

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1975-1976

5 May 1975

DOCUMENT 68/75

ORAL QUESTION (0-1/75)

with debate, pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure,

by Mr JAHN, AIGNER, BURGBACHER, FRUH, KLEPSCH, MURSCH and SCHULZ

to the Commission of the European Communities

Subject : Composition of the Consumers' Consultative Committee

The Commission, in its answers to Written Questions Nos. 644/73 and 683/73 on the composition of the Consumers' Consultative Committee (1), was unable to provide any reasonable explanation of why only six seats on the Committee, which is supposed to consist solely of consumers' representatives, are in fact held by actual consumer associations, whilst three have been allocated to the European Community of Consumer Cooperatives and six to European Trade Union organizations. It should be pointed out that it is the actual consumer associations, first and foremost, which have a real and therefore informed

(1) OJ No C 49 of 27.4.1974, p. 18 and 24

interest in problems affecting the consumer. This was the view of the Commission itself in its answer to Written Question No. 468/73 on criteria for the composition of advisory committees².

In connection with this the Commission is asked to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission consider that, with its present membership, the Consumers' Consultative Committee is properly balanced and really represents consumer interests in the best possible way?
2. Why does the Commission not follow the principles it has itself set out in its answers to Written Questions Nos. 468/73 and 644/73, according to which the Consumers' Consultative Committee should consist solely of representatives of consumers, with the proviso however that groups having a real interest in the subject under consideration, i.e. organizations directly concerned with consumer affairs (trade unions, consumer cooperatives, the retail trade), should participate?
3. Are there not grounds for redistributing the 15 seats on the Consumers' Consultative Committee in accordance with these principles, so that 10 seats are allocated to the consumer associations and five to the trade unions, consumer cooperatives and the retail trade?
4. Does the Commission agree that the retail trade has the same legitimate interest as the consumer cooperatives in being represented as a voting member on the Consumers' Consultative Committee?
5. Is the Commission aware that the Consumers' Consultative Committee is not purely a specialized working party, like the 'Committee on fruit and vegetables', say, or the 'Committee on beef and veal', but is in a position to exercise a decisive influence on consumer policy, and does the Commission therefore not consider that the final composition of the Consumers' Consultative Committee requires a decision of the Council, or at least consultation of Parliament?

(2) OJ No C 58 of 18.5.1974, p. 2