

Annex

Official Journal of the European Communities

No 222

October 1977

English edition

Debates of the European Parliament

1977-1978 Session

Report of Proceedings
from 24 to 26 October 1977

European Centre, Luxembourg

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NOTE TO READER

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

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

Resolutions adopted at sittings of 24 to 26 October 1977 appear in the Official Journal of the European Communities C 280 of 21. 11. 1977.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR SPENALE

President

(The sitting was opened at 5.15 p.m.)

President. — The sitting is open.

1. *Resumption of the session*

President. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on 14 October 1977.

2. *Apologies*

President. — Apologies for absence have been received from Mr Scelba and Mr Vernaschi, who regret their inability to attend this part-session.

3. *Designation of Members of the European Parliament and verification of credentials*

President. — The First and Second Chambers of the States-General of the Netherlands have informed me of the appointment on 18 October of Mr Albers, Mr Baas, Mr Berkhouwer, Mr Broeks, Mr Dankert, Mr Geurtsen, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mr Lamberts and Mr Patijn as Members of the European Parliament.

Mr Schuijt, Mr Van der Mei, Mr Notenboom, Mr De Koning and Mr Van der Gun shall remain in office until a date to be decided later.

Pursuant to Rule 3 (1) of the Rules of Procedure, the Bureau have made sure that these appointments comply with the provisions of the Treaties.

It therefore asks the House to ratify these appointments.

Are there any objections?

These appointments are ratified.

I congratulate colleagues whose appointments have been renewed and welcome the new Members.

4. *Appointment of the members of the Court of Auditors*

President. — Following the deliberations of the European Parliament during its part-session from 10 to 14 October, the Council has informed me that at its meeting of 17 and 18 October 1977 it appointed the Members of the Court of Auditors.

The following have been appointed: Mr Angoi, Mr Gaudy, Mr Johansen, Mr Leicht, Mr Lelong, Mr Mart, Mr Middelhoek, Mr Murphy and Sir Norman C. Price.

5. *Documents submitted*

President. — Since the session was adjourned, I have received the following documents:

(a) from the Council requests for an opinion on:

- the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a directive amending Directive 75/106/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the making-up by volume of certain pre-packaged liquids (Doc. 335/77)

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

- the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 706/76 on the arrangements applicable to agricultural products and certain goods resulting from the processing of agricultural products originating in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States or in the overseas countries and territories (Doc. 337/77).

This document has been referred to the Committee on Development and Cooperation as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Agriculture for its opinion;

- the proposal for the transfer of appropriations between chapters in Section II — Council — Annex III — ECSC Auditor of general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1977 (Doc. 342/77).

This document has been referred to the Committee on Budgets;

(b) from the committees, the following reports:

- report by Mr Hamilton on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, on petition No 13/76 by Mr Jean Feidt and fifteen other members of the Staff Committee of the European Parliament on enquiries into the political affiliations of Commission officials (Doc. 336/77);
- report by Mr Cointat on behalf of the Committee on Budgets on Sections II and IV of the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1978 (Council and Court of Justice) and possibly on Section V (Court of Auditors) (Doc. 338/77);
- report by Mr Cointat on behalf of the Committee on Budgets on Section V (Court of Auditors) of the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1978. (Doc. 339/77); (interim report);
- report by Mr Cointat on behalf of the Committee on Budgets on amendments to the estimates of revenue and expenditure of the European Parliament for the financial year 1978 (Section I of the draft general budget of the European Communities) (Doc. 340/77);
- report by Mr Shaw on behalf of the Committee on Budgets on the draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1978 (Doc. 270/77) — (Doc. 341/77);
- report by Mr Muller on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations, on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 233/77) on the harmonization of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in respect of standard exchange of goods exported for repair (Doc. 343/77);

6. *Authorization of Reports*

President. — The Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport, at its own request and pursuant to Rule 38 (3) of the Rules of Procedure, has been asked for its opinion on the prospects for the enlargement of the Community, which has been referred to the Political Affairs Committee as the Committee responsible and to the Committee on Agriculture for its opinion.

President

Pursuant to Rule 38 (1) of the Rules of procedure, I have also authorized the Committee on Energy and Research to draw up a report on the need for joint action on the use of wave, tidal and wind power for the production of electricity.

7. Petitions

President. — At the request of the Committee on the rules of Procedure and Petitions, and to Rule 48 (4) of the Rules of Procedure, Petitions Nos 5/76, 16/76, 19/76, 4/77 and 5/77 have been filed without further action and Petition Nos 15/76 and 17/76 have been forwarded to the Commission.

8. Order of business

President. — At the end of the sitting of 14 October 1977, Parliament adopted the following order of business for this part-session :

Monday, 24 October 1977, 5 p.m. — 10 p.m.

- submission and discussion of the Cointat Report on the amendments to the estimates of Parliament for 1978, the Cointat report on Sections II and IV of the draft general budget for 1978, the Cointat interim report on Section V of the draft general budget for 1978 and the Shaw report on the draft general report of the Communities for 1978.

- debate on the draft general budget for 1978.

Tuesday, 25 October 1977, 10 a.m. — 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. — 6 p.m.

- continuation of budget debate.

Wednesday, 26 October 1977, at 10 a.m.

- presentation and discussions of supplementary report from the Committee on Budgets followed by voting on :
 - Sections I, II, IV and V of the draft general budget of the Communities for 1978 ;
 - draft amendments concerning appropriations in the 'Commission' section of the draft budget ;
 - proposed modifications concerning appropriations in the 'Commission' section of the draft budget ;
 - the motions for resolutions contained in the Shaw and Cointat reports.

9. Organization of budget debate

President. — Pursuant to Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, speaking time for the budget debate has been allocated as follows :

Total duration of the debate : 13 hours

- Mr Cointat, rapporteur : 20 minutes
- Mr Shaw, general rapporteur : 90 minutes
- Draftsmen of opinions : 80 minutes in all, i.e. 10 minutes each
- Commission and Council : 80 minutes

Total : 270 minutes

- Socialist Group : 140 minutes
- Christian-Democratic Group : 120 minutes
- Liberal and Democratic Group : 65 minutes
- Group of European Progressive Democrats : 55 minutes
- European Conservative Group : 55 minutes
- Communist and Allies Group : 55 minutes
- Non-attached Members : 20 minutes

Total : 510 minutes

The speaking time allocated will also have to be used for the presentation of the main and supplementary reports as well as for introducing draft amendments and proposed modifications. During the vote, only the rapporteur will be able to speak in order to state briefly the opinion of the Committee on Budgets.

This will be the first time that Parliament has applied the budgetary procedure provided for in the Treaty of July 1975 concerning the budgetary powers of Parliament and the setting up of a European Court of Auditors.

Since I have already applied a procedure corresponding to the new standards I shall not go into this further I shall simply remind the house of certain essential points :

The time-limit for tabling draft amendments, proposed modifications and proposals for rejection of the budget as a whole has been set at 11 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday 25 October, to enable the Committee on Budgets to examine these proposals at its meeting to be held the same day at 6 p.m. The Committee on Budgets will report on the proposals at the beginning of the sitting on Wednesday, 26 October before the vote on the budget as a whole.

I would urge all Members of the House to observe the speaking time allocated and ask the political groups to put forward as early as possible the names of those who will speak in the debate and on which part of the budget they would like to speak. Draftsmen of opinions will, in principle, have the opportunity to speak at the beginning of the debate on the appropriations relating to that part of the budget on which they have delivered their opinions.

10. General Budget of the European Communities for 1978 (debate)

President. — The next item is the debate on the draft general Budget of the European Communities for the 1978 financial year on the basis of the following reports drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Budgets :

- Report by Mr Michel Cointat on amendments to the estimates of revenue and expenditure of the European Parliament for the financial year 1978 (Section I of the draft general budget of the European Communities). (Doc. 340/77).

President

- Report by Mr Michel Cointat on Sections II (Council) and IV (Court of Justice) of the draft general budget for the financial year 1978 (Doc. 338/77).
- Interim Report by Mr Michel Cointat on Section V (Court of Auditors) of the draft general budget for the financial year 1978 (Doc. 339/77).
- Report by Mr Shaw on the draft general budget for the financial year 1978 (Doc. 270/77) (Doc. 341/77).

I call Mr Cointat.

Mr Cointat, rapporteur. — (F) Mr President, for several weeks, Parliament and its Committee on Budgets have now been considering the various documents for the financial year 1978, including the estimates of revenue and expenditure of Parliament. We have already discussed Parliament's budget for 1978 and I shall not dwell on it here. I only want to note that the Committee on Budgets proposes that the budget be adopted with a figure of 99 812 612 EUA for expenditure. This represents an increase in expenditure of some 4 %, not counting appropriations for the elections and supplementary appropriations for the construction of new premises ; with the appropriations for direct elections, the increase will be around 20 %.

The budget for 1978, in its present form, is clearly a provisional one, for if direct elections do take place early in 1978 as planned, a supplementary budget will be needed. The Committee on Budgets has therefore been very circumspect with its current proposals. You will see from the motion for a resolution that we also propose unfreezing a number of appropriations and posts, in accordance with the decision taken in June, including the release of 64 of the 83 posts created in the estimates. But all I really want to do here is to comment briefly on the amendments tabled by the Committee on Budgets and on the amendments the committee has rejected.

The first amendments are about staff, and although the Commission has agreed to most of what was put forward by the enlarged Bureau, it has made some changes, which it has notified to the President of the European Parliament by a letter dated today, pursuant to the internal Rules of Procedure. In particular, it had been intended to create a number of posts in Brussels to improve translation facilities for Members. It has been agreed that this will be reviewed, after the budgetary procedure, with the chairmen of the political groups and the Bureau. We also have an amendment concerning the secretariat of the Committee on Budgets, which we also submitted to the Bureau. We want to expand this secretariat, because it now has to perform extra duties involving the setting up of the Court of Auditors and control procedures.

Another amendment concerns the setting up of a data-processing coordination department, but here the committee has not retained all the posts originally proposed. It would prefer initially to see a fairly small

hard core of staff for this service before deciding on the correct size of this department at a later date.

A final item on staffing is that the Committee on Budgets has agreed to the proposal submitted by the chairmen of the political groups for converting temporary posts into established ones. In particular, it approves the creation of a post for a full-time nurse in the European Parliament's day nursery, which deserves better premises and working conditions.

As regards expenditure relating to persons working with the institution, the Committee on Budgets will also propose a further 55 000 EUA for the recruitment of teams of auxiliary staff, in particular duplicator operators, during part-sessions in Strasbourg and Luxembourg, to take account of the growth in Parliament's activities.

A number of other amendments concerning buildings, equipment and administrative expenditure will also be tabled ; for example in view of the need to increase the Schuman grants by adapting expenditure for 1978 in the light of the decision taken for the 1977 financial year ; an amendment will be tabled by the Socialist Group calling for 150 000 EUA for special subsidies ; this amendment is also duplicated in the budget of the Commission.

There is an amendment calling for an increase of 310 545 EUA in appropriations for the Parliament's Information Service, in particular to ensure that groups of visitors are as fully informed as possible. At the same time we have cancelled some 1 million EUA of our own budget for appropriations to cover the activities of the Committee of Control and the ECSC Audit Officer, because these are no longer necessary since the setting up of the Court of Auditors. These appropriations will be entered in the budget of the Court of Auditors from now on.

There are two further items which the Committee on Budgets considers important. Firstly, the entering of an appropriation of 9 680 000 EUA for information and publicity to create public awareness of direct elections to the European Parliament. Secondly, an appropriation of 5 000 000 EUA to improve and extend office accommodation in Strasbourg, Luxembourg and Brussels to provide suitable facilities for the new Members who will take their seats after direct elections. I owe a few words of explanation on this point. No one is at present in a position to say by what amount appropriations must be increased to take account of Parliament's switch from 198 to 410 Members. That is why we have confined ourselves to an indicative estimate and proposed increasing appropriations by 5 million EUA on the basis that 4 800 000 EUA have already been entered. The only reason for this amendment is to enable the Secretary-General and Parliament's services to make the necessary changes in good time when a definite date has been given for direct elections.

Cointat

These are, Mr President, briefly the amendments to the draft estimates. I am sorry my speech was rather dry, but manipulating figures is a serious business.

Mr Eyskens, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, if I make my speech now at this somewhat inconvenient moment, it is because I have to leave this House at 6 o'clock in order to be present at a Council meeting in Brussels at 7 o'clock to examine the amendments made by the Belgian Parliament to the Belgian budget.

I ask your forgiveness, but I shall be back at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. I have had the opportunity to observe some of the work of Parliament's Committee on Budgets in Brussels. I should like to pay a tribute to the seriousness and the thoroughness with which the proposed modifications and amendments were prepared and formulated. I should also like to pay tribute to the rapporteur, and to Mr Cointat whose report we have just heard, and to Mr Shaw who will explain his report presently and finally, last but not least, Mr Lange, chairman of the Committee on Budgets.

I note that the proposed modifications and amendments presented by the Committee on Budgets aim more or less to restore the original Commission proposals in the preliminary draft budget.

This means high percentage increases and I think it useful to emphasize this at the beginning with a view to a continuation of the budget debate tomorrow. By looking simply at the non-compulsory expenditure, that is expenditure over which Parliament has control, I find that the percentage increase in comparison with 1977 is 36.3 % for commitment appropriations and 59.9 % for payment appropriations. This will undoubtedly create a problem for the Council, all the more so because the Council did its bit in the written procedures for payment appropriations, which took place a few weeks ago, by bringing the percentage increase to 31.5 %. Your amendment makes this a rise of 59.9 %, that is double, while the Council was prepared for an increase of 31 %.

I would also like to point out that the percentage increases which result from your draft amendments relate chiefly to increases in the Social Fund. Tomorrow we shall undoubtedly have an exchange of views on the import of this political choice.

I should also like to emphasize that the Council has done its best to take account of some of the wishes already expressed here by adding 8 million EUA to the original commitment appropriations and to 2.5 million EUA to the original payment appropriation for social policy and, after the written procedure, increasing the appropriations for industrial policy by 15 million.

These are just some introductory remarks. I should just like to draw your attention to the fact that I shall

be discussing the consultation procedure with President Colombo tomorrow. I hope that this procedure, dealing with the nine or ten points you are familiar with, can take place in early November, if possible on 7 November, and I hope that it will then be possible to reach an agreement between the Council and your parliamentary delegation on the outstanding problems. Finally, I can tell you that the Council of Ministers will again meet on 22 November to decide what attitude to take to the amendments and proposed modifications which you will discuss and adopt here today and tomorrow. These, Mr President, were the remarks I wanted to make at the outset, and I apologize once again for the fact that I must leave this meeting in half an hour's time.

President. — Thank you, Mr Eyskens, for the close attention paid by your Institution to the work of our Committee on Budgets and for its readiness to begin the concertation procedure.

Mr Cointat, do you wish to speak again ?

Mr Cointat. — (F) Mr President, I have dealt very briefly with Parliament's estimates but I should like to say a few words about the Council, the Economic and Social Committee, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors.

I hope you will not object.

President. — I call Mr Cointat.

Mr Cointat. — (F) Mr President, I shall take the Council of Ministers first. The Council has submitted a draft budget for 80 million EUA, an increase of 11.7 %. In the Committee on Budgets we debated a number of technical points which I think hardly need to be repeated here. The committee decided unanimously to propose that the Council's draft budget should be accepted *without amendment*.

The appropriations for the Economic and Social Committee incorporated in the Council's budget amount to 15.6m EUA. The Committee on Budgets has four amendments here. The first concerns the creation of four posts to strengthen the staff of the Economic and Social Committee, the level of activity of which is increasing, particularly since it now has the right of initiative, following the decision of the Conference of Heads of State or Government.

The second amendment concerns career prospects. With similar amendments being proposed in all the other institutions, there is no reason why the Economic and Social Committee should be left behind. The third amendment concerns equipment, and in particular the replacement of very obsolete offset printing machinery. The amount involved is 29 000 EUA. The fourth and last amendment is for equipping premises in the Ravenstein building rented, following the departure of the NATO staff, as a staff canteen. These premises were rented too late for the

Cointat

appropriations to be entered in the draft budget. The Committee on Budgets therefore proposes adding 100 000 EUA, half of which will be frozen until detailed plans are submitted. Subject to these four amendments, the Committee on Budgets holds that the appropriations for the Economic and Social Committee should also be adopted.

I think we should all be grateful for the modest requests submitted by the Court of Justice and welcome the fact that it has the lowest rate of staff increases of all the Community institutions. Its revenue will nevertheless rise from 15.4m u.a. to 17.3m u.a. in 1978. The Committee on Budgets has no amendment concerning the Court of Justice and will propose that its appropriations should be approved.

I have had to produce an interim report on the Court of Auditors, because it has not yet submitted its budget. As the motion for a resolution says, the Committee on Budgets hopes that the Court of Auditors will be able to draw up provisional estimates of its revenue and expenditure as soon as possible, so that they can be considered under the ordinary budgetary procedure as provided for by the Treaty of 22 July 1975. So far the sum of 500m u.a. has been set aside by the Commission and the Council for equipping the premises of the Court of Auditors.

Subject to the points I have just made, the Committee on Budgets approves the adoption of the budgetary documents for the four institutions for the 1978 financial year.

President. — I call Mr Shaw.

Mr Shaw, general rapporteur. — Mr President, I understand the problem that faced Mr Eyskens and I fully accept the reason for his having to depart so early in our proceedings. I look forward to seeing him on his return tomorrow.

Mr President, this year that we are considering — namely, 1978, — is to be a year of great importance to Europe. It is the year when we should be holding direct elections, when for the first time a great enterprise in international unity and cooperation becomes linked directly with the people in our countries. Until now, our affairs have been controlled by representatives of national governments and of national parliaments; the European view is nowhere transmitted direct to the people of Europe, and equally the views of those people of Europe, and equally the views of those people are in no way reflected directly into our Common Market affairs. After direct elections, the voice and views of the people of all our countries will be heard directly through their elected representatives and, above all, they will be heard in the budgetary processes of our Community, in the raising and spending of our money, in the responsible discipline of creating the Community resources to finance the Community policies that are being developed.

To all this, we must add the decisions that are likely to be taken next year in moving towards the enlargement of our Community and the difficult and long-term economic consequences that will eventually flow from such decisions. This, in itself, will add to the need for us to give political shape and purpose to our work in establishing our budget.

Finally, I must emphasize that we are going through our budgetary processes against a background of uncertainty as to the structural reforms that we, as a Parliament, have worked so hard to agree with the Commission but on which we have, as yet, received no final news as to whether Council itself can agree to them: uncertainty as to the final adoption of a system of the Communities' own resources through VAT; uncertainty as to the adoption of a system of the European unit of account; uncertainty as to the final content of the new Financial Regulation. We, for our part, Mr President, have, I believe, worked hard to resolve these matters in a responsible and a relevant way. It is a matter of deep regret that the Council should have taken so long in arriving at decisions on these matters, knowing, as they must, how critical they are to the final structure of this budget.

On one matter, however, action has been taken, and how glad I am that it has! I wholeheartedly welcome the setting up of the new Court of Auditors. It will help Parliament in its control of expenditure work in a far more effective way than was possible for its predecessor.

Whilst on this subject, I noted with regret a recent pronouncement in the papers on the working of the Control Subcommittee. I have stated on many occasions that I did not believe that our subcommittee could really establish its true role until the Court of Auditors had been set up. Any ill-judged comment is, I believe, premature at this stage, because, in order to work properly we need to work in coordination with that Court.

The subcommittee has, nonetheless, already done a lot of valuable work. We have brought up to date the examination of the annual accounts, and all members that have participated know how necessary that was. Mr Aigner and Mr Bangeemann, in their discharge reports, have raised over a hundred points for comment concerning these accounts, and we have evolved a procedure for dealing with confidential issues. These are but some of the activities that we have already carried out, and I hope that, now that the Court of Auditors has been set up, we shall be able to work even more usefully than we have done in the past.

Mr President, we as a Parliament have worked hard in our consideration of the draft budget for 1978. We were greatly disappointed by the changes made by the Council to the Commission's preliminary draft. These changes seem to us largely to destroy the political

Shaw

pattern of developing Community projects that were envisaged in that preliminary draft. Instead, whilst agriculture expenditure was virtually untouched, the other proposals were seriously cut back.

As you know, I have laid great emphasis throughout my rapporteurship on my desire that all the committees and groups of this House should play a full and meaningful part in what is undoubtedly by far the greatest annual task that we have to undertake — the establishing of the budget. I am glad to say that never before have the committees played such an important role in our annual deliberations, and I am deeply grateful to them for all the work that they have put in. It does mean, however, that this year we have no fewer than 324 amendments to consider, more than double last year's figure, which was itself a record.

Before turning to a consideration of the work that we have been engaged upon, I should like to say a word about the economic background. When the preliminary draft and draft budgets were being prepared, there was a climate of severe economic stringency in the nine Member countries. It was natural that the climate should condition the attitude of the Council in its deliberations. In my view, it over-conditioned its attitude — understandable though that was. It meant that the Council gave priority to economic stringency at the expense of economic coherence.

However, that climate since those early days has now significantly changed and the same early arguments can no longer be put forward by the Council. The national governments themselves are now changing their policies with a view to encouraging growth in investment and with a view, perhaps above all, to reducing unemployment. The fact is that, in any case, the size of the Community budget is so small, being under 1 % of the Community's GDP, that it cannot have any effect on national economic policies. Yet, if we are to fulfil Community policies that have been hammered out during the year, then we must be prepared in the budget to meet their costs, remembering that a substantial part will not be additional cost to the Community overall, since it will be in support of policies better done by the Community than by individual States. Whilst never forgetting the need for proper discipline and control, I maintain, as forcefully as I can, that the policy of economy at all costs is not only wrong in the circumstances of this budget, but could, in fact, be seriously harmful to the long term interests of our Community.

Let me now turn to the details of the work that we have undertaken together during these last few months, and in so doing I welcome, as I have indeed already done, the President-in-Office and Mr Tugendhat. If I may start with the receipts, I have already mentioned the importance that I attach to the implementation of an own resources system of finance in this coming year. I will say nothing on this subject, save that your Committee on Budgets has put

forward a number of amendments on the receipts side to improve in particular the clarity of presentation. This is very important, to show from the outset that the funds coming in are Community funds, and not contributions from individual Member States. Furthermore, we have made it clear that the authorization to borrow and lend is given each year by the budgetary authority itself. I should perhaps add, Mr President, that, during the course of the discussions in the Committee on Budgets, our colleague Mr Spinelli put forward a number of interesting points, particularly with regard to receipts. He will, doubtless, refer to them later on in the debate, but in brief, as I understand him, he is seeking to establish the budget on a comparison of the overall possible financial revenue from Community, national and local resources with the needs and objectives of the Community at all levels. Likewise, he is seeking to relate the overall volume of annual Community revenue to an analysis of the total tax burden borne by the citizens of the Community. Clearly, these ideas could not be taken further in this budget, but any further work on them might well produce some very interesting information.

Could I now say a word about staff? It is often very easy for us to decry a need for further staff. I, as rapporteur, went into the various problems relating to staff matters in a comprehensive fashion. It is my opinion, and also that of the Committee on Budgets, that the Commission should have available to it sufficient staff to enable it to carry out effectively the tasks which Parliament and Council impose on it. Furthermore, we believe there should not be any automatic inflation in the number of posts. New posts should be created only after the budgetary authority has been satisfied that the case for each such post has been fully established. In the preliminary draft budget, the Commission explained very comprehensively why it needed 531 additional posts. It gave a very full and detailed explanation of its needs. However, the Council, in the draft budget, gave the Commission 100 new permanent posts and 26 new temporary posts. No real explanation was furnished by the Council for its rejection of the well-argued case put forward by the Commission. The issue, as I say, was gone into by the Committee on Budgets and we concluded that there was a genuine need for more executive and clerical staff, so that certain of the more routine tasks could be carried out without making inroads on the time of 'A' grade officials.

Briefly, what we have proposed is to cancel 20 language posts which have been granted by the Council. We did this because we became aware of the fact that there are already some 180 language posts unfilled in the Commission's establishment plan. In addition, we felt that there was a need for certain other posts totalling 115 in all. Thus, we are recommending a net increase of 95 posts above the seemingly rather arbitrary figure put forward by Council.