European Parliament to champion.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Van Minnen. — *(NL)* Mr President, Mr Galland claims that he had the foresight to request urgency in connection with this motion for a resolution even before the Israeli raids had taken place. However, the motion for a resolution with request for urgent procedure unfortunately paints a completely different picture. The dramatic situation in the Lebanon involves

far more than the incident underlying this motion for a resolution, i.e. the tragic murder of an official of the French Embassy and his wife — and I might remind you, furthermore, that the question of the responsibility for this murder has not as yet been clarified.

The situation in the Lebanon at the moment is characterized by the reality of Israeli rocket attacks on Beirut and Sidon, which result in not one or two but tens of deaths, by the reality of the breaking of a cease-fire agreement and by the reality of a Security Council meeting to be held today to discuss the Israeli attacks.

The situation in the Lebanon is one where everyone is shooting everyone else and in which the streets in Beirut could be mistaken for the streets in a bombed post-war German city. This is a climate, Mr Galland, in which the question of whether ambassadors have to flee the Lebanon is entirely of secondary importance. In their motion for a resolution, Mr Donnze and his colleagues call for special protection but who is to be protected from whom and by whom? A certain kind of protection already exists, in the Lebanon at anyrate, in the form of the Arab peace-keeping force, and the Lebanese government has only recently reaffirmed that it wishes to keep this protection in spite of its limitations.

Mr President, this resolution is also, as we see it, self-contradictory in that paragraph 4 on the one hand insists on respect for the sovereignty of the Lebanese government — which, as I have just pointed out, is explicitly in favour of maintaining the presence of the Arab peace-keeping force — while at the same time calls for the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from the country, obviously including the Syrian-Arab peace-keeping force. The amendments to paragraph 4 are also completely one-sided if they condemn the Syrian attack and call on the PLO of all people to affirm the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Lebanese government.

In the final reckoning, the question raised by this motion for a resolution this morning is obviously a very serious one. Is this text perhaps intended as an excuse, a pre-emptive justification for a possible Israeli invasion? The terminology is highly reminiscent of the so-called 'Christian Falangists'. The Socialist Group has no intention of falling in with this terminology and will therefore vote against the motion for a resolution and the amendments.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr d'Ormesson. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I put it to you that at the present time there is no free man who does not rest his hopes on the faith and courage of the Lebanese resistance forces under the command of Bashir Gemayel, to save the country

d'Ormesson

from occupation by two foreign powers. The occupation of Lebanon by Syria and the PLO furthers the interests of Soviet expansion as the People's Republics do in eastern Europe. Furthermore, can we forget that Libya and Algeria have banded together with Syria with the aim of destabilizing the Middle East and Africa using terrorists trained in camps based on their territory to organize so-called liberation movements, the aim of which is to bring this region of the world into the Soviet sphere of influence?

Those who saw the shocking documentary on French television last night about the assassination of the French ambassador, Mr Louis Delamare, were shown proof of the fact that this crime was committed by Syria to counter the efforts he was making with such extraordinary and untiring courage to bring Christians and Muslims together. He was shot because the possibility of reaching an understanding was beginning to dawn and another diplomat and his wife were killed a few days later in reprisal for France's attachment to the freedom of the media because this film was to be shown last night on channel 1 of French television.

This House, which was so right this morning in expressing its total support of the United Kingdom on the Falkland Islands dispute, will enhance its prestige by approving the motion for a resolution presented by Mr Donnez and his colleagues in the Liberal Group, and Mr Taylor's two amendments. It will fulfil its rôle even more fully by showing the Council of Ministers what its duty is, since Europe's real task is to contribute towards restoring and maintaining peace on the shores of the Mediterranean. This motion for a resolution calls on it to work for peace in the Middle East, by tackling the problem at its root, that is by helping Lebanon to regain its national sovereignty by means of energetic diplomacy and, if necessary, by committing itself militarily. How can anyone forget that Lebanon shares our faith in God and in Man, and our devotion to all forms of freedom? Who can forget the bonds which blood and a shared culture have forged between us and Lebanon? This Christian community on the threshold of the Muslim world deserves Europe's aid. The Community can and must respond.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Marshall. — Mr President, we have made a last-minute substitution.

For many years, there was peace between the Lebanon and Israel. A number of Members of this House stood on the border between the Lebanon and Israel some fifteen months ago and that was not a military border, it was a peaceful border. And the only reason why there is trouble in the Middle East is that the evil men of the PLO seek to use the bases in the Lebanon to pour poison and bombs against the people of Israel.

Where Mr Provan, Mr Hord and I stood fifteen months ago, within a matter of days that spot was destroyed by a PLO mortar; and that brought home to us more strongly than anything else the evil of the PLO. There will only be peace in the Middle East, Mr President, and there will only be peace in the Lebanon when the PLO ceases its war of destruction against the people of Israel. There will only be peace in the Middle East when all the Arab world recognizes the right of the people of Israel to live in peace. Until that happens, incidents will occur. There will be loss of life, but it is up to the men of the PLO and the men of the Arab world to decide that Israel has a right to exist, because the civilized world has accepted that right to exist for many years.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — *(FR)* Mr President and honourable colleagues, after what Mr Galland and Mr d'Ormesson said in favour of Lebanese territorial integrity, which has been so knocked about it hardly exists any more, I will speak of the factors contributing to finish off the demolition of Lebanon. It is difficult, you must agree, to speak diplomatically of a situation constituting a threat with tragic consequences for all those performing diplomatic duties.

The French Ambassador Louis Delamare was assassinated for wanting to bring together parties who had become completely alienated and for having promoted a Lebanese solution to the Lebanese problem. We can guess the name of the power behind this assassination since we think we know the names of the three assassins, who belonged to its secret service.

A good fortnight ago, Mr Delamare's successor was stopped at a Syrian road block. He was not treated with due respect for his position and the country he represents. Since it is inconceivable for a simple private soldier to take it on himself to treat an ambassador like that, the incident was taken as a warning. Was it — I will not venture any answer — simply a tragic coincidence? Several days later an official of the French Embassy and his young pregnant wife were brutally murdered.

Lastly, last Saturday the American assistant military attaché was wounded by a non-identified marksman just as he arrived at the demarcation line between the Christian and Moslem sectors.

Several observers who are particularly well informed about the situation in Lebanon, claim that there is a campaign to frighten off all diplomatic staff, so that Lebanon's existence as a state comes to an end once and for all. We cannot assent to this and we demand that the *de facto* authorities — I repeat the *de facto* and

Beyer de Ryke

not only *de jure* authorities which are unfortunately so helpless — ensure that the lives of recognized diplomats are respected. Nevertheless, gentlemen in the opposite seats, I will refrain from indulging in partisan expressions of indignation.

The most recent and most immediate events move me to mention another of the tragedies besetting the Lebanon. The Israeli air force struck yesterday, particular around Beirut, and it just so happens that barely a fortnight ago I visited one of these places, called Damour. It a place which always seems to be in the front line, whoever its inhabitants are. In the past it held a Christian population which was decimated by the Palestinians. Nowadays it holds the Palestinian survivors of the Tell el Zatar camp, who were transferred there and are enduring the Israeli raids.

Military objectives often intermingle with civilian installations in Palestinian camps. Damour is a small town and I visited it on foot. I witnessed the destruction there, in particular a school where twelve children died last year. Nowhere in the small town did I see any military installations, which are probably outside the town limits.

In these circumstances, and may I be quite clear about it, I should like a clear reply from the Israeli government, explaining why the town of Damour itself has been hit so frequently.

I want to end up with an appeal which you should all endorse, to the Syrians, the Israelis and the Palestinians, to let Lebanon live.

IN THE CHAIR: MR KLEPSCH

Vice-President

President. — I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, I went to a conference in the Lebanon at the beginning of this month attended by Members of Parliament from the following countries: Canada, Australia, United States, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Switzerland, Norway. There were many Members of the European Parliament from most groups; there was a big representation of French politicians of all colours. So it cannot be said that it was a conference attended by one colour or another.

I would like to say that the attention of the world is focused, when it talks of the Middle East, on the Arab-Israeli conflict and I know that that is very

understandable and I, myself, participate in any debates on that subject.

But I should like to draw the attention of this House to a matter of conscience. There are 1.5 million — about half the population of this beleaguered state of Lebanon — Christians there who say — and I have spoken to ever so many of them. I left the conference and spoke to the people in the street — they are not going to leave this place. They have been there for 2 000 years and very many invasions have tried to remove the Christians from this place and they simply say we are at the end and we are not going to go. They are very devout, religious people; they are not anti-Israeli or anti-Arab or anti-anything. They are just pro-Christian and they say we have been here for 2 000 years and we are not leaving. We have a situation where every young person has a gun — not an admirable thing — but they are prepared to die, every one of them, women, mothers and children. I have never really seen in my lifetime such a situation. They are occupied by Syria; they have taken in 900 000 Arabs. Some of them would not be taken in by many an Arab state, let us face it. They have the PLO working there. Oddly enough, their natural allies in a certain way are the Israelis, because the Israelis are threatened with extinction as well — and the Israelis are also having a bash at their country. It seems an extraordinary thing. But rightly or wrongly, whatever you may have thought of that regime, whatever views you had about whether it was conducting itself well before or after, it is an independent state. It is occupied by other people and you have there a beleaguered 1.5 million Christians who rightly or wrongly say we are not leaving this place.

Lebanon is part of the conscience of the world. It gave us the Bible. It gave us the alphabet. It is an ancient place where they speak the language Christ spoke. They have the feeling that Christ was just a fellow who came from down the road; they are simply not going to leave. And I just join in supporting this resolution, on behalf of my group, in hoping that the conference that was held there will help to awaken the world to the fact that the Middle East has many problems and this is one that we should all take full account of.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Davignon, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(FR)* Human nature is such that it tends to grow accustomed to enduring tragedies. From this point of view the Commission is glad that the Parliament has raised the Lebanese issue because the frequent recurrence of tragic incidents tends to make us forget the situation that country and the peoples in it are living.

Davignon

The Commission thinks that consideration should be given to direct action to relieve suffering, both in the case of tragic events involving individuals suffering in the course of their duties like the ambassador Louis Delamare and his younger colleagues in the French embassy and when it come to people enduring the consequences of Lebanon's helpless position which led to yesterday's attack by Israeli bombers. That is the most important thing, if I can be quite frank about it. The martyrdom of these people takes precedence over the approval of resolutions on issues which manifestly are partly beyond our control.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

6. South Africa

President. — The next item is the joint debate on three motions for resolutions:

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1094/81), tabled by Ms Clwyd on behalf of the Socialist Group, on South African press policy;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1096/81), tabled by Mr Sieglerschmidt and Mr Glinne on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the charge of murder brought against two clergymen in the Republic of South Africa;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1097/81), tabled by Mr Van Miert and Mr Glinne on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the release of youth movement leaders in South Africa.

I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, southern Africa is now a major source of news and will remain so for many years to come. Journalists are increasingly asking themselves whether adequate coverage can be guaranteed given the conditions of the conflict, the repressive nature of the regimes and their influence on the gathering of news.

The International Press Institute in its annual review of press freedom around the world, puts South Africa into the partly free section at the beginning of 1979. The IPI, Mr President, is being too generous. The formal closing down of newspapers and the continuing and worsening harassment of journalists means that South Africa has crossed the divide when press freedom can no longer be said to exist in a satisfactory form. The press in South Africa has, of course, frequently been the target of angry salvos from the

Pretoria Government. But this time, the press's critics have wheeled up the biggest gun they can find. The report of the government-appointed Stein Commission which was tabled in South Africa's whites-only parliament, some months ago, contains the most damaging proposals on the future of the press which the country has yet seen. Under the guise of aiming to professionalize journalism, on a par with medicine, the law, engineering and accountancy, the Commission recommends a system of compulsory registration of all journalists. Only registered journalists would be allowed to write. Those who fail to exercise due care and responsibility on matters which may detrimentally affect the economy or the country's international position, may be struck off the register.

Journalism, of course, is not a sacred occupation. There are legitimate issues for discussion in any society which wants to ensure openness, objectivity, accuracy and fair play in its press. But to pretend that the South African Government is an unbiased participant in this kind of discussion would be totally absurd. The Stein Commission report appears to have been written from within the government's perspective. Any claim that it is concerned with press freedom rather than a narrow-minded concept of whites-only national security looks weak when one sees its suggestion that the old department of information should be revived. This, it may be remembered, was the department which produced 'Muldergate'.

The South African Government has not yet given its considered verdict on the Stein Commission report. It will probably do so next month. When it does so it will presumably act on the basis of what it considers best for the government, not the press. The only way in which it can be deflected from endorsing Stein is if the press itself — and I am coming to an end, Mr President — and international opinion shows that the game is not worth the candle. South Africa still likes to claim that it preserves some vestiges of democracy. To endorse Stein, Mr President, would be to remove a few more of those vestiges of democracy, and I appeal to my colleagues in the European Parliament to support the resolution.

President. — I call Mrs Herklotz.

Mrs Herklotz. — *(DE)* Mr President, I am speaking on behalf our colleague Mr Sieglerschmidt, who is unable to be here this week.

The motion for a resolution contains a detailed and forceful account of the facts. It deals with the trial of originally two, but later four Lutheran clergymen from Vendaland who are accused of murder. The trial began on 12 February. The two pastors Phosiwa and Phasewane were accused not only of murder and aiding and abetting, but of violations of the Terrorism Act. Three other clergymen no longer face charges but

Herkotz

will appear as witnesses for the prosecution. It must be assumed that the testimony or confessions of all detainees were obtained by means of torture. The arrest of the Lutheran clergymen followed a guerrilla attack on a police station in which two policemen were killed.

The president of the Ecclesiastical Foreign Affairs Department, Dr Held, was in South Africa representing the Council of the Protestant Church in Germany, and was in Sibasa at the time of the trial. At his request, he was allowed to speak to the two accused pastors. He was also able to visit their families and attend the court hearing on 12 February. However, Dr Held was not allowed to speak to three other detainees, including Deacon Farisani. For reasons not yet known, Farisani had to be transferred to a hospital twice while awaiting trial.

Now the first day of the trial before the Supreme Court of Vendaland on 12 February did not last long. It was suspended until further proceedings on 3 May. This is soon: a matter of weeks, and the fact is that according to local legislation, it is up to the accused to provide evidence of their innocence themselves without legal aid.

To conclude, dear colleagues, it is not a question of launching invective against South Africa but of helping people in dire straits. All that the motion for a resolution calls for is a fair trial without torture or hindrance; I therefore ask you to accept this motion for a resolution.

President. — I call Mr Van Miert.

Mr Van Miert. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, when our Group Chairman and myself decided to table this motion for a resolution, it was out of a feeling that it was our duty not only to constantly expose the immoral apartheid regime in South Africa, but also to repeatedly draw attention to the violation of human rights in its various guises. The many victims of these violations have a right to our unremitting concern since this is one of the ways we can help them and support them in their just struggle. The growing opposition to apartheid in South Africa itself is accompanied by even harsher repression. It is particularly among the younger generations — not only the coloureds but the whites too — that this opposition is growing and in the churches too things have clearly started moving in the direction of a critical mentality which also favours a radical change in the apartheid regime. For this reason, I wanted to draw particular attention to this point by means of this motion for a resolution. We have taken a specific case for this purpose, i.e. the case of Cecil Sols, but this is only one of tens of similar cases. Sols, the co-ordinator of the Young Christian Students' Movement was imprisoned in Soweto under the General Law Amendment Act which forbids all contact with other persons.

We are genuinely concerned at the fact that after 14 days one comes under the scope of title 6 of the Terrorism Act and can be kept in solitary confinement for an indefinite period. We know, incidentally, the horrific results to which this can sometimes lead and that people are sometimes found dead in their cells. We therefore urge this Parliament to take this opportunity too of clearly voicing its disapproval of the arrest of Cecil Sols and of the tens of similar cases. We would also urge it to expose such imprisonment without any forms of trial as in conflict with the United Nations Charter and fundamental human rights. We therefore support the young people's organizations involved and reject practices of this kind.

President. — I call the Group of the Europeans People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Penders. — (NL) Mr President, there are obviously certain differences between the various resolutions on South Africa currently before us. For me personally, the resolutions regarding clergymen and young political leaders pose no problems, I even intend to support them and I hope that many of my colleagues will do likewise. To be honest, however, I would have found it more fitting if those responsible for tabling these resolutions had gone to the trouble of approaching other Groups on these humanitarian questions so as to avoid any impression of party-political pre-occupations.

This brings me to the motion for a resolution on press policy and I wonder, Mr President, why urgent procedure was required in this case. Would it not have been better dealt with as part of the Scott-Hopkins report on South Africa, which is under discussion in the Political Affairs Committee? However, our leaders have decided in their wisdom, which I obviously do not share, that it should be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

And now to the resolution proper. The Stein report is indeed ominous from the point of view of the future of the press in South Africa, nor do I personally think it is a good report. However, I should like nevertheless to make two other points. Firstly, it is ironical that the freedom enjoyed by the press in South Africa is many times greater than in most black African countries, and secondly I would point out that the report has not yet been adopted by the Government, i.e. the Government has not yet come to its conclusions regarding this report which does not yet, therefore, represent official policy.

For reasons of good order, therefore, I think it is premature and inadvisable to ask the Council to speak out against this report at this stage. All in all, therefore, I personally intend to vote in favour of the resolution on the young political leaders but to abstain from voting on the motion for a resolution on the Stein report.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, these motions are not within the competence of the Community, they are not topical and they are not urgent. These motions furthermore reflect a prejudiced and blinkered view of southern African affairs. I can tell you that the motion on the South African press is premature, as the South African Government have not even considered the Stein Report. The motion regarding the two clergymen is factually incorrect insofar as any criticism here should be directed at the black Venda Government, independent of South Africa, because they are responsible for these actions. I therefore exhort all Members not to support these prejudiced and largely inaccurate motions.

President. — I call Mrs Clwyd on a point of order.

Mrs Clwyd. — Mr President, a point of order because I think it is important to correct misapprehensions. Mr Penders obviously was not here at the beginning when I spoke; otherwise he would have heard me say that the South African Government is considering this Stein Commission proposal in its parliamentary session of May.

President. — I cannot allow you to resume the discussion, Mrs Clwyd.

Mrs Clwyd. — We put our point of view. Mr Hord, I am afraid, is just ignorant.

President. — I call Mr Habsburg.

Mr Habsburg. — *(DE)* Mr President, I really wonder why the European Parliament has a subcommittee on human rights when fundamental human rights issues, which ought to be discussed in committee, are rushed through an empty House as matters of urgency and upset the agenda, instead of being debated in a proper manner. I request that the three motions be referred to the relevant committees because what is happening here is utterly ridiculous.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Clwyd.

Mrs Clwyd. — Mr President, I object to having all three taken together. They should be taken separately, and I propose that they are taken separately.

President. — Your objection will be taken into consideration.

I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — *(IT)* In the case of motions of urgency, Mr President, my view is that Rule 85 on referral to committee does not apply. The point is that when we have voted on which motions for urgent debate to accept or not to accept, we have already decided that there will be a vote here in the House. If you ask me, that motion cannot be referred back to committee at this stage. I beg you to apply the rules in this fashion.

President. — I am sorry but I cannot do as you ask. In the first place, there has already been a vote this morning on referral to committee. Secondly, in accordance with Rule 85 referral to committee can be moved at any time.

(Parliament referred the three motions for resolutions to committee)

7. Fixed link across the Channel

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two motions for resolutions:

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-114/82), tabled by Mr Seefeld and others on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on the financing of a fixed link across the Channel;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-131/82) by Mr Cottrell and others on the Channel tunnel.

I call Mr Seefeld.

Mr Seefeld. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen. We have dealt with the construction of a firm link between the Continent and Great Britain in this House more than once already as you know. We have expressed our interest in and desire for a Channel tunnel several times, over many years, and always with a large majority.

At the beginning, the desire for rapid construction most probably outweighed any hopes of this. However, since Great Britain has been a member of our Community, the prospects of a successful outcome have gained substance. In May 1981, this Parliament made a clear statement in a report drafted by the Transport Committee to the effect that the Community should not wait for Great Britain and France to provide the necessary funds, and we recommended that the project be completed at all costs. On that occasion, we designated the Channel Tunnel as a genuine Community task and, my dear colleagues, we should continue to do so today. This kind of link will

Seefeld

do more than bring the two countries concerned, France and Great Britain, closer together: all our Member States and other European countries, too, stand to gain from this link in the final analysis.

For my colleagues in the Transport Committee and most of those in my Group, however, Community participation in the construction of this link, whatever the form or level is a symbol of partnership. The Community is generally short of symbols and this is the kind we need. It is also a first and very important step towards the fulfilment of a Community-wide infrastructure programme. The Commission, we feel, must tackle the financing problems once and for all. The plenary session of May 1981, here in Strasbourg, called for a report from the Commission on all questions connected with it. We have not had this report yet.

We are therefore in favour of urgent treatment of this issue and call upon the Commission to present this report without further delay, since there are also signs of progress having been made in the negotiations between the two governments concerned.

And now I would like to say a final word to the Council: the motion for a resolution which has been tabled calls for a reform of the Community transport infrastructure. Agreement on this should be reached as quickly as possible, but we know that the Council is unfortunately often incapable of taking action; in this case, it could prove the opposite to us once and for all.

There you have the arguments. As the first signatory of one of the tabled Resolutions, I ask for approval of the motion for a resolution and hope that, with our declaration, we will be able to get the Commission to act. We appeal to the Council and hereby demonstrate our interest in this issue again.

President. — I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — Mr President, my motion is broadly in parallel with that tabled by Mr Seefeld on behalf of the Committee on Transport but is slightly nearer to the problem that we face at the moment. We have recently had a report in the United Kingdom which appears in some respects to be unfavourable to the concept of a fixed link. At the same time there has been a heavy lobbying campaign by the Dover Harbour Board and by certain of the ferry owners who suggest that over the remaining years of this century and into the next the ferries can deal with all the traffic which is on offer between France and the United Kingdom.

I submit, Mr President, that that is a narrow and short-sighted view and it is a narrow and short-sighted view typical of that which has characterized the history of this project for some 160 years. It totally fails to take into account the positive fact of Britain's mem-

bership of the Community, her increasing trade with other Member States, particularly France and Belgium, and the way in which a fixed link would in fact generate traffic with those two countries and indeed with other Member States of the European Community. We are expecting shortly the report of the Anglo-French study group which I trust will report favourably on the channel project or indeed whatever form of fixed link it might commend.

This House, as Mr Seefeld has said so rightly, has consistently supported this project through the De Keersmaeker report and through the Moorhouse resolution, which was subsequently endorsed by a majority of the Members of this House. I believe that it is our duty as members of the European Parliament with breadth of vision to at last see this project under way. It is not a question of looking to our relationship with the rest of Europe in terms of messing about in boats for the next 20 years. Let us get on with this project. Let us provide work, encouragement, investment for the people of Europe. Let us at last have an exciting breadth of vision, the lack of which has deprived us of the fixed link for something like two centuries and ought not to deprive us of it for the next ten years.

President. — I call Mrs Castle on a point of order.

Mrs Castle. — I am sorry to interrupt this debate but I have hurried down here for the South African vote. There has been no division bell anywhere on the premises. I have been waiting for it. I happened to hear the relay of what was going on, caught some reference to South Africa, hurried down here saying to people on the way, look, it looks as though there is going to be a South African vote. No division bell at any stage. When I arrive down here I find that the vote has already taken place. A lot of my colleagues wished to participate in it and could not.

Can the presidency please intervene with the Parliament's authorities to give us some indication by a division bell as to when votes are imminent, because this is nonsense. We cannot just sit waiting for it hour after hour. We have to go to other meetings such as the Falklands and others. Therefore I do ask you to see that the services of this place work to a minimal standard of efficiency.

President. — I realise that the bell cannot be heard everywhere but it is generally known that we always vote on urgent motions immediately after the debate. Be that as it may, the Bureau will do its best to solve this problem in the future.

I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — Surely, Mr President, you should not have to remind Mrs Castle that the word 'urgent'

Cottrell

means what it says. If she supports these resolutions, then she should get herself as a matter of urgency to the chamber and listen to the debates and then vote at the end of them.

President. — I call Mrs Castle.

Mrs Castle. — Further to that point of order, Mr President, I would have hoped that my old colleagues from the British system would have backed me on what is a perfectly reasonable demand. The claims on our time at any session are multiple. For instance, there has been a most important meeting with visitors from the Falkland Islands. It would have been wrong to miss that. And there are other meetings that one goes to, one after the other. It is impossible to sit in this chamber all morning. We demand a proper division bell as in any sane parliamentary institution.

President. — I call Mr Berkhouwer.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Mr President, we are not in London today, but in Strasbourg, and this is why we want a Channel tunnel. As Europeans, we want to link United Kingdom with Europe so that Mrs Castle can get from London to Strasbourg quicker and spend more time in this chamber.

This Euro-tunnel is not an Anglo-French affair, but first and foremost a European affair from which every European citizen can benefit. A tunnel of this kind would enable us to travel from Paris to London in three to four hours. This would be latter-day Tale of Two Cities. I should like once more to make an urgent appeal to the Commission and, in particular, the Greek Commissioner, although this is not an Athenian question. Could the Commission finally shake off its lethargy as regards the Channel Tunnel.

The question at the moment is that of financing and I wholeheartedly support Mr Seefeld who says that financing poses no problems whatsoever. The various technical problems have been solved and there are no financial problems outstanding either. Our grandparents laid the Russian railways and they paid dearly for it, so why do we not organize a European system of financing with low-denomination shares for small savers? We have the European Investment Bank which has built the bridge at Istanbul over the Bosphorus somewhere in Asia so why should we not be able to build a tunnel between Calais and Dover in Europe? It is incredible, Mr President, how we are wasting time in taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by technology.

This is all I wanted to say. Let us hope the Commission will now do something to get the matter off the ground.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Pauwelyn-Decaestecker. — (NL) As you know, the Liberal Group has always been an enthusiastic and convinced supporter of the idea of building a Channel tunnel to link United Kingdom with the Continent. Might I also remind you of the great symbolic value and importance of this project, not only for the Members States directly involved, but for us all. This initiative deserves all our encouragement and must not be thwarted by objections of a technical and/or financial nature. With the view to making the tunnel a reality as soon as possible, we strongly urge for the necessary Community aid to be granted to the project. In spite of all the advantages which would result from this project, we nevertheless feel that it can only be a European success if it is accompanied by a number of ancillary measures, and I would particularly stress the need for extensive development and adaptation of the access routes, particularly on French territory, to the bordering Members States. Account must be taken of the fact that the tunnel might have certain negative repercussions for certain groups, such as those living in the coastal areas of Belgium since the shift of some of the goods and passenger transport to France will affect the hotel and catering sectors, self-employed persons and the maritime sector, particularly in Belgium. Unless the road network is developed or adapted to the new situation, I am afraid that too many jobs will be jeopardized at a local level. We must remedy this problem by laying decent roads and good links between Calais and the coastal regions of other Members States. If the construction of the Channel Tunnel goes hand in hand with an improvement in the transport infrastructure, I have no doubt that the tunnel project will be of real benefit to all the people of Europe.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, I should like to thank the speakers and particularly the two rapporteurs, the Chairman of the Committee on Transport, Mr Seefeld, and Mr Cottrell.

The Commission has repeatedly stressed the importance it attaches to the construction of a fixed link across the Channel. It is convinced that such a link could be included among those projects eligible for priority aid from the Community. On behalf of the Commission, I should like today to confirm this interest.

The importance of this project in itself cannot be doubted by anyone, but there are certain problems which stem from its nature and which have to be thoroughly studied. Although constantly aware of the fact that this project is above all a matter for the countries

Contogeorgis

directly concerned, the Commission does not overlook the role which the Community can play.

The results of a thorough study by the Commission on the interest to the Community of the various types of link have been taken into consideration by Parliament and were used in the drawing up of Mr Keersmaecker's excellent report. But the main thing is that the two Member States concerned should, after assessing their mutual interests and after taking account of any aid which might be forthcoming from the Community, agree in principle on the link and as far as possible on the technical options available.

The Commission is keeping in contact with the Member States concerned, considerable progress is, I can assure you, being made and I hope that a decision of principle can be taken very soon. With particular reference to paragraph 3 of Mr Cottrell's motion for a resolution, I should like to say that the Commission, encouraged by the Parliament resolution of 8 May 1981, cannot but incite and urge the Council to approve the proposed regulation on aid to infrastructure projects of Community interest in the field of transport. If the Council adopts this proposal, it would be an effective contribution to the question of constructing a Channel link. I must inform the Council that recently, thanks to Parliament's assistance there has been considerable progress towards a successful outcome with regard to this Commission proposal. But at the same time I should like to draw attention, as certain speakers also did, to the possibilities for promoting the project which are offered by the already existing Community financial mechanisms, particularly the European Investment Bank and the new Community instrument.

With regard to Mr Seefeld's demand, which was also discussed previously, that the Commission should present a specific report on this subject, I should like to say that a full report on financing problems can be drawn up on condition that the countries concerned agree in principle on a specific project. As you know, there are 10 different projects, the cost of which varies from 1.5 million ECU to 8 000 million ECU. Furthermore, the intentions of the two governments must become known as to the proportions of the cost to be covered by public and private funds respectively. This point is important for carrying out a full study and essential for fixing both the means of finance and the form which any Community aid might take. However, if Parliament insists on receiving a report within a month, the Commission undertakes to prepare and table it within this period. But I should like to say that in this case the Commission's report will deal in a general manner with the methods and possibilities of supporting this project and will not be able, for lack of the information to which I have referred, to give a precise description of the project's requirements.

President. — I call Mr Boyes.

Mr Boyes. — A very minor point of order, Mr President, which will only take you seconds to deal with. I understand that you closed the list of speakers at approximately 11 o'clock this morning and that there is some time left for Socialists. For a balanced debate I think it would have been useful to have an anti-Channel tunnel viewpoint . . .

President. — An announcement was made before I closed the list of speakers.

Mr Boyes. — I was just asking under what rule number you closed the list of speakers, thereby not allowing a political group to use its time available.

President. — In accordance with the Rule of Procedure speakers are called by the President. In order to get an idea of whether we could manage to deal with all the urgent motions, I asked at a particular moment if anyone still wished to put his name down and I said that I would close the list of speakers at a given time.

I call Mr de Courcy Ling.

Mr de Courcy Ling. — Mr President, out of consideration for Mrs Ewing I would ask Mr Boyes to exhibit his characteristic sense of British fair play which hitherto I have always admired in him.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted both resolutions)

8. Fishery

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-117/82), tabled by Mrs Ewing on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the deplorable absence of a common fisheries policy.

I call Mrs Ewing.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, may I thank the House first of all for showing consideration to this breed of fishermen of Europe, for allowing this urgent item. I really am deeply moved by the support I have received from all quarters of the House — really all quarters — and I speak from the heart when I say 'thank you'.

This is an admirable race of Europeans; they do not want anything except to fish the sea; they are the last hunters; I think they live a dangerous and brave life to bring us this protein from the sea, and I feel it is very sad that no time has been found for a general debate on fishing in this Parliament for quite some months. I

Ewing

have deplored — and I really am regretful to say this — very seriously the failure of the Council of Ministers to debate fishing, because outside this House, where we are warm and comfortable, there are at this very moment people sailing in gales. It is the life they want; they do not want any particular sympathy; but I think we owe them some sympathy, because we need the harvest of the seas. Also, bear in mind that every one of these men has ten men on the shore dependent on him for their work. So we are concerned not only with the men that go to sea, but with all the in-shore ancillary industries.

Now in my resolution I have said the industry is in grave difficulty. I have said it is in a state of uncertainty. This means that we are all the losers, for it is an industry that traditionally ploughs a lot of its revenue back into investment: instead of using their revenue to live in grand style — on the whole fishermen live modestly — they plough it back into the industry. There cannot be many industries in which this is done to such an extent.

They are in a state of uncertainty because we have not arrived at a common fisheries policy, and I often think that if we had left it to the fishermen to talk about it, just the fishermen of all our countries, we would have achieved a common fisheries policy long ago. But they have been made pawns in a political game. Elections come into it — Danish elections, or French elections, all kinds of things. The Mandate of 30 May comes into it. The agriculture prices come into it. I think the fishermen are fed up being treated as pawns in a game, which has really to do with other matters, when all they want to do is go onto the seas and catch the fish.

Now, I do not think that I need to say very much more because I think the House is with me, but the absence of a common fisheries policy — and this is the most serious thing I can say — is stopping a generation from going to sea. The fathers are saying to the children, do not go to the sea, my son — there is nothing but worry and hassle and bank overdrafts that we cannot pay off. Do you know, Mr President, that I have lived through five tragedies in my period as a Member of Parliament? Some of these tragedies involved bank overdrafts and staying at sea when they should have been at home because they had to pay off the bank loans. It is an intolerable situation that Europe has allowed these men to get into, from all countries, and I really welcome the support I think I am going to get from this House.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Pery. — *(FR)* Mr President, for years this House has been approving motions for resolutions calling for a real common fisheries policy to be worked out. We must settle the access problem in accordance with the Treaty, approve common measures to conserve fishery

resources, bring social welfare schemes in Member States into line and achieve efficient coordination in the surveillance of Community waters.

The 1972 Agreement expires at the end of this year and we are going to encounter a lot of trouble if a new agreement is not reached in the meantime. Each Member State will have to allow Community boats to come and fish just off its beaches, for instance. There will be no longer any standard limits on catches and in the long run the industry itself will be endangered.

Each Member State has economic interests which are especially vital in certain regions where fishing and the ancillary industries are the basic resources. It is therefore in the interest of all for an agreement to be reached and a real common fisheries policy to be implemented.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — *(GR)* Mr President, the Commission shares the concern expressed by the honourable members about the serious consequences for Community fishermen of the lack of a Community Fisheries Policy. The Commission has already made proposals which are now before the Council. Among these, I would like to mention the proposals for technical conservation measures, the measures for supervision and inspection of fishing activity and the structural policy.

You are aware that the Council adopted in December of last year, after years of inactivity, on a proposal from the Commission, the regulation on organization of the market in fisheries products. I think the adoption of that regulation is already a step forward and has great importance for protecting the difficult jobs — as Mrs Ewing pointed out — of Community fishermen.

In a few days the Commission will submit proposals for the TAC and the 1982 quotas. It is following these matters very closely and taking part in developments which are taking place among the states mainly concerned with regard to the draft of the basic regulation which it submitted in March 1981 access to fishing areas. It is in fact true that no Fisheries Council has been held since October 1982.

The Council which had been planned for 30 November and 14 December 1981 were postponed on an initiative by the then presidency of the Council which considered that under the agreements then prevailing no progress could be observed. The Commission was simply informed of the decisions to cancel those Council meetings.

With regard to the most recent developments I would like to inform Parliament that the next Fisheries

Contogeorgis

Council is planned for 18 May 1982. The Commission agrees with Parliament on the need to reach agreement on all the questions in the interests in the Community fishing industry. But I would like to repeat once more that the Commission on its own cannot find and impose an acceptable solution. Enormous political advantages would flow from the drawing up of a Community Fisheries Policy and these were pointed out earlier.

What the Commission can do is to propose solutions which it regards as logical, fair and beneficial for the whole of the Community and encourage the Council to take the appropriate decisions.

I would like to assure you that the Commission, just as it has carried out its task hitherto, will continue to perform it to the full in future, so that a decision can be taken on the drawing up of a complete fisheries policy which alone can further the interests of fishermen.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

(The sitting was suspended at 1.10 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: LADY ELLES

Vice-President

9. Setting up of interparliamentary delegations

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-146/82), tabled by Mr Glinne on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Barbi on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), Sir Henry Plumb on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr Fanti on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group, Mr Bangemann on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group and Mr de la Malène on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the membership of interparliamentary delegations.

I call the Committee on External Economic Relations.

Sir Fred Catherwood, *chairman of the Committee on External Economic Relations.* — Madam President, the delegations of the European Parliament fill a very real need in the external relations of the European Com-

munity. In our trade relations with other countries the Community negotiates from a common position. Since the development of the EMS on monetary policy we have been aligned and we are actually aligned against high American interest rates and the undervaluation of the yen. Political cooperation has developed rapidly; how rapidly is shown by the spontaneous and absolutely united response of the whole Community to Argentinian aggression. The Community's development programme touches most of the Third World. The rest of the world recognizes the unity of the Community in external relations and the immense power that that unity brings. Yet the Community has a tiny overseas representation in contrast to the considerable establishments of each member country so that the world has not known to whom to talk. But gradually they are settling on the Parliament as the true public spokesman for the whole Community. As one diplomat said to me: the Council operates behind closed doors. We do not know how or why it makes its decisions. The Commission are bureaucrats — I am simply reporting what is being said — and we have concluded therefore that the right people to whom to talk are the Parliament because they represent the political view of the whole Community.

So, without a foreign office, with hardly any diplomatic representation, the burden of dialogue with the rest of the world falls on Parliament's delegations. So they cannot be, as they began, just mutual friendship societies. They have to bear a very much heavier burden; the burden of discussing the hard issues that arise between the Community and other nations and groups of nations, of defending Community policy and Community interests in a spirit of goodwill as well as putting to us the problems and constraints of the other countries.

That is why I believe that this new motion under Rule 106 before us now has become necessary. It is not to make the delegations of this directly-elected Parliament do anything new. They have actually adapted already. It is rather to spell out exactly the function that they now have; the need to be briefed on the issues by the main committees and debriefed when they return, which large delegations like those to the USA, China and Japan, and small delegations like those to Israel, Switzerland and Portugal, already do most carefully; the need occasionally to take a chairman or a rapporteur as expert on current and difficult issues, the need, within the political balance that the delegations must keep if they are to be truly representative of European opinion, to include experts within the membership itself; and the need to discipline themselves to express the views of those who send them — that is us in this Parliament, as any diplomatic representative must do.

Therefore, I believe that this motion, on which Mr Vandewiele and others have worked so hard, is a great step forward and I warmly commend it to the House.

(Applause)

President. — I would point out that this speaking time does not come out of the speaking time allocated to the groups. So I do hope that Members will agree to respect this recommendation from the chair.

I call the Socialist group.

Ms Clwyd. — Madam President, I am afraid I am a bit out of breath since the bell was not heard in the offices once again. There was some dispute here this morning about not hearing the division bell and some of my colleagues protested that they did not hear the bell before the votes. I have been in my office now for the last quarter of an hour and there was no bell to be heard.

Please, would you investigate this, Madam President, as I think it is important that Members are alerted when the sitting is about to start?

President. — I will ensure that an inquiry is made immediately. There may be a fault in the bell-ringing system. I will have it looked into.

Ms Clwyd. — I speak on behalf of the Socialist Group, particularly on the amendments to the motion for a resolution which Mrs Gredal and myself have put down on behalf of the Socialist Group.

I think one of the most sensitive matters concerning delegations is, of course, the expense of delegations. Many delegations now have cut back substantially on their costings. Unfortunately, the same practice does not seem to be prevalent throughout the parliamentary delegations of this Parliament. Recently, as President of the Portuguese delegation, we held a meeting in London. At the end of the 2½ days of the meeting in London at Riverside House which, I was told, is a place that your colleagues know very well, we were presented with a bill for £ 5,000. Now I, as chairman of the delegation, instructed the staff not to pay that amount of money. However, as chairman of the delegation, I was not involved in the administration or the costing of the delegation. I asked the secretariat what the costing was likely to be for the whole delegation visit and I was told that that was not a matter for the chairman of delegations. Now that seems to me to be totally stupid. That is why we have put down an amendment suggesting that not only should the enlarged Bureau be involved in the costing, budgetary implications and resources available to delegations, but also that the chairmen of the appropriate delegations should also be involved. And I am sure all my colleagues in this House will want to support that particular amendment.

As the Socialist Group we also want to withdraw the third amendment we have down seeking to replace the countries of Eastern Europe by Comecon. We withdraw that particular amendment.

On the third amendment, we think it important that the political groups and the non-attached Members should propose the names of chairmen, vice-chairmen and members of delegations to the enlarged Bureau rather than inform the enlarged Bureau of these particular names.

I think it is important to state once again that all the delegations in this Parliament do a very important job of work. It is very easy to write the kind of slick stories that have appeared in the press recently attacking the cost and the irrelevance of delegations. I would like to assure everybody who is interested that most of the delegations that I know do a very good job of work and it is totally unfair to treat them with derision. I am sure that these resolutions, if we support them this afternoon, will in fact ensure that delegations will continue to be taken seriously by the majority of Members of this House.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Pannella. — (*FR*) Madam President, for once Ms Clwyd must excuse me but I do not fully agree with her. Perhaps her delegation is necessary, but I do not think that all our delegations are. That is why we have tabled an amendment to cutback the number of delegations to those which derive from treaties or agreements between the Community and States or parliaments. I consider that the principle by which we should all be a member of a delegation is neither practical nor sensible. If we want to carry out our work in parliamentary sessions, committees and at national level conscientiously, we can hardly find time to do serious work in delegations.

I add that I am very sorry that this fragmentation of our work deprives the REX Committee of much of its meaning, since institutional problems which should be examined by this committee are very often split up between the various delegations.

I therefore consider, Madam President, that the established principle whereby each Member should take part in a delegation calls for much too much financial, intellectual and physical effort. I have tabled amendments out of concern for transparency that is, our amendments mention the agreements already reached between the leaders of groups on the ways tasks should be distributed between delegations, so that all Members of this House are aware of them.

Furthermore, we are sorry to observe that our Group has been ostracized once more, in spite of the provisions of Article 106, paragraph 2 of our Rules of Procedure.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, although this motion for a resolution contains a number of elements which we can whole heartedly support, and although I go along with a number of points made by Sir Fred Catherwood regarding the usefulness of the work done by our delegations, I also endorse the point made by Ms Clwyd concerning the questionable things that are going on in this area. It would be a good thing, I think, if we could reorganize the work of our delegations in such a way that people like Mrs Castle and Mr Van Minnen would no longer be able or feel it necessary to find an excuse to criticize the way the work is carried out. We therefore feel that we would be right in abstaining from voting on this resolution and I think it is worthy that all the Group Chairmen — with apologies to Mr Pannella — are conspicuous by their absence now that we have come to debate this motion for a resolution. They probably thought: We have done our work: all the Plenary Assembly has to do is to give its agreement, since it is we who make the decisions. I hope this is not the case. I have three criticisms to make. Firstly, I join other people in wondering whether it is really necessary to maintain expensive structural contacts via delegations on the scale proposed with all the countries mentioned. Secondly, as I see it, the composition of the delegations which, I grant you, is not what we are officially discussing today, but which is apparently already being definitively discussed by the Group Chairmen, deserves our criticism — and by 'us' I mean the Non-attached Members. To give an example, we have applied three times in writing and orally two to take part in the consultation on the distribution of the delegation posts. Our application has been rejected — indeed, disregarded. The fact is that the crumbs which are by definition all that are left over for the Non-attached Members are now being chopped up still smaller. In the most recent proposal, Mr Eisma has lost his place in the ASEAN delegation, Mrs Spaak has lost her place in the Israel delegation and Mr Pasmazoglou has failed to get the place to which he had laid claim. Our completely justified and unexaggerated requests have been disregarded by those gentlemen who obviously make the decisions. I should like to protest against this situation and call for at least some evidence of democratic respect when the rights of minorities are concerned.

My last criticism concerns the costs. I myself was able to take part in a number of delegation visits in the ACP context and I have always wondered why there are always so many staff compared with the number of Members of Parliament taking part in the talks. I am more or less convinced that if a thorough investigation were to be carried out into the scale and costs of these visits, savings would clearly be possible. I am not even primarily concerned about the guilders or Ecus involved in these delegation visits, but more with the unfavourable picture that results and which people such as Mrs Castle and Mr Van Minnen use to justify — rightly or wrongly — their criticisms in the press of the composition and costs of the delegations.

President. — I call Miss Brookes.

Miss Brookes. — The previous speaker stated that he wished leaders of the political groups were present at this debate. May I point out, please, that the leader of the European Democratic Group, Sir Henry Plumb, has been present from the commencement of this debate. Just to clarify the position.

Mrs Castle. — Madam President, may I also point out that the leader of the Socialist Group, Mr Ernest Glinne, has been absent all week because he is ill. As I am acting in his place the leader of the Socialist Group is *de facto* present.

Mr Barbi. — (IT) Madam President, I should like to propose that Mr de Goede be given a pair of specs!

(Laughter)

President. — I think Mr De Goede has now been corrected in his statement.

I call Mr Pöttering.

Mr Pöttering. — (DE) Madam President, may I also point out that the Group of the European People's Party is represented at this important debate by several of its representatives as well as by the leader of the group.

Ms Clwyd. — Madam President, there seems to be some evidence of discrimination. My group has failed to get the amendments in English. Our secretariat has just been out to the office and asked for the amendments in English and we are told they are not available. Now I know that your group has them in English. Can you please ask your staff to investigate the matter because we are not in possession of the amendments.

President. — Ms Clwyd, I think there may be some misunderstanding. I, as acting President, have my text in English and all the amendments are here. I understand that members of the European Democratic Group who, as you know, mostly speak English, do have their amendments. So possibly there has been a hitch somewhere. Perhaps you would kindly ask your secretariat to investigate. I, for my part, will enquire from the parliamentary services if there has been a hitch.

I call Mr Harris.

Mr Harris. — The explanation is quite simple. The European Democratic Group believe in self-help. We

Harris

went out and got our own. The Socialists believe in sending the secretariat, perhaps that is the mistake. The amendments are there to be collected.

Mr Møller. — (DA) Madam President, you said that the European Democratic Group had copies in English but we have nothing in Danish. I do not want to hold the debate up, and I hope that I understand English well enough to take part in the voting.

President. — I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — And a completely unjustified criticism, Madam President, because before lunch I went to the office myself to collect them. It is now of course after three o'clock and as I explained to you at the beginning, there was no bell at the beginning of the sitting. We have sent our secretariat out because I am now involved in the debate, which seems to me entirely reasonable. I cannot be in two places at once. However, we have still not been able to obtain the amendments in English. Can you please see that I have those amendments. Otherwise I refuse to take part in the debate and so will my group.

President. — I think, Ms Clwyd, that the debate is concluded. We are now taking points of order before voting. It will be a question of whether your group will be prepared to vote rather than continue the debate. I wonder if we could close this discussion.

I will just call Mr D'Angelosante and then finish this discussion. I will in the meantime try and see what can be done about getting copies.

We shall now vote on the motion for a resolution subject to the English amendments being available.

Ms Clwyd. — Madam President, I am not prepared, and neither is my group, to vote until we have the amendments, so I would ask you please as President to ensure that the vote does not take place until we have the necessary amendments.

Sir Fred Catherwood. — The amendments were not over the counter. They were in the little place down the side where you take them all out. You overlooked that. They were all there. It was absolutely full up.

President. — I wonder if Ms Clwyd would be kind enough to ask a member from her group to go and look in front of the place where we get our papers, where all the copies of the amendments have been available throughout the morning.

(Applause)

Ms Clwyd. — Madam President, I am sorry, but this is not true. Somebody from the secretariat is now here, she has just come to me and has said she has checked and they are not available.

However, with uncustomary generosity a kind member of your group has let me have the amendments in English. However, I must ask members of my group whether they have the amendments in other languages because if we do not have them in other languages then again we are not prepared to participate in the vote.

Mr Junot. — (FR) Madam President, I must protest against all these delaying tactics which are holding up the vote and making a laughing-stock of this Assembly.

(Applause)

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Madam President, just a brief word. Five minutes ago the amendments — 31 of them — were not available in Dutch. I have copies in German in front of me and I support what Ms Clwyd said about voting. It is not enough just to have the amendments but we have to be able to read them as well.

President. — Mr De Goede, I understand that you do not have the amendments in your language. There have been protests. I therefore propose that we put off this vote until seven o'clock tonight and discontinue this debate.

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (FR) Madam President, we have spent more than a quarter of an hour talking about this motion and there was a vote scheduled. If you like, Mr Møller, I have a copy of the text in Danish for you here.

Madam President, I withdraw all my amendments apart from Nos 8 and 9.

I urge you not to put off the vote.

President. — Mr Pannella, I have already decided in view of the discussions on the query as to the availability of the amendments in the proper languages that we shall take this vote at seven o'clock. This decision is final.¹

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¹ Votes: see Annex.

President. — I call Mr Junot on a point of order.

Mr Junot. — (*FR*) Madam President, what I have to say will be very short and the aim is to suggest that the Presidency take some measures which could mean that proceedings in future might be more to the point.

A tragic event occurred this morning while we were debating an urgent motion on the situation in Lebanon. We learned of a bomb explosion in Paris which left many dead and injured.

The attack had occurred two hours earlier and the rapporteur and other speakers were unaware of it. It would be extremely useful if something could be done in cases like this so that the President could keep the discussion abreast of events. A similar incident — a significant incident, albeit less serious and tragic — occurred during the debate with the Council and the Commission present on the Hopper report. It was a chance event prompting a complete change to the recitals of the report.

Could the House not make arrangements so that we are kept in touch with events, especially during urgent debates, which could radically change the course of the discussion?

10. *Guidelines for the 1983 budget (continuation)*

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the Robert Jackson report (Doc. 1-97/82) on the European Parliament's guidelines on the 1983 budget of the European Communities.

I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Scrivener. — (*FR*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I should first like to congratulate the rapporteur on the method with which he has approached his task.

Mr Jackson as a result has given the matter a quite extraordinary amount of thought and has this year decided to adopt a new approach.

Now, in April, we have before us for the first time what we feel are clear choices on the question of budget priorities and both the European Commission and the Council will therefore be obliged to assume their responsibilities.

The Liberal and Democratic Group also endorses the ideas which the rapporteur has put forward, since we feel that the central theme of the 1983 budget must be the fight against the scourge of inflation.

The Social Fund does indeed have a major role to play in this respect, but in no event should it be considered

as the only weapon at our disposal. All Community instruments are being and must be employed.

Second point: we share the concern of the Committee on Budgets regarding the implementation of appropriations. This is an extremely fundamental point and there are no two ways in the matter. Either the appropriations approved can be spent, and the European Commission must then use them, or they cannot be spent, and then neither the Commission nor the Parliament should enter these appropriations in the Community budget.

I hope that the very serious warning given during the debates on the 1981 discharge will be heeded, and I am confident that Parliament will keep a watchful eye on the matter.

Thirdly, need I stress the importance which we attach to the question of the classification of expenditure? We expect an agreement to be reached between the three institutions before the debate on the adoption procedure for the 1983 budget. We feel some concern here, since we would like to see more progress being made.

Finally, I will conclude by pointing out that the Liberal Group has tabled a number of amendments. These are designed to draw attention to the need to increase the Community's own resources, since it would indeed be strange if the resolution did not mention this express request of the Parliament. And we wished to point out by this means that the common agricultural policy will not cease to account for such a large proportion of the budget until the Member States have agreed to develop other common policies.

That, for us, is the essential objective.

Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, that is all I wish to say on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

I should, if I may, Mr President, like to take this opportunity to make a request concerning the agenda.

I request, under Rule 87 and because I am losing my voice and have to make a great effort to speak, that the report on the combating of drugs which I was to present today be adjourned to the May part-session. I would ask you to excuse me for making such a request. I believe that this report is important, but my voice will not hold out for the ten minutes or quarter of an hour which I need to present it. This report has had to wait for a very long time but, for once, the delay will be due to force majeure.

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Bombard.

Mr Bombard. — (*FR*) Does Mrs Scrivener also want her report on asbestos to be deferred?

Mr Sherlock. — I think, Mr President, that Mrs Scrivener's request must be acceded to right away, and the consent of the House sought on her request solely to withdraw her report on drugs. She is poorly, she is losing her voice. We can give her the opportunity to relax her voice so that she can perhaps present her important report on asbestos a little later this evening. I submit that under the rule she quoted the House should instantly vote and give her that which she requests.

President. — Mr Sherlock, will you agree to our postponing this item for 70 minutes?

Mr Sherlock. — I submit, Mr President, that it is a request under a point of order and, therefore, requires the immediate attention of this House no matter on what other business it may be engaged.

President. — I call Mr Provan.

Mr Provan. — On a point of order, Mr President. You have just taken a vote of the House, I do not see what difference there will be in taking another vote of the House if that is necessary. But Mrs Scrivener, as rapporteur, has requested that this be taken off the agenda, and I think she is perfectly right at any time so to do, and I submit that to you. I think it would be highly unfortunate, Mr President, if you were to give a ruling at this stage that would not allow Mrs Scrivener to retire and get well as soon as possible. I think if you ask her to wait for another hour, it is really rather ridiculous.

President. — Rule 87(1) of the Rules of Procedure states:

Before or during a debate on an item on the agenda, any Member may move that the debate be adjourned to a specific date and time.

I propose that we take a decision at seven o'clock.

I call Mr Provan.

Mr Provan. — Mr President, I am sorry to interfere again but I do not think it is under that rule that Mrs Scrivener made the request. I think she, as rapporteur, was wanting to take it off the agenda and not seek closure of debate.

President. — I call Mrs Scrivener.

Mrs Scrivener. — (*FR*) I think we are wasting a lot of time, Mr President, but I should like this item to be

deferred until May. I shall wait until seven o'clock. Having said that, I do think it is a little odd — and I share the view of my Conservative friends on this — how people are being stubborn over this. Never mind, let's carry on.

President. — I call Mr Price.

Mr Price. — Mr President, I move under Rule 87 that this debate be postponed until the May part-session. Under Rule 87 I may do that before or during a debate on an item on the agenda. I am doing it before the debate, namely now. I ask you to put it to the House now.

(Parliament agreed to Mr Price's request)

President. — We shall now continue the debate on the Robert Jackson report. I call the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Mouchel. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we are called upon to state our position on the European Parliament's guidelines for the 1983 general budget which Mr Jackson has already presented precisely in order to allow the House to hold a debate at a later stage in the procedure on the draft budget and consider whether the latter is consonant with the aims and intentions of this Parliament.

Following the transitional budgets of previous years, the rapporteur thus proposes a 'progress' budget whose central priority is the fight against unemployment. In his view, the necessary expansion should be achieved by taking measures to restructure the budget. These would essentially take the form of a strict control or even reduction of agricultural expenditure and increased spending on other policies which, he maintains, will tip the balance in the favour of new jobs.

We wish to thank Mr Jackson for the new ideas which he has put forward and which, it is our sincere hope, will facilitate discussions with the other institutions in the budget debate which will commence shortly, and we are at one with him in recognizing the priority and urgency of the fight against unemployment and the need for the Community to use all the means at its disposal to fight it. On the other hand, we find the rapporteur's proposals for attaining these objectives totally unacceptable.

What Mr Jackson is proposing is that expenditure on the Common Agricultural Policy be brought under control and the savings from these cuts used to finance new policies. We do not question in any way the need to develop new policies; indeed, we must develop other policies if we want the Community to have a decisive influence both on the European economy and in international politics whenever Community action

Mouchel

appears more effective than measures taken by individual Member States. And, when these policies come into being, we are prepared to provide the necessary finance by proposing to the Member States that the ceiling for Community VAT should be raised to increase Community revenue, it being clear that the failure to obtain the agreement of the governments to such a move means that there is no prospect of increasing the Community's own resources in 1983.

The rapporteur sees the strict limitation of the appropriations allocated to the Common Agricultural Policy as an essential requirement which must precede any restructuring of the budget which, he claims, is necessary for expansion and progress. This is tantamount to financing admittedly necessary measures by taking away from the only truly common Community policy part of the funds available to it. This is totally unacceptable to the Group of European Progressive Democrats. Contrary to a widespread belief, the Common Agricultural Policy is not the cause of Europe's difficulties, as Mr Jackson assumes, but on the contrary is the foundation on which we must continue to build up Europe. Therefore, by endangering the Common Agricultural Policy by operations and manipulations based on nothing other than a superficial assessment of the imbalance of certain items in relation to actual expenditure, we are running the real risk of no longer being able to maintain in employment our some 8 500 000 farmers and adding to the very unemployment which we propose to fight. Thank you, Mr President.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Bonde. — (DA) Mr President, I should like to congratulate your supranational fellow party member, Mr Jackson, on his clever tactics. I should like to thank him for his sense of realism in recognizing the fact that no one feels any sympathy with this Parliament's demand for more power over the Community purse. Mr Jackson has entirely understood that what the voters are interested in is full employment and he has therefore come up with the idea of harnessing the unemployed to Parliament's chariot. The people are supposed to imagine or be tricked into believing that a 130% increase in the Social Fund will help the employment situation, whereas even if the Social Fund were increased tenfold, this would still be chickenfeed compared with the scale of the problem in the European Community. In spite of the countless subsidies, we are still unable to create jobs at the rate Mr Jackson's fellow party members are capable of losing them in the United Kingdom.

The figures show that over the last year the number of unemployed in the United Kingdom has increased by half a million. It will not be unemployment which

disappears if Mr Jackson gets his way; it is the independence of the various countries which Mr Jackson wants to reduce and he wants to use an issue which is very much in the minds of the public, such as the fight against unemployment, for this purpose.

We are very familiar with these tactics from experience in our own country, as the President will be able to confirm since, when we were called on to vote on the question of Community membership, we were told that this was not a question of independence and that saying 'yes' to the European Community was also saying 'yes' to full employment. At that time we had 22 000 unemployed. In March this year we had 257 600 and if Mr Jackson gets his budget accepted with a 130% increase in the Social Fund, we will probably end up with 300 000 unemployed with no prospects of us solving our problems within the Community context.

President. — I call Mr Pesmazoglou.

Mr Pesmazoglou. — Mr President, I shall speak in English to convey some specific thoughts to our rapporteur, Mr Jackson.

I wish to congratulate, in the first place, Mr Jackson, for the very significant overall presentation of the general ideas which should provide the guidelines for the 1983 budget. My comments are very specific and are comments of emphasis mainly.

The first one to which I attach great importance is that the fight against unemployment should be waged mainly by stimulating growth. I think that this should appear both in substance and in the presentation of our budget.

The Social Fund and other activities can only be conceived as ancillary to the main objective to stimulate growth. I think that this should be made clear both in order to encourage expectations, private investment and enterprise as well as providing the main tool to fight inflation and also unemployment.

My second comment is that development policy and special emphasis on the Mediterranean project are an objective not contradictory but complementary to the stimulation of growth. I think this also should appear in our resolution on the budget.

My third comment is that the reservations which have been made by our rapporteur as well as by the Commissioner, Mr Tugendhat, on agricultural policies should be rather on the re-arrangement of agricultural policies and not on the principle which should remain in line with the Treaty of Rome and of the original agricultural policy as conceived in the early 1960's.

My fourth comment is that the budget should contain specific remarks about the revenue side. On that Mr

Pesmazoglou

Jackson made some comments and I am anxious to encourage him to include specific proposals about the revenue aspects specifically towards exceeding the 1% limit, a proposal which has been repeatedly voted by this Parliament.

My fifth and last comment is that the budget should be an overall budget and, therefore, capital transactions should be included. I think both the inflows and outflows of capital should gradually be part of our budget and constitute one of our main instruments to influence policies within the European Community.

The principle which has been stated by Mr Jackson and by Mr Tugendhat, namely that growth policies in the fight against unemployment are mainly the responsibility of member countries and only an ancillary objective of Community policy, is not I think, a valid one. I would say the responsibilities of Member States and of the Community are equivalent and I think we should give emphasis to our main objective, namely to set in motion a growth process which is the only means to overcome unemployment.

President. — I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, I would like to point out an error in the first page of the Jackson report and that is that it has omitted to record my name as being present at the Committee on Budgets and since I moved the successful amendment for a 130% increase in the budget, I think it is important that my name should be recorded.

Mr President, unemployment is the major theme of this report and, of course, I welcome that fact. It has been the main priority of the Socialist Group in this Parliament for the last three years. It is, I think, politically essential for the European Community, if it is to retain any credibility, to face up to the problem of unemployment which is expected to rise to 13 million by 1983. At the moment nearly 10% of the Community of Ten's working population are unemployed. They represent an increase of nearly 26% in one year alone, and over 40% of those without work are under 25 years of age.

This week at the ETUC Conference in The Hague, the President told the delegates that no society can afford to send 40% of school-leavers home with a message that there is no place for them. No one can turn a blind eye to the fact that mass unemployment is fertile soil for political extremism.

He drew attention to one of the most important facts and the most serious threat to democracy: that very large groups of the population are losing confidence in what politics can do for the man in the street. There is a loss of confidence because of years of unwillingness to tackle the root of the crisis. If this distaste for poli-

tics continues to eat into democracy, it can prepare the way for unscrupulous men with simplistic answers — something we have seen before in Europe and something we never want to see again.

This week a widespread sense of hopelessness among people in a Welsh town with high unemployment is reported in a UK Government-backed report. The survey concluded that what is so sad and telling is the widespread feeling of hopelessness in ordinary people. They do not believe that anything can be done locally, and they feel impotent personally. The solutions are long-term and difficult to achieve but the direction of thought and action ought to be towards a strengthening of the local economy.

Inevitably the European Social Fund has raised increasing expectations among the people of the Community and it has been able to satisfy less and less the demands upon it. So much so that it is already estimated by the Commission that this year eligible applications for aid will exceed money available by about 130%.

Even in the key sectors of youth training and youth employment eligible applications in 1981 exceeded by 75% and 45% the money available. Despite the considerable increase in applications to the Social Fund, the proportion of the budget allocated to it has failed to keep pace with the dramatic rise in unemployment in recent years. Every minute of the working day another five people are added to the dole queue.

The point I am making, of course, is that even if we increase the Social Fund by 130%, the amount of money we are talking about is so small that it would be like putting a piece of chewing gum on a broken water main.

The truth is that many of the policies which alleviate unemployment lie in the gift of national governments, and to suggest that the Community has the means or the money to combat massive unemployment would be totally misleading.

One of the groups which suffers most at times of high unemployment are the disabled, and I would remind you that we have already got a policy, voted by the Parliament last year. We agreed that the Commission should incorporate in its rules governing Community grants a provision that the granting of funds to firms will depend on the applicant's policy on the employment of disabled people. I shall be putting that as an amendment to Mr Jackson's report and I hope you will support what is already our policy.

We are asking for a 130% increase in the Social Fund. That is only one-tenth of the total budget — one-tenth of the budget to deal with 11 million unemployed in the Community. It is not that we are baying for the moon, indeed I think we are being too modest in our demands.

Clwyd

Mr President, I am coming to an end. The same consideration must be given to the industrial sector as to the farming sector. Money must be found to deal with the problem which is the greatest challenge to the countries of the Ten. That is a challenge we must face up to as European parliamentarians. We have an obligation to produce solutions, otherwise we shall have failed the people who elected us. My group will be supporting Mr Jackson's report.

President. — I call Mr Pranchère.

Mr Pranchère. — (*FR*) Mr President, the breath expended on the speeches given at the official ceremonies has merely served to blow out the 25 candles commemorating the anniversary of the Treaty of Rome without providing a new impetus for the construction of Europe and helping to solve the problems confronting it: rising unemployment and inflation, stagnating output and growing disparities and inequalities.

The commercial position of Europe is disastrous for workers. There is therefore but one answer: one must either decide to pursue a true reflationary policy to halt the rise in unemployment or rely on the laws of economic liberalism and suffer the crisis, trying to disguise it with a gloss which, sadly, soon falls away.

In its report on the guidelines for the 1983 budget the Committee on Budgets has chosen the second path, thus continuing the budgetary policy of previous years, despite the latter's ever more evident failures. However, being aware of Europe's poor public image and wishing to improve that image, it has made the fight against unemployment the central theme of the 1983 budget.

But magic words and good intentions alone do not make a good policy. In spite of certain interesting changes, most of the supplementary appropriations planned for the Social Fund and the Regional Fund continue to reflect the continuation of the austerity and restructuring policies and are designed to conceal the absence of a true social policy in many Member States.

The French Members in the Communist and Allies Group will fight these guidelines throughout the budget procedure by proposing that employment should form the core of a true social policy, in contrast to Mr Jackson, who wishes to call into question certain advances on the social front when he states that our employment protection policies have created inflation. We will continue to advocate reflation through improvements in purchasing power, the implementation of significant new progress on shorter working hours and better working conditions, vocational training and professional qualifications. We will rigorously oppose the guidelines in the Jackson Report, which is

aimed at bringing forward the restructuring of the budget and financing new policies by continuing to chop away at agricultural expenditure.

The Report even goes so far as to claim that by exerting greater pressure on agricultural prices, reducing market guarantees and support and extending core-responsibility to all production sectors, lower agricultural spending is a principal means of combating unemployment. This is more than a mistake: it is a misconception and an insult to all those forced to leave their farms. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear! You have compiled a list of European Parliament resolutions to back up your guidelines, Mr Jackson. Have the honesty not to disclaim knowledge of those which do not support your views and, in particular, to take into account the Resolution adopted at the part-session on agricultural prices. That Resolution contradicts your guidelines, since it is aimed at stopping the fall in agricultural revenue and the destruction of the Common Agricultural Policy.

We must be consistent and adopt guidelines consonant with what we have decided. This is essential to ensure the development of our agriculture and within our budgetary resources when one considers that in 1981 EAGGF expenditure declined by 3.5%, and that it accounted for only 62% of the Community budget, compared with 77% in 1977.

These in outline are the guidelines which the French Members in the Communist and Allies Group will support during the budget procedure in order to safeguard the interests of French workers and ensure that Community policy cannot hinder or prevent the implementation of a new economic and social policy in France.

(*Applause*)

President. — I call Mr Delatte.

Mr Delatte. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Jackson's Report underlines the need to approve substantial funds to make the fight against unemployment the main theme of the 1983 budget.

I and the majority of my group unreservedly endorse this proposal, since unemployment is currently our worst social evil in this difficult period for the world economy.

But let us be under no illusion. The overall Community budget represents only 0.8% of the Community's gross domestic product and can therefore have no notable impact at the macroeconomic level.

The sole exception, of course, is the Common Agricultural Policy. I should like to make two remarks on the subject, Mr President.

Delatte

The first is that I wish to contest the analysis made by the rapporteur, who claims that agricultural price guarantees have a negative effect on employment and adds that they fuel inflation and reduce competitiveness.

I cannot accept this argument, knowing for a fact, and I am supported in this by the Commission, that by restraining agricultural prices one is hitting farmers and inevitably increasing unemployment. Agricultural policy is an instrument which can be used to combat the drift away from the countryside, and thus to fight unemployment.

Moreover, by restricting output we would be depriving ourselves of the major natural resources provided by agriculture. And one cannot talk of competitiveness when one knows that every country in the world provides aid to its farmers.

My second remark is this. The Report analyses agriculture exclusively with a view to restricting budgetary expenditure, whereas the positive aspects — important positive aspects — seem to be ignored. Agricultural policy must meet the objectives set out in Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome.

We must therefore introduce new policies, but only if we obtain the financial resources for such policies by removing the excessively tight constraints imposed by the low VAT contribution ceiling. That, Mr President, concludes the remarks which I wished to make and is the purpose behind the amendments tabled by the Committee on Agriculture.

President. — I call Mr Georgiadis.

Mr Georgiadis. — (GR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in our view the attempt by Mr Jackson's report on behalf of the Committee on Budgets to make the fight against unemployment the main element of the 1983 budget is mistaken, biased and one-sided. We do not doubt that the fight against unemployment is one of the main objectives of economic policy in the Community and in the Member States, but we would point out that it is exaggerated to think that the budget, particularly the 1983 budget, can contribute so much to finding a solution to this problem.

Firstly, because the budget itself has not been restructured sufficiently for it to have such major pretensions, and secondly because there are other problems in the Community which are equally pressing for the Member States and their peoples. I need only mention the gulf between the developed and the less developed countries, the problem of the incomes of certain categories of producers in various regions of the Community, and the problem of the lack of productive investment to promote the creation of infrastructures and the development of industry and the economy in the less

developed countries. These are problems which the Jackson Report ignores or passes over without attributing particular importance to them. It is on the basis of this one-sided approach to the many and equally important problems facing the Community that we have the proposal for the enlargement of the Social Fund, with its being strengthened to such an extent that there will no longer be hardly anything left for the other common policies if the proposed major increase in the Social Fund is implemented, because we are all aware that the budgetary resources are so limited that a substantial increase in one sector would lead to a standstill or a reduction in other sectors.

Mr President, I have already mentioned some of the problems neglected in the Jackson report. There are, however, still others, to some of which I should like to draw attention, since I feel that specific mention should at least be made of them in the 1983 budget. One of these problems is the use of the budget and other means to strengthen those procedures which could be used to help new countries joining the Community, such as Greece, and later Spain and Portugal, so that they can tackle the problems of adaptation which their accession to the Community creates. This problem will remain pressing and serious for the next few years, and I think the budget should at least start to help in doing something about it. Another problem, Mr President, is the need to increase investment, particularly in infrastructures in — as I have already said — the regions, and particularly the underdeveloped regions.

However, Mr President, I should like to say in conclusion that what I find missing in the Jackson Report is a decision that Parliament should finally state with all the force at its disposal that the Community budget will never be properly structured unless it provides for the transfer of resources from the rich countries of the Community to the poorer ones, from the rich regions to the less developed ones, as is in fact done in the national budgets of most countries.

For those reasons, Mr President, we have tabled a number of amendments. Our amendments are intended not to bring about the downfall of the Jackson Report, but only to add to it certain elements which will bring it into balance. Whether we shall be able to vote in favour of the report will depend on the fate of these amendments.

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Mr President, the Communist Party of Greece has the following general comments to make.

Firstly, the European Parliament's efforts to forestall the Council with a vote on the 1983 budget are neither sensible nor democratic, but will only lead to *faits accomplis* which will reduce the powers of the national

Alavanos

governments to support their national interests within the Council.

Secondly, the central feature of the new budget would appear to be the fight against unemployment. However, the proposals in the Jackson Report do not include any effort to tackle the reasons which have led to the unemployment of about 10 million people, with new policies being implemented which really do meet the needs of working people. With the proposals for financing industrial and research policy etc., the budget items will benefit those who created the unemployment and not those who are experiencing it.

Thirdly, we must point out that unemployment is being taken as an excuse for diverting the lion's share of Community resources to the large and developed countries of the Community, with the result that fewer resources are available for countries like Greece which have much greater need of them and where the unemployment is largely hidden.

Fourthly, the Communist Party of Greece would be the last political force to defend the Common Agricultural Policy as it stands at present, but we are categorically opposed to reductions in agricultural spending as a whole in the budget until such time as there is a substantial — and not just notional — restructuring in favour of small and medium producers and Mediterranean products.

Fifthly, the coresponsibility levy, which is supported yet again in the Jackson Report, is causing farmers to go out of business.

Sixthly, proposals such as those for Community publicity programmes in the fields of young people and culture conflict even with the Treaties of Rome.

Seventhly, the general outlines of the 1983 budget fail to show any interest in a substantial strengthening of the development programmes for the most backward countries of the Community, in tackling the problems of small and medium-sized undertakings, in developing relations with socialist and other countries which might prove particularly beneficial for our countries etc. — all of these being questions which we consider to be of crucial importance.

For all these reasons we too are unable to vote in favour of the Jackson Report.

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Robert Jackson, rapporteur. — Mr President, could I thank those Members who have spoken in the debate for their kind remarks about this resolution even when they have disagreed with it. And, indeed, I hope that this expanded debate on this occasion about guidelines will be a useful element in this year's budget

procedure. I would also like in turn to thank the specialist committees for their contribution to this resolution. I have tried to take all the points that they have made on board and certainly I hope that we have succeeded in beginning a dialogue between the Committee on Budgets and the specialist committees which will become increasingly fruitful as the budget year unfolds.

Mr President, the main question that has been raised in the brief debate which has taken place concerns the possible consequences of this proposed emphasis on the Social Fund for other Community policies and especially for the Community's regional policy. Now I think that there is an element of misunderstanding in some of the remarks that have been made in the debate.

First, very briefly about the agricultural policy. Mr Delatte was quoting from the working document where I raised the question simply as a question for consideration for Mr Delatte what the impact of the common agricultural policy was on employment. But it is not a feature of the resolution and so what I would answer to him and to Mr Michel who made the same point is that it is not the theme of this resolution that we should cut agriculture in order to spend more on the social policy. I would simply point out that in the sections on the agricultural policy in this resolution there is hardly a word which is not taken from the European Parliament's basic resolution adopted last year on improvements to the CAP.

Second, about the relationship between the Social Fund and regional policy of the Community. I think there is a misunderstanding here because it is not the case that the Social Fund and the Community's regional policy are completely distinct factors and forces. The fact is that 88% of Social Fund expenditure takes place in the Community's regions and if the House were to adopt the target of increasing the Social Fund by 130%, this would, indeed, have a big impact on expenditure in the Community's regions.

I would just like to say to Mr Georgiadis and to Mr Alavanos, who were expressing scepticism about the utility of the Community's efforts in this field, that it is no small thing that the Social Fund pays for the retraining of 400 thousand young people in a year, for the creation of 300 thousand jobs in a year. That is something and we ought to try to increase it. It is not something to be neglected or treated as of no account. Besides, the resolution makes, I think, abundantly clear that all the Community's instruments should be used in this campaign against unemployment and I would draw the attention of Members particularly to the section on Community borrowing and lending activities.

As far as the Regional Fund is concerned, we have adopted today a resolution the De Pasquale resolution, which supports the Regional Fund — of course

Robert Jackson

we all support the Regional Fund — but which calls for improvements in its operation. And all that this guidelines resolution does is to say that we will judge what budgetary priority to give to the Regional Fund when we come to our first reading in October in the light of the progress that we hope will have been made between now and then in improving the operation of the Fund along the lines that the Parliament is advocating.

Mr President, the last two years' budgets have been frustrating budgets both for the Parliament and, perhaps more important, for the Community as a whole. I remember them very well. They were described, both of them, as budgets of transition. Poor Mr Spinelli had to preside over a budget of transition when I know that he very much wanted to preside over a different sort of budget. Well, we need to get away from budgets of transition; we need a budget of progress, not a budget of transition and this is how I hope that the 1983 budget will emerge from the guidelines that we are setting today. Let us combine together from all sides of the House to make this a budget of hope and above all a budget which will give better hope to the millions of Europe's unemployed.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

11. *Protection from risks related to asbestos — Dangerous substances and preparations*

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two reports:

- report (Doc. 1-903/81), drawn up by Mrs Schleicher on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-47/80) for a directive amending for the fifth time Directive 76/796 EEC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations;
- report (Doc. 1-916/81), drawn up by Mrs Scrivener on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-488/80) for a second Council directive on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to agents at work: asbestos.

The following oral question (Doc. 1-71/82), tabled to the Commission by Mr Collins and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, is also included in the debate:

Subject: Asbestos Congress in Canada

Can the Commission explain what were the criteria in its decision to sponsor this conference in Montreal in May 1982, and what form this sponsorship will take?

Would the Commission explain why the Directorate-General for Social Affairs had not been consulted during preparatory work for this conference as other Directorates-General had been?

Are they further aware that the ETUC, who were not originally invited to participate, have interpreted this Conference as being merely a display of publicity for asbestos producers and manufacturers and that this feeling has been reinforced by recent threatening attitudes on the part of the Commission towards Sweden if they continue to pass anti-asbestos legislation.

Does the Commission accept responsibility for the contents of a letter sent by a Director General of the Commission to the Swedish Government, (a letter which has been criticised in the Swedish press), threatening possible sanctions within the framework of GATT if the Swedish Government pursues its proposed legislation on asbestos?

Does the Commission approve of the fact that, on a certain number of occasions, specialists from Asbestos International Association participated in preparatory work on draft directives on asbestos, sometimes in the guise of government representatives and sometimes as representatives of the industry?

I call Mrs Schleicher.

Mrs Schleicher, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen. Today, we have two reports to discuss, both on the subject of asbestos. One on guidelines for restriction of its use, which I will present, and one on industrial safety guidelines to be presented by my colleague Mrs Scrivener. Mrs Scrivener stated clearly before her committee that the work of the two committees and their efforts to achieve coordination had unfortunately not led to any measure of agreement between the two reports. In order to prevent an endless discussion, I propose that Mrs Scrivener say what there is to say on this subject when she presents her report and that I simply present my guidelines. The aim of the guidelines on the restriction of the use of asbestos which I am presenting is to provide better health protection for the public at large as well as for employees of asbestos processing companies. The Commission has done groundwork on this subject and has done it conscientiously. In our committee, however, there were arguments about the of the general scope of coverage of the guidelines.

The carcinogenic properties of fine asbestos dust are the objective basis. In the committee, therefore, we

Schleicher

tried to make a careful and responsible assessment of the dangers that really exist and to establish whether the fear of cancer which is associated with asbestos is justified and, above all, whether asbestos is an environmental problem, i.e. of danger to the public at large. Professor Selikoff's latest work, for example, should be mentioned in this context. His work which is based on statistics indicates a much lower degree of risk in jobs than his previous statements and estimates.

The most recent scientific long term studies, especially those concerned with the risk to people living in the vicinity of the Canadian asbestos mines, for example, refute the increasing number of wild assertions made in recent times, that all uses of asbestos and products containing it are dangerous to the environment and hence to the public at large.

In my view, the general public is not at risk and this is why the majority of the committee turned down the demand for a total ban. There is very little point in banning the use of asbestos because it occurs as a mineral in many rock formations on this earth and erodes naturally, which means that it is always present, even if somebody bans it.

As far as the various articles of these guidelines on restriction of use are concerned, the committee passed by majority vote the following resolutions which differ from the Commission's draft:

1. A ban of the use of blue asbestos.
2. Further restrictions in the use of white asbestos.
3. The marking of products containing asbestos.
4. Compulsory substitution according to a catalogue of substitute materials to be drawn up.

Whilst I very much agree with two of these recommendations, I, together with other members of the committee, hold an extremely critical view of the other two recommendations for fundamental reasons. One concerns a total ban of crocidolite, or what is known as blue asbestos; this I oppose because it is not yet possible to replace it without incurring a substantial decline in quality in many important applications. As far as the other recommendation on substitution is concerned, i.e. substitute materials and products, speaking as the Rapporteur, I am worried that the majority vote will lead to rash action.

I regard overhasty demands for bans and substitution irresponsible where there is no certainty that the substitutes are innocuous. It was several decades before it was discovered that asbestos was dangerous. The ruling now demanded would make it compulsory to use materials whose risk potential is not yet known. The Commission has also confirmed this as well: the experience we have of most of the fibres which come under a consideration as substitutes, especially from the required epidemiological studies, is not as extensive as our experience with asbestos fibres. The congress on

the biological effects of the most varied fibres being held this very week in Copenhagen under the sponsorship of the World Health Organization clearly shows the magnitude of the risks they entail in several studies.

This is why many of my colleagues and I believe that compulsory substitution is a more than dubious solution. First we have the problem of who is to draw up the catalogue of substitute materials: if this is done at the national level there will be no harmonization. Secondly: who determines and guarantees that the substances included in this catalogue are harmless? I believe it would be much more responsible to make a closer study of how the various advantages of asbestos can continue to be used. Where a substance's risk is known, it can be eliminated by controlled treatment and the use of materials with unknown hazards should not be made compulsory.

I hope that, in spite of the very complicated nature of the subject, my written report has given you sufficient insight into the matter to draw the necessary conclusions for the vote.

President. — I call Mrs Scrivener.

Mrs Scrivener, rapporteur. — (FR) First of all, Mr President, esteemed colleagues, I should like to apologize for any confusion that may have arisen.

I should like to begin by making a general point regarding my report on the protection of workers from the risks related to asbestos exposure.

The directive which concerns us, and hence the workers themselves, is related to the other directive — about which Mrs Schleicher has just spoken to you — on the limitation and use of certain dangerous substances.

One of the major difficulties that we have encountered stems from the fact that the European Commission has not really co-ordinated its work on these two directives. As a result, the task of this Parliament has been rendered extremely difficult. In its directive on the protection of workers from asbestos, the Commission sanctions the use of crocidolite or blue asbestos, with the proviso that this should only happen when it cannot be avoided; in the directive on dangerous substances, however, this substance is outlawed completely, except in two precise cases. I agree that this is a very tricky problem and I should not like anyone to take my remarks as a serious reproach to the Commission, but I think that it is vital to remember that consistency in our work is all-important.

We in the Committee on the Environment really did try to be consistent but we were not entirely successful, unfortunately. While an amendment to Article 4,

Scrivener

paragraph 3, of the directive on the protection of workers exposed to asbestos would indeed have made the two directives consistent by referring back to the provisions of Article 5(1), of the directive on dangerous substances, a vote was taken within the Committee on the Environment to outlaw crocidolite completely. This complicated matters but that is how life goes. As the rapporteur, I can only regret such an outcome, as we ought to submit a text on which Parliament can base a highly considered vote, if we are to remedy the situation — which is still possible. I should like to make this point very forcefully to my colleagues, as once before — when voting on a similar directive concerning the protection of workers from lead — we committed errors and made a directive quite inconsistent.

I shall now say a few words about the most crucial, basic issue at stake. I must point out that scientific opinion is divided as to whether crocidolite is more or less harmful than white asbestos. In this state of doubt, the Committee on Health Protection decided to prohibit the use of crocidolite, the sole exception being the manufacture of large-diameter pipes and seals.

These are the only two cases where there is currently no satisfactory substitute for crocidolite, given its durability and resistance to mechanical wear. But this means, of course, that it is essential for workers exposed to this type of asbestos to benefit from greater protection. In other words, the limit values for fibre concentration should not exceed 0.1 per cubic centimetre in the case of crocidolite, whereas the corresponding values for other types of asbestos would be 0.5 per cubic centimetre.

Finally, the Committee on the Environment adopted an amendment, that I consider crucial, which aims at giving aid to firms so that they can step up their research on the hazards of asbestos, investigate possible substitution products and, above all, perfect their laboratory measuring equipment. We cannot over-insist on this essential point, as it is indispensable that sampling and monitoring methods are applied in the same way in each Community Member State if we are to make true comparisons.

Very briefly, that is what I have to say on this difficult directive, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, but we will have to be particularly attentive when the votes are taken and I shall try my utmost, at that point, to be as clear as possible.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Weber. — *(DE)* The history of asbestos pollution is that of a constant, increasingly tough power struggle between scientists, the workers affected, their families

and industry. This is clear when one realizes how long this struggle has gone on already and how strongly it has been fought for decades.

The first results of studies of the cancer risk caused by asbestos fibres were obtained as early as the 1920s, and new studies began in the 1960s, the results of which have been available for over twenty years now. In the USA, for example, where probably the most detailed research has been carried out, long-term studies have been conducted involving 16 000 dock workers who were in direct contact with asbestos.

All these studies very quickly disappeared into the filing cabinets of industry, at least in the initial phase, and those who carried out these studies — and there is proof of this — were subjected to considerable pressure, at least in the early years, not to publish the results. We now find that this situation today is not very much better, when we consider how strongly the asbestos lobby in the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, reacted to a report of the Federal Ministry of the Environment and how many court actions are currently being conducted in the Federal Republic against people who have simply indicated in advertisements that asbestos products may be carcinogenic.

When one sees this happening, it becomes clear that a power struggle is still underway.

Regardless of this knowledge we have had for over twenty years, asbestos consumption continues to increase. It is now estimated to total about 5.2 million tonnes per year. A further interesting point, however, and one which makes the whole issue so difficult, is the fact that there is very narrow vertical concentration in the major companies, with control, in some instances, of the whole processing line from the mine to the asbestos cement processing plant, as in the case of the Schmidtheim Group in Switzerland.

Now in the discussion on asbestos, and this has already been made clear by the two rapporteurs, Mrs Schleicher and Mrs Scrivener, there are a few points which remain undisputed. The first is that asbestos is considered throughout the world to be one of the ten most dangerous carcinogenic substances in existence.

Secondly, asbestos causes various diseases: on the one hand, asbestosis, the fibre disease, and on the other hand various types of cancer such as lung cancer and mesothelioma. This is important because they have to be taken into account when it comes to taking action.

Thirdly, the carcinogenic effect of asbestos can not be determined according to the quantity of asbestos fibers inhaled. This means — and it has also been proved by the World Health Organization in its international cancer research institute — that only by applying the zero threshold is it possible to ensure complete elimination of the danger of cancer to employees.

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Fourthly — and this too is undisputed — the time required by asbestos to take effect can vary, i.e. in some cases as long as 20 to 30 years, and at the same time, the period of exposure to asbestos fibres may also vary. It is therefore very difficult to check whether a person dying of lung cancer at the age of 50 or 60 may have been exposed to considerable quantities of asbestos fibres at the age of 20. First it is assumed that the person died because he was a smoker and nobody thinks of performing an autopsy to check whether his lungs contain fibre residue, for example. This is one of the main problems in this matter.

Fifthly, and this is directly connected with the previous point, the effect of asbestos fibres unfortunately may be increased by other harmful substances, such as cigarette smoke or waste gases from industry and automobiles.

The next undisputed point, which again makes subsequent assessment very difficult, is the fact that contamination may occur in many different activities. First of all, we have direct contact with asbestos, which is the simplest to check and to provide protection against.

With products containing asbestos, however, the problem becomes much more complicated. It begins with the demolition of old buildings in which asbestos was used without inhibition. Danger also exists on new building sites, however, where workers handle asbestos cement slabs which of course do not bear individual warnings of risk from asbestos, with the result that the workers still apply their tools to this material, and thus increase the risk.

Fine asbestos dust is dispersed in the air. We find this asbestos contamination not just in working areas, but in our environment and coming not just from natural sources but from asbestos products, too.

It is assumed that the emission from products is higher than that of industry. This pollution is to be found above all in areas of high population, but we are now also finding it in areas previously considered to be 'clean'. On Austrian farms, in small villages, a much higher fibre content is found in the vicinity of houses with eternit-slate roofs.

It is also an undisputed fact that industry has introduced substantial preventive measures to reduce the fibre content of the air in line with laws and regulations in all our Member States. However, the actual effectiveness of this protection as far as asbestos products are concerned is illustrated by what I have just said.

It is also clear that thousands upon thousands of people would still be alive today if industry had tackled the problem of asbestos fibre risk early enough and with a sense of responsibility, that is, if it had immediately drawn reasonable conclusions from the

studies, by replacing asbestos products step by step with less dangerous products. We would then have been a good deal further than we are today.

These points are in fact undisputed, although there were also members in the Committee who did not accept them. If all this is correct, however, something must be done as quickly and reasonably as possible. Risk can only be prevented properly by substitution, as the World Health Organization has said, also. Now we are faced with the question of whether an immediate ban of asbestos is justifiable? We have two proposals for amendments on this subject. I believe that this is hardly possible for the moment, although I would prefer this solution. On the one hand, it is not yet possible to use substitutes in all areas, and on the other hand, it would not be possible to extend the range of products to include alternative products immediately except in a few companies: in all others it would take a little longer. However, we also find that there has been a total ban of asbestos in Denmark for two years now and this has not had a noticeably negative effect on the country's economy.

I now take the view that we need a period of transition which is acceptable from the environmental and economic point of view. This period must be restricted, however, otherwise the existing substitutes will not be used and the pressure required to bring about a real improvement in the situation will not be exerted.

My motion, which is backed by the Socialist Group, proposes the introduction of a gradual reduction in the use of asbestos over a period of ten years and the immediate use of substitutes wherever these are available and can be used.

We also believe that a catalogue of substitute substances should be drawn up because many are not yet aware of the wide range of substitutes which are already available.

By way of an example, a large automobile company in the Federal Republic produces brake linings without asbestos for export; the vehicles in the Federal Republic, however, still use asbestos brake linings. This, therefore, is an area where a switch from one product to another could be made immediately without problems or economic consequences.

And now we come to the problem of crocidolite and chrysotile. One section of this House — and I am glad there is a majority for it in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection — held the view that crocidolite should be banned immediately because it is more dangerous. There are other opinions on this, but very recent studies show that more dust is circulated where crocidolite is processed, the fibres are longer, thinner and therefore more dangerous, they are tougher than other fibres, and therefore penetrate very much further into the

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body and remain there longer, and therefore it is assumed that they carry with them a much greater cancer risk than all other types of fibres.

The Commission has now tried to ban crocidolite in a rather strange formulation. It has said something like, 'the use of crocidolite is forbidden . . . except in the following cases . . .' and then come the exceptions. Strangely enough, one of these is the production of large tubes, in fact precisely a sector where 94% of the products consist of crocidolite only — where crocidolite really plays an important role. Neither was the Commission able to give the Committee a satisfactory answer on the reasons for irresolute attitude.

And now we come to the question the substitute: Mrs Schleicher has just spoken about them. There is no point in going into detail about hitherto known risks, but this does not mean that we should leave known risks alone as well.

I do not think this would be in the interest of those who have to work with these products. If we know there is a risk, we must eliminate it immediately. We cannot simply say the risk is there, people are dying, the people are wasting away with horrible, slow-acting diseases — and then say ' . . . we do not know whether the other products are more dangerous or not'. Furthermore, it is an undisputed fact that most substitutes have long proved much less harmful by reason of their different fibre structure.

I have brought a cassette with me today which has made a very deep impression on me. This cassette gives a detailed description of the dramatic procedure for the recognition of occupational diseases as conducted in a particular firm. It contains the voices of people who did not survive until the end of the procedure. It shows how long, how degrading and inhuman these procedures are, although their sole purpose is to ensure that the victims of these diseases for which they are not responsible, at least obtain financial compensation afterwards, for which they have to fight for so long, for themselves, and — since it is too late in most cases — at least for their families.

I think we should draw the right conclusions from our experience from the past and impose a gradual ban on asbestos to improve the situation as quickly as possible for all: for workers as well as for the population as a whole.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Alber. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen. Health is such an important asset that we must do everything we can to protect it, and it is better to do too much than too little. Nevertheless, we must not throw out the baby with the bath water, because

anyone who wants to remain healthy and live to a ripe old age must give up eating, stop working and not go out any more.

Anyone who talks of power struggles in this context is throwing out the baby with the bath water. I think we should keep ideologies out of these matters. The risks presented by asbestos mainly stem from the fact that it was used in a very uninhibited manner in the past, but a great deal has changed. Many processes, such as the spraying method, have been discontinued and it is therefore unfair to refer to reports based on completely different circumstances.

I say 'unfair', but I almost feel like saying 'frivolous'. For the rest, asbestos occurs in large quantities in the natural environment; all the Alps are full of it and hence the water, too, but in this precise area there are very healthy people, and very interesting people for that matter, when I consider the Bavarians.

We cannot provide a substitute for everything at present, and to be fair, we should also talk about how many lives asbestos has already saved as a means of fire protection or material for car brakes. Mention should also be made of the water pipes which are particularly important to the countries of the Third World, and countries like Zimbabwe, which are major suppliers of asbestos.

I have therefore submitted an amendment proposal to the effect that blue asbestos should be allowed for large tubes with a minimum diameter of 800 mm, because these tubes can be hardened only by using this material. However, in order to ensure that health is really protected, my proposal makes provision for a release quantity of 0.2 fibres per mm.

I think this will take account of any misgivings; we should beware of discrediting certain materials by way of individual bans. As I have said, good health is an asset we have to protect, but we must not throw out the baby with the bath water.

President. — The debate is adjourned.¹

The sitting was suspended at 8.15 p.m. and resumed at 9.15 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

President. — The next item is the continuation of the joint debate on the reports by Mrs Scrivener (Doc. 1-916/81) and Mrs Schleicher (Doc. 1-903/81).

¹ Votes: see Annex.

President

I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Prout. — Mr President, the Commission proposal appears to have gone further than the present state of scientific knowledge justifies. There is no proof that asbestos in all its forms is dangerous. Moreover, we do not yet know whether any substitutes chosen will be safe.

The grounds for prohibiting the use of chrysotile asbestos in the listed products, as expressed in this proposal, are based on fears that the fibres may be released during application or service and inhaled by persons nearby. But in many cases these fears are unjustified. For example, in paints, mastics and adhesives the asbestos fibres are dispersed in organic resinous material and are not carried on the air as respirable fibres.

This view has been supported by all relevant authorities concerned with industrial health.

This list, therefore, should be confined to those materials and purposes acknowledged to represent a real risk. This risk should be determined by a limitation of exposure test as defined in the committee's amendments to the Commission proposal which my group will support.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Communists and Allies Group.

Mrs Le Roux. — *(FR)* Mr President, a debate on asbestos might appear primarily technical and remote from the daily concerns of the public. But we are aware that the word *asbestos* conjures up a highly legitimate disquiet in the minds of thousands of workers whose health and lives are too frequently threatened by the use of this material.

It is our awareness of this problem which makes the French Communists and Allies share a keen interest in the constructive comments raised by the Commission's proposals for a directive and the two reports by members of the Committee on the Environment.

The improvement of living and working conditions — cited as a target in the Treaty of Rome — ought to occupy a much more central place in our common concerns. The possibility of building a Europe with an effective social policy lies in our desire to extend the benefits of the most advanced bodies of legislation to all workers in our various countries.

These two proposed directives — one aiming at protecting workers from the hazards of exposure to asbestos and the other at limiting the market availability and use of asbestos — fit perfectly into an approach of harmonizing what is best through social

progress, and our group is happy to be able to make a positive contribution to these developments. While we recognize the overall merit inherent in these proposals for directives, we feel that some of the provisions which they contain warrant critical assessment. To a large extent, this would obviate the need to adopt what are otherwise a certain number of useful amendments. To be specific, we consider it a drawback that the two proposals for outlawing the use of crocidolite — a variety of asbestos whose excessively dangerous character is incontestable — are not the same. We should therefore like to declare our reservations about authorizing the use of blue asbestos. Indeed, the authorization of its use goes against the principle that employers are solely responsible for working conditions. Talking about exposure limit values, we think it would be a good idea to lower the threshold level — as suggested by a number of amendments — and we feel this particularly because doubts remain regarding the level of toxicity capable of provoking cancer.

Finally, it is our belief that the effectiveness of any social reform — whatever its character — can only be guaranteed by the wholehearted participation of workers and their representatives in its application. That is the main point of our amendments. We think it is essential to build up workers' capacity for defending themselves so that they can be on their guard against the consequences of working with asbestos or other dangerous products and so that they can ensure that the standards laid down to safeguard their health are adhered to. To this end, one of our amendments provides for bodies representing workers to have the right to veto the implementation of proposed decisions which they deem dangerous. We believe that even the best social provisions in the world are destined to remain a dead letter without the experienced participation of workers in their application. Given the useful nature of the proposals for directives and the potential for improvements embodied in a number of the amendments, we trust that we will be able to approve and vote for the two motions for resolution.

President. — I call Mr Collins.

Mr Collins. — Mr President, nobody who has ever visited the areas of the asbestos mines of the old variety or who has met some of the people who once worked in these mines can be in any doubt of the dangers involved in the use in an uncontrolled way of asbestos: diseases of the lung, reducing healthy workers to nothing more than wrecks; diseases of the lung producing death measured by trade unions over many years of struggle trying to assert their rights. It is a long time since the dangers were recognized and it is a long time now, I suppose, since action was first taken. Crocidolite is already totally banned in the United Kingdom and I must say that it would be a great tragedy if we were to have to retreat from that particular position there. But gradually the whole world has

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become aware and gradually controls have been improved and substitutes have been developed in one or two significant areas.

It is because of this realization that the Socialist Group has tabled the oral question which is part of this debate. We discover that at the same time as these two draft directives are being presented to this Parliament, and at the same time as it appears that we are making progress, it has been shown to us that the Commission has been involved in the preparation of an international symposium on asbestos in Canada, along with the Canadian Government and the Government of Quebec and an organization known as the International Asbestos Association.

Mr President, I have no objection and the Socialist Group has no objection to this. Indeed, we encourage the Commission to participate in international symposia. We would even encourage the Commission to help to organize these and give them support. However, the circumstances here are a little bit different and I think are a little bit disturbing. For example, it would appear to us that the symposium is dominated by the International Asbestos Association, and many people in the trade union movement feel that the contents of this symposium are biased towards finding a justification for the continued use of asbestos in circumstances that I think this Assembly will not approve of.

It is all very well for Mr Alber in his speech earlier on to say 'we should keep ideology out of this debate'. That is fine, Mr President, but there are many many people in the trade union movement who still have unhappy memories of their fight to have the suffering from effects of asbestos recognized and they remember how reluctant were the employers to help them. Therefore, Mr President, we want to know why the ETUC was not involved right from the beginning in the preparatory work for this symposium.

Secondly, given the responsibility of the Social Affairs Directorate-General for health and safety and recognizing that health and safety must be a central part of any such symposium, we are a little bit surprised to find that the Social Affairs Directorate-General was not consulted until long after the original preparatory work was done, and we want to know why.

Thirdly, to make matters worse, we understand that representatives of industry did participate with the Commission in that preparatory work and sometimes the same people were industrial representatives and sometimes they were government representatives. Now that does not do anything for our confidence in the intentions of the Commission and we ask, therefore, for them to clarify their position.

Fourthly, we discovered that a letter has been sent from the Commission to the Swedish Government containing a hint of a threat of action under GATT if

Sweden continued to improve its already high standard of protection against the dangers of asbestos.

We want to know whether the Commission agrees with this letter. We want to know how they can justify it. Does it not seem to indicate that the suspicions of the ETUC about the symposium are justified?

Finally, Mr President, the work of this Parliament is to open up the work of the Commission and of the Council to public scrutiny. Parliament will become a respected institution in Europe only if it learns to ask awkward questions. The other Community institutions will also be respected if they can show clearly and without doubt that these questions can be answered, that there is nothing to hide; that there are no contradictory, ambiguous and misleading policies being followed. The oral question, Mr President, is therefore a contribution to that spirit of openness which we pursue in the Community and we look forward to a clear and, I hope, doubt-dispelling reply. But I must say, Mr President, that if we do not get a doubt-dispelling reply, then the questions we ask will become more and more awkward.

President. — I call Mr Protopapadakis.

Mr Protopapadakis. — (GR) Now that previous speakers have developed the subject, I should like to dwell a little on the problem of crocidolite.

The motions for resolutions and the amendments before us seek to ensure improved working conditions in factories and mines where asbestos is produced. I consider, however, that the proposal by the Committee on the Environment to prohibit crocidolite without exception is very final and absolute, while the data on which those who are proposing it base their views are indefinite and doubtful, as has been stressed both by the rapporteurs and by the spokesman for the Socialist Group, who repeatedly stated that the data currently known to science concerning the effects of asbestos on human health have not yet been clarified. On the other hand, it is absolutely certain that with the fuss we are making about asbestos — and we often do the same with regard to other similar matters — we are causing panic in public opinion, and if we get to the stage of inciting consumers and workers to the irrational fear that asbestos is a terrible and deadly poison, what will we have gained?

The only thing that will happen is that we will make even more workers unemployed, while the consumers will look for other materials, which will be plastics. And it is very likely that these plastics cause greater harm to man and to the environment than asbestos does.

In order to avoid creating such a panic without good reason, we must not be absolute in our decisions. An

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appropriate restriction on crocidolite and on asbestos in general, as originally imposed by the Commission, is sufficient. In particular I think that it would be useful to exempt from the prohibition the production of asbestos cement pipes and other substances the use of which does not pollute the atmosphere.

It would be sad and pointless to put an end without good reason to an industrial activity which has become internationally established and which is a healthy cell in the Community economy. Perhaps the zeal, I would even say the missionary zeal, of those who wish to bring about decisions for the protection of the environment can, if exaggerated, develop in some cases into over-protection. It can be compared to the protection given by the mother who wrapped her child up so tightly to protect him from the cold that he died from asphyxia. If we wish to protect workers, we must propose measures to improve working conditions, not close down industries and make the workers unemployed.

President. — I call Mr Verroken.

Mr Verroken. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should first of all like to congratulate the two rapporteurs on the dedication, sensitivity and discrimination with which they have carried out their difficult and delicate task.

As I am sure everyone realizes, there is still an unresolved controversy regarding certain aspects of these two motions for resolutions in the Parliamentary Committee too, as can be seen not only from the lack of unanimity in the voting on these reports, but also from the disturbingly contradictory nature of the texts adopted.

The fact that many questions of a scientific nature still remain unanswered and the great disagreement regarding blue asbestos, which is allegedly more dangerous, do not make our job easy. I intend to call a spade a spade and I will therefore make no bones about the fact that my attitude is partly determined by the fact of the socio-economic situation and, in particular, by the existence of a number of cement works in my country. The situation is easier for those Members who come from countries where cement products of which blue asbestos forms an essential constituent are not produced. In my country, a fundamental ban on blue asbestos would result in the immediate shutdown of a massive production apparatus and would threaten 3 000 jobs at one fell swoop — which is a relatively large number of jobs for a small country such as my own. At the present time, a ban of this kind would have disastrous social consequences which cannot simply be glossed over.

As a complete layman where asbestos problems are concerned — even after being approached by the

industry — I regarded it as my intellectual duty to consult all the scientific, medical, technical, trade union, administrative and policy-making bodies in my country, both outside as well as inside the industry, which might possibly be competent on this question. This led to the following provisional conclusions:

1. that factories where asbestos is processed must be subject to the most stringent safety regulations and operate and produce under the most stringent surveillance with a view to protecting both the workers and the consumer;
2. that no substitutes have as yet been found for blue asbestos;
3. that as a result of the great affinity between cement and asbestos, *subsequent* release of pure asbestos is virtually impossible and that asbestos cement is not a synonym for asbestos;
4. that all the so-called counter-arguments which have been put forward have nothing to do with the chemical processes and working techniques currently in use but relate to the production and processing conditions of at least 30 years ago.

Under these circumstances, therefore, it strikes me as reasonable, subject to further thorough scientific investigation, to place our confidence in the original Commission proposals.

President. — I call Mrs Schleicher.

Mrs Schleicher. — (DE) I was pleased to hear Mr Collins mention the progress that has been made in an area which has already been a source of great concern to us. It has been possible, over the last ten years, to utilize the experience gained from scientific research to push through improvements in works and factories, and that — in my opinion — is something which has been too little heeded. The fact is that a very great deal has been done in this field — more in some countries than in others — and it is our job here to ensure that what has been achieved so far in the interests of those who have to work with asbestos is adopted likewise by those countries which are so far lagging behind, in the interests of their workers too.

However, in the case of asbestos, certain parties in certain countries have, for some time now, been pursuing ideological ends with the aid of health policy considerations, using statistics and estimates which are, in my view, irresponsible.

For that reason, I should like to quote the occupational medicine expert, Professor Valentin, who said that medicine is, to a very large extent, a factually-based science, and who dismissed extrapolations, model calculations, hypotheses and unproven twilight statistics as speculation, especially in cases where they were derived from the distant past or emanated from

Schleicher

other countries with different technologies and inferior safety provisions.

Fictitious or imaginary data are no basis for a modern and socially aware industrialized country to enact laws, regulations or provisions, and specifically prohibiting provisions. In this case, I particularly deplore the two-faced morality with which certain people attempt to persuade the public that risks can be eliminated entirely from a modern industrialized society. Asbestos is only one of 900 known carcinogenic substances, of which there may be as many as 2 500. I am quite sure that the solution to this problem is not to be found in simply banning all these substances.

Mrs Weber referred to the lobby which she claimed was exerting pressure. I get the impression from what she said that, as far as she is concerned, 'lobby' equals 'industry'. Of course, I have received representations from industry, but I have also been contacted by a number of workers who have tried — successfully — to force through improvements at their place of work. I have also received representations from the trade unions, which I also regard as a lobby. In fact, a 'lobby' is to my mind a positive thing, in that it is up to everyone with an interest in the matter at hand to state his point of view.

That does not mean to say, though, that we listen to only one side or the other. Everyone must have a chance to air his views. For instance, I was very surprised to find that workers in factories put forward suggestions which were different from those advanced by the trade union leaders. The trade unions have clearly decided at European level that asbestos must be banned, but as you yourself said, Mrs Weber, such a thing is simply not feasible at the present time. On the other hand, we have the problems of the workers themselves, who are confronted daily — or at least very often — with the spectre of unemployment. There must surely be a reasonable alternative to these two extremes.

I believe that the directive, in its present form, incorporating the amendments, which are of course weighted differently, provides the basis for a solution at Community level in accordance with the nature of the problem.

On the one hand, it is irresponsible to unsettle the public at large by overstating the dangers of asbestos — as has certainly happened.

On the other, it was also irresponsible in the past not to devote to asbestos the kind of attention it should have received in the interests of protecting human lives. That was everybody's fault, because no-one pressed for improvements, and so I cannot single out any one party now to take the blame for having done nothing. The fact is that, when nothing is done, we are all at fault.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, we shall be voting in favour of all the proposals aimed at strengthening the measures to protect the health of those working in the asbestos industry or with asbestos products. Major scientific studies are already available as a basis for establishing international criteria for the permissible limit values. On this point, the regulations must be strict and must provide for stiff penalties against violations under the supervision of the workers. Provided that this condition is strictly fulfilled, we disagree with the complete prohibition of the use of crocidolite, which is already essential for the manufacture of asbestos cement and special cement pipes, and because there are as yet no sure substitutes for it. Moreover, the scientific data, as was pointed out in the course of the debate, are still conflicting, and such an exaggerated step at the present time would increase unemployment in countries which have built up such an industry on a major scale, such as Greece.

I have here a recent memorandum from the General Workers' Confederation of Greece, issued after the changes in its leadership, and I should like to draw the attention of the Members present to the fact that it may well be that major opposing interests will cast their shadow over our discussions.

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to make a few remarks in connection with the Scrivener and Schleicher reports. It is a widely-known fact that the inhalation of asbestos can lead to various illnesses. Anyone who has driven along the north-east coast of Corsica in a 2 CV, as I have, will still remember driving for kilometer after kilometer through enormous dust clouds from the Canari asbestos quarry which can be seen from a great distance. Fortunately, this breeding ground for lung diseases has been shut for 17 years now and it is a good thing, therefore, that the old directive for the protection of the consumer should now be brought up-to-date and that a new directive for the protection of workers has been submitted to Parliament. In both of the resolutions before us today, and in the Commission's proposed directive too, it is recommended that we make a serious search for substitutes which are not harmful and which require equally harmless substances for their production. We wholeheartedly go along with this but nevertheless think that, for the time being, it is not possible to find substitutes for all types of asbestos and therefore support the proposals by the Committee on the Environment. We intend, therefore, to oppose those amendments which advocate a total ban on the use of asbestos. We would, however, like to draw attention to a strange inconsistency in the work in the Committee on the Environment. According to Mrs Scrivener's report, the use of blue asbestos will only be permitted under

Eisma

the terms set out in Directive 76/769/EEC. However, in Mrs Schleicher's report, the Committee on the Environment proposes a total ban on the use of blue asbestos in this Directive. If this is adopted, there would be no need for the use of blue asbestos to be made subject to the provisions of the Directive.

Finally, Mr President, an explanation of our Amendment No 17. The Commission proposal prohibits the use of certain asbestos fibres for air filtration. The amendments by the Committee on the Environment restrict this ban to filters for liquids. We propose therefore reinstating the ban on air filters and I am convinced that you will give your support to this amendment.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, the Commission would like to begin by thanking the two rapporteurs, Mrs Schleicher and Mrs Scrivener, most sincerely for their excellent reports, and to extend a word of thanks too to the Chairman and members of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for all the work they have put in.

In all the Member States of the Community, asbestos is one of the central elements in public discussion of environmental policy, something which today's debate has underlined. This general discussion has led at Community level too to various initiatives, including the proposed directives we are debating today, with the dual aims of restricting the marketing and use of asbestos and providing protection for workers in the industry.

In view of what is — in part at least — the great political, economic, social and health importance of the proposals, great care must be taken before any decisions are made, and I feel bound to point out to those ladies and gentlemen who are taking an interest in the matter that the DIW published a few weeks ago a very good summary of the availability and use of asbestos, a report which might very well yield additional information for certain speakers so that this subject can be dealt with on a proper factual basis.

Turning first of all to Mrs Schleicher's report, I should like to point out that it was the European Parliament itself which gave rise to this proposed directive in the first place as a result of its resolution of 16 December 1977 on the health hazards of asbestos and of 11 May 1979 on environmental carcinogens. The aim of this proposal, apart from ensuring the free circulation of goods within the European Community, was first and foremost to protect life and health, and therefore provides for extensive restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous sorts of asbestos.

In this case, the Commission thinks it right and proper to amend its original proposal, which it forwarded to the Council two years ago, by adopting the amendments to Article 1 (5.2) and (5.3) proposed by the committee, subject to a different wording.

The requirement here is that the use of the authorized product should be prohibited unless the harmful release of fibres is prevented. From my own visits to works, I have gained the impression that substantial progress has been made in this respect over recent years in all modern works and I believe this must be taken into consideration in our assessment of the problem. We must not base our judgement on the production methods used in the 1960s and 1950s when we come to decide on asbestos in the present decade.

Our criterion is the same as is quoted in the draft directive on the protection of workers — rapporteur Mrs Scrivener — namely, one fibre per ml, a figure that has been accepted by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. A time restriction on authorized exemptions, as called for in Amendment No 13, seems to us to be no longer necessary, as, assuming that the amendments are adopted, the health risk will be much less than for many other products and activities. Perhaps I may be allowed to point out that the number of proven cases of asbestos-induced illness for which compensation has been granted is, in the case of the German trade cooperative associations, something like 1.7%, or exactly one-tenth of the number of cases of silicosis for which compensation has likewise been granted. That is just to illustrate the magnitude of the problem.

As a result, the only provision which we do not regard as immediately feasible is the amendment proposed in Article 1 (5.1), calling for the prohibition of the placing on the market and the use of crocidolite (blue asbestos) fibres or of products containing them. However, the Commission is prepared to limit its original proposal and allow exemptions only for pipes of a minimum diameter of 800 mm, which is the point made in Amendment No 3 tabled by Mr Alber.

Provision could also be made for a deadline for the two exemptions, which would then only be extended if it were ultimately found that there were really no substitute materials available. That, of course, is the risk inherent in all deadlines — we do not know when development work will be completed. We can only keep introducing into the discussion on an experimental basis. The Commission also feels that there should be no immediate ban on products containing blue asbestos which were already in use when the directive came into force and which, by their very nature, involve no particular health hazards.

As regards the proposed amendment to Article 1 (5.4), the Commission feels that this point is justified in principle, but should be incorporated in point 8 of the motion for a resolution on the grounds that a directive

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cannot be addressed to the Commission — which is covered by paragraph 5.4 — but merely to the Member States. For that reason, this point must be included in point 8. To accord with the requirements set out in the proposed amendment, research work into substitute materials will have to be carried out, such that the findings can be reflected in Community legislation. We shall be taking up this suggestion to the extent to which it is feasible from the staffing and financial points of view.

As regards Mrs Scrivener's report, I should like to point out to begin with that the draft directive on asbestos at work is based on the Council Directive of 27 November 1980 on the protection of workers from the risks relating to exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents at work, which calls on the Member States to take steps with a view to keeping an adequate check on the state of health of workers during the period of exposure and of keeping workers informed as to the risks inherent in contact with asbestos.

The outline directive provides for separate directives, the aim being to lay down limit values and other special provisions relating to a number of agents, including asbestos. This is the second in the series of separate directives.

The outline directive itself is based in turn on the Council Decision of 1973 on the European Community programme of action on safety and health at work. The present proposal is therefore a logical progression in the development of Community instruments aimed at improved protection for workers within the Community.

It takes into consideration work which has already been done at Community level, including the European Parliament's resolution on the health hazards of asbestos of 16 December 1977.

Moving on the specific point of the limit values for crocidolite, I am pleased that Parliament has accepted the Commission's view and supports our feeling that crocidolite is more dangerous than other fibres. That is precisely why the Commission has proposed lower limit values for crocidolite, with a view to reducing to a minimum the risk of cancer from this particular type of asbestos.

The amendment proposing to make the limit value for blue asbestos the same as for other fibres runs counter to this view, as workers will continue to be exposed to crocidolite in the course of their work, for instance, in building demolition work or in the cutting of asbestos. The Commission cannot accept that insufficient protection be afforded to these workers, and for this reason, we are unable to support the proposed amendment.

The Commission can accept most of the other amendments — with the exception of No 38 — from the

point of view of content, although our acceptance must be subject to modifications to the wording and coordination with the context of the directive as a whole.

The proposal advanced in Amendment No 38 is for Article 15 to be deleted entirely, the idea being to do away with compulsory regular health checks on workers. The Commission is unable to go along with this idea.

As regards the oral question tabled by Mr Collins and others, the world symposium on asbestos to be held in Montreal — Canada being one of the leading producers of asbestos — is being staged, as far as the Commission is aware, to enable the representatives of the scientific community, the trade unions and industry to put forward their views on the asbestos problem. It is *not* an event organized by the Commission. Nor are we co-organizers of the project. The Commission has merely been represented temporarily in the steering committee by one of its officials to enable us to obtain more detailed information on the nature of the conference.

Mr Davignon, who will be in Canada at the invitation of the Canadian Government at the time of the congress — albeit for other reasons — will be making a speech on the periphery of the conference, as it were. Otherwise, the Commission will be represented at official level under the auspices of the agreement on commercial and economic cooperation between Canada and the European Community.

The Commission believes it important that the symposium make a positive contribution to the objective evaluation of the dangers which might result from asbestos, and of the chances of replacing asbestos by materials of similar quality but with less health risk. The Commission does not feel that, by participating in this conference, it is violating the undertaking given to the European Parliament and the resultant initiatives on the use of asbestos and the monitoring thereof. Let me repeat: no plans have been made for the Community to contribute financially to this symposium. Moreover, all Directorates-General with any interest in the subject have been consulted in the course of the preparatory work prior to the symposium.

As regards the participation of the trade unions, the Commission has been informed by its officials on the steering committee that the American trade unions attending the conference had undertaken to guarantee the representative and balanced participation of all trade union interests, including the Europeans, and in view of this undertaking, the Commission has taken no steps itself to ensure a European presence specifically from trade union circles.

Reference was made to a letter to the Swedish Government. I do not know whether the Honourable Member is aware of the full text of this letter; if he is,

Narjes

I cannot quite understand the problem, because, the fact is that, in the letter in question, the Community — in the context of the usual contacts we maintain with our major trading partners on the application of GATT — points out the possible consequences of Swedish legislation deviating substantially from the norm. The point at issue is asbestos, as is evident from the draft asbestos legislation we are discussing here. Given that it is normal in the context of GATT to deal with differences of opinion on the application of regulations according to the procedures laid down in GATT, we have merely pointed out that the same procedure must be followed in this case too. There can be absolutely no question of threats or intimidation or the like. It is in fact — if you like — a purely routine matter, in that Community interests have been expressed by the Director-General responsible in correspondence with the third countries concerned.

Finally, as regards the participation of experts, the Commission would like to point out that, in drafting directives, the Commission's officials consult all interested parties as a matter of course. The Commission issues invitations to attend the meetings of the government representatives to the permanent representatives of the Member States. It is then up to the Governments to decide on the composition of their national delegations, and their decision is accepted by the Commission, even in cases where a delegation includes representatives of industry. To be a representative of industry is not to be branded unclean for the rest of one's life, and if we find that a particular delegation includes representatives of industry, we assume that the government concerned regards them as particularly expert in the field.

President. — I call Mrs Weber.

Mrs Weber. — (DE) Mr President, I was most surprised to hear Mr Narjes say that the Commission was not one of the co-organizers of the Montreal Symposium. All the invitations and all the texts which have been sent out on the subject of this Symposium name as hosts the Canadian Government, the Government of Quebec and the Commission of the European Communities. I am therefore astounded by Mr Narjes's statement. Even if the Commission is not participating financially, the fact is that its participation is on a very extensive scale. If the Commission had been embarrassed about this, I am quite sure it could have found ways and means of getting its name removed from the invitations in this form.

In view of the autopsy findings in the case of people who have died of asbestosis, mesotheliomas and lung cancer, and where the cause of death has been found to be asbestos fibres in their lungs or the other infected parts of their bodies, it seems to me absolutely amazing and depressing that people should have been referring here to fictitious data, unproven facts, exagger-

ated risks and unjustified fears. Given that so many people have been shown to have died of asbestos fibres, and that these people have unfortunately failed to survive the complicated procedure of identifying their particular occupational disease, it really will not do to go round using language like that. It remains an indisputable fact that there is no limit value for the risk of cancer caused by asbestos. Reducing the number of fibres in the works, however well the monitoring system works, will not reduce the cancer risk. That much has been proved in any amount of scientific research, and it is something which has consistently been confirmed by the World Health Organization in all its research. The effect is not to lessen the risk of cancer, but only the risk of asbestosis. I would really ask you to bear this point in mind. The point is not merely that asbestos is one of the several hundred acknowledged dangerous substances, Mrs Schleicher. In fact, asbestos is one of the ten most dangerous substances in the world, that is to say, one of the ten substances which are responsible for most deaths. That is something we must always remember.

As regards the protective measures, it is universally acknowledged that the factories in which asbestos is processed in its original form now take maximum care with regard to their precautionary measures. That is something I said earlier. However, these precautionary and monitoring measures are not feasible at subsequent processing stages, and my authority here is not just any old fictitious reports or fictitious scientific opinions. Just go along to the nearest building site and see for yourself. I have done precisely that over recent months, and I have seen how asbestos products are handled on many sites in a way which does not afford the workers adequate protection.

Mr Narjes, you referred to the small number of cases which have been recognized as occupational diseases. When, as is the case for the entire area of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, a total of only four building workers are officially recognized to be exposed to asbestos fibres, you must surely admit that the procedures used in the building industry are clearly way behind what is now accepted practice in other industries. That is something which needs changing. These things are not monitored adequately on the basis of the directive in its present form, which means that it is impossible to keep a check on what is going on. For this reason, I and my Group feel it is sensible and economically justifiable to call for the step-by-step replacement of asbestos by other materials, and it is by no means pie in the sky to call for this process to be completed within the next ten years.

President. — The debate is closed. The motions for resolutions will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

12. *Animal foodstuffs and trade in fresh meat*

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two reports:

- report (Doc. 1-977/81), drawn up by Mrs Lentz-Cornette on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-574/81) for a decision on general conditions to be followed for establishing microbiological criteria for foodstuffs and feedingstuffs, including the conditions for their preparation, in the veterinary, foodstuffs and animal nutrition sectors;
- report (Doc. 1-49/82), drawn up by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council on fresh meat (Doc. 1-586/81 — COM(81) 503, 496, 504, 497, 501 and 500 final).

I call Mrs Lentz-Cornette.

Mrs Lentz-Cornette, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, this proposal for a decision is the first element in a body of Community legislation which has to be instituted in order to guarantee the hygienic standards of food for humans and animals alike.

It is common knowledge that foodstuffs and feedingstuffs can be classified according to their origin, by which I mean whether they are from the animal or vegetable kingdom, their composition, by which I mean their nutritional value, and their appearance — colour, flavour, smell, mineral salt and vitamin content, and also by whether they contain any hormones and any microbes or not.

A distinction must be drawn between harmless micro-organisms presenting no dangers to man or animals, such as those found in cheeses like Camembert and Roquefort, for the bacteria, yeasts and moulds necessary for the manufacture of other cheeses, bread, wine, beer and other products and, on the other hand, those harmful micro-organisms which can cause serious illnesses in both men and animals. One example are the salmonellas, which have become more and more common — I don't suppose that there are many people here today who have not, at some time or other, suffered from intestinal complications due to salmonellas — and clostridium-botulinum — *Wurstvergifter* in German — which is capable of causing severe poisoning in man and in some animals.

There are, therefore, countless varieties of micro-organisms which can be found either in foods, or which can be transmitted when foodstuffs are manufactured, stored or transported.

The proposal for a decision lays down a series of general recommendations for the microbiological criteria

governing foodstuffs for men and animals. The supervision required must be effective, scientifically based, and feasible. It should be applied equally in all Community Member States to avoid anomalies within the Community. Some Member States already have very strict regulations in this field. We must harmonize these laws on the basis of what is best in the existing regulations in the different countries.

With a view to the establishment of a Community policy on microbiological control of foodstuffs and feedingstuffs, the proposal contains the following general recommendations: the fixing of three levels of microbiological criteria based on the nature of the risk of contamination and its probability; the adoption of common statistical sampling plans (number, manner, size, time, place); choice of internationally recognized detection tests; the development of a procedure for a product failing to satisfy a criterion; the proposal of a list of food products for which it is desirable to have Community microbiological criteria.

There are those who believe that the supervision of foodstuffs destined for human consumption and of feedingstuffs for animals should have been kept separate. That is one way of seeing things but, to a large extent, the two sectors overlap since contaminating agents accumulate in and are transferred from one element to another in the food chain.

What we are discussing now is only a framework decision which will lay down general principles for biological control. Therefore, we are certain to dwell longer on these subjects when it comes to the practical application of such a decision. The Committee on Agriculture pronounced itself in favour of this proposal and our Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection adopted it unanimously. Moreover, I would point out that no amendments have been raised. I therefore ask Members to approve this motion for a resolution unanimously.

Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, in the past only the Committee on Agriculture was asked for its opinion on Commission proposals of this kind. It is true that these Directives are aimed at eliminating obstacles to trade, but nevertheless the protection of the consumer in the Member States forms the basis. I am aware of the major trade interests involved in the harmonization of these provisions, but the health of the consumer should not be endangered by meat of an inadequate quality. What we are discussing here, after all, are health questions, and for this reason it was a good thing to have the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection state its views on the matter. This Commission has discussed the question in depth and I am pleased to be able to inform you that it unanimously supports this report and has seen fit to propose a number of changes and additions in the form of amendments with a view to improving and clarifying the

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Commission text. The opinion of the Committee on Agriculture to the Committee on the Environment contains a number of proposals some of which had already been included in the draft report and which, for the rest, have been included in the report before us today.

The number of directives regarding trade in fresh meat, together with older technical annexes, is so vast as to be virtually unmanageable. For those people who cannot avoid working with them they represent a maze of discouragement and an obstacle to practicability. It must surely be possible to summarize a package of measures such as this in one or two directives, which would make the situation more acceptable and clearer to boot for those involved.

In addition, complicated legislation means that inspection — which is a very important aspect — is inevitably incomplete. What do we in fact mean by 'Community inspection'? Inspection of inspection in the Member States? Can the Commission tell us whether it is adequately prepared for this task from both the qualitative and the quantitative point of view? If not, we can forget about effective inspection and we will unfortunately have no adequate guarantee for the application of all these directives. And who is to pay for these inspections? Is it the government, the producer or the consumer via price increases? I am very taken, therefore, by the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture, particularly as regards the costs of veterinary inspection, and for this reason, among others, I call on the Commission to draw up a horizontal guideline regarding these costs. We as Members of Parliament are increasingly faced with directives and regulations calling for checks on foodstuffs. What we need is a directive indicating precisely how the costs are to be covered. This would create clarity and transparency as regards the way in which the final price paid for a product was arrived at. For the time being, the Committee on the Environment agrees with the Committee on Agriculture that the costs must be borne by the governments of the Member States as is already the case, or at least partly the case, in a number of Member States. In cases of infringements of the relevant provisions, it is obviously the offender who should pay.

Mr President, it has repeatedly become apparent in recent years that there is a need for *ad hoc* measures to protect the consumer from harmful products. I am thinking, for example, of the hormone scandal. There is a great need for a positive list of substances and residues which are permitted in fresh meat. If we are really to harmonize the EEC regulations, bilateral agreements which are not in line with Community agreements must be discontinued. All fresh meats in the Community must fulfill the requirements of these Directives and this is one of the reasons for my amendment to Article 34 of the original text of the directive since it would be foolish if it were possible to get around the obligations imposed by this directive,

via Article 34 as it stands. Do we really want to eliminate checks at the internal borders of the Community? A considerable amount of meat from non-domesticated animals comes onto the market from various sources. How does the Commission intend, in the interests of public health, to provide the consumer with the guarantee that this meat also satisfies the requirements laid down in the directive? I might also draw attention, in this connection, to the steady increase in the number of holdings breeding animals which until very recently have only been found in the wild, such as wild boar and deer.

Mr President, let there be no misunderstanding — all of these directives are intrinsically of great importance for the protection of the health of the consumer. Subject to a number of modifications and additions as described in the reports by the Committee on the Environment, which also deals with consumer protection, this Committee can give its support to the directives proposed by the Commission. They represent improvements for the further liberalization of trade in fresh meat and the guaranteeing of strict health standards in the interests of public health.

President. — I call Mr Eyraud.

Mr Eyraud. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is really going to be a Herculean task for me to sum up, in under two minutes, all the ideas which I have gathered throughout my long practical experience of biology and of infected meat and foodstuffs of animal origin. I will however try to list some of the main points.

The first point that I want to make is that it is absolutely essential that the staff responsible for the inspection of animals prior to slaughter and for post *post mortem* examination of carcasses are competent and highly qualified. The level of qualification required — which is a prime guarantee for consumers — must be harmonized throughout the Community. The Commission proposals constitute an initial step in the right direction. It is necessary to go further, however, and desirable — as the Commission itself proposes — that a critical assessment should be made after 20 years with these regulations. The regulations themselves must also be harmonized and must be made quite specific, both with respect to third countries and within the Community itself. Only thus will we be able to avoid the introduction of new or exotic diseases, incompatibilities between the regulations and the actual material resources available, and excess paperwork.

One example of such incompatibility: it has been suggested that substance residue checks should be carried out on between 10 and 5% of animals slaughtered, but the authorities should be made aware that the competent laboratories in France are hardly capable of deal-

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ing with a tenth of that figure and I am sure that in other Member States, the figure is even lower.

An example of imprecision is the fact that no allusion is made to pig carcasses in the proposed Directive No 501. Yet we know the amounts of antibiotics and vermifuges or other hormones absorbed by pigs that have been fattened by conveyor belt feeding in landless holdings. Another dangerous imprecision concerns poultry. The water content of poultry must be scrupulously monitored if consumers are not to be deceived. Since we are aware that this meat is subject to immersion treatment, the least we should do is to ensure that the water is free of microbes. After all, if we are going to sell water to consumers at the price of meat, the least we can do is to make sure that such water is drinkable.

I will be satisfied, ladies and gentlemen, if, by these few remarks, I have managed to make a modest contribution to this debate in our Assembly and to increase an awareness in those present of the complexity and gravity of the problem before us. After all, it is human health that is at stake.

President. — I call the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr Helms, draftsman of an opinion. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the short time available this evening permits me to make only a few central points regarding the seven important proposals by the Commission to the Council on fresh meat and standards for the manufacture and quality of foodstuffs and feeding stuffs on which Mrs Lentz-Cornette has drawn up her report.

It should be particularly stressed that the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and the Committee on Agriculture are in complete agreement on this question and I should like to thank Mrs Krouwel-Vlam for emphasizing this point. I hope the situation may remain this way in the future too.

As draftsman of the opinion of the Committee on Agriculture I am very pleased to note that all the proposals discussed and adopted by this Committee in the course of several meetings — a number of which have been mentioned by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam — have also been adopted by the Committee on Consumer Protection. I see this not only as a sign of effective cooperation between the two Committees which, particularly in the field of foodstuffs, have much the same problems to deal with, but it also shows clearly that, as far as consumer protection is concerned and as regards achieving the highest possible quality in foodstuffs in all the Member States of the Community, the two Committees have adopted the same principles and take the same approach. This became apparent to me last year in connection with the oestrogen directive and I

think it will be possible for us to continue working hand in hand.

My particular thanks, therefore, are due not only to the two rapporteurs, but also to the members of the Committee on Consumer Protection for their support and adoption of all the proposals made by myself on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture. I am convinced that we will be able to adopt them with a large majority tomorrow.

We welcome the Commission's proposals since replacement of all the old regulations is long overdue. We must finally put an end to the conflicts involving barriers to trade, boycott or the oestrogen case, of which there have been far too many and which have led to serious losses for the producers since both the producers and the consumers are equally affected by such things. Without common rules there can be no genuinely free, frictionless internal market for high-quality foodstuffs. We have already pointed out — during the discussion of the oestrogen directive in the Nielsen report of last year — that there is an urgent need for settlement of the various questions which have been brought up today in these reports, particularly as regards the use of antibiotics in feedingstuffs and we look to the Commission to amplify and amend its proposals on the basis of the resolution of the Committees and to recommend them to the Council in their revised form. I would refer you to the text of the resolutions by both our Committees. I will make no secret of the fact that we are afraid that it will not prove possible to achieve an adequate degree of harmonization and satisfactory checks.

We must ensure that all the provisions on the production of supplementary feedingstuffs — particularly Article 9 of Directive No 70/524 — the notification of animal disease and the minimum requirements for slaughterhouses etc. are fully observed. I urge the Council to ensure that all the rules are correctly and uniformly applied in all the Member States.

I should now like to draw attention to four particular points since they have not yet been included in the Commission's proposals. The motion for a resolution calls on the Council 'to bring the veterinary provisions of the Member States into line at the most stringent possible level.' We call on the Commission to submit to the European Parliament, one year after the entry into force of the directives in question, a report on the approximation of legislation which has been implemented and also to indicate which approximations of legislation; in the veterinary field are still necessary and are envisaged.

We call on the Council that it should impose at least the same conditions concerning veterinary, hygiene, food and health provisions on meat for trade with third countries as for intra-Community trade.

Finally, a word on the systematic use of antibiotics which, when the meat has been consumed, produce a

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resistance in the human body. This systematic use should be prohibited in the breeding of animals for slaughter and I am calling for this as a farmer who can speak for the farmers of Europe. I am speaking here, I think, with the support of the entire Parliament. Consumer protection is only possible if we act on a joint basis, if we discuss things together and reach a consensus which we, the European Parliament, I am sure can reach. It is time for the Commission and Council to act.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, in the short time available I want to thank the rapporteur in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for the report putting forward amendments to this directive concerning fresh meat. The specific amendments to which I refer allow meat inspection to be carried out by environmental health officers. These people are very highly qualified and dedicated to their work. I am proud to be a vice-president of their institution and I would like to see the HO- system in all Member States. I urge the Commission to accept these amendments to the directive and thus recognize the contributions EHOs make in the public interest.

Whilst on my feet, Mr President, may I also commend Amendment No 22 put down by Mr Provan on behalf of my group. Following the committee's work on this directive this is a small improvement to the text and is the only amendment we are putting forward.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, I should like to start by thanking Mrs Lentz-Cornette and Mrs Krouwel-Vlam and congratulating them on their reports, which support all the Commission's proposals on this extremely important subject of protecting the health of the consumers. In particular, I should like to comment on one point raised by Mrs Lentz-Cornette — the fixing of microbiological criteria for foodstuffs and feeds, including the limits for their preparation. I should like to assure you that the general principles provided for in the framework directive will be implemented as soon as we have the special directives for the inspection of each individual product, because the special features involved make it impossible to have a general directive for such products as meat, meat products, milk and eggs. Naturally, once these specialized proposals for the practical application of the general principles to the individual sectors have been studied and examined, the European Parliament will be asked its opinion in the usual way.

As regards the report by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, I should like to thank Parliament for its rapid processing of so

many proposals on health legislation problems, which are all of paramount importance for progress in this field. May I comment as follows on some of the points raised in the report by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam.

As regards the indication of the date on vacuum packaging, this is something which must be settled more generally instead of being examined in a specific directive. With regard to the derogation in favour of international organizations in the case of meat imported from third countries, I accept that there may be a need for more precise definitions, but I do not think there is any reason not to put in a general reference to them in the text, because we must take into account the fact that there are international agreements which are binding. On the other points, I can assure you that the Commission considers this matter to be of paramount importance. I also recognize that a certain role can be played by positive lists, but this should not exclude a more general examination of the matter. The Commission has no evidence that the injection of tenderizing agents into living animals does not involve a danger to human health, and I do not think that we can be more liberal, more flexible, than we are at present on this subject.

As regards the responsibility for public health inspections and certification, I appreciate that this represents a particular problem in the United Kingdom, and I can tell you that we devoted a great deal of attention to the report of the special committee which looked into this subject. The Commission would like to see proper recognition of the Environmental Health Officer — i.e. the official responsible for environmental health — at Community level. Our proposal in favourable on this point. However, the responsibility of the veterinarian will also have to be maintained, since he has had a fuller training in the fields of animal pathology, microbiology, veterinary medicine and epidemiology, which are essential for inspection of the meat and its hygienic production. The Commission's guidelines on veterinary requirements will ensure that the same quality criteria are applied in all Member States. Our proposals recognize that the officials responsible for environmental health and the safety of the meat being inspected play a major role in this field.

As far as the inspection costs are concerned — and this was something which cropped up in this evening's debate — I would remind you that this is an old problem. Unfortunately, we are not changing our view that these costs must be chargeable to the product. The current economic situation is not one in which we can call for a fundamental change in the system which is already generally applied in the Member States. It is clear that this principle must be applied to all varieties of meat inspected in the Member States, so that there is no discrimination in this context.

As regards informing Parliament, the Commission agrees and accepts that there is a need for Parliament to be duly informed, but it does not think that an

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administrative provision to this effect has to be included in the text.

Finally, as regards the problem of bilateral agreements with third countries, I would point out that even though I fully understand Parliament's concern in this respect, I must make it quite clear that the Commission's view is that it is illegal to conclude such agreements after the directive comes into force or, in the case of existing agreements, if no special provision has been made in the directive. We have no wish to accept a text which leaves room for the interpretation that such previous agreements can be revived.

President. — The debate is closed. The motions for resolutions will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

13. Pollution

President. — The next item is the point debate on three reports drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection:

- report (Doc. 1-636/81) by Mr Muntingh on the combating of photochemical pollution;
- report (Doc. 1-1073/81) by Mr Mertens on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-448/81) for a decision establishing a reciprocal exchange of information and data from networks and individual stations measuring air pollution within the Member States;
- report (Doc. 1-976/81) by Mr Scrivener on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-620/81) for a decision on the consolidation of precautionary measures concerning chlorofluorocarbons in the environment.

I call Mr Muntingh.

Mr Muntingh, rapporteur. — Mr President, like an elephant with its trunk, we human beings are never seen without our pollution, which is our most striking characteristic. There is just no getting away from it. We have pollution of all kinds and in all sorts of degrees: water pollution, soil pollution, radiation, noise pollution and air pollution. All these types of pollution can be further subdivided. For example, in the case of air pollution there is sulphur dioxide pollution, carbon dioxide pollution and photochemical pollution. This last form is a particularly nasty type which is also known as 'smog'.

Photochemical pollution occurs when primary pollutant such as oxides of nitrogen, hydrocarbons and

oxygen undergo a chemical reaction induced by the sunlight to produce new harmful substances which together form the poisonous fumes which we call smog. Inhalation of the smog, especially to a large extent and over a long period, can have extremely harmful effects on the health, particularly in the case of children, old people and asthmatics. Depending on the concentration of the various constituents, the symptoms can vary from slight irritation of the eyes, increased susceptibility to infection and minor asthmatic attacks, through various functional disorders and structured changes in body tissue, to chronic inflammation, tissue loss, tumours and even premature death.

Apart from its detrimental effects on health, photochemical air pollution is also undesirable from the economic and financial point of view. Studies have been carried out which suggest that air pollution costs us three — quarters to one and a half per cent of the gross national product — which is a not insignificant amount. About 10% of this is in turn due to photochemical air pollution. We should therefore tackle this form of pollution, particularly as it appears likely that it will start to increase again in the near future after a period of relative reduction. Studies have shown that — for Europe as a whole — the best way of approaching this problem would be by attempting to prevent and reduce pollution by oxides of nitrogen.

By far the larger proportion of these oxides of nitrogen come from industry and motor vehicles. Our sacred cow, the automobile, is a notorious polluter. The same is true, incidentally, of the hydrocarbons. In other words, we would like to put in a word for public transport and for far more stringent standards to be imposed on engines. In this connection, therefore, I fail to understand how the Commission could protest to the Swiss government in a recent letter against proposals for more stringent legislation and standards for the exhaust gases of motor vehicles in Switzerland. All right, we have known for a long time that economic issues were more important than the environment or, in other words, Mr Narjes, that the Commission thinks the elephant's tail is its trunk.

However, the Committee on the Environment, like the ecological movement 'Anders Denken, Anders Doen' is able to make this distinction. It finds photochemical pollution so serious that it calls on the Commission to come up with measures aimed at combating it. These measures could consist of a) standards, b) the drawing up of a list of priorities and c) the tightening up of existing legislation.

Time is pressing, in view of the situation in Athens, for example, where people regularly — I repeat, regularly — go out onto the streets to *demand* that something be done and where the government itself has already been obliged to call on the people to leave their fires off and not use their cars. As you will know, at certain times they even go so far as to ban the use of cars with

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even numbers on one day and those with odd numbers the next.

The situation there has become so serious that there have been public disturbances.

I should like to conclude by saying that the ball is now in the Commission's court. Parliament has done its job.

Mr Mertens, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I hope it will prove possible for us to amplify the three reports, in preparation for the joint debate, at least sufficiently to permit an organic approach to the problems.

The report which it has fallen to me to present on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection refers to a proposal by the Commission to the Council which in fact ultimately dates back as far as 1976 inasmuch as the Commission at that time introduced an information, data and measurement network for the collection of data relating, in particular, to sulphur dioxide. The aim of this present proposal is to extend this network to cover other important pollutants, such as lead and other heavy metal particulates, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide and ozone. The Commission is of the opinion that the relevant technology has in the meantime developed to such an extent as to permit such an extension of the system.

The Commission welcomed this proposal and has discussed it. It now congratulates the Commission that it can pass on the proposal to the Council with the wholehearted support of the Committee. In addition, however, in the light of the extension of this system, the Committee would like to raise two further questions. Firstly, it would like to ask the Commission whether or not, since the system has existed since 1976, the Commission would be able to give the Committee somewhat clearer information regarding the results achieved, particularly as regards the toxic SO₂, so that the Committee can consider the question of the uses to which the system can be put? How can we come to grips with the problems?

Secondly, the Committee has stated that a measurement system of this kind should now be used with a view to dealing with the very acute problem of 'acid rain'. What is meant by this term? The problem of 'acid rain' results from the very toxic substances I have just mentioned, i.e. substances resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels which are released into the atmosphere and are then returned to earth with precipitation and attack trees, poison needles and foliage, finally work their way into the soil itself, attack the root system and thus kill the trees.

Why do we attach such particular importance to this system and the problem of acid rain? Because this, as

we see it, has become a European problem which must be approached seriously by the European Parliament. Parliament must not only draw the attention of the Commission to the problem, but it should also help it in its search for a genuine solution to the problem. We realise — and this is also clear from the proposals — that the scientist have by no means all the relevant data at their disposal.

However, the pictures — I will just give a few examples — are disturbing enough for us to regard this as a European problem. For example, in the north of Czechoslovakia — in the Erzgebirge — large areas of a formerly thriving forest have been turned into a desolate waste as a result of the amounts of lignite used as fuel in that country. The director of the Bavarian Forest Nature Reserve has drawn attention to the fact that the Bavarian Forest will be a wilderness within 10 years if this air pollution continues. Forestry workers point out that it is the western slope of the Black Forest — which is just on our doorstep here in Strasbourg — which is particularly at risk: 50 000 ha in the small Land of Baden-Württemberg alone and a great number of other areas are affected too.

I am sure the various colleagues here in this House will be able to provide some more examples from their own countries and we also know that at the time of the thaws the lakes and rivers in the south of Sweden are 'relieved of fresh water', i.e. they become acid and their ecology is turned on its head.

Ladies and gentlemen, these pictures should make it clear that we cannot afford to hesitate. Something must be done. You should affirm the opinion of the Committee that this is a European problem which we must now tackle.

Finally, I should like to mention coal-powered power stations as the main polluters next to motor vehicles and oil stoves. We are faced with the question of whether or not we will have to rethink our ideas once more in the case of future energy supply? Can we afford to go on building these polluting coal-powered power stations in Europe? This question too must be given serious attention when dealing with this problem. We must draw the appropriate consequence with a view to avoiding even more damage. Nature forms the basis of human life, and we are all in favour of protecting the health of ourselves and our fellow men.

Mrs Scrivenen. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as *rapporteur*, I am asking you to give your assent to the Commission proposals on the consolidation of precautionary measures concerning chlorofluorocarbons in the environment.

The aim is to reaffirm the provisions approved in March 1980, namely, a reduction of 30% — in relation to the 1976 reference level — in the use of chlorofluorocarbon CFC 11 and CFC 12 the filling in of aerosol cans.

Scrivenen

The aim is also to reduce to a minimum the chlorofluorocarbon emissions into the atmosphere for which the refrigeration, foam plastics and solvents sectors are responsible.

Finally, the Commission is quite rightly asking for the results of any study or research on the possible dangers resulting from the use of these products to be communicated to it. In the past, a number of scientists formed the opinion that there would be a serious and imminent danger of the ozone layer of the atmosphere being reduced due to the emission of chlorofluorocarbons into the atmosphere.

The fear was in fact expressed that a reduction in the ozone layer and subsequent increase in the amount of radiation reaching the earth's surface would be hazardous to the health of human beings.

But, although work has been carried out, it must be admitted that this theory remains unproven after six years of research. During that time, our knowledge of stratospheric photochemistry has considerably improved as well. Measurements of atmospheric ozone have shown a slight increase in ozone during the last decade, which is quite contrary to the forecasts which were made.

What is more, science is more capable now than in the past of providing a system of alarm should the ozone layer actually be reduced.

For all these reasons, which we have considered at length, even though — I have to admit it — we envisaged a 35% reduction instead of a 30% one, but this could not be justified scientifically and would also have entailed serious disruptions for industry, we believe that the most appropriate solution is to reaffirm the request for a 30% reduction throughout all Member States.

Of course, it will be up to the Commission to check that such a reduction is actually obtained in each of the Member States.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling. — (DE) The Socialist Group welcomes the proposals on the exchange of information and data from the various measurement networks and stations in the Member States. It is also very grateful to the rapporteur, Mr Mertens, for his work in which he has taken fair and conscientious account of all our proposals too. Partly for this reason, we have only one amendment on this difficult matter.

A further reason, however, is undoubtedly the fact that this and the other two reports, for which we are also grateful, have merely highlighted a problem which Parliament should not leave until 11 o'clock at night when there are only a handful of people left.

Together with the problem of ensuring a supply of drinkable water and protection against noise, the state of the atmosphere is one of the most decisive elements affecting our existence. Anyone who is obliged to breathe the air in our big cities and is day by day exposed to ever more complex air pollution, with all its consequences, realizes just as well that this is the start of a long overdue debate as the person who walks with his eyes open through our forests — or should I say, what is left of our coniferous forests. Young and centuries-old trees are dying at a disturbing rate. The new catchword is 'acid rain'.

Are these dying trees just a foretaste of what further air pollution has in store for us? Agricultural advisers are already sounding the alarm. Hitherto inert heavy metals in the soil are being dissolved by the acid rain to such an extent that they are being absorbed in ever increasing quantities by plants and are hence finding their way into the food chain.

We need this directive and we need it not only on paper, which costs us still more trees, but as the basis for vitally urgent work. We must be prepared to act as swiftly as possible on all the conclusions which may result from these studies.

We also regard combined monitoring of illness as a function of air pollution in the places where people live and work as very important.

The big glossy magazines in my country are currently running a series of advertisements trying to show the advantages of the chemical industry from the point of view of human life and health. I do not deny that such merits exist, but I am afraid that the results of the study called for by the Committee will show us the highly disturbing other side of the medal!

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mrs Lentz-Cornette. — (FR) Mr President, emissions of nitrogen, carbon and hydrogen compounds are increasing in all industrialized countries as populations grow, resources are exploited, industry expands and more and more cars appear on the road.

While emissions of various gases have been on the increase, at the same time, the height of the chimneys of thermal power stations has also increased, with the result that the gases can be widely dispersed much more easily.

Emissions of nitrogen compounds from cars are very troubling, particularly in large urban centres. The nitrous oxides given off by vehicles at ground level in towns have both short- and long-term effects.

Short-term effects include the formation of photochemical oxidizing agents, due to a reaction with

Lentz-Cornette

hydrocarbons when solar light is present, giving rise to smog — so well described by Mr Muntingh — which has a negative impact on health, provoking asthma and other respiratory diseases in children and, above all, in elderly people.

Long term effects include the formation of acid rain, and the destruction of foliage, particularly in plantations of beans, tobacco, potatoes and conifers.

The only feasible solution — already voiced by all my predecessors — is quite simply to reduce the emissions. There is no point in neutralizing the acidity of lakes, with lime, as the lakes in question would remain sterile, whatever we did. Above all, we must make provision for reducing these substances, by which I mean that we must try to prevent their formation. Nature produces enough of them already. It was reported in a conference held in Paris this winter that the emissions from the volcano Mount Etna contained as many nitrous compounds and sulphur compounds as those produced by the gases which escape from all the cars in Western Europe.

On behalf of the European People's Party, I should like to voice my support for the motions for resolution submitted by Mr Muntingh, Mr Mertens and Mrs Scrivener.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Sherlock. — Mr President, my first message to those few faithful who remain must be the same message that I have preached so often.

Here tonight we have nine reports — no less than nine reports — from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. We are stuffed up the chimney into this late hour yet again and I object most strongly.

Next I would advise you, all of you, especially those who can think enough perhaps to avoid the use of your particular party whip, to recognize that nine reports have been produced by this committee which has produced nine balanced, digested, sensible views, several of them based on very good material originating in Commission and all of them deliberated very fully, very fully indeed within that committee. And that committee, I can assure you Mr President, is a hardworking, very thoughtful committee representing every sort of point of view that can be brought to bear.

It has to deal, and if I take just these three reports tonight as my particular brief, with topics of extraordinarily difficult scientific background. It has to try and digest them and reach a recommendation which takes into account the politics that we all are here to represent. And in my opinion, it does a first-class job. If this House tomorrow voted on those opinions just as they

have appeared it would not go politically or scientifically very far wrong.

To try and reach decisions on these various matters is not easy. Hippocrates himself observed that the art is long and life is short. He referred, of course, to medicine. And everybody, of course, is his own doctor. We have heard Frau Weber, for example, pontificating on the subject of asbestosis as if she had been for the best of her very short and very beautiful life entirely involved in dissecting the lungs of the victims of this thing. By the numbers she gives, I wonder that I was able to stagger up the stairs over the bodies of the millions of victims. But judgment, Hippocrates also observed, was difficult and even experience fallacious.

I was so pleased that Mr Muntingh reminded us of the elephant, that great creature of great sagacity. Mr Muntingh's report, like all the others, is absolutely first-class and we are going to work towards a clearer atmosphere, but we have had contributions tonight from both ends of the elephant.

The major suggestion is that we should, in all these topics, pursue research. Those of us who leap to conclusions without continuing our studies stand a very good chance of stepping right up to our necks, or even beyond it, into the products, perhaps, of the nether end of that worthy creature.

To the report of Mr Scrivener I can add very little except to say that this is the most refined of all atmospheric problems, possibly the most serious. We do well to maintain our stance cautiously and carefully against any deterioration. But I rejoice that that deterioration has not been demonstrated, since we last talked about the matter in this House, to have occurred.

If we put our trust in research, if we make our decisions by sensible deliberation in a committee as good as the one of which I have the honour to be a Member, I think this House will not find itself short of good guidance.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Adamou. — (GR) Mr President, it really was high time that we discussed the problem of the pollution of the atmosphere and of the natural environment in general, since it is a burning issue which effects the living conditions and health of millions of people in many countries. As far as Greece is concerned, this problem is taking on dramatic proportions year by year, especially for the inhabitants of Athens and the Plain of Attica, who represent almost 39% of the population of Greece.

Atmospheric pollution, the notorious 'smog', as the Greeks call the suffocating mass of smoke loaded with nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and carbon monox-

Adamou

ide, has become a very real and direct threat to the lives of the Plain's 3 600 000 inhabitants.

According to data collected by the PAKOE ecological monitoring institute, during the period from 2 March to 13 April alone, smog was responsible for a 300% increase in respiratory and cardiac diseases and a 150% increase in the death rate.

The situation is particularly dramatic in Elefsina, the ancient town where Aeschylus lived, where environmental pollution has in recent years been responsible for a 70% increase in the number of deformed babies born. Scientists stress that unless measures are immediately taken to eliminate pollution, today's children will be the future generation of cancer victims.

The Saronic Gulf, the sea which surrounds Attica, is incredibly polluted. Thousands of tons of industrial effluent, together with 500 000 cubic metres of urban sewage, flow into the Gulf every day and have caused terrible pollution over a vast area. From the steelworks in the Elefsina region alone, more effluent flows into the sea than from all the inhabitants of Attica put together.

The Acropolis, that immortal monument of world culture, has suffered more damage from pollution in the last 25 years than in the rest of its 2 500-year history.

Pollution of the atmosphere and the natural environment in Athens comes from two sources: 85% of it from the factories which have been highly concentrated in Attica and the remaining 15% from motor vehicles. The situation is made worse by the almost total lack of trees. For each Athenian there is hardly a square meter of greenery.

This dramatic situation can, however, be dealt with. It has been calculated that the cost of the necessary measures for Athens and Attica would be 2 000 million EUA.

In order to give some point to today's debate so that it is not a vain academic exercise, we propose that Athens and its region be included in those regions eligible for aid and . . .

President. — Mr Adamou, you have greatly exceeded your speaking time and I must interrupt you.

I call Mrs Weber.

Mrs Weber. — *(DE)* Mr President, with a view to reducing my speaking time, I should like, if I may, to use the word 'chlorofluorocarbons' just once more and henceforth abbreviate it to 'CFC'. This should reduce my speaking time substantially.

Estimates for the depletion of the ozone layer however, vary — perhaps one should say thank God —

between 2% and 5% in recent years. Fortunately, improved measurement techniques have clearly helped to permit a more realistic assessment of the situation. However, there is also the undoubtedly unexpected tendency for the various kinds of air pollution to cancel each other out to a certain extent and this is obviously responsible for part of this reduction. Nevertheless, there is unfortunately increasing evidence to the effect that certain types of skin cancer increase even with very slight ozone depletion. For example, it has been estimated that in the southern states of America with the large amounts of sunshine a mere 5% reduction in the ozone layer is responsible for a 50% increase in malignant skin disorders and even with a lesser reduction, this risk is clearly present.

We are therefore very pleased that, in her report, Mrs Scrivener particularly calls for reducing to a minimum the CFC emissions for which the refrigeration, foam plastics and solvents sectors are responsible. Nevertheless, we feel that the pollution from the source which is most easily dispensed with, i.e. the use of CFCs as aerosol propellants, should be reduced still further since this risk is still clearly apparent to us. A number of Member States have already to a great extent fulfilled the Commission and Parliament's requirement in that they have gone further than the 30% reduction. As we see it, it is only logical that we should take the second step and introduce a 50% reduction.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Schleicher.

Mrs Schleicher. — *(DE)* I should like briefly, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party to state our views regarding the report on — I will use the abbreviation straight away — CFC, by Mrs Scrivener. In the public debate, this too — perhaps rather like the asbestos question — is a highly emotionally and ideologically charged subject. There is still disagreement among scientists regarding the findings while, on the other hand, it has been possible only in recent years as a result of scientific studies in the field of space travel to make any improvements at all in our investigation of the situation.

As Mrs Scrivener has already said, the objective set out in the Community decision of 26 March 1980 i.e. to reduce production by 30% by the end of 1981, has been achieved and certain Member States have even gone further than required. However, we should also bear in mind that this reduction depended on voluntary agreements between the industries involved and their respective governments and this shows that there is some point in appealing to the sense of responsibility of those involved.

As in the case of asbestos, there is the problem of finding substitutes for CFCs. Other propellants can be

Schleicher

used but they have the great disadvantage that they are not only inflammable but also explosive which means that their production involves considerable risks to the workers. If, as advocated by Mrs Weber, there is a further reduction to 50%, what worries me is that this will lead to increased quantities of the substitutes coming onto the market and representing a greater risk both to the production workers and to those using the aerosol cans. At the beginning of this year there was an accident involving an explosion at a factory in Hanau producing aerosols and CFCs could not have possibly have been responsible for it. The consequences of the accident were substantial.

However, as the Commission says in its explanatory note to the decision currently before us, there have been no new scientific discoveries in recent years which would justify the new reduction measures. Quite the reverse — according to the reports of the environmental protection programme of the United Nations — the measurements of the ozone concentrations in the entire atmosphere made by the worldwide coordinated ground measurement network of the World Meteorological Organization do not indicate that the ozone layer is being depleted.

Over the last two years the case against CFCs has been substantially weakened in that isolated observations led to CFCs being held responsible for a far greater degree of long-term ozone depletion, recently, however, the scientists are moving away from isolated observations relating to the CFCs alone, and more to integrated mathematical models, and there is one effect which we must recognize and take account of right away, i.e. the increasing levels of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides in the atmosphere.

My Group takes the view that everything possible on the basis of present knowledge has in fact been done and that no further measures should be taken at this point. We therefore wholeheartedly support Mrs Scrivener's report and reject all the amendments which have been tabled.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, I should like to congratulate the Members who brought up this matter this evening. I would also refer to what Mr Muntingh and Mr Adamou said about the particular problem affecting the Greek capital and I would ask you to look favourably on the proposal, which I reserve the right to table separately, that an institute for research into photochemical pollution be set up in Athens to study the phenomenon, its effects on health and the environment, and to draw up standards for urban and industrial sources of pollution in collaboration with the competent Environment Ministries in the Member States and with research and higher education establishments, as well as in the context of the decentralization of the European Community institutions.

We agree with the proposals and the solutions put forward in the reports. We should like to point out most particularly that a very great deal depends on a fundamental political decision and we hope that our debate this evening will also serve to help in this direction.

President. — I call Mrs Squarzialupi.

Mrs Squarzialupi. — (IT) Mr President, we must show interest in the Commission's decision to protect the environment from chlorofluorocarbons, which are odourless, colourless, non-corrosive, unflammable and non-explosive: they are not directly dangerous to man, but they are dangerous to the atmosphere that supports human life. They destroy the ozone in the atmosphere, which is of crucial importance for our survival.

This explains why it is vital that we should pay great attention to these chlorofluorocarbons, which we encounter in aerosol scent sprays, hair lacquer, deodorants and other products which do, to be sure, help to sweeten our lives. Given that these chlorofluorocarbons are so widely diffused, in such large quantities, the Commission, following the example of the United States, decided two years ago that the quantities of these substances in aerosols should be reduced by 30% throughout the European Community. But the figures collected in 1976 which were to be used as a basis for calculating the reduction of the chlorofluorocarbon content of aerosol sprays were distorted by a hasty increase in production by the manufacturers, their aim being that the threatened reduction of 30% should result in approximately the same situation as before. In other words, a 30% reduction in production is equivalent to leaving things as they were before.

This is the reason for the amendments that I have proposed and I regret that the rapporteur — to whom, naturally I extend all my sympathy for the indisposition she has suffered — cannot be present here today. These amendments — I want to stress this — are identical to the ones that were submitted when the first draft of the report, which was subsequently modified, was completed. I am asking for a reduction of 35%, which, in practice, will mean a reduction in production of 5%. And I ask that this should be achieved by June 1984, so that we can all feel safer, given that the atmosphere that we breathe is indispensable for our existence, and so that we can initiate a reversal of the trend without indulging in any kind of ecological terrorism.

The reduction in production of chlorofluorocarbons that took place last December was moreover, not uniform throughout the various Member States of the European Community: in some countries production was reduced by 50% as compared with the 1976 figures, whereas in other countries it fell by very little,

Squarcialupi

because the companies producing these substances that were obliged by other countries to leave their territory simply transferred production to these other countries. So, in other words, the reduction was not a homogeneous one and simply involved the shifting of productive capacity from one country to another, without any resulting advantage for the atmosphere.

Studies on chlorofluorocarbons, which were very actively pursued in the 1970s, are now gradually being abandoned and a good deal of uncertainty has arisen as a consequence.

I want to conclude by expressing the hope that the Commission will be able to make use of data of its own and will not always have to depend on data produced by the manufacturers. In addition, I hope that the Commission will be able to commission further studies, so that it will similarly not be dependent only on studies carried out by the manufacturers.

I hope that Mr Sherlock will not accuse me of pontificating: each one of us attempts to pontificate at meetings of his own committee according to his conscience dictates to him and under the influence of the mandate he has received from the voters.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, the Commission would like to thank the three rapporteurs, Mr Scrivener, Mr Muntingh and Mr Mertens, for the very solid work they have done in preparing a number of important subjects for decision. We also thank the Committee for the thoroughness which — as Mr Sherlock has also rightly pointed out — it has again demonstrated this evening.

It should be pointed out in connection with Mr Muntingh's report on photochemical oxidants, that this is indeed a complex technical and chemical problem. The main photochemical oxidants are ozone, peroxyacetyl-nitrate and aldehydes, which are produced in the atmosphere as a result of the effects of sunlight on other chemicals such as nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons.

The Commission shares Mr Muntingh's view that this is an increasingly serious problem which has even reached a critical stage in certain areas. It also goes along with his first conclusion, i.e. that this form of pollution must be actively combated. However, as regards the way this should be done, I must point out that, contrary to what Mrs Pantazi assumes in Amendment No 1, the Commission does not have the necessary funds to provide special aid in particular cases. This is not provided for in the present budget. However, certain measures have already been taken:

Firstly, a draft Directive on nitrogen oxides, i.e. one of the chemical precursors mentioned above. This draft is

currently being discussed with governmental experts and will be submitted to this House before the end of the year.

Secondly, we are carrying out our own studies into the current situation in the Community as regards measurement data, the state of knowledge as regards the relations between the precursors and the oxidants, methods of analysis and the choice of a possible oxidant indicator. It should also be possible to complete these studies in the course of 1982.

Thirdly, the implications of this problem for the limit values for emissions of harmful substances from motor vehicles are being investigated and taken into account. The plans for systematic measurements in the Member States of photochemical oxidants — ozone and the precursors of nitrogen oxides to be precise — are an important step, and in order to permit these studies to be carried out, the Commission has included these substances in its proposal for extension of information exchange dealt with in the report by Mr Mertens.

Before I go into this report, I should like to say a few words on Mr Muntingh's elephant theory. It is worthwhile occasionally to mention the need to fix as uniform environmental figures as possible in Europe and not to apply slightly different figures in every individual country as this would result in a substantial barrier and considerable opportunities for abuse and protectionism and I think it would be in the interests of the workers, in particular, to eliminate barriers of this kind which could be wrongfully derived from environmental protection. However, that is a subject for another debate, but I do not share your fears in this respect.

This brings me to Mr Mertens's report. The Commission proposal for the collection and evaluation of data for the measurement of air pollution is based on experience from an earlier 3-year pilot study. The present proposal would extend in field of application of this study. A further important element is the proposal that active participation in calibration and inter-comparison programmes is to be organized in such a way as to permit swifter and more effective harmonization of the measurement procedures, particularly in the case of the newly-included pollutants.

In view of the limited time I have available, I will go into only a few of the points contained in the report. As regards paragraph 3, I should like to express our thanks for the affirmation that the ensuring of comparability of data is a matter of urgency. And then there are the problems of acid rain dealt with in paragraphs 6-9. This is an extremely complex problem in which we are constantly making completely new discoveries concerning the interrelation of the various factors, which in turn call for further research. The measurement system proposed will undoubtedly be extremely useful in this respect. The Commission intends to give

Narjes

priority to this problem with a view to finding a solution as soon as possible.

I would point out, in connection with the requests listed in paragraph 9 that the Commission produces a series of statistics based on daily and hourly data not only for each individual month, but for entire seasons. It should be pointed out in connection with the collection of data on the incidence of disease that the selection of such data depends on the purpose for which they are intended — your request to include data on bronchial complaints and diseases of the heart and circulation is under consideration. The Commission is already looking into the question of developing 'atmospheric pollution climatology', as you request, in connection with a research programme.

Now to Mrs Scrivener's report on chlorofluorocarbons. The aim of our proposal is to consolidate the measures decided on as long ago as 26 March 1980. We also propose a reassessment of the situation in 1983 on the basis of all available information. The Commission is grateful that the Committee is in agreement with it in this respect. The Commission has already put the programme aimed at the reduction of emissions of chlorofluorocarbons in the refrigeration, foam plastics and solvents sectors into operation and we expect to have concrete results in a year or so.

Preparations have already begun for the world-wide UNEP Convention on the protection of the ozone layer. It will step up the initiative aimed at reducing the production and use of chlorofluorocarbons in those countries which have not as yet introduced any measures to this end. The Commission has received its negotiating brief from the Council for its participation in these preparations and will make every effort in this direction.

As regards Amendments Nos 1-7 which concern either changing the legal basis or making the objectives more stringent, I would say that we do not think these things would be possible or advisable given the current economic and technical situation. We cannot, therefore, go along with these Amendments.

President. — The debate is closed. The motions for resolutions will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

14. *Physical properties of foodstuffs*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1074/81), drawn up by Mr Provan on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-578/81) for a decision adopting a con-

certed action project of the European Economic Community on the effect of processing on the physical properties of foodstuffs (COST project 90A).

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Provan, rapporteur. — I had every intention, Mr President, of introducing this report only formally, but I see we have at least one speaker, so I will very quickly run through it.

The subject of these projects covers the physical properties of foodstuffs, and the Community's role is to provide the financial and the administrative resources necessary for coordinating this research on an international basis within Europe. It is not only for Community countries, I might add, but for other countries on the European continent.

We consider that the collection of scientific information on the physical properties of foodstuffs may lead to improvements in food technology, to the benefit of producer and consumer alike. And we welcome the contribution that concerted action is making to the coordination of research into this subject in the Community as well as the other European countries.

I think that is all one needs to say in introducing the report, Mr President. It went through the committee unanimously. There is one amendment from Mrs Weber, which came in at a late stage, and we are very happy to welcome that and take it into the report. I hope the Parliament will support it tomorrow.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group).

Mr Ghergo. — (*IT*) Mr President, the aim of the second concerted action on the effect of treatment on the physical properties of foodstuffs, called Action COST 2b, is twofold:

- to bring the first concerted action to a conclusion and to promote the implementation of the results obtained by it;
- to make use of the experience acquired in the field of implementation that has already been studied (effect of water and rheological and thermal properties) by broadening the sector of coordination to include other properties — mechanical properties, properties of diffusion and electrical properties — which we consider we need to get to know better, as a matter of priority, in order to improve the quality of the products supplied by the food industry.

It is deplorable — as the rapporteur, Mr Provan has rightly pointed out — that Parliament has not been

Ghergo

provided with any adequate information on the results of the first concerted action. But there is worse: the Commission informs us that it has had to organize an entire series of 'parallel' researches which may be expected to continue for approximately two more years, in order to make the coordination which was the aim of the first concerted action a feasible goal, which indicates that when the original programme was planned it was not worked out in sufficient detail.

That being said, it must be pointed out that any initiative designed to encourage scientific research is worthy of our praise and our support, particularly, as in this case, when the research in question is likely to have positive results on the preparation of foodstuffs and, consequently, on public health.

Nevertheless, there are grounds for wondering whether splitting research up into sectors, essential though that is for the purpose of studying specific topics in greater detail, is not in contradiction with the need for an overall view of the problem, in the context of which overall view the individual aspects of that problem must be provided with a harmonious solution. What I am trying to say is that it is undoubtedly a good thing to study the physical properties of foodstuffs, but there is also a need to relate the results obtained from research of this kind to results obtained from other research programmes that are connected in any way at all with the preparation and the preservation of foodstuffs.

The motion for a resolution we are debating today provides for the setting up of an appropriate action committee with the power to nominate subcommittees in respect of the specific topics that the research is concerned with.

In this respect, it must be emphasized that a whole variety of bodies have been set up under Community auspices operating in fields which if they are not completely related to each other, are at the very least of a kind that suggests possible interaction. The Scientific Committee for Food, for example, plays a very important role and consists of highly qualified experts in fields connected with medicine, nutrition, toxicology, biology, chemistry and other related disciplines. Apart from bodies of a fundamentally scientific description, there are others which are principally economic, social and commercial in nature, such as the Economic and Social Committee, with its various sections, and the Advisory Committee on Foodstuffs, which consists of representatives of industry, the consumers, agriculture, trade and the work force.

Given that the action programme mentioned in the motion for a resolution under discussion now also tends, over and above the immediate scientific results, to promote the protection of public health from the point of view of nutrition, and in this respect, provides, as I have already remarked, for the setting up of an *ad hoc* committee, it would seem appropriate that

coordination amongst the various consultative bodies and study groups should similarly be provided for, so that the results may be related to the problems as they arise in reality, that is to say globally, and not divided into sectors.

The consumer makes use of foodstuffs, in that they reach him after undergoing various processes of preparation and conservation. There is no doubt, for example, that an investigation of food wrappings and food containers for liquid and solid foodstuffs generally, should go hand in hand with research into the physical properties of the same foodstuffs.

Whilst, therefore, on behalf of my group I give the strongest support to this initiative, I should like to stress the need to see that the various actions programmes on scientific research are related to an overall policy for homogeneous foodstuff sectors, so that we may avoid fragmentation and overlappings, which, in the end, will make the results less incisive as regards their practical utility.

(Applause from the centre)

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* Mr President, I should first of all like, on behalf of the Commission, to thank Mr Provan for his excellent work. The aim of the COST 90A project is to build on the work accomplished under COST 90 and to extend the scope of the work to cover three new properties of foodstuffs, i.e. mechanical properties, diffusion properties and electrical properties. In addition, a small group will also be responsible for continuing the compilation and dissemination of information from the technical and scientific literature.

I should like to thank the Committee and its members in particular for the positive attitude they have adopted to the efforts of the Commission to coordinate the various research projects. However, the Conclusions contain a number of criticism of the Commission. As regards reporting to Parliament on the progress made under COST 90 I should like to point out that only a few days ago a brief report by the COST Concerted Action Committee was adopted and will be distributed as soon as the translations are available.

The increase in costs results mainly from the fact that the new project is to run for four years, compared with three years in the case of the original COST 90 project, and the need for more staff.

Paragraph 20 of the Conclusions, which refers to the failure to justify the discontinuation of research in certain areas, is based on a misunderstanding. The Commission agrees with this House that the text could be clearer and will propose appropriate amendments. We

Narjes

do not see any problems as regards the amendments proposed either.

The Commission proposes, in accordance with Amendment No 1, that the following recital should be inserted after the eighth recital: 'whereas the co-ordination of research work initiated under the above-mentioned concerted action project should continue.'

As regards Amendment No 2, Annex A of the proposal should include a new Section 5 which should read 'completion of current work (rheology, absorption and thermal properties)'

As regards Amendment No 3; the word 'four' should be deleted from Annex B, Section 1, paragraph 6 in order to make it clear that a Sub-committee can be set up for all of the subjects mentioned in Annex A, in particular for the new Section 5, which I have just proposed.

What this means in practice is that the collection of data on rheology, absorption and thermal properties will not only be continued, but can also be brought to a proper conclusion. The Commission therefore feels that account has been taken of the wishes of this House.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

15 *Community inter-institutional information system*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-41/82), drawn up by Mr Seal on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, on the

proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-431/81) for:

- I — a decision relating to the coordination of the activities of the Member States and Community institutions with a view to setting up a Community inter-institutional information system;
- II — a decision concerning the coordination of the actions of Member States and the Commission related to activities preparatory to a long-term programme for the use of telematics for Community information systems concerned with imports-exports and the management and financial control of agricultural market organizations.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Seal, rapporteur. — Mr President, in view of the late hour I will confine my remarks to a few brief comments about the need to get these projects under way.

The INSIS project is intended to provide for much greater use of the new information technologies for communications amongst Community institutions and also between the Community institutions and the national administrations and between the Parliament and the Member States. If it is successfully implemented, it could not only greatly improve the workings of the Community but, by providing a major new test market, it would be a spur for the development of new information technologies in the Community. It could also assist in the process by setting appropriate standards for these new technologies.

It might well be of direct significance for our everyday work as Members of this Parliament. We could provide, for instance, electronic transmission of committee agendas and Parliament and Commission documents and data. Those responsible, I understand, for the INSIS project in the Commission are already working on one such application — the handling of written parliamentary questions.

The CADDIA project, whilst not directly dependent upon the INSIS project, may eventually be an application of this project, because it will provide for the computerized handling of export and import data in the agricultural and customs fields, and it will greatly strengthen the implementation of Community policies. For instance, one application might be to improve Community surveillance of sensitive imports coming into the EEC from third countries. So between them INSIS and CADDIA are of great potential significance for strengthening the internal market, for Community industrial policy and for the more efficient conduct of Community business.

I must, however, sound a note of warning. Eventually the CADDIA and INSIS projects will lead to the installation of computers at each country's customs points, and these will then be linked. It will be possible to flash information quickly around the Member States. We must be very careful about the quality of this information. I understand that personal information concerning immigration is already being carried on the Heathrow computer.

We must ensure that any subjective information is carefully monitored and kept under strict control. For example, if someone is categorized by some over-zealous official as a right-wing subversive, without their knowing it they could be banned from entering any of the Member States. Already we know there are problems with migrants entering Germany, problems due to difficulties with names; and these difficulties could be multiplied a thousand-fold with the extensive use of computers.

Seal

Bearing that in mind, however, my report before you today, Mr President, approves the broad lines of these projects. At the same time, it points out that this is only a first step towards getting Council approval for further project development by the Commission and getting the national administrations much more closely involved. I believe that the Parliament also should be more closely involved with the further implementation of these projects. Wherever possible, I feel there should be a representative from Parliament at the various symposia, the various workshops which are being planned. For example, the question of accepting the new technologies in the workplace is one subject of concern. Another is whether it will be Community firms or competing firms from third countries, in particular the United States and Japan, that will benefit from the market opportunities that are going to be created. These and other issues must be carefully monitored.

We should also like to make suggestions on possible further applications. We must keep track of the different issues which are going to be posed to the Community by the setting of new standards.

I feel, Mr President, that these projects must go ahead, that the Commission and the Member State' governments must guarantee that people's civil rights will be safeguarded. We must beware of the misuse of personal information with computers. These links will lead to super computers, and unless we are wary we may get super misuse of the personal information that they store.

With these warnings, I ask the Parliament to support this report.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Leonardi. — *(IT)* Mr President, I want to say very briefly that we are in agreement with Mr Seal's motion for a resolution supporting the CADDIA and INSIS projects.

We simply want to stress the need, which he also emphasizes, for democratic parliamentary control, so that these two systems may operate openly, and so that we may consider them above all as catalysts for further development.

Obviously, any data-processing system functions firstly on the basis of the information fed into it, so the introduction of these two system raises problems of standardization and improvement of information at every level and, secondly, in accordance with the purposes for which it is used.

There is no doubt that the introduction of these systems does not mean that there is no more need for political decisions, in order, for example, to eliminate

the absurdity of having Parliament working in three different centres, or in order to eliminate internal customs barriers within our Community and to improve the system of external customs.

These are political decisions, which the computer systems which we have adopted will merely make more obvious, but which they will certainly not make superfluous.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* Mr President, the Commission would like to thank Mr Seal for his excellent report. It is pleased to note that the resolution will lead to closer cooperation between the Community Institutions and will play an important part in aiding the development of a common market or new information technologies.

In view of the late hour, I shall be very brief and wholeheartedly endorse the points made by the two previous speakers. We are aiming for increased growth in productivity in this sector. We are well aware of the dangers and risks involved, but we also see what opportunities are offered. We want to avoid building a sort of electronic tower of Babel in the Community and to continue the requisite basic studies which may lead to INSIS, which is the germ for this entire project, serving the interests not only of the Commission but of all the Community bodies and institutions.

While INSIS is concerned with the fundamental problem of the exchange of information, i.e. the problem of incompatibility of communication equipment resulting from the application of different standards, CADDIA is aimed at quite specific types of use and information system, particularly in the field of trade and agricultural policy.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

16. *Investment within the Community*

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two reports by Mr Moreau on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs:

- report (Doc. 1-89/82) on the common position of the Council (Doc. 1-652/81) on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-581/80) for a decision empowering the Commission to contract loans for the purpose of promoting investment within the Community;

President

- report (Doc. 1-87/82) on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-928/81 — COM(81) 790 final) for a decision applying for the first time the EEC decision empowering the Commission to contract loans for the purpose of promoting investment within the Community.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Moreau, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, first of all I would like to say that I regret the absence of the Council of Ministers because some of the issues which we are going to raise concern it directly.

Second point: while a lot is being said at the moment about the European revival and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty, and while the three institutions — the Council, the Commission and Parliament — are convinced of the need for the NCI, paradoxically however we cannot seem to agree either on the form this NCI should take or the relations which should exist between the various institutions in this matter.

The two reports which I am going to discuss concern firstly the results of the conciliation procedure between the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on the basic decisions on NCI and, secondly, the implementing decisions on NCI. If, in spite of the difficulties which we have encountered, and in spite of the unwillingness displayed by the Council of Ministers — some of our fellow members were dismayed by the fact that during this conciliation procedure our discussion partner was not the Council of Ministers as a whole but the President of the Council of Ministers, and that the necessary dialogue between Parliament and Council could not take place, and if in spite of the fact that the Council of Ministers did not agree either in spirit or in practice to carry on the conciliation procedure as we wished and as it had been laid down in the agreements, we are asking the European Parliament not to oppose the implementation of NCI 2, then it is only for political reasons. Allow me just two minutes to explain this point.

In fact, some of our colleagues may be surprised that as the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs we are asking Parliament, unanimously, not to oppose the first tranche of NCI 2. Our opinion is that in view of the present difficulties in Europe, the economic difficulties in our various countries, it would be improper of Parliament to add to these by refusing Commission the means to act. However, if as the Committee we have opted for this course — and I hope that it will be ratified by Parliament tomorrow — we feel also that the Commission and the Council of Ministers must not misjudge the significance of this decision of Parliament in that I must again stress that Parliament in no way renounces the positions it has taken and which it has presented, namely in the Gouthier report and in the Pfennig report on the problem of the NCI.

There must be no mistake either about Parliament's determination to enter into a veritable conciliation procedure, into a veritable discussion with the Council and in this context we have taken note of the Commission's undertaking to propose to us, in the relatively near future, basic decisions on NCI 3 — sufficiently in advance and before definitive decisions have been taken as regards loans under NCI 2 — so that we have time to take the necessary steps to ensure that this conciliation procedure with the Council can proceed under the right conditions.

Those are, Mr President, the reasons why we are asking Parliament not to oppose the opening of NCI II, it being understood of course that we expect the Council of Ministers not to use this position of Parliament as a pretext for remaining inflexible and we therefore expect from its part a gesture showing that our action has not just been one-sided.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Rogalla. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to have to begin my brief contribution by deploring the fact that we are forced to deal with such an important issue in such a short time.

We have two reports to decide on. These reports have their legal basis in Rule 38 (4) of the Rules of Procedure according to which we must debate the results of the conciliation with the Council. As the rapporteur has just pointed out, there has not actually been any conciliation, and this point has already been made briefly in this parliamentary act of mourning which is the reason why I am speaking now.

It is regrettable, and the President of this House deplored this fact in his address on the 25th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Rome, that the relations between Council and Parliament are in a very bad way. On the one hand, we have a directly-elected European Parliament looking for influence and formal competency with great deal of understanding of the matter in hand and substantial democratic justification, and on the other hand we have the Council going it alone with its entirely un-European approach, which is dictated by the zeal of the national experts, and its continuing total lack of willingness to change direction. It is neither here nor there whether the Council commits itself to involvement and consultation of the European Parliament — what happens in practice is that everything is done at the last minute and the date alone of the consultation, i.e. 15 March 1982, which is also the date of the decision, speaks volumes! This means that my Group too firmly condemns the attitude of the Council on this question since it was at no point willing to conduct a serious conciliation.

In spite of these procedural shortcomings, time is pressing and the need for more money is too great in

Rogalla

numerous areas. We must, therefore, whether we like it or not and in spite of the serious objections which might be raised, decide to adopt the rapporteur's proposal and take note of the events, so as not to stand in the way of the application of the NCI II any longer. However, this in no way means that we approve of the way the Council has acted and we should like to draw particular attention to this fact here in this House and in spite of the late hour. In this Community, we must not always work on the principle that there are always judges in Luxembourg to fall back on, and I hope that we will be spared the need for a new judgment by the European Court of Justice to remind the Council of its obligations, as in the isoglucose case.

And now to my second point. This consists principally of the fact that we go along with the amendment tabled by Mr Albers according to which possibilities must be opened up in the areas he mentions for using the New Community Instrument in the financing of vocational training and the creation of jobs for school-leavers.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Herman. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, my Group strongly supports any decision authorizing the Commission to contract loans to promote investment in the Community. It will therefore vote in favour of the Moreau report but it wishes to emphasize the substantial disparity which still exists between Council's views and those of Parliament whether it be as regards the permanent nature of the instrument, the authorization procedure or the budgetization of the borrowing and lending mechanism. On all this we do not agree and we continue to oppose the Council. However, in view of the urgent nature of the issue, as previous speakers stressed, we will agree to the release of the first tranche.

We fully agree with the objectives and priorities adopted by the Commission for the use of this tranche of 1 000 million ECU. Energy saving, infrastructure contributing to the development of the regions, of small and medium-sized firms are also our priorities on condition, however, that by infrastructure is also understood, for example, the telematic network. Also it goes without saying that all small and medium-sized firms should not enjoy the same priority. It is not sufficient that they be small, they must be well managed, financially stable and above all their activity and their investment must be forward looking, i.e. they must use new technologies or be situated in advanced technology sectors. In view of the lateness of the hour, Mr President, that is mainly what I wish to say now.

President. — I call the Committee on Budgets.

Mr Balfour, draftsman of an opinion. — Mr President, I am authorized by the Committee on Budgets of this House to register the strongest possible objection to the flagrant disregard by the Council of Ministers of the wishes of this House. They have totally refused to observe the basic courtesies of conciliation and they have challenged the budgetary authority of Parliament.

The so-called conciliation of 15 March was a disgrace. It was an unparalleled insult to this House and it was delivered in the presence of our President. It is difficult sometimes to believe that the individuals who from time to time make up the Council of Ministers are the product of parliamentary democracy. They are utterly insensitive to the legitimate rights and aspirations of this Parliament. This is perhaps excusable in the non-budgetary field but it is totally objectionable and unacceptable in the budgetary one.

In this struggle between Council and Parliament it is this House which will triumph. We may not yet have the legislative powers or traditions or pomposity of an established national parliament but we have all that matters — the votes of the electorate of Europe. It is right that our voice should be heard and right that, when it is heard, it should be listened to and heeded. It is we jointly with the Council who must exercise control over all Community expenditure, even that which is lent rather than spent.

On behalf of the Committee on Budgets of this Parliament I must tell the Council of Ministers that we violently object to the procedure which led to their decision and to the limited and unsatisfactory nature and content of their decision.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Groups.

Mr Bonaccini. — (IT) Mr President, the, as it were, intimate nature of this debate should not lead us to overlook the enormous importance of the problem we are dealing with. What is more, the medium-term programme, the documents prepared for the 'Mandate of the 30 May' and the discussions we have had on the economic situation in this very House, have more than once demonstrated the need for an efficient policy on investments. If we want to counteract the objectively recessionary impact which the international monetary system is having at present on the world economy, if we want to overcome the difficulties we have come up against in the attempt to recycle capital efficiently, in order to make up for the capital deficiency which is the root cause of unemployment in many of our Member States, including the State I live in and of which I am a citizen, we need this policy. This is why we support Mr Moreau's report and why we also support all initiatives that are likely to promote the objectives I have just mentioned.

Bonaccini

But permit me to emphasize just one aspect of the matter. At times the Council too has appeared to be worried by this situation; however, its decisions have subsequently suffered a mysterious fate upon which we are not permitted to have any information, whilst, from time to time, rumours reach our ears of attempts by various Member States to outdo each other in stinginess regarding the size of a particular loan, or the overall quantity of funds which are expected to be lent.

I want to stress — and the Moreau report also emphasizes this — that this problem of the ceiling on loans must be tackled and the investment policy and the policy on loans for investments made to the Community must be approached from the point of view of a permanent policy, capable of breaking out of the restraints at present imposed upon it, which have hitherto prevented the attainment of the results we all hope for.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Purvis. — Mr President, can I suggest to you that it is true to form. We have no representation from the Council and perhaps not only the report should go forward to the Council, but also the transcript of the speeches tonight, with a request that perhaps they would respond in writing if they cannot be here to respond verbally.

I must say it has taken a certain strength of will to stay up this late to be here but my group feels so strongly that I have been asked to represent them here tonight and to make the strongest possible objections on behalf of the European Democratic Group to the long delay the Council took to respond to our request for conciliation.

The fact is that that conciliation was a complete sham, and I stress that we are only acceding to the request for urgent consideration of this because we realize that the only sufferers will be the potential recipients of those loans.

We deplore the cavalier attitude which even, I suspect, the Council will come to regret in time yet ahead of us. We emphasize in particular paragraph 10 of Mr Moreau's second report but we reserve the right to re-initiate conciliation if we continue to meet the Council's ignoring of our legitimate desires.

As to the detail, we welcome extension of the NCI to small business in particular and would stress that the service sector should not be ignored, indeed it should be encouraged.

It is regrettable that the Council still considers the NCI as an instrument for periodical renewal with, as Mr Bonaccini said, fixed and very limited ceilings and with severe restrictions on the treasury management and flexibility.

The objective must be a long-term, constructive and ongoing borrowing and lending policy. And while we quite agree that we must avoid the trap of white elephants, it should be combined with imaginative but well-justified Community policies involving long-term capital projects, perhaps projects with higher risk or lower projected financial returns than would otherwise be commercially acceptable.

But the fundamental problem is the attitude of the Council of Ministers, not just to the NCI but in almost everything: its short-term, myopic, nationalistic, procrastinating arrogance in its attitude not just to the Parliament but to the people of Europe.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, in spite of the importance of the subject, I will be particularly brief since it is after midnight.

First of all I would like to thank Parliament, and particularly Mr Moreau, for the remarkable application which he has displayed in this matter. His political attitude is marked by a great sense of responsibility in a very sensitive area for Parliament — I am referring to the conciliation — and it is an action which is of immense real and symbolical value in helping us to emerge from the crisis. That is my first comment.

Second comment, I have taken note that this in no way signifies that Parliament has renounced its views which on many points are akin to those of the Commission. I am referring for example to the duration of the instrument in question and to the budgetization problems. I mention this simply in order to point out that, having lived through this conciliation procedure, Parliament has maintained its position intact; this is how I have understood it.

Thirdly, further discussion is necessary as the recent conciliation procedure was not fully satisfactory. Such a discussion must take place very soon. As requested by Mr Moreau, I wish to confirm that in the coming weeks the Commission will propose NCI 3 which will give us an opportunity, so to speak, with our minds refreshed and under more normal conditions when we are less hurried, and when we still have NCI 2, to discuss very seriously the basic issues which have remained open since the discussion a month ago.

(Applause)

President. — I should like to thank Mr Ortoli for remaining with us until such a late hour.

President

The debate is closed. The motions for resolutions will be put to the vote at the next voting time.¹

(The sitting was closed at 12.05 a.m.)

ANNEX**Votes**

(The Annex to the Report of Proceedings contains the rapporteur's opinion on the various amendments and the explanations of vote. For a detailed account of the voting, see Minutes)

— *De Pasquale Report (Doc. 1-61/82): adopted*

The rapporteur was:

- in favour of Amendments Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 46, 47, 49, 51, 55, 77/rev., 80, 91, 108, 109, 113, 116, 117, 127 and 128;
- against Amendments Nos 41, 42, 54, 56, 58, 63, 67, 69, 71, 81, 88, 89, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 118, 121, 122 and 123.

Explanations of vote

Mr Pearce. — Madam President, I am not entirely clear whether you are going to call for a vote on the report from Miss de Valera or not, but what I have to say remains the same in either case. I am driven to abstain on the report as a whole because of the interventions that have come in this very curious way from the Committee on Women.

Madam President, I am not at this stage talking about the constitutional points: I am talking about the philosophy of this. I am really tired of the whole question of the women's angle being introduced into this Parliament as though it were something special. It is time we realized that while women have their rights, so do men; it is time we stopped this nonsense that some Members of this House have more rights than others. Heaven knows, what could we do, Madam President, if this Women's Committee believes that, philosophically or intellectually, there is a special women's angle? In this week, we could have had a woman's view on exposure to asbestos, on drug abuse, on battery cages for hens. It just shows the nonsense that is perpetrated by believing that in regional policy or in anything else,

the female angle is something special. I resent, as a member of the male half of this species of ours, what is being done. I am opposed to the philosophy that goes behind this, as well as to the procedural abuses which I submit have taken place.

For that reason, Madam President, I am driven to abstain on the De Pasquale resolution and on the de Valera one if in fact you take it to the point of a vote.

Mr Clinton. — Madam President, I am going to vote for this report even though I see in it still a number of serious defects. I am sorry to have to say this, because I fully appreciate the immense amount of thought and work that has been put into these proposals, both by the Commission and by the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning. The most serious defect that I see in it is the exclusion of housing from any regional development, because if we want to keep people particularly in the remoter and more underdeveloped areas, we shall not succeed unless we have reasonable housing for them.

I am concerned about women just as my colleague Miss de Valera is, but in a different sort of way. I do not like to see women set apart and separated. I want to see conditions made sufficiently attractive for them to keep them in the country — sufficient of them at least, because if we do not have young women in the country, we shall not have young men in the country. And without young men and young women, there is no worthwhile development possible.

What I wanted to say was that I vote that we start to work on this now and that we work on pilot schemes that we all know to be ready in various parts of the Community.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) It is certainly true to say that a more fruitful regional policy would be useful and desirable in this Community. However, the extent to which this theory has already been overtaken by practice can be seen from a very telling example in Northern Ireland where there is a plastics factory. If they made plastic bullets, there would probably be no shortage of orders. However, they make textiles and the factory is being closed down over the heads of more than 1 000 workers who have not been informed or consulted.

The factory is in Antrim, which is one of the last peaceful areas left in Ulster, and which will soon have over 50% unemployment — and we know what sort of an explosive situation this implies. The company responsible is a Dutch multinational of dubious reputation, i.e. AKZO. You do not need to be from Northern Ireland yourself to be shocked or from the Netherlands to be ashamed.

Mr President, I intend to vote in favour of this report, but the fact that we are calling for a more effective

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see minutes.

Van Minnen

regional policy here today immediately makes it particularly clear how much we need effective measures to deal with the multinationals who first of all exploit and then abuse regional policy.

Mr Hutton. — Madam President, I think that, faced with a massive task, the Commission has made a sporting attempt in this document to shift the emphasis of regional policy. They have made some helpful proposals about putting their effort into smaller enterprises and in particular into service industries. I am intrigued by the idea contained in the new Article 16 of encouraging local potential, though I have to say that I do not much care for some of the additions which this Parliament has put into the article. Nevertheless, I think that it must make a lot of sense, and in particular in the rural areas. The ERDF has concentrated heavily on areas of industrial decline and their problems are undoubtedly spectacular. The people who tend to drift away are the people of working age, often with families who go with them.

These new measures offer the chance to Europe to be more active in the rural areas, and for this reason, Madam President, I want to support them.

Mr Hord. — Madam President, I shall vote for the De Pasquale report, despite the fact that the Bureau of this Parliament inflicted a separate interim — and I stress, ‘interim’ — report from the Committee of Inquiry into the situation of women. If ever there was an example of waste of paper and time and an abuse of the competence of the Committee of Inquiry, the separate de Valera report was just that. One single amendment from the Committee of Inquiry was all that was necessary to cover the feminist view, instead of the many thousands of sheets of paper that we used. It is essential, Madam President, that this issue be investigated by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and by Parliament’s Bureau.

(Applause)

Lord O’Hagan. — Madam President, I shall vote for this report, but I shall vote for it with regret — not because its intentions are poor or the way that it has been prepared is weak, but because of its continued discrimination against the people of the counties of Devon and Cornwall. I am sure that Commissioner Giolitti, whose interest in our problems we welcomed when we visited him recently, will have felt from time to time during the proceedings this afternoon that his proposals were being affected perhaps adversely by the activities of Parliament and perhaps beneficially, I hope, as well. Nevertheless, I should alert him and the officials of the Council that unless this manifest injustice is rectified this will be as nothing against the hounds of hell that will be unleashed on him and the other Institutions of the Community if Devon and

Cornwall are not given fair treatment, based on fairer statistics than those supplied so far.

With that happy note I thank you, Madam President, for chairing this Assembly this afternoon in its jolly and awkward mood.

Miss de Valera. — Madam President, I should like to join with Lord O’Hagan in congratulating you on getting through the business so efficiently.

I would also, as I am speaking on behalf of the European Progressive Democrats, say that we shall of course be voting in favour of the De Pasquale report, and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of every member of my group to congratulate Mr De Pasquale on his tremendous work and his achievements here today. It is no easy matter to get such a report together and to get it through this Parliament with such a good response and indeed support.

With regard to the Women’s Committee, I feel I must make a few comments on this because there have, regrettably, been so many attacks this afternoon, on the Committee of Inquiry into the situation of women in the ten Member States. (I have three minutes, as I am speaking on behalf of the group). As I was saying, I am very sad indeed to see the anti-feminist position taken up by a number of people here, including, unfortunately, some here on my left — they are on my left as they sit in the Parliament but I do not think they are on my left with regard to political viewpoints. I would make the point that not once did we in the Women’s Committee refer to women exclusively in any amendment. At all stages we referred to both sexes: to take just one example, Amendment No 116, which I am glad to say was adopted by this House this evening, referred to both men and women and to young people. So the Women’s Committee is not just concerned with the problems that relate to women exclusively, but also those that concern every sector of our Community.

As I have said, the Group of European Progressive Democrats are very happy to support this report, because we feel that the amendments put forward this afternoon go to improve the whole of the Regional Fund. The Regional Fund is one of the major instruments of this Community, and in my view should be even given greater cognizance than it receives at the moment.

I would like to take this opportunity, Madam President, of asking the Commission whether they intend to accept the amendments that were put to the House this afternoon, with particular reference to the Women’s Committee.

That is all I have to say at this particular stage. Once again, thank you for your cooperation and the cooperation of the other Members.

Mr Cecovini. — (IT) Madam President, I should have liked to speak in this debate, since I took an active part in the work of the Committee, but unfortunately I did not have the time. I should like to congratulate you, Madam President, Parliament and the rapporteur, Mr De Pasquale, for the excellent work that has been done.

It must nevertheless be clear that the new Regulations does not solve all the problems, and neither does it dissipate all the uncertainties in the present common policy; however, it does constitute an undoubted step forward as compared with the previous state of affairs. It has been possible to introduce important innovations, in spite of one or two restrictive tendencies of a political nature and sometimes, even of a national nature. This is particularly true regarding the increase in the non-quota section, but I must emphasize the importance of not stopping here and of going on, in a not too distant future, to a substantial increase in the overall appropriations voted for the Fund.

Consequently I shall vote in favour of this report, even though I voted against the amendment on the foundation of a patent bank, which does not seem to me to be an instrument specifically designed for providing aid to regional economies.

In conclusion, I hope that we shall all consider this regulation as a mere step towards the goal of redressing the imbalances in the regional economies which we must pursue by means of further adjustments and innovations, a goal to which we should like to know, as of now, that the Commission is committed.

Motion for a resolution by Mr Glinne and others (Doc. 1-146/82)

Explanations of vote

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I am obviously disappointed that my amendments have not been passed. I must say that my experience in this Parliament is that when people come up to me and tell me that amendments I have put down are dreadful and are rubbish, the Parliament tends to pass them. When I put down amendments and everybody comes up to me and says how sensible of you to rise the topic, they knock them down. Whether there is a lesson here for me or for somebody else I do not know.

But the point that I want to make is that I am really not knocking delegations. I am a strong supporter of delegations. I hope that we have seen the end of the knocking of delegations in the press. It is about time we stood up and said that they are good for the relationships between the Community and the rest of this world and that they do a great deal of good.

I might say personally that they do a great deal of good in increasing in *my* friendly relations with other Members of this Parliament on the delegations. I hope that those people in this Parliament who have tried to knock the delegations and put out half-truths and inaccuracies to the press will now stop it and that we can get on with delegations that are useful and constructive.

Mr Radoux. — (FR) Mr President, I was chairman of the delegation responsible for relations between Parliament and the countries of Eastern Europe and Comecon up to the time when the parliamentary delegations had to be reappointed in accordance with our Assembly's rules of procedure. I see from the document that has been handed out for the purposes of the present vote that ten additional members are to be specially appointed to the delegation in question for our relations with Romania. To my knowledge, there has never at any time been question of such a division operating within our delegation. I trust that I am correct in supposing that some kind of error has occurred, an error which is nevertheless important enough to cause me to abstain. If it is not merely a mistake, however, I would consider it a grave fault.

President. — I should like to make a brief statement of my own. Once a delegation has been set up, I think that it is simply good manners to establish contact as quickly as possible with the country in question, that is to say, with the other half of the delegation in order to ascertain whether the country concerned is interested in, and approves, the initiative taken. I recall that this practice was neglected in 1979, giving rise to problems with the countries with which it was hoped to establish relations.

Robert Jackson Report (Doc. 1-97/82): adopted

The rapporteur was:

- in favour of Amendments Nos 1, 13, 14, 17, 20, 21, 32, 33, 47, 55, 57, 58 and 63;
- against Amendments Nos 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15/rev., 16/rev., 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29/rev., 30, 31, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 59, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77 and 78.

Explanations of vote

Mr Kirkos. — (GR) Mr President, Mr Jackson's report and the subsequent debate have created problems for all of us as regards the major priorities for 1983, i.e. the fight against unemployment, the restructuring of the budget and the measures to remove regional imbalances. In our view, however, these priorities are not reflected in the essential part of the report, particularly as regards the rectification of regional imbalances. The enlargement of the Community is essentially disregarded, as are the special problems facing the Mediterranean regions, while the emphasis placed on limiting agricultural expenditure is such that it will endanger the balance of their economies.

I shall be voting against on behalf of the Greek Communist Party (of the Interior).

Mr Gauthier. — (IT) Mr President, on behalf of the Italian Members of the Communist and Allies Group I wish to say that we shall be abstaining on this motion for a resolution.

We are in favour of an increase, even a hefty one, in the resources of the Social Fund. However, the way this motion is worded — even if it has been improved in parts — seems in our view to be trying to turn the Social Fund into something it cannot be. It seems to be trying to make it encourage development. To our way of thinking, encouraging economic development and with it youth and female employment can, in the first place, come only from the coordinated use of all structural means.

It follows then that we cannot go along with this steady adaptation of the basic thrust of this Parlia-

ment's policy. One of the basic aspects of this policy has been the idea of increasing our own resources, without any strings attached. This is a dangerous attempt to set up the Social Fund against the Regional Fund and in this respect it is a deliberate attempt to confuse the issue of convergence within the Community, which is still the number one problem.

Consequently we shall be abstaining. We shall observe further developments on the budget problems which, of course, we are greatly concerned about.

Mr Baillet. — (FR) Earlier during the general debate, Mr President, my colleague Mr Pranchère gave the opinion of the French Members of the Communist and Allies Group. The fundamental criticism which he voiced about the Jackson report explains why we shall be voting against it.

The fact is that the farm budget is seen just as a source of cuts which will allow us to develop other essential but ill-defined policies. What is more, we cannot accept the idea that cutting farm spending is an essential element in combating unemployment. I should think that the common agricultural policy itself was a way of tackling the exodus from the countryside and hence the unemployment which the rapporteur wanted to make the key theme of the 1983 budget.

Mr Georgiadis. — (GR) Mr President, I shall be very brief. For the reasons I stated in my speech, and because the voting on the amendments has enabled a lot of conflicting elements to find their way into the Jackson Report, we Greek Socialists will not be able to vote in favour. This means that, while we welcome the positive elements in the Jackson report, we cannot accept those elements of the report which reject the budget as a means of reducing regional imbalances. We shall therefore be abstaining.

SITTING OF FRIDAY, 23 APRIL 1982

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IN THE CHAIR : LADY ELLES

Vice-President

(The sitting opened at 9 a.m.)¹

1. *Energy-saving*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-99/82) by Mr Pfennig, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, on the problems of budgetary law and policy connected with the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-526/80) for

- I. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 725/79 on financial support for demonstration projects in the field of energy saving; and
- II. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 726/79 on financial support for projects to exploit alternative energy sources.

This debate also includes the oral question, with debate, by Mr Cariglia and others to the Commission (Doc. 1-69/82):

Subject: Financial backing from the OPEC countries for certain Community countries for the creation of alternative energy sources.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether there is any truth in the reports appearing in the European press according to which France and the Federal Republic of Germany have

¹ For items concerning approval of the Minutes, documents received, application of the Rules of Procedure, membership of committees, procedure without report and reports without debate, see the Minutes of Proceedings of this sitting.

As regards the votes, rapporteurs' opinions on amendments and explanations of vote are reproduced in the Annex; for further details, see the Minutes.

President

concluded agreements with the OPEC countries for financial backing amounting to 5 000 million EUA for development projects in the alternative energy sector?

2. If these reports are true, can the Commission give its opinion on these agreements and state how far they are consistent with a European programme on alternative energy?
3. What benefits will Community countries not party to these agreements derive from them?

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Pfennig, rapporteur. — (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I have just had a brief discussion with the authors of the amendments. There is a chance that these amendments will be withdrawn, which would greatly simplify matters.

I should like to keep the presentation of my report relatively brief, because, as everyone will recall, we had a debate on this problem when the Committee on Energy and Research was still the committee responsible. At that time, Mr Turcat said that the Committee on Energy and Research felt unable to deliver an opinion on the 'ceiling' regulations proposed by the Commission because, as Parliament saw it, they would result in an inadmissible restriction of its budgetary powers. Our position is still basically the same. Parliament adopted the Turcat report unanimously at the time and called on the Council to join in preliminary conciliation in this matter to establish the compatibility of the European Parliament's legislative and budgetary powers.

Allow me to remind you what is involved here. We are *not* delivering an opinion on whether the energy conservation projects are right and acceptable. They *are* right and acceptable, and we of the European Parliament very much want the Commission to finance energy conservation projects. We have made this abundantly clear, as you will see from the explanatory statement in my report, by approving far more resources for the Commission's energy conservation projects than the expenditure the Council is asked to approve at present.

The reason why we are still not prepared to deliver an opinion on the Commission's proposals is that during the budgetary procedure we have stipulated amounts for energy conservation which in the last five years alone have totalled some 243m EUA. When you compare this with what the Council intends to set aside for these energy conservation measures — a total of 150m EUA — we can only ask what our decision on the non-compulsory side of the budget is in fact worth.

We approve action by the Commission which has been deemed acceptable and correct and we approve adequate resources for this purpose — more in fact than

the Commission itself wanted — so that the Commission could now implement the energy conservation projects in full. But then the Council comes along during the financial year and says: we do not want to spend as much on energy conservation measures in the current year as Parliament has approved, and we want the Commission to propose a regulation that will spread these resources over several years. In other words, less money is to be spent.

If we tolerate this kind of procedure on the non-compulsory side, where Parliament has the final say, we may well find the Council in future constantly going back on the whole of the budgetary procedure where it concerns non-compulsory expenditure. This would result in Parliament taking a great deal of trouble to enter resources in the non-compulsory sector — energy policy, transport policy and also social policy and to some extent regional policy — and have them fixed during the financial year, only to find that the Commission is not using them at all because of pressure from the Council to propose and adopt 'ceiling' regulations deleting these resources again.

If we put up with this, we shall be abandoning our budgetary rights in this sector, and that is the crux of the report I have submitted and the crux of our dispute with the Council. I repeat: the point at issue is not the Commission's energy conservation programme, because we are in favour of that and we have entered substantial resources in the budget for that purpose. The Commission must simply be forced to implement the budget with these resources. It has not yet had the courage to do so, because it is under pressure from the Council of Ministers to propose 'ceiling' regulations limiting expenditure.

The motion for a resolution the Committee on Budgets has submitted to you attempts to resolve the conflict between the Council's legislative powers and Parliament's budgetary powers by urging the Commission, firstly, to take up Parliament's ideas and secondly, to withdraw its proposal for a regulation, which concerns only those amounts which can be spent this year, unless the Council declares that the amounts referred to in the regulations are purely indicative and that the volume of action taken will therefore be dictated solely by the budget.

That is the opinion of the Committee on Budgets on the subject. We are not, that is to say, delivering an opinion on the Commission's proposal for a regulation in the formal sense of the procedure for consulting this Parliament: in view of Parliament's desire to safeguard its budgetary rights, including such rights as it has *vis-à-vis* the Council in this respect, we are calling on the Commission to use its influence to stop the Council interfering with those rights.

We have taken a small precautionary measure in paragraph 3, because you never know where you are with the Council. If the Council should simply take a deci-

Pfennig

sion without receiving a valid opinion from Parliament in this matter, we should at least expect it to engage in preliminary conciliation with Parliament, as we have long urged it to do. This has always been refused because the Council considers that it alone has the right to decide in this matter. I hope that everyone now appreciates the problem and that Parliament can see its way to adopting this resolution unanimously, as it did the resolution tabled by Mr Turcat.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Adam. — Madam President, first of all I would like to congratulate Mr Pfennig on a commendably brief report on a difficult and complicated subject. I think there is a lesson for many Members in the length of that particular report.

I want to respond also to his call that we should adopt the report unanimously by indicating that I will withdraw my two amendments. I understand the third amendment will also be withdrawn.

What the report does is to indicate very clearly the difficulties that Parliament experiences in achieving satisfaction in budgetary disputes with the Council. As far as this particular issue is concerned, Parliament has two clear objectives. First of all, we want to end this dispute with the Council on the question of budgetary ceilings. Now since the Council has already agreed on previous occasions budgetary figures which exceed the ceilings that they have laid down, I cannot see why there is such great difficulty in reaching agreement over this particular issue. If you agree a level of expenditure in the budget, it is surely quite unnecessary to put artificial ceilings into the procedure and to prevent the achieving of the policy objectives that we have set out in the budget. The resolution, in paragraph 1, emphasizes the importance we attach to the role of the Commission in helping Parliament to defend these budgetary powers.

The second objective for Parliament is to ensure that these demonstration projects of the type that we are discussing go ahead, because they are an important contribution to energy investment and they are a recognized Community priority. We have had frequent reports from the Commission, those of us who are on the Committee on Energy and Research as well as the Committee on Budgets, as to how they tackle this particular job and the amount of consultation that goes on about which project should be accepted and so forth. I cannot for the life of me see why the Council then seeks to have a right of veto over every single project that is put up by the Commission after all this consultation process is completed. Therefore, we fully support the sentiments in paragraph 10 of Mr Pfennig's explanatory statement calling for an end to this practice of financial ceilings at a very early date. We want the demonstration projects to go ahead and we want these limits to be removed.

Nevertheless, I hope that while we are preserving Parliament's objection to the ceilings and the request for consultation, the working arrangement which the Council is proposing is an interim measure to release the 55 million European units of account for projects which the Commission has already put up. I hope that it will be possible for that to be released very soon and for those Commission proposals to go ahead. Although I understand that Mr Aigner and Mr Notenboom are withdrawing their amendment, I hope the Commission will also indicate without any reservation that it is going to execute its existing powers up to the budgetary limits that we have.

I also would ask the Commission to give us an assurance that this particular question will be looked at very seriously when the review of these regulations comes up later in the year. We do have an opportunity later in this year for a further look at this problem in our relations with the Council, and I hope the Commission will give us an assurance that that will be an important part of their thinking.

The Socialist Group is now looking to the Council to take up the demand contained in paragraph 3 of this resolution that we should have an understanding on this question of budgetary ceilings and some consultation. Now that discussions are going on between the Council and the Commission and the Parliament on an even more vexed question — that of the classification of expenditure — it surely is not too much to hope that the way is now clear for the Council to agree to consultation on the issue of ceilings as well.

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Notenboom. — (NL) Madam President, I merely wish to inform you that, as Mr Adam has already said, the amendment tabled by Mr Aigner and myself is hereby withdrawn. As Mr Aigner is in hospital, I am acting on his behalf. We are withdrawing the amendment for the sole reason that we do not wish to distract attention from the main issue of the Pfennig report.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Price. — Madam President, I stand four square behind the Pfennig resolution. I think this is a matter of major constitutional significance which will have an effect on the relationship between all three Community institutions in the future as to what is done about this topic. What it relates to is the flouting of the provisions of the Treaty regarding the budget. If Parliament accepts such a clear-cut abuse, then we shall be slackening our grip upon the limited budgetary powers that we have. That is why this topic is so important. It relates to a sector of energy and research

Price

which is of course non-compulsory expenditure and where, if we are ever to get the sort of development that most of us in this Parliament want, it is crucially important that Parliament should not just hold onto its existing powers but develop them and ensure that in future it has a means of ensuring that this sector of expenditure is expanded.

Now if we want to do that, then clearly we need the support of the Commission. In the resolution we are asking the Commission to stand with us and, if the Council indicate that they intend to continue in their present course of action to withdraw their present proposal. Now that is not because we regard the energy demonstration projects as unimportant and purely expendable in a constitutional argument. This is an important sector and the energy demonstration projects form an important part of our total energy policy as it exists at the moment and for that reason it is important to get this decision right. At the moment, world oil and gas reserves are still being depleted at a rate faster than new reserves are being found. So diversification of sources and a strong conservation policy diminishing consumption are both important. That is precisely what these demonstration projects are all about.

The European Council and the Council of Energy Ministers have reflected these same priorities in their decisions. So are the Council of Finance Ministers going to regard finding ways of circumventing the European Parliament's budgetary powers as more important than these priorities? Often we have come across that fragmentation within the Council which is one of its fundamental weaknesses. If that problem occurs here, it is up to the Heads of Government, who have declared their priorities elsewhere, to ensure that those priorities are carried out by the Council of Budget Ministers.

The role of the Commission is crucial, because we call upon them to withdraw their proposal if the Council is not prepared to abide by the Treaty in effect.

In considering their next course of action, the Commission should bear in mind that Parliament has three reserve powers. The power to reject the budget was something which Parliament used in 1979. Its power to refuse a discharge it came very close to using earlier this week when a decision was taken to defer the grant of discharge. Its third major power, that of censure and, therefore, dismissal of the Commission, is one which Parliament has not yet used. If it came to do so, I believe that it would probably be on an important constitutional issue of this kind that Parliament would be so moved. Whether it be on this particular issue alone or more than just this, I believe the issue we have before us today is of fundamental importance in the relationship between Parliament, Commission and Council, and we look to the Commission for a very strong stand on our side in this debate.

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Madam President, perhaps I should point out to you that the speech that I am going to make relates to the oral question with debate that has been taken with this report. You have not, as yet, called the authors of the question, and I think it would be more appropriate if I followed them.

I would also suggest to you that it would be more proper to finish Mr Pfennig's report, because, quite frankly, as I think he would agree, the oral question is a quite separate subject.

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Pfennig, rapporteur. — (DE) I endorse the proposal that we consider my report first and then go on to the oral question.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Madam President, the Commission has been invited to and would now like to make one or two points in answer to the report and motion for a resolution by Mr Pfennig.

First of all, we are of one mind with Parliament in attaching considerable importance to the Community's promotion of demonstration projects in the energy field. It was in this light that in October 1980 — I repeat, 1980 — the Commission proposed an increase from 150 million units of account to 310 million units of account in the target figure which we would like to spend on implementing this programme.

Secondly, the Council, as everybody knows, has so far refused to approve this proposal. Parliament, because of a dispute with the Council, has not yet delivered its opinion. Naturally the matter did not, and indeed it could not, rest there, and in fact Parliament entered 83 million units of account in the 1981 budget and 41 million units of account in the 1982 budget, thus making available to the Commission a sum in excess of the original target ceiling of 93 million.

On the basis of those budget entries, the Commission — and I must say I am sorry that there is no mention of this in the motion for a resolution — presented to the Council a number of financing proposals for demonstration projects which exceeded the previous target ceiling. In this way the Commission, I think, did two things: it demonstrated its determination to implement the Community's energy policy and, at the same time, demonstrated its determination firmly to respect Parliament's prerogatives as far as budgetary matters were concerned. That, perhaps, is an answer to some

Richard

of the requests which have been made in this debate for a firm expression of the Commission's opinion as far as that is concerned.

There is, however, one factor which I think Parliament has left out of account: namely, that the regulations laying down the management procedure for demonstration projects require that projects approved by the Commission must also be accepted by the Council. So, with great respect to Mr Pfenning, this is not purely a budgetary matter. It is this requirement which the Council is using to block implementation of the projects submitted by the Commission, despite the fact that the experts are agreed on the projects' technical merits and on their suitability for financial support. Now, faced with this stalemate, I think it is right that the Commission should define its stand, as indeed I have been asked to do. That is what I now propose to do, and I hope the House will feel I am being frank with it.

We have already shown our willingness to use appropriations which Parliament makes available to it in passing the budget. Given that the expenditure in question is clearly non-compulsory, we shall continue to submit projects for the approval of the Council within the limits of the funds entered in the budget. In so doing we are again — and I emphasize — acknowledging the powers of this House, to which, as I hope the House knows, we attach great importance.

The Commission, however, sees no reason, in view of what I have just said, to withdraw its earlier proposals, since in our view it will help us to obtain the Council's agreement for the expansion of our policy on demonstration projects, particularly as the most recent Energy Council has accepted our suggestion that an in-depth debate on demonstration projects be held in July in an attempt to break the deadlock.

Parliament, I think, should realize that the Council has the power to withhold approval for the use of funds, not on budgetary grounds, but because it has to approve by qualified majority the list of projects proposed by the Commission and, for the time being, this qualified majority cannot be raised for the reasons I have already described. This is one of the factors which have prompted the Commission's decision to propose new regulations on support for demonstration projects. Parliament will, of course, be asked for its opinion on those regulations.

Finally, I assure you that the Commission will press the Council to accede to the request for conciliation referred to in paragraph 3 of the motion for a resolution.

So, Madam President, the Commission's position is briefly this: we find ourselves in the middle of a major dispute — and perhaps it is of major constitutional importance, as Mr Price said in his speech — between the Parliament and the Council as far as budgetary

authority is concerned. We have a number of demonstration projects which we are anxious to continue. We are prepared to spend our money up to the limits to which we are both able and entitled to spend it.

Unfortunately, this is not a purely budgetary matter because of the powers of the Council under the existing regulations for the approval of demonstration projects. We are at present trying to amend those regulations and, as I understand it, there will be an in-depth discussion in the Council of Ministers in July.

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Pfennig, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr Commissioner, I can only reply to your remarks in a language which is not officially accepted in this Parliament: *O si tacuisses, philosophus mansisses!* If you had remained silent, it would have been better!

I can only remind you of what Mr Price said. We have had enough of the Commission's stories in this matter. This is really very poor, Mr Commissioner. Commissioner Davignon tells us in the Committee on Budgets that the Commission will accept Parliament's proposals and if necessary, if there is no other way out, withdraw the proposals for 'ceiling' regulations but still implement the Commission's projects with what it has, even if there are no regulations. But you refer here to some figures or other and say that you intend to increase the Commission's proposals from 150m to 310m EUA and to do various other things. But that has nothing at all to do with our problem. We are not here to express our views on the figures. The figures are to be found in the budget. As a Commissioner, perhaps you would like to take note of that. The budget contains a figure, and you know very well that this figure will not be matched by the Council's decisions, because the Council would not dream of going as high as 310m EUA in its 'ceiling' regulation. There has been talk of an additional sum of a mere 25m EUA, making 175m instead of 150m EUA — and now take a look at the budget! You will see that the last five years produce a figure of 243m EUA.

If you can assure me that the final result in the 'ceiling' regulation will be 243m EUA, I do not mind talking about it, but you simply cannot give me that assurance. You know that very well, and you cannot therefore expect Parliament to accept what you have just told us. You should reconsider whether you want to say anything more on the subject here or whether we should not leave it at what Commissioner Davignon said in the Committee on Budgets.

President. — I call the Committee on Budgets.

Mr Lange, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (DE) I did not really intend to speak to this subject,

Lange

but I am afraid I shall have to do so now that the Commission's representative has expressed himself in such a way that it is obvious he either is unaware of the circumstances that have led to this motion for a resolution or chooses to ignore them.

By letter of 8 March, the Council informed Parliament that it had been awaiting Parliament's opinion on this matter for many months. Parliament had delivered its opinion long ago, but had included a request that the Council discuss the matter with Parliament before considering the proposal, that it enter into a kind of preliminary conciliation procedure. The Council was clever enough to say that, as there was absolutely no provision for this, it would not agree. The Council's treatment of Parliament was thus far from satisfactory, and it also resorted to untruths in subsequent correspondence. In its letter of 8 March, the Council exerted pressure on Parliament to deliver its opinion — one way or the other — by 24 April by threatening that it would otherwise withdraw its request for Parliament's opinion.

I should like to know who advised the President of the Council to sign this letter, because the Council simply cannot do this, especially after the recent judgments of the European Court of Justice. This is the crux of the procedural dispute between the Council and Parliament. The Commission's representative should realize that too, and he should also pass the information on to those who advised him to speak as he has done, otherwise we shall go on talking at cross purposes.

In these circumstances we are unable to deliver an opinion on the substance of the matter. Nor is it for the Committee on Budgets to do so. Under the agreement between the Committee on Energy and Research and the Committee on Budgets, all we are concerned with at the moment is the procedure. But as procedural disputes between institutions sometimes assume a clearly political complexion, Parliament must surely react as the Pfennig report proposes.

I therefore call on the House to approve the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pfennig, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets, as it stands. We shall then have to continue the struggle with the Council in this matter, but it must be made clear to the Council that we cannot accept what it is proposing to do. Because of its attitude, the Council will also be receiving an appropriate report from the President of Parliament strongly denouncing and rejecting the Council's attitude towards Parliament and its conduct in this affair.

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Madam President, as the authors of the question for debate are not here — which I regard as a pretty poor show — and I am the only speaker on the oral question, I am not going to speak. I would

suggest that we move on to our legislative business rather than take up the time of this House, for I know that we have a lot of important business to deal with.

President. — I must point out that, of course, the oral question with debate was subsumed into the debate on the report of Mr Pfennig.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Madam President, I would particularly like to reply to some of the things that Mr Lange said. I am glad to see that he is still here and listening. I really think that Parliament is asking rather a lot of the Commission. Parliament has put in the Pfennig report — perfectly fair and legitimate; Mr Lange has said that we should take note and try and understand the Parliament's view on this. If I were in his position I would feel exactly the same way as he does, and I am sure that if he were in my position, he would be saying exactly the same sort of things as I have been saying. But it is a nice dialogue, this, across the table!

(Laughter)

Let me now try and clear up some misunderstandings. When the Pfennig report is presented, I think it is right that the Parliament should get as clear a statement as it is possible for the Commission to give in the very difficult situation that we find ourselves in . . .

Mr Lange. — But related to the case at stake!

Mr Richard. — . . . I think it was right in these circumstances that the Commission gave as clear a statement of its position as it could. We are, after all, in Mr Pfennig's resolution being asked to withdraw certain proposals. That is really what we are being asked to do in that resolution.

I tried to explain, as best I could, two things. One was that the Commission is with the Parliament in, if you like, the constitutional dispute between the Parliament and the Council of Ministers and we are anxious indeed to try and preserve the Parliament's prerogatives and its constitutional rights in relation to the budget. Fine. On the other hand, I also tried to explain to Parliament that the Commission really did not think it made sense at this moment to withdraw those proposals. Mr Lange may not like the position but at least, I hope, he will be clear as to what the Commission's position is by the time I am finished. I then tried to set out why we were not going to withdraw those proposals, particularly because we are trying to amend the regulations so as to remove from the Council of Ministers the power that they have at the moment to hold up these demonstration projects and secondly, because in any event there will be an in-depth discussion at a Council of Ministers' meeting in July.

Richard

Now, with great respect, I hope that I will have satisfied Parliament that although we are not prepared to withdraw the proposals, nevertheless, as far as your Parliament's constitutional prerogatives are concerned, the Commission has done in the past, and will continue to do in the future, what it can to uphold those prerogatives.

Having said that, I must also say to the Parliament that we do attach importance to these demonstration projects. It is a matter of great regret to the Commission that it finds itself in the middle, as Mr Lange himself put it, of a procedural conflict between the Council and the Parliament. In those circumstances all we can do, it seems to me, is to try to preserve the projects as best we can, try to get more money for the sort of projects that Parliament and the Commission would like to see implemented, and at the same time, do what we can to negotiate that with the Council. That is what we are doing.

Finally, may I say one word in answer to Mr Pfennig. What I have given this morning I trust he will take, as indeed the Commission intends it to be, as a definitive statement of the Commission's position as of today. It is not a matter, frankly, of what one Commissioner has said in one committee or what another Commissioner has said in the plenary sitting of the Parliament. It will be no surprise to Parliament, I am sure, to know that the Commissioner responsible for this, Mr Davignon, and I have indeed had close consultations as to what the Commission position should be, and indeed it is as I have stated it this morning. If all that means that what I am doing is what Mr Lange wanted me to do, namely, taking note of what the Parliament has said, I take note of it.

President. — I call Mr Lange.

Mr Lange, Chairman of the Committee on Budgets. — (DE) I thank Mr Richard for taking note of these things, because this gives us some assurance perhaps that the Commission appreciates Parliament's position. I repeat: we are not concerned with the substance of the matter. On that, our position is absolutely clear. The only issue is the relationship between the Council and Parliament, nothing else. It is true to say that there may be some trouble with things dear to the Commission and something that is close to our hearts, but we surely cannot waive powers which we enjoy under the Treaty but which the Council seeks to question at every available opportunity.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

The Chair must request that the whole of this debate be sent to the President-in-Office of the Council. The Chair also expresses great regret that there is no Mem-

ber of the Council present to listen to what is undoubtedly a very important constitutional debate.

(Applause)

I call Mr Purvis.

Mr Purvis. — Madam President, we had the same problem last night with the Moreau report, when the Council were not present. It affected them too, and I suggested to the Chair that the transcript of the whole debate be passed to the Council with a request for their written specific response to the points raised. I suggest you do that again today.

President. — Thank you, Mr Purvis. Your proposal has been noted.

2. Securities

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-48/82) by Mr Dalziel, on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-891/80) for a directive coordinating the requirements for the drawing up, scrutiny and distribution of the prospectus to be published when securities are offered for subscription or sale to the public.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Dalziel, rapporteur. — Madam President, we in the Legal Affairs Committee certainly welcomed this proposal from the Commission, and I hope that some of the warmth with which we received it has been transmitted in my report and motion for a resolution.

This may appear to some people to be a rather technical subject, and indeed it is; but we in the Legal Affairs Committee thought it of sufficient importance to devote a fair amount of time to it. As Members may know, it is merely one of a series of proposals for directives on the security of industry and follows logically from the preceding proposals, some of which, I have to say, have already been adopted and have been implemented in national law.

There is a legitimate argument for working towards the creation of a European capital market. One has to avoid the temptation of thinking that one can create a capital market overnight. These things do not happen in that way. They develop, they mature and they are often amalgams of existing operations rather than a single new creation.

Dalziel

As I say, we welcomed the proposal from the Commission. We felt, however, that it was in certain respects rather imprecise, and so we put forward some amendments which I hope the Commissioner will accept in their entirety and in the good sense that they were presented to him.

We have certain points which I can itemize fairly quickly. Our primary concern, clearly, was to strike a balance between protecting the investor and bearing in mind that an investor, by definition, is somebody who himself has to evaluate risk and reward, and in any case one did not want, in any way, to stifle the creation of a European capital market. Equally, following on from what I said earlier, it was our feeling that one should certainly move towards a greater interpenetration of the capital market; but there could well still be certain areas which are best handled by national legislation or by national stock-exchanges and which, indeed, should continue to be so handled. My amendments contain reference to two of those points particularly — the prior vetting of prospectuses by the competent authority of the Member State and the amount of disclosure to be insisted upon in those prospectuses.

One of the most important issues before us, at least in this proposal for a directive, was how one defines a public issue as opposed to a private placement. The view expressed in the amendments accepted unanimously by the Legal Affairs Committee was that we should strive towards a Community-wide definition of private placement as opposed to public issue, and I hope very sincerely that the Commissioner feels capable of responding positively to those suggestions.

Equally, and this is again contained in the various amendments, we felt unanimous in the committee that there were certain types of issues, certain types of capital-raising activities, which did not lend themselves to inclusion in this directive. We have therefore quite clearly specified certain exemptions which in no way, we feel, would detract from the protection we obviously wish to give investors, but whose omission would rather add further and unnecessary encumbrances to what are at present quite efficient and successful money capital market operations. These are my comments on the amendments, on the most important things which we have been trying to incorporate, and I hope the Commissioner can accept them in their entirety.

Obviously, we in the Legal Affairs Committee were anxious to ensure that there was a suitable legal basis for this directive. Here we have Article 54, Article 100 and indeed the preamble to the Treaties. So, without any doubt at all, there is an impeccable legal background to the directive. It follows logically and nicely from previous directives which have already been accepted, and I think it marks an important step forward in the development, admittedly on a rather long timescale, but necessarily so, of a European capital market of a more integrated nature, which we encour-

age and are keen to pursue in the Legal Affairs Committee.

By way of conclusion, Madam President, let me say that the Legal Affairs Committee adopted, with only one abstention, my report and my motion for a resolution. That reflects a certain degree of unanimity in the committee. I think it also indicates the importance which it attaches to this particular subject. We should like to use this opportunity to ask the Commissioner to make every effort to be as accommodating to our proposals as he possibly can and to recognize that we are putting forward these amendments in a spirit of friendship and cooperation, rather than in any other way.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Madam President, I will do my best to respond as positively as I can to those remarks. As far as the Commission is concerned, may I start by expressing my thanks and appreciation to the rapporteur, Mr Dalziel, for the excellent report he has drawn up. His work and that of the Legal Affairs Committee and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs will be, I think, of invaluable help to us in presenting our modified proposal. The Commission attaches considerable importance to this proposal, representing as it does a significant further step in the Commission's overall information policy concerning securities.

Three directives have been adopted in the securities field in the last three years. They rightly emphasize the importance of information concerning securities, but their scope is limited to securities admitted to listing on the stock-exchange. A stock-exchange is, of course, a market-place where securities are bought and sold, and it is right that investors should be given information on which to base their purchase and sale decisions. There is, however, an earlier moment when investors need information just as much, and that is the occasion when the securities are offered to the public for the first time, i.e., on the occasion of the primary offer, and this is the aim of the present proposal. I think it would not only help to bring about a better level of investment protection in the Member States, but also, as Mr Dalziel emphasized, contribute towards the creation of a European capital market.

As regards the amendments proposed to the draft report, I think I can be very brief, because we accept all of them. In saying this, I should perhaps leave the Commission a little room for manoeuvre concerning the precise way in which the amendments are actually incorporated into the text of our modified proposal, because, as I am sure the House will recognize, there is occasionally a need to formulate the text in a somewhat different way or a need to adapt, or add to it to some extent. More particularly, on Amendment No 9,

Richard

I would like to take this opportunity to say that the suggested special scheme for small local companies might warrant extension into a general standardized procedure for small and medium-sized companies. This would be fully in accordance with Parliament's resolution of 19 February 1986 on the situation of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Community, more particularly with paragraphs 4 (c) and 4 (d) of that resolution. It would likewise be consistent with the Commission's efforts in this field.

In any event, Madam President, the important thing is that we agree with the spirit of each one of the suggested changes. We consider they will enable us to improve the proposal substantially

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament approved the draft directive and adopted the resolution)

3. Feeding of animals

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1092/81) by Mr Newton Dunn on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-900/81) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1119/78 laying down special measures for peas and field beans used in the feeding of animals.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Newton Dunn, rapporteur. — Madam President, this is a proposal to introduce a wider use of MCAs. The great majority of Members have shown by their votes on many occasions in this House that they are opposed to MCAs because MCAs distort and hinder the achievement of a true common market. Nevertheless, both the Committee on Agriculture in its report and the Committee on Budgets in its opinion ask the House to approve this further introduction of MCAs, specifically in the field of peas and beans for animal feeding.

The reason why this is necessary, or thought to be necessary, is that the movements of currencies belonging to the different Member States have created uncommon or unequal prices for peas and beans in different Member States. Therefore, manufacturers of feedstuffs who buy the peas and beans go to buy them in those countries whose currencies have fallen, at the expense, of course, of growers in other countries whose currencies have risen. This has led to great inequity among growers in different countries in the Community.

The estimated cost to the budget is approximately 0.32 million ECU in 1982. So though, Mr President, we are all against sin in the form of MCAs, we ask the House to be in favour of a little temporary sin in practice, particularly if it does not cost too much.

There is one outstanding question which the committee would like the Commission to answer. Back in 1978, when the original regime was introduced to provide support for peas and beans for animal feedstuffs, it was foreseen that this support would stimulate production of these vegetables in the Community and thereby reduce imports from third countries of alternative feedstuffs, in particular oilseed and oil cake. What we want, in other words, in the Community, is our animals to be full of beans. Will the Commission, therefore, please tell us how near we are to this universally desirable goal?

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, the present regime of Community support for peas and beans used in animal feedstuffs was enacted, as Mr Newton Dunn mentioned, in 1978. It is a regime that fits in with the broad framework of Community policy in regard to the provision of animal feedstuffs rich in proteins, and indeed this system was intended particularly to encourage the production of such products within the Community. The Community suffers from a lack of protein-rich materials. Consumption within the Community amounts to about 15 million tonnes per year, nearly all of which is either imported in its final form, or prepared within the Community from imported seed.

The Community approved this policy of development for peas and beans because these are crops ideally suited to the climate and conditions prevailing in the Community, the intention being that they should replace imports from abroad.

In reply to Mr Newton Dunn's specific question, I would like to say that since the establishment of the said system, the output of these products in the Community has increased from 165 000 tonnes in 1978 to 400 000 tonnes in 1981.

The regime established in order to provide conditions favouring this increase in production is a deficiency-payments regime that envisages the granting of support to those manufacturers of animal feedstuffs who

Contogeorgis

have accepted the obligation to pay the growers a price at least equal to the minimum price guaranteed by the Council for each trading period. The purpose of this support is to ensure that the price paid by the users of animal feedstuffs within the Community will be on a par with the prices obtaining on the world market. Nevertheless, the minimum price and the support in question are both constituents of the common agricultural policy, and are expressed in ECUs. It follows that they have to be converted to national currencies with the aid of the 'green' exchange-rate, which, however, is often different from the central exchange-rate or from the current daily exchange-rate.

This situation creates distortions in transactions between the Member States, owing to the fact that the final price for the user, under present conditions, will not always be on a par with the world market price in all the Member States. The prices for peas and beans in the Member State of origin and in the Member State where they are used may not be the same. Precisely in order that such anomalies may be eliminated or reduced, and taking into account the increasing importance of these products, the Commission has proposed the introduction of an elastic system of currency regulation that aims to correct these anomalies.

In its proposal the Commission estimated that the cost to the Community budget would amount to 320 million ECUs.

I would like to thank Mr Newton Dunn, because his own proposal indicates that the Agricultural Committee has accepted the Commission's proposal.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament approved the draft regulation and adopted the motion for a resolution)

4. *Laying hens kept in battery cages*

President. — The next item is the second report by Mr Tolman, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-95/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-452/81) for a directive laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens kept in battery cages.

I call Mr Hord on a point of order.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I rise on a point of order in regard to the Tolman report. I wish to advise you that the Tolman report, as you will recall, was debated by this House in December last year, and after the dis-

ussion we had under Rule 36, initiated by Mr Herman, as the Commission were not prepared to accept Parliament's amendments, the rapporteur agreed to take the matter back.

As Rule 85 was not at any time mentioned in the debate, I submit that it was sent back under Rule 36, and in those circumstances the rapporteur had no authority to produce a new report. I believe, therefore, that this report is out of order.

But what I would like to say, Mr President, is that this is a serious matter; we have already got too much business. It seems absurd that we should be discussing this matter twice, and I would request that this matter be dealt with by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and by the Bureau.

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, you appreciate that the question that has now been raised is an important one, but when we took the decision to put the Tolman report back on today's agenda, the matter was examined by the Bureau.

I propose that we do not begin a procedural discussion on that subject now. If we continue to quarrel over the question whether there is any contradiction between the two Rules referred to, then I must simply ask the Assembly to decide whether it wants to begin the debate and settle the question straight away.

We are concerned with Rules 36 and 85 of the Rules of Procedure. Rule 36 says, among other things, in paragraph 2:

In this case, the committee shall report back to Parliament within one month or, in exceptional cases, any shorter period decided by Parliament.

I am aware that, in all the political groups of this Parliament, the will is there to deal with this report. If procedural problems are now to be raised by referring to another Rule, I propose, as occupant of the Chair, that we stick to Rule 36 and so begin the debate.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Tolman, rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, there is absolutely nothing new about what Mr Hord tells us. He is repeating what he has already said in the Committee on Agriculture, where his views were dismissed by a very large majority. Other Members have also urged that this second report be considered as quickly as possible. After the discussions that have been held in various places, I feel that the time has now come for this report to be debated and put to the vote.

President. — I call Mr Hord.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I am, of course, in your hands. All I have done is to draw attention to what I believe to be a most unsatisfactory situation which, I believe, warrants an enquiry.

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Hord is very accommodating. He leaves the matter to me; I must therefore make a proposal. It is my earnest wish that we begin this debate. That is my proposal.

I call Mr Woltjer.

Mr Woltjer. — (NL) Mr President, I think it is important for the Bureau to provide a clearer definition of this procedure for future reference. What we are doing here this morning is absurd: we are doing something we have already done. The report was sent back to committee for a specific reason. The problem that led to this has not been solved. Parliament now intends to take a second vote on something that has already been approved. We have this problem because the rapporteur failed to understand what he was instructed to do. I believe the Bureau must prevent a recurrence of this in the future.

President. — I will not press you any more. We must now bring to an end this discussion on procedure. On behalf of the Bureau, the Chair undertakes to refer these questions, which have been rightly raised, to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, but in view of the fact that the Committee on Agriculture has once more expressly requested that this matter should not be delayed any further, I ask the House now to begin the debate and listen to Mr Tolman.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Tolman, rapporteur. — (NL) I shall keep my presentation brief. This is the second reading of my report, and I see my task as rapporteur as being briefly to indicate what changes have been made to the previous version of the report.

There are two distinct differences. The first report referred to 450 cm²; after due consideration, this was changed by a clear majority of the Committee on Agriculture to 500 cm². Then there is the year in which the provisions should enter into force — and this is a departure from the Commission's proposal: this has been changed from 1995 to 1990. We are therefore in agreement with the Commission's proposal where it concerns the area available to each hen.

Mr President, I believe it is a good thing we are dealing with these problems now. I have always said we must pay heed to the welfare of animals — and this includes the welfare of laying hens — and also of the workers who have to contend with these problems.

The increase to 500 cm² will mean enlarging the living-space of laying hens by about 25% or slightly more, and that is a distinct improvement; but to permit an objective and correct appraisal, I would refer to two disadvantages connected with this proposal. There is no denying, of course, that increasing the space laying hens have will have a considerable effect on the production process, will mean higher costs and the consumer having to pay more for the product. Secondly, the European Community's competitive position will be weakened by this proposal. The Community occupies a strong position in the poultry sector: 1981, for example, was a successful year; exports to third countries were tripled. However, this position will be affected to some extent by the proposed measures, if they are implemented. I refer in particular to competition with the United States, where battery hens have between 310 and 340 cm². Our competitive position will therefore be affected, and that will have an adverse effect on employment, a subject in which we take so much interest.

A great deal of attention has been paid to improving the welfare of laying hens, but there are limits. The rapporteur feels that the absolute maximum has been achieved with this proposal. The Committee on Agriculture approved the proposal by a very large majority. I hope, Mr President, that Parliament will follow suit.

President. — I call the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling, draftsman of an opinion. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection made its opinion absolutely clear to the House at the December part-session. It noted with satisfaction that a large number of Members, though unfortunately not enough, agreed with its proposals.

These Members joined with us in opposing the legitimisation of a situation in which living creatures are forced into completely inadequate receptacles, and refused to be party to the situation described by our vice-chairman, Mr Johnson, in some ways very convincingly, in his extremely cynical amendment No 27.

The committee hoped that the withdrawal of Mr Tolman's first report would lead to a definite improvement. It finds that this was a vain hope. The second Tolman report again takes insufficient account of all the basic proposals which I presented to you in detail on 17 December and to which I refer you once more. This report will not give these animals reasonable living-space, although we are grateful for the slight increase, it will not enable them to carry out the movements peculiar to the species and it does not provide for reasonable transitional periods.

My committee has advocated a five-year transitional period and considers this perfectly adequate. Even Mr

Seibel-Emmerling

Tolman's claim that the animal welfare associations approved of his proposals, a claim which I have refuted, is again to be found in the explanatory statement despite the correction and despite protests, for example, from the Eurogroup of Animal Welfare, the umbrella organization of animal welfare associations. My committee finds this very regrettable.

The decision to send the report back to the Committee on Agriculture meant that my committee had to decide whether to draw up a new opinion. In January, we decided unanimously to abide by our original opinion and to retable the amendments we tabled last time, which I hereby do. With your permission, Mr President, I would like the explanations I gave of those amendments on 17 December included in the record.

Our opinion has not changed in the slightest, nor, unfortunately, has the future lot of laying hens, although it will now have the European Parliament's stamp of approval. If, ladies and gentlemen, you are as opposed to this as my committee and I, if you too feel that the area called for here and also recommended by the Commission is really more suitable for an egg than for a living, full-grown laying hen, I beg you to approve our amendments, which can be attributed to my committee's three areas of responsibility, all of which it takes very seriously and for which I hope to find supporters among you.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Woltjer. — (NL) As I have just said in the discussion on procedure in this matter, I think it is absolutely wrong that this completely different report should again be presented by Mr Tolman without a single reason being given for his departure from the position originally adopted by Parliament. The Committee on Agriculture has, as it were, entered into negotiations with Parliament. First we had 450 cm², and this has now become 500 cm². Parliament wanted to put a forceful proposal to the Commission and to change this to 600 cm²; but now we have Mr Tolman saying that we have gone as far as we can, because otherwise agriculture will be placed at a serious disadvantage. I find that a rather cryptic remark. Only a few months ago, Mr Tolman and his group were saying that they were opposed to a levy on imported feedingsstuffs because this would greatly increase the burden on the poultry farmers. All we are now asking is that laying hens be given a little more space in their cages.

Since we believe that the position originally adopted by Parliament must be upheld, my group has again tabled all the amendments which were adopted at that time so as to give Parliament another chance to vote for them and thus reassert our position.

I come to my final comment. Mr Tolman says he feels that 500 cm² complies with the public's desire to see

the treatment of laying hens improved. I am surprised that the agricultural world has not taken note of this obvious desire for better treatment. I am on the farmer's side, but I do think that agriculture must do something about improving the treatment of animals.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, as has been mentioned before, the rapporteur has had no authority to produce the new report. I think it is fair to say that the rapporteur has not only ignored the previous views of Parliament, but has defied Parliament. Therefore I think that he ought to think again about coming forward with 500 cm²: perhaps he would reflect that Parliament's decision should override the rapporteur's own view and the view of the committee concerned. Mr President, I ask myself how many times we are going to go through this ritual. Mr Tolman started off with 450 cm²; this time we are on 500 cm²; have we got to go back two more times before he gets to the 600 cm² which was decided by this House back in December?

One of the things which I said when I was speaking on this subject in December was that the Commission's proposals were half-hearted and half-baked. I think most of us were concerned that they did not really grapple with this important subject. I would submit, particularly as the Commission itself is calling for much more detailed research into the question of battery hens, that the Commission should withdraw this proposal and get involved immediately with this outstanding research and then re-table new proposals which, one hopes, will recognize not only the results of that research but the mood of this House and many other parts of the Community and so constitute a set of proposals which can be respected. Therefore, my feeling is that at this stage we should perhaps send the whole thing back and ask for a better report.

In conclusion may I say, Mr President, this is a matter which clearly exercises the minds of many millions of people in Europe. I do implore the Commission to recognize the concern that exists on this subject and respect the views of this Parliament.

President. — I call Mrs Castle.

Mrs Castle. — Mr President, I am delighted to be called on in this way, though rather to my surprise. I share the condemnations that have been made of Mr Tolman. I am here to support the protests that have been made about the Tolman report by my vote, and of course I have amendments down.

I believe three things are essential in our approach to this matter. The first is that any improvements that we are voting on are only interim ones. They are going to

Castle

be inadequate as a long-term solution. The research must be pressed ahead into alternative methods of housing hens.

Secondly, even in this interim period the standards for which we should be aiming must be the 600 cm² minimum and not any lesser figure than that. But as the 600 cm² is still an inadequate solution to this problem, I have an amendment down, and others have, demanding that the interim period should only be five years. Now I think that would help to meet Mr Hord's point that we know the Commission has not finished its studies. We know this is not a final solution, and underlining the urgency of the situation by stipulating only a five-year period would concentrate minds wonderfully in my view and compel us to look at the whole situation in a more fundamental way. Certainly, more than five years would be intolerable. It really would be absurd to say we are going to spend 10 years getting down to 600 cm² and then, if another arrangement is visualized, have another long interim period in order to meet the financial difficulties of the poultry industry. Ten years is just absolute nonsense, and it means that nothing really fundamental is intended to be done.

People say that the five years are impracticable in view of the fact that people in the poultry industry have invested capital on which they have not yet received their return. I believe that the period for getting one's money back has been estimated at about 10 years. But they have not all just put in new battery cages, for heavens sake! They have been doing it for years past. Probably many of the existing battery cages have come to the end of their useful life, and in the end the financial problem might turn out to be much smaller than we have visualized. In any case, I personally would be perfectly prepared to consider some system of compensation for the poultry industry in those cases where the alteration of their present arrangements and the introduction of more generous standards cause difficulties. But they would have to be examined on their merits and I repeat, I think they would be less than people visualize. We have all talked in rather a general way about this and the Committee on Agriculture has never had any specific figures put to it.

So I am here to fight for a much higher interim standard, a much shorter interim period and the insistence that research must go on into alternative methods of housing which will enable us to get rid of battery cages altogether in due course.

President. — I call Mr Provan.

Mr Provan. — Mr President, to my mind there is another argument in this issue, and it is the very simple matter of practicality. Production is dependent on the welfare of the laying hen. The poultry industry in the United Kingdom accounts for approximately 15% of

total agricultural output, and the battery-cage system has evolved as the best system for producing eggs. We must ask ourselves why. It is all very well for people to stand up in this House and say there has not been a lot of research. There is a lot of basic research and there is also practical evolution. So we ask the question why has it evolved the way it has.

Of course the hens are housed in near-optimum conditions. You will discover that in battery cages the death-rate is 2% per annum, whereas in deep-litter systems you have a death-rate of 8% and in free-range systems a death-rate of up to 20%.

Now what are we really talking about? Are we talking about the welfare of the hen or what people think the hens actually want? The advantages of the battery cages are that you get clean eggs and you know where to find them. You know when they have been laid, and you get value for your money. The hen is content as well. Now if, as we have heard today, you go up to the level of 600 cm² per hen, you get aggression in the birds. It has been proved by research that once you go over 500 cm² you have to de-beak the hen. Now is that what the environmental lobby really want to see happening? I would submit to this Parliament, Mr President, that interfering with the beaks of hens is far more inhumane than actually putting them into conditions in which you know they are going to survive.

President. — I call Mr Eyraud.

Mr Eyraud. — (*FR*) Mr President, I have no wish to prolong a debate that has in my view gone on for far too long already. I would simply like to say that one could go along with the figure of 600 cm² provided there was a longer transition period of, say, ten years or so. This would do two things: firstly, it would allow small producers who have fitted themselves out with battery units to 'digest', if I may so put it, the investment they have made, and it will also result in better conditions for the hens as and when the equipment is changed over.

I would also urge the need to introduce a register to be kept by battery farms in which losses would be recorded, since this would allow more effective monitoring of the health aspect.

President. — I call Mr Clinton.

Mr Clinton. — Mr President, I can be very brief, because what I wanted to say has almost entirely been said already by Mr Provan. The people who are opposing the Tolman report, as it now stands and as it has been revised, have not a scintilla of evidence to prove that what they are looking for is going to be better or more comfortable or more suitable for hens in battery cages. The fact of the matter is that that evi-

Clinton

dence is not there. I think we should wait until we have it.

A point that has not been made is that there is no support whatsoever for the poultry industry that may have to change from a smaller cage to a much larger cage. This will cause very considerable expense. There has been no reference to the fact that it is estimated that the price of the end product, the eggs, will go up by 30% and it is the consumer who will have to pay for that. I think that these are very serious omissions. Most of the opposition that we have had to the Tolman report today was opposition to the chairman's ruling, which was an extraordinary thing, I thought instead of discussing the merits of the report before us. In my view regardless of what has been said, immense improvements have been effected on the original document that came before the House. The size of the cage has been considerably increased and the time for bringing this larger cage in has been reduced by five years. So what does the House want? We want some balance in this House and we don't want to go crazy. We are not half as concerned, may I say, about housing conditions for human beings.

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Tolman, rapporteur. — (NL) Perhaps it would be better if I commented now, before the Commission replies. Although we are not to speak to the procedure again, you must allow me one remark. Mr Hord has said — and I cannot let this pass — that I have defied Parliament.

Mr President, this cannot be true. This is not a one-man show. After my first report had been debated, I requested leave to withdraw it. Parliament agreed to this by a large majority. I then went back to work and drew up a different report, after a great deal of consultation with various authorities. That is how things were. First my methods are criticized, and now Mr Hord is saying this new report must be withdrawn and replaced with a better one. He is now advocating that I do what he began by criticizing. I believe I need say no more on the subject.

President. — I appreciate your brevity. Mr Hord adopted a friendly tone, and after all, he left the decision to the Chair. You have mentioned his name once more: strictly speaking, he could ask for the floor to make a personal statement, but I urge you to bring this procedural discussion to a close. We still have a large number of amendments to vote on, and I hope to get the whole thing finished.

I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, the Commission has followed

with great attention the previous discussions in this House, and today's as well. A number of conflicting points of view have been expressed in connection with the need to establish certain preconditions for the protection of laying hens, of the economic situation and the market, of health and quality, and of existing practices. I believe the Commission's proposal strikes a balance between all the points touched upon by the various speakers, and for this reason I think the Commission should stand firm by its present proposal, which certainly represents some progress and also, as Mr Clinton pointed out, achieves a degree of compromise between the conflicting views expressed.

As regards the timetable for implementing the proposed directive, we believe that a period of transition will have to be provided for, of sufficient length to allow the amortization of existing installations, since otherwise egg-producers would suffer great financial damage. However, the Commission can give some consideration to reducing the period that it proposes in the directive, in the light of today's discussions.

As for the question of supervision and control, I recognize the wish that has been expressed for the founding of a Community supervisory organ. However, perhaps that proposal goes too far under today's conditions. The responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the directives and its surveillance should remain with the Member States. The function of the Commission is to check whether these measures are being implemented uniformly by the Member States.

As regards the dimensions of the cages, the opinion of the Commission after studying all the scientific data is that there are no grounds to justify a modification of its proposal that envisages a lowest acceptable limit of 500 cm³, as Mr Tolman has proposed in his report. Mr President, I would like to assure the House that the Commission will continue its examination of the problem of alternative accommodation and will take into account as many aspects of the problem as possible.

President. — The debate is closed.¹

5. Fisheries

President. — The next item is a joint debate on

— the report by Mr d'Ormesson, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-82/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1054/81) for a decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Government of the

¹ For the vote, see the Annex.

President

Republic of Senegal amending the Agreement on fishing off the coast of Senegal signed on 15 June 1979, the Protocol and the Exchange of Letters referring thereto;

— the report by Mr de Courcy Ling, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation (Doc. 1-96/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1054/81) for a decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Government of the Republic of Senegal amending the Agreement on fishing off the coast of Senegal signed on 15 June 1979, the Protocol and the Exchanges of Letters referring thereto;

— the report by Mr Battersby, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-81/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-35/82) for a regulation laying down for 1982 certain measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources applicable to vessels registered in the Faeroe Islands;

— the report by Mrs Pery, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-91/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-43/82) for a regulation laying down certain measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources applicable to vessels flying the flag of certain non-member countries in the 200-nautical-mile zone off the coast of the French department of Guiana;

— the report by Mrs Pery, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-90/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-44/82) for a regulation laying down for 1982 certain measures for the conservation and management of fishery resources applicable to vessels flying the flag of Spain;

— the report by Mr Provan, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-80/82), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-67/82) for a decision on the conclusion of the Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Economic Community and the Government of Denmark and the Home Government of the Faeroe Islands establishing measures for salmon-fishing in the North Atlantic waters.

I call the rapporteurs.

Mr d'Ormesson, rapporteur. — (FR) Listening to the important discussion on the dimensions of battery

cages brought to mind, thinking about the report that was to follow, Baudelaire's cry: 'Free man, you will always love the sea'; but of course no one has ever asked the hens what they thought.

The report which we are considering here today and which has been discussed in the Committee on Agriculture concerns the modification of a previous agreement linking the Community with Senegal. It sets out two important changes. The first provides for a relaxation of the rules regarding the validity periods of licences for fishing rights, certain kinds of vessels being allowed to obtain licences for as little as four months. The second provision is for the Community to undertake to finance a Senegalese scientific programme at a cost of 100 million CFA francs. The Committee on Agriculture gave a favourable opinion in both cases. Finally, my committee has taken this opportunity to call for a report to be prepared on the state of negotiations with other countries such as Guinea, Sierra Leone, the West African coastal States, Mauritania and on passage rights for the Community's tunny fleet.

I understand from the Commission that this report may be available to my committee this autumn. I feel that this could lead to a very interesting debate. Indeed, in our discussions among ourselves within the fisheries subcommittee, which is presided over with such distinction by Mr Battersby, we frequently disagree on the problems of quotas inside the territorial waters of the Community. But, if we had the will to seek solutions with the countries of Africa that would be willing to conclude agreements with us on the west coast of Africa, I am quite sure that we would find there a solution to our problems, and that would be an enormous step forward in the North-South dialogue.

Mr de Courcy Ling, rapporteur. — Mr President, I am rapporteur on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation for this joint debate on fisheries. I should therefore like to draw the House's attention to the developmental advantages in fisheries agreements of this kind with African countries. I congratulate the Commission on the proposal it made to the Council, and I congratulate the Council on accepting it.

The form of the agreement was, to a considerable extent, influenced by the report of Mr Enright, my good colleague in the Committee on Development and Cooperation, and the effects of his report are to give greater attention to technical training by the Community at the expense of the European Development Fund under the terms of the Lomé Convention; and, of course, it is important that the conclusion of these agreements should be of value not only to the European Community but to the host African country. It is good to support this particular agreement with Senegal because, as the House knows, Senegal is one of Europe's traditional partners in Africa and has been ever since her independence under her first president, L. Senghor.

de Courcy Ling

I hope that more and more of these agreements will be concluded with African countries for developmental reasons and, of course, to the benefit of the European fishing industry. The European Community is a maritime power. The European Community has a maritime vocation and whereas Japan, for example, is now consuming 90 kilos of fish per head per year, France and the United Kingdom, for example, are each consuming less than 12 kilos per head per year. The consequence of this diminution of consumption is increasing unemployment in the fishing industry at home — in Mrs Ewing's constituency, for example. There is also the consequence that our fishermen think less and less in terms of long-range operations, and I particularly welcome the facility which will be available to European Community fishermen, to the fishermen of Brittany, increasingly to those from Italy and from Greece, to use these Senegalese waters.

We know from the events of recent weeks that the civilian fleet is as important to European security outside the NATO area as are the naval forces. France, for example, has far-flung territories such as Saint Pierre de Miquelon. We in the United Kingdom have far-flung territories in South Georgia and the British Antarctic territory which will have to be defended permanently. We will never cede sovereignty over these territories, whatever happens, and we need to maintain our long-range maritime vocation in order to defend those interests.

In conclusion, I would like to point out, Mr President, that this is an agreement concluded under Article 113 of the Treaty and therefore the Parliament's input is a consultative input in the committee. The Committee on Development and Cooperation has extremely good relations with DG VIII of the Commission, and this is largely due to Mr Pisani, to whom I would like to pay tribute. I hope we shall continue to have very close consultations with the Commission about the negotiation of future such agreements, because although we, of course, have no power in the Parliament immediately to invalidate an agreement of this kind, it follows that it is in the Commission's and the Community's interests to consult the Parliament at an early stage before future such agreements are negotiated. This particular one will expire on 15 November 1983, and I therefore look to the Commission to come to my committee in about June 1983 with some ideas about the successor agreement.

Mr Battersby, rapporteur. — Mr President, before I present this report I should once again, as chairman of the fisheries working group, protest at the shunting of fisheries, which is a sector where agreement is vital and urgent, to the end of the line. And I must insist

that in the May part-session, when we have a further fisheries debate, fisheries be assured a much earlier place on the agenda so that we can get due attention for this very important sector of our business.

To turn, Mr President, to my report: I would first of all like to congratulate the Commission on concluding this fisheries agreement with the Faeroese and on achieving, at least on paper, some degree of control over the potentially highly dangerous Faeroese high-seas salmon fishery. I say 'some degree of control on paper'. I must emphasize that only tight and efficient policing of this fishery will protect the North Atlantic salmon from extinction.

In my report I have also emphasized the need to ensure in negotiations with the Faeroese that our fishermen are able to catch the quotas agreed and are not prevented from so doing by excessive restrictions — geographical, fishing-gear, time or bureaucratic delay.

I have also drawn attention to the need to achieve a closer and more advantageous balance in cod equivalent for the industry. In this connection, I would like to suggest that the conversion factors for certain species be re-examined to ensure where certain stocks are concerned that the system is not working to our disadvantage.

Once again, Mr President, we have demonstrated that in fisheries we can, as a Community, always achieve agreement with third countries external to the Community. Yet the total policy for our own waters continues to evade us. Admittedly, we have made some progress, for example on internal marketing policy, but critical questions, such as the exclusive 12-mile national limits, must be resolved this year. The total common fisheries policy covering controls, surveillance, conservation, structure, allocation of resources — the whole integrated system of fisheries management — must be agreed, established and be working efficiently before Spain and Portugal, with their enormous fleets, mentioned by my colleague John de Courcy Ling, join our Community.

The basic internal administrative work by the Commission was completed many months ago. The budgetary resources for the fisheries policy have been approved by this Parliament and by the Council. All that is lacking is the political will of the Member States in the Council. So I say to the Council and to the Belgian Presidency: for heaven's sake, get on with it and finish this job at next month's fisheries meeting of the Council in Luxembourg or Brussels! Our fishermen are rightly disillusioned and frustrated with the Council and we expect next month that the Council will reach agreement and give our fishing industry the total common fisheries policy it so desperately requires.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

Mrs Pery, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, the first motion for a resolution for which I am rapporteur concerns the European Community's agreement with non-member countries fishing in the 200-nautical-mile zone off the coast of the French department of Guiana. This document covers three points.

The first is a proposed regime, to run for one year — from 1 April 1982 to 31 March 1983 — for vessels of the United States, Japan and Korea which fish for shrimp and compulsorily supply processing undertakings situated in the French department of Guiana. In 1981, 81 licences were granted to these countries. At the present time, five new French vessels are under construction. The Commission is accordingly proposing that the licences granted to these third countries in 1982 be reduced by that number. The fisheries working-party and the Committee on Agriculture would like this decision to be deferred until such time as these Community fishing vessels have actually been built and are operational. We do not intend to allow supply problems to affect the operation of processing-plants in Guiana.

The second point concerns vessels of Trinidad and Tobago which have not complied with the notification requirement laid down in Community regulations. The Commission is proposing to reduce the number of licences and quotas by 30%. In our view, this sanction is too harsh, given that the failure to notify statutory information appears to be due to organizational difficulties rather than any lack of willingness to comply. We urge that these quotas and licences be reduced only by 10%.

The third point concerns vessels of Barbados and Guyana which did not apply for any licences in 1981. The Commission is therefore proposing not to grant any quotas or licences in 1982. We feel that fishing can play a not inconsiderable role in the economic development of these countries. We are accordingly asking that the quotas and licences allowed in 1981 be carried forward to 1982.

In suggesting these three alterations, we have been motivated by a desire to help these countries. The Community's interests are in no way affected. The Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries and the rapporteur hope, therefore, to receive the support of Parliament and thus influence the Commission's proposals and the Council's decision.

Mr President, the second report that I am presenting concerns the agreement between the EEC and Spain. This agreement was concluded on 26 January 1982, and Spanish vessels are currently authorized to fish in

Community waters by virtue of an interim arrangement which expires on 30 April, whence the urgency of our vote. This agreement fits in with the outline agreement concluded between the EEC and Spain on 15 April 1980.

In 1981, 142 licences had been granted for hake-fishing, as against 130 in 1982. This agreement was concluded with difficulty. The reduction in the number of licences provoked a sharp response from the Spanish fishermen and their government. The Franco-Spanish frontier was closed, and imports were banned for several weeks, causing chaos on the markets and a slump in prices in certain Member States.

It has to be acknowledged that the situation is a tricky one.

Fishing has for a long time been of great economic importance to Spain, a big consumer of fish. Since the introduction of the 200-mile Community fishing zone, the Spanish fishing-fleet has been experiencing a serious crisis and the country is having to import a considerable proportion of the fish it consumes. Various means have been used to overcome this situation. Some Spanish vessels have resorted to registering in one of the coastal Member States and are thus now flying a Community flag. Others have changed their fishing methods in order to benefit from conversion rates. Large trawlers become small trawlers, so that the 130 licences granted enable more vessels to put to sea. Practices like these are arousing anger among Community fishermen, and there were some regrettable incidents at sea last month. If such 'showdowns' are to be avoided in future, it is essential that all the Member States enforce the agreement as it stands.

Spain is about to enter the Common Market. The strength of its fishing-fleet poses a problem for the Community fleet. We know that the fisheries question is one of the delicate points in the negotiations. For this reason I ask you, first, to accept the Commission's proposal and, second, to invite it to report to us on the following five points:

- the state of fish-stocks in which there is common interest, particularly stocks of hake, in the North Atlantic, including the Bay of Biscay;
- the market outlook for each party in the event of the accession of Spain to the Community;
- the importance of fisheries for the Spanish economy;
- measures for the reorganization of the Spanish fishing-fleet which could be considered by both parties at the present stage;
- the desirability of granting 'pre-accession' aid to Spain to enable it to reorganize its fishing-fleet.

Pery

These are questions which pose some problems. It would be as well to face them and to seek solutions to them right away, given the prospect of the introduction of a common fisheries policy and Spain's accession to the European Community.

Mr Provan, rapporteur. — Mr President, I think it is fair to say that this agreement and the signing of letters between the Faeroese and the Community would have gone through unnoticed if it had not been pointed out that salmon catches by the Faeroese since 1978 have increased, not by 5% or 10% or even 100%, but 2 500%. In circumstances like that, I think it was right for the subcommittee on fisheries in the Committee on Agriculture to have a look at the situation.

Salmon are fresh-water-spawning fish and yet they live most of their life in sea water. Thus the Atlantic salmon is an international fish crossing the Atlantic several times during its life and crossing international boundaries. Salmon can spend up to four years in fresh water and up to about four years, whilst feeding, in the sea.

The main Atlantic salmon-harvesting nations are the Faeroese and the Greenlanders. They, of course, are the responsibility of our Community partner, Denmark. Thus there will have to be an agreed European policy for the high-seas management of the salmon stocks, bearing in mind the fact that only three Member States produce salmon stock in their rivers, namely the United Kingdom, Ireland and France. So we have got quite a conflict of interests within the Community that must be resolved. It is for that reason that we as a Community are signatories to the new North Atlantic Salmon Convention, which, we hope, will be commencing work this August. But that will be the subject of another report.

I think it is important that we realize what is going on in the rural areas of the Community because we are talking about rural areas when we talk about Scotland and the Irish rivers and even the French rivers; we are talking about part of the rural economy that is being damaged by this massive increase in salmon-catching at sea. It means that the spawning rivers, which for centuries have been responsible for part of the tourist trade in the rural areas, are suffering. This year, in Scotland alone, the catching of salmon in the rivers is very very small, indeed, even by average standards. I know, and I have been made aware of the same situation in Ireland.

There are two reasons for this, Mr President. One is of our own making by allowing draft netting to take place off the coast of the countries where they catch the salmon prior to their entry into the rivers. But the second and most important one, as I have tried to point out already, is the Faeroese increasing their catch of salmon from 30-40 tonnes in 1978 to 1 100 tonnes

this year. They have been able to identify in the high seas the route that the salmon take every year from their breeding grounds to their feeding grounds. I think that is a situation that we have to get under control.

The committee suggests, Mr President, that it would be wrong at this time to try and upset the arrangements that the Commission has made for this year and request the Faeroese to limit their total tonnage caught to 750 tonnes. Therefore, as far as 1982 is concerned, we approve those proposals. But for 1983 we suggest that the Commission goes back to renegotiate with the Faeroese. We think it is wrong for this to get established at such a high rate for catches at sea. We believe that instead of agreeing to 625 tonnes for next year's allocation, it should be reduced to 400 tonnes and that from 1984 onwards the whole thing should be submitted to the North Atlantic Salmon Convention for proper negotiation between all the Member States concerned, and that, of course, includes the Community as a partner.

Mr President, I hope that Parliament will approve the proposals.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, because of the lucid, logical report which has been produced by Mr de Courcy Ling, and upon which I congratulate him, and also because of the very full and effective speech he has made on this topic, I can be very brief.

It will not have passed your notice, Mr President, that there are absolutely no amendments to this report, and that is because Mr de Courcy Ling has restored the good name of his group by consulting with this group very carefully at all stages, from the very beginning. The result is absolute cohesion and agreement, unlike the discourteous and bungling way in which one of his colleagues acted over the Falklands. However, I can forgive the group that, because any group can make a mistake in its choice of spokesman and it always has time to put that right.

I should like to deal specifically with one thing in the report and that is in paragraph 7. We have in fact asked before for an evaluation of the consequences on the economic development of Senegal. In particular, we wish to see how the infrastructure, the freezing machinery and so on, is affected and who is taking the profits out of that. I would like to know from the Commission whether such information is in the course of being prepared or whether they have overlooked it, or whether in fact they have let it settle down for a year before they start sensibly evaluating it.

So once again, I congratulate Mr de Courcy Ling.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, I would like to begin by thanking the rapporteurs, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr de Courcy Ling, Mr Battersby, Mrs Pery and Mr Provan, for their excellent reports, which support the Commission proposals connected with the signing of fishing agreements between the Community and third countries. Referring specifically to Mr Battersby's comment about the need, at long last, to determine a common fishing policy, I would repeat that the Commission fully shares Parliament's concern about this point, and that we are doing all that we can to encourage the finalization of decisions. As I announced yesterday, the next Fisheries Council will meet on 18 May: we may hope that progress will be made and the final target achieved on that occasion or that the finishing touches will be put to a common fisheries policy during the present six-month term under the Belgian Presidency.

Turning now to the comments made concerning each agreement individually, this is what I have to say:

As regards the agreement with Senegal, the experience gained from the fisheries agreement between the European Economic Community and Senegal signed on 15 January 1979 guided us in negotiating a more flexible form for the more important activities, those of the transatlantic trawlers, while the working conditions for the other categories of vessels — trawlers without refrigeration, tunny-fishing vessels without refrigeration and transatlantic tunny-fishing vessels — have remained almost the same.

To be specific, Senegal has recognized that fishing activities in her waters all the year round are possible only for a part of the fleet, which could even now select a period of four months within the peak period that starts in April and ends in September for deep-sea trawling. Whereas previously we had been allowed to fish with refrigerator trawlers of a total capacity of up to 12 300 tonnes, the new agreement has changed this figure to 5 000 tonnes for year-round fishing and to 9 000 tonnes for the peak period of April-September.

On the face of it, the quantity now seems to be smaller than 12 300 tonnes. In fact, however, this is not the case, because it was not previously possible to utilize our potential to the full and the amounts actually obtained were considerably below 12 300 tonnes. Under the new agreement, which, as I have said, is more elastic, we hope to use the potential offered to the full, and this all the more so now that from 1 January last year, Greek fishing-vessels have joined the Community fleet. The movements of the fleet, which is based at Dakar, and the modification of the equipment of some vessels, necessitated a slight adaptation of the tonnage in the case of the small tunny-fishing vessels and the trawlers. To give the owners greater security of employment, we preferred to negotiate the

terms for two years in spite of the fact that the framework agreement envisaged a yearly period.

I would also like to mention two new factors: the participation of the Community in the costs of a scientific programme of fishing, to the extent of 100 million Senegalese Francs, and the contractual liability of the owners for the cost of an observer on each vessel, to ensure adherence to the terms of the agreement. Apart from this participation in the programme of fisheries research, the burden on the Community's budget remained unchanged.

We fully agree with Mr de Courcy Ling's comment that our approach to the subject should be a regional one, since we shall have to face the possibility of negotiating fishery agreements with many African countries. As the rapporteur will know, there are enormous difficulties to be faced and we are not very hopeful that all these difficulties can be overcome in the immediate future, though we shall continue to strive towards this. On the other hand, it is not out of the question that regional agreements may be negotiated with the countries of the Gulf of Guinea for the fishing of tunny, or even with the countries of the River Mono Union, comprising Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea (Conakry).

I now turn to the Faeroe Isles agreements.

The motion for a resolution on the Faeroe Isles calls upon the Commission to ensure that Community fishermen will be able to benefit fully from the quotas agreed for them in the waters of the Faeroe Isles. In this connection, I can assure this House that during the course of our deliberations with the Faeroe Isles to establish the agreement, the Commission was well aware of the problem of restrictions imposed in Faeroese waters on Community fishing-vessels, and in 1981 we achieved substantial improvements over earlier years with regard to these zonal restrictions. As for the size of the quotas, which was the subject of negotiation for 1982 as also in 1981, these were reduced in relation to previous years because the Community's vessels had not been able to make full use of the quotas negotiated in 1979 and 1980.

The motion for a resolution also calls upon the Commission to negotiate a more advantageous balance between the quotas granted by the Community to the Faeroe Isles and those reciprocally granted by the Faeroes to the Community. On this point, I would emphasize the fact that the framework agreement of 1979 recognizes the special dependence of the Faeroe Isles upon the fishing industry and that this too is a matter that must be borne in mind when applying the agreement. In recognition of this fact, throughout the years during which the agreement obtained, the Commission negotiated quotas such that what was conceded by the Community to the Faeroe Isles was slightly higher than the reciprocal concessions of the latter to the Community's fishing fleets. In recent years, this

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advantage in favour of the Faeroes has amounted to about 15%, and I do not think that this is excessive if we take into account the degree to which these islands and their population are dependent on the fishing industry.

I agree with the rapporteur that it is important for the Community's fishermen not to be impeded from fishing in the waters of third countries during the early months of the year. The comment in paragraph 5 is very interesting, even though I think this would not be easy to achieve in the event that the failure to reach agreement before the end of the year was not due to lack of time but to some substantial disagreement between the Community and the third country. In the Community's case, I recognize that we have some procedural difficulties in passing the requisite regulations within a very short period of time, as is often necessary. However, the Commission intends to submit a proposal to the Council of Ministers, which will be debated in Parliament, in order to make possible the rapid ratification of agreements in general, but in particular agreements that relate to restricted periods of time, where time must not be wasted so that fishing can begin straight away.

I now turn more specifically, while still on the subject of the Faeroe Isles, to salmon-fishing, mentioned by Mr Provan in his very detailed report and speech. With this agreement the autonomous government of the Faeroes undertook the obligation to restrict salmon-fishing to the fishing-zone of the Faeroe Isles, and salmon-fishing by Faeroese vessels on the high seas to levels significantly lower than in the season of 1980-81, when catches did indeed attain the levels mentioned by Mr Provan. We have now achieved a considerable reduction in these figures, and we feel this will help considerably to preserve salmon stocks coming from the rivers of the Community.

As Mr Provan has also pointed out, the proposed agreement approves in principle the arrangements made for the early stages — that is the restriction of salmon-fishing for the period 1981-82 — but calls upon the Commission to renegotiate for the following year.

I would like to assure you that the Commission has done the best it can in this connection, and that even the agreement concluded, which covers the two years 1981-82 and 1982-83, was arrived at with very great difficulty. I think that under the present conditions it would not be possible to achieve any better result. As for the years after 1983, it is almost certain that the North Atlantic Salmon Convention will have come into force. The parties to this recently-signed agreement, including, of course, the Community and Denmark on behalf of the Faeroe Isles, have undertaken to work together within the framework of the organization recommended by the Convention. Consequently, I am convinced that this organization will come to some agreement concerning salmon quotas in

Faeroese waters, establishing levels that will indeed protect this source of wealth for the fishing industry and safeguard the interests of the countries in whose rivers the salmon are spawned.

As for the agreement with Guiana, in common with the Agricultural Committee I, too, think that we should not expose the supplies of processing industries to any risk by reducing too rapidly the number of licences for vessels to unload the whole of their catch in French Guiana. To ensure that these supplies will be maintained, each vessel whose licence is withdrawn will have to be replaced by a Community vessel.

To begin with, the French authorities had announced that during the course of the year the Community fleet was to be enlarged by 5 to 7 vessels. However, the most recent information available indicates that between now and the end of the year, 7 vessels will commence fishing operations — two by the end of April, two in June and three in December. For this reason, I decided to request the Commission to modify the previous proposal to allow for three further three-month licences in addition to the 76 already envisaged. These licences will be renewed so long as no new French vessels are put into service. However, if new French ships do come into services, then, Mrs Pery, the licences will not be renewed. We are certain that this measure will ensure that the local processing industry continues to be supplied by at least 81 ships all the year round. I feel that this amendment fulfills Parliament's expectations, as Mrs Pery described them, and that it safeguards both the interests of the processing industries and those of Community fishermen.

As for the 10% reduction in quotas and numbers of licences for vessels from Trinidad and Tobago, instead of the 30% envisaged in the Commission's proposal, I can say that I agree with the Agricultural Committee and accept this reduction. Nevertheless, I would point out that our services are in contact with the authorities of that country, with whom they expect to collaborate sincerely and ensure that Community regulations are adhered to. Should this not prove to be the case, then the Commission's proposal for the fishing regime during 1983 will, and should, certainly be stricter.

Finally, as regards the suspension of quotas and licences for Barbados and Guiana, which Mrs Pery also mentioned, I regret that I cannot agree with the Agricultural Committee. Specifically, we conclude that these countries are not interested in fishing off French Guiana, since they applied for no licences in 1981 and have expressed no intention of applying for any in 1982. For this reason, I feel that the Commission's proposal is logical and serves as a reminder to third countries that the fishing-rights granted them by the Community are not automatic, but are granted only to countries which express interest in this connection. In any case, I would remind you that the Commission has not erased the names of those countries from its pro-

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posal, but refers to them with *pro memoria*, and is quite prepared to review its position during the year if and when proper applications for fishing licences are submitted.

In connection with Spain, I should like to say the following:

In common with the Agricultural Committee, the Commission too has attentively followed developments in the registration of Spanish fishing-vessels under the flags of certain Member States, with the result that these vessels are considered Community vessels and can fish under the same conditions as the latter. However, the Commission must emphasize that Member States themselves are responsible for the registration of fishing vessels and that this matter is regulated by their legislation. Bearing in mind the effects of these registrations on the adaptation of the Community's fishing-fleet to existing fishery resources, I have asked the Commission's fishery services to examine the possibility of taking some action at Community level. As soon as this has been investigated and full information is available, if action of this kind is deemed necessary, the Commission will not fail to face up to the matter and do what must be done.

As for the negotiations concerning Spain's entry into the Community, particularly in connection with fisheries, I must remind Parliament that progress in this respect is undoubtedly influenced by our own discussions and by the establishment of a common fisheries policy. This is a major topic in the negotiations, and when the appropriate moment comes I will not fail to keep Parliament informed of developments in this area.

As for Mrs Pery's proposal for a study of the matters she mentioned concerning relations between Spain and the Community over the fisheries issue, I must say that many of these points have been taken into account in the Commission's proposals for negotiations concerning fishing, and I must add that we shall of course complete this study so as really to integrate it and cover the areas that Mrs Pery referred to.

More specifically, for this year's agreement, which forms a part of the framework agreement as a whole, I would remind you that the framework agreement envisages a progressive reduction in the licences granted to Spain for fishing in the Community. This principle has been applied in spite of the fact that Spain has doubts about it: we persisted, and I must say there came a point when collaborative relations in the domain of fishing were broken off, so that we had great difficulty in imposing the solution envisaged by the framework agreement — that is the annual reduction of the MERLU quota. However, as I have said, this difference of opinion did not prevent the completion of the yearly deliberations, as is in any case shown by the proposal now submitted for approval of the agreement.

That is what I wanted to tell you, as quickly as I could, about the present group of fishing agreements between the Community and third countries. I would again like to thank the rapporteurs, and to thank Parliament for approving the Commission's proposals.

President. — The debate is closed.¹

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President. — I call Mr Newton Dunn.

Mr Newton Dunn. — Mr President, a very small point on yesterday's minutes if it is an appropriate moment to raise it. The voting lists were not circulated at the beginning of the morning. I went and got a copy, and on looking through the Falkland Islands series of votes, Mr Fanton, who resigned last month amidst great celebrations or commiserations, is actually recorded as having voted throughout the Falkland Islands debate yesterday. Presumably somebody has got his card. Would it not be sensible if the minutes were corrected?

President. — I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — On a point of order, might I indicate to the House that today is St George's Day and nobody has wished the English a happy birthday? Yet here we have been doing our duty, outnumbering all other nationalities by over 2 to 1.

(Laughter)

6. Adjournment of the session

President. — I declare adjourned the session of the European Parliament.²

(The sitting closed at 1.30 p.m.)

¹ For the votes, see the Annex.

² For motions for resolutions entered in the register (Rule 49), membership of committees, time-limit for tabling amendments, forwarding of resolutions adopted during the sitting, and dates for the next part-session, see the Minutes.

ANNEX

Votes

This Annex indicates rapporteurs' opinions on amendments and reproduces the text of explanations of vote. For further details of the voting, the reader is referred to the Minutes.

Scrivener report (Doc. 1-916/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

- *in favour* of Amendments Nos 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 39, 44 and 45, and
- *against* Amendments Nos 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42 and 43.

Explanations of vote

Mrs Squarcialupi. — (IT) Madam President, we shall vote in favour of this proposal for a directive, even though we believe it is inadequate to cope effectively with the problem of health risks related to asbestos. It is true, however, that in some countries where there is no legislation in this field, the directive might be of some use. This is the reason for our favourable vote.

Unfortunately, in times of economic crisis it is thought 'ideological' to care about the health of the workers, but among the demands of the working class the claim to health protection is becoming ever more insistent, and people refuse to be blackmailed into choosing between health and jobs.

If it is indeed ideological to think of banning substances which are certainly harmful and cancer-producing, we choose to profess this ideology, and we shall continue to fight and hope for the replacement of harmful substances with ones that are compatible with health and work.

Mrs Hammerich. — (DA) The directive contains norms and rules less far-reaching than the Danish norms and rules governing asbestos; but since this is a minimum directive, more stringent Danish rules can be accepted.

All the same, the People's Movement against the EEC can support neither the Commission proposal nor the report, even if the latter includes certain improvements on the Commission report.

The reasons may be set out as follows:

First, there is cause for concern that even minimum directives can cut back Danish legislation as a result of economic pressures for favourable conditions of competition, including labour costs, economies and security of employment.

Secondly, we continue to believe that labour market conditions, including the working environment, are quite separate national concerns and that it is the efforts of the workforce at national level that create the necessary improvements.

Thirdly, implementation of this directive will inevitably conflict with the implementation of another asbestos directive, which is designed to remove technical obstacles to trade.

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Schleicher report (Doc. 1-903/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

- *in favour* of Amendments Nos 8, 9, 11, 12 and 17, and
- *against* Amendments Nos 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Explanations of vote

Mr Pantazis. — (GR) Madam President, since the amendments have been rejected I withdraw the explanation of vote.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Madam President, the Communist Party of Greece is particularly sensitive to matters concerning the protection of workers and consumers.

There is some asbestos production in Greece, and we think it necessary to revise and update the legislation in order to eliminate health risks. In spite of this, and in contrast to our position on the Scrivener report, we shall not participate in the voting on the Schleicher report. This is because we were sorry to see, during yesterday's debate, that behind several proposals for the safeguarding of consumers or workers, one can discern the plans of certain multinationals to close down their competitors by striking at the national asbestos production in our country. We think that in the name of interest on behalf of the consumers or the workers, certain parties could in fact throw many workers on the dole. Our country must urgently enact strict measures for avoiding the negative consequences of using or processing asbestos, must live up to international standards in this respect, but we have no need of help from certain uninvited advisers.

Mrs Hammerich. — (DA) The Commission proposal seeks to deal at one and the same time with free trade and occupational health and, as expected, occupa-

Hammerich

tional health takes second place to industrial earnings. This should surprise no one who knows anything about the Treaty of Rome in its letter and spirit, since its precise purpose is to protect freedom of movement of goods and capital, not human beings. It is for this reason that the majority of Danish workers have always been against EEC intervention in the sphere of employment, especially the working environment.

In this connection, I should like to quote a few words from the Danish Trades Union Congress: 'If the directive is adopted, it will mean considerable restrictions on Danish regulations . . . and Svend Auken (former employment minister) is prepared to go to any lengths to see that the directive is not adopted in its present form'.

Consequently, we can adopt neither the Commission proposal nor the report.

Mr Petersen. — (DA) We have two directives here: one is the subject of the Scrivener report, which is supposed to deal purely with the working environment — a safeguards directive — while the other, which is dealt with in the Schleicher report, is a trade-barriers directive bearing on the working environment.

In principle, the Danish Social Democrats can subscribe to this first directive and hence, too, to the Scrivener report. Here we are dealing with minimum harmonization, which means on the one hand an improvement in the working environment in certain parts of the EEC and at the same time sets no limits of what a Member State may do to develop its working environment.

We have nonetheless certain objections which we have set out in a number of amendments. These are concerned mainly with replacing the proposal's provisions on medical supervision with actual preventive care.

The directive on asbestos, the trade-barriers directive dealt with in the Schleicher report, I cannot accept. If the report were to go through, it would mean that we in Denmark would have to cut back on our asbestos regulations. This we cannot agree to.

We do not wish to remove obstacles to trade where they affect the working environment in a Member State. There must be limits to the free exchange of goods, and these are reached when we come to public safety and health in a Member State.

I have therefore submitted a number of amendments to the Schleicher report which call for a general ban on the use of asbestos and at the same time allow for possible derogations — for a limited period — by the Member State.

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Muntingh report (Doc. 1-636/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *against* Amendments Nos 2 and 3.

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Mertens report (Doc. 1-1073/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *against* Amendment No 1.

Explanation of vote

Mr Moreland. — Madam President, in about two months' time the House will be getting a report from the Committee on Energy and Research on the Davignon proposals on coal, for which I am the rapporteur. Those proposals cover to some extent the question of acid rain, and I should like to express my appreciation to Mr Mertens for covering this subject and therefore relieving me of some work.

I would, however, like to express one reservation even though I shall be voting for this motion. That is that while I entirely endorse what he says in his explanatory statement, in the motion itself I think it is important not to overemphasize the role of sulphur dioxide. As he himself says in his explanatory statement, nitrogen oxides and hydrogen chlorides are also major contributors. Strictly speaking, I think his resolution is correct, but it may give the wrong impression and may be unfair to many of the coal-mining and coal-using areas of this Community. On those grounds I would like to express that very minor reservation, but in general to support all that he has said.

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Scrivener report (Doc. 1-976/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *against* Amendments Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

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Provan report (Doc. 1-1074/81): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *in favour* of Amendments Nos 1, 2 and 3.

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Seal report (Doc. 1-41/82): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *in favour* of Amendment No 1.

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Tolman report (Doc. 1-95/82): adopted

The rapporteur spoke

— *in favour* of Amendments Nos 33 and 34, and

— *against* Amendments Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32.

Explanations of vote

Mr Hutton. — Mr President, I will be brief. I have to admit that I do not actually know what makes a hen happy, and from what I have heard this morning, I do not think anybody else here does; but certainly I know that hens came from the jungle originally, and I have never seen a happy hen in a north European rainstorm.

Mr President, 50 years ago, consumers were campaigning against free-range eggs because they were a health hazard, so poultry producers went out of their way to find other ways of producing eggs, and I must say, I am getting rather tired of being bombarded by people who are awfully keen to see poultry producers putting their money where somebody else's mouth is.

(Applause)

I am very interested to see those people who are in favour of dearer eggs but are not prepared to stand up and say so openly.

We need more research. All the objective tests that have been done on subjects like social harassment, mortality, hygiene, disease and environment all show — and also, I might add, the working conditions of poultrymen show — the present system to be better than any known alternative.

The Commission has to get on with considered research with the backing of this House, and that is why I am supporting the Tolman proposals.

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling. — (DE) Mr President, I shall vote against this resolution in anger and disgust and also with the passion that mankind should feel for suffering animals. The scientific studies I have read with great care mostly say — that is, when they have not been paid for by groups with a very definite interest — that what we are doing here is wrong. On no account,

therefore, will I give my vote to an arrangement of this kind, which is incompatible with the interests of the environment, health and the consumer.

Mrs Muntingh. — (NL) Mr President, we must call a spade a spade. Once again it is clear, hard cash has the edge on flesh and blood and far more subtle matters such as the ethics and morality that find expression in the love of animals and human compassion.

The cash in man's pockets and the metal used to oppress animals have triumphed under Mr Tolman's leadership. But nature and animal lovers do not mind that so much: we are used to it.

My motives for voting against this resolution are not so much those of a nature lover as those of a politician. Last time this Parliament instructed Mr Tolman to exercise a certain degree of moderation. Mr Tolman has not done this. Through Mr Tolman's doing, we now have a different resolution before us. As a token protest, Mr President, I shall therefore be voting against this resolution.

Mr Skovmand. — (DA) Mr Tolman's second report is a little less improper than his first. At least, it makes no inroads on the Commission proposal. Mr Tolman now also agrees that battery hens should have at least 500 cm² space.

500 cm² is very little — less than a sheet of writing paper, and it is less than the minimum in Denmark of 600 cm², which is little enough as it is.

When poultry batteries were legalized in Denmark, they were described as cruelty to animals, but this protest was rejected on the grounds of EEC regulations. Denmark could not say no to egg imports from other EEC countries. Consequently, for the sake of competition, farmers had to be given better conditions and poultry, worse conditions.

And now it looks as if our poultry is to suffer once more because of our being in the EEC, for if this is adopted, Danish batteries will naturally be replaced by smaller ones. Worse still, it is not even necessary. EEC countries are not forced to import from abroad eggs that are produced under unacceptable conditions.

Therefore we can, with a clear conscience, demand that poultry be allowed sufficient space. However, neither the Commission nor Mr Tolman are agreeable to this. This being so, we shall vote against.

D'Ormesson report (Doc. 1-82/82): adopted

de Courcy Ling report (Doc. 1-96/82): adopted

Battersby report (Doc. 1-81/82): adopted

Pery report (Doc. 1-91/82): adopted

Provan report (Doc. 1-80/82): adopted

Explanation of vote

Mr Skovmand. — (DA) The Faeroes are a little community which has been severely hit with the introduction of the 200-nautical-mile zone in the 1970s. This has meant that the fishing industry has had to reorganize itself completely, so that now over half of it is carried on around the Faeroe Islands.

One of the places where the Faeroese fisheries have most declined is that part of the North Sea which is

controlled by the European Community. But one finds little understanding for that in Mr Battersby's report: he wants to get more from the Faeroes fishermen and to give them less than even the Commission had in mind.

We of the People's Movement against the EEC must oppose this way of thinking. We would further point out that the Faeroes have a surplus from fishing only in Greenland waters; and when this is lost in 1984, the European Community will be obliged to make more fish available to the Faeroe Islands.

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