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INTRODUCTION

by Alfredo de POI

It has now become a custom for notices on the activities of the Christian-Democratic Group in the European Parliament to be widely distributed, and we should not like this custom to be lost.

The Press Office of the Group secretariat now publishes a brief review of news and of the opinions both of individual members and of the Group as a whole, reflecting essential aspects of the life of the largest group in the European Parliament: the Christian Democrats.

This is one aspect of the reorganization of the technical services of the secretariat in order to improve and augment the work, already thorough and of an excellent standard, done in the past. Our aim and duty is to make the voice of the European Parliament heard outside the House in Strasbourg or in Luxembourg. At this delicate and difficult time of enlargement of the Community, consolidation of its institutions and strengthening of the rights and powers of the European Parliament, it is vital for the action, which is certainly neither easy nor facilitated by national and international circumstances, to be known of all those who in the Assembly are striving for a politically united Europe; the Christian-Democratic ideals must preserve their central position and keep up with the constant development of the awareness of the Community among its citizens.

A NEW FORMULA

by Giampaolo BETTAMIO

Each new phase of development entails, almost by definition, a period of adjustment and organization. Bureaucratic complications which we have all experienced at one time or another in our home countries are heightened at the level of European organizations by an 'international coefficient'

which often renders them endless. Our new Press Office almost suffered this fate but, thanks to the efforts of all concerned, it has now got off the ground with this issue of the CD-Europa-Bulletin.

We are still at an experimental stage, searching for the formula best suited to the needs of the Group which will enable all our parliamentarians to follow new developments.

Our Bulletin will be edited by a new Press and Information Office which will, we hope, become increasingly important and help to publicize the activities and views of the parliamentary Group.

The Office will assume the task of informing and documenting Members of our Group and play an active part in drawing public attention to the Christian-Democratic presence at European level. This aim cannot be achieved without the participation of all those concerned who must shape the Office into an essential and constructive service.

CRISIS AND RECOVERY OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE

by Mr SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA

The Final Communiqué of the Paris Summit Conference aroused varying and sometimes conflicting reactions and comments. Obviously I do not wish to revert to this subject; if I now look back a few months it is simply to point out that the work of the Conference and the Final Communiqué at least had the advantage of setting sufficiently specific political objectives and time limits for achieving them. Now we must look again at the basic issues. Admittedly this is no easy task, but it is after all primarily a matter for the political forces and parties. To the difficulties involved must be added the need to act fairly soon if the political forces are to come to the next Summit in 1975/76 with clear ideas.

We Christian Democrats must be particularly conscious of the time schedule if we are to make an original and significant contribution to the shape of political Europe.

Unfortunately, the conditions at the outset are not particularly favourable. Even a superficial examination of the situation of our Party in Europe shows clearly enough a state of crisis, faced as we are with the Socialist Party in an attacking mood. Recent electoral failures have justifiably created anxiety.

However, I believe that paradoxical as it may seem, Christian Democracy has now reached a point at which it can again take the political initiative in Europe. It may well be that in certain countries, such as Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands, Christian Democracy has lost its specific political, cultural and sociological character, through the necessity to compromise with other political forces in government, but it is also true that in other countries, such as France and Germany, it has preserved - or has had greater reason to preserve - its ideological and cultural heritage.

I believe that circumstances have obliged Christian Democrats to abandon some of their essential positions through considerations of

power or government. The present symptoms of confusion and crisis therefore have a precise origin.

But I also believe that Christian Democracy can find, in those very countries in which it is the opposition party or the alternative party, the ideological strength to take up the challenge of a confrontation on political attitudes to Europe.

However, we must pause for reflection before doing so. The time has come for Christian Democrats to rethink and reappraise the party's ideological, cultural and social principles.

The aim of such reflection should be the formation of a single European Christian Democratic party, which would replace the present European organization of the national parties and eliminate its contradictions.

Otherwise, Christian Democratic policy documents can only be of theoretical interest and will not have the power to persuade and convince.

I am certain that it is only by adopting an overall strategy and undertaking a thorough reappraisal of its position that Christian Democracy, starting from those countries in which it is free from division and compromise, can take the lead in fostering the idea of a political Europe.

Carlo SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA (Italian, CD) is Vice-President of the Commission of the European Community.

MR WILLEM J. SCHUIJT, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF PARLIAMENT

During the February part-session held in Luxembourg, the Christian Democratic Group officially put forward the name of Mr W. J. Schuijt as candidate for the office of President of the European Parliament. A press communiqué was issued during the part-session to make the Group's position known to the public. The members of the Conservative Group also decided unanimously to support the Christian Democratic candidate.

Mr Schuijt is already a Vice-President of the European Parliament of which he has been a member since it was formed in March 1958.

He was a member of the Second Chamber of the Dutch States-General from 1956 to 1971; he then became a member of the Dutch Senate in which he was chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. In the Netherlands he belongs to the KVP (Catholic People's Party) and in the European Parliament to the Christian Democratic Group.

He has acted as rapporteur for the European Parliament's Political Affairs Committee on matters such as the location of the seat of the European Community institutions and information policy. Prior to becoming a Vice-President of the European Parliament he served successively as chairman of the Committee for the Association with Greece and the Committee for the Association with Turkey and as vice-chairman of the Christian Democratic Group. In May 1971 he led a delegation from the European Parliament to Washington at the invitation of the United States House of Representatives. Thereafter he was responsible for a parliamentary initiative for setting up a special Community fund with a view to enabling young Americans who are potential leaders to become more familiar with the European Community.

In the course of his career he has been a manual worker, office employee, teacher and Paris correspondent for a leading Dutch newspaper. At the same time he completed his university studies with a doctorate in the Romance languages. He has written a number of books on literary subjects and many political articles. He has also held a variety of public and industrial offices. His distinctions include the American Medal of Freedom (for his contribution to psychological warfare in the years 1940-45), the Italian Order of Merit (Commendatore), the French Legion d'Honneur and the Dutch Order of the Lion.

He is married with four children.

DIALOGUE WITH THE TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS

In the course of the debate on the Community's economic situation which took place during the January part-session of the European Parliament

in Strasbourg, Mr Giovanni Bersani advocated, as part of a more enterprising social policy within the Community, a meeting between the European Parliament and the various trade unions and employers' organizations.

1973 is a crucial year; it is to see a series of fundamental steps, not only in the economic and monetary but also in the social and political fields, which - if they are effectively taken - will bring about fundamental progress in the building of a united Europe. At the same time, however, participation in a dialogue of this kind by the trade unions and employers' organizations has always presented great difficulties.

The unsolved problem, which now seems urgent, remains how to find a positive basis for an encounter which would create the conditions necessary for a convergence of efforts or at least for agreeing on the objectives. Such a meeting between the European Parliament and workers' and employers' organizations could prove to be a step forward in one sector - that of co-operation with these organizations - in which, despite the efforts made here and there (in Holland, for example) nothing concrete has so far been achieved.

MEDIATION BY THE COMMUNITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

The Political Affairs Committee has entrusted Mr Mario Scelba with the task of drawing up a motion for a resolution on the political situation in the Middle East. This is a question to which the Christian Democratic Group can make a special contribution, adopting a Catholic approach in any political action it takes.

In fact, it is not so much a matter of hoping that the governments of Member States are willing to define a Community policy and create the necessary instruments to be used at the proper time. What is important is to present united Europe as a force for peace and its natural guarantor and spokesman in all areas by a political initiative designed to achieve a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

In addition, Mr Scelba will not overlook the fact that both parties concerned have an interest in arriving at a peaceful solution; the facts of geography, cultural traditions and political links all combine to involve Europe directly and naturally in the vicissitudes of the Mediterranean basin.

HELPING YOUNG AMERICANS TO GET TO KNOW EUROPE

During the January part-session in Strasbourg, the European Parliament adopted a resolution inviting the Commission to undertake the studies necessary for the adoption of a programme of Community scholarships for young Americans. The resolution adopted was based on a proposal put forward by the following members: Schuijt, Lücker, Aigner, Bos, Houdet, Briot, St. Oswald and Scott-Hopkins.

This proposal falls within the broader context of better and closer relations with the United States; an independent and 'European' Europe can only be created if its relations with all its partners - and above all with the United States- are re-organized on a more solid basis. Much can also be learned in this field from the practical experience of the Japanese. It is obvious that the first condition for better relations is improved mutual understanding; this is the object of the scholarship programme which will enable students, research workers, teachers, journalists, etc. to come to Europe and familiarize themselves directly with the work of integrating the Community through their everyday contacts.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP

On the first of March, at Trond, Belgium, Mr Bertrand will give the introductory speech at a political meeting of the CVP (Christian Democratic Party) at which the national president, Mr M. Martens will also speak.

On behalf of the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, Mr Glesener attended the 17th graduates' reunion during the schools' 'Europe Day' held in Dublin from 22 to 31 July. Mr Glesener presented a report on the position adopted by Parliament as regards youth and education, thus not only giving up-to-date news of Parliament's policy but also introducing a note of realism into the debates.

Mr Aigner proposed that the European Parliament should have its own Audit Office as part of a new European auditing system. He also announced the submission of a document in which the chairmen of the various national audit offices had recorded their agreement with his proposal.

During a meeting of the Committee on Development, Mr Aigner drew attention to the contrast between the Community's policy for aid to development and its agricultural policy. He did not agree that this conflict could be resolved solely on the basis of a moral undertaking. From the point of view of social justice, the interests of European farmers were just as important as those of the big landowners in Latin America or Africa. The conflict could be resolved, however, by a long-term process involving the re-distribution of labour and the harmonization of production.

RAPORTEURS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP

The following members of the Christian Democratic Group have been appointed rapporteurs:

- Mario SCELBA, on the political situation in the Middle East;
- F. G. van der GUN, on the harmonization of legislation concerning electrical apparatus;

- Hans RICHARTS,¹ on the state of Community agriculture as regards markets;
- René PETRE on social provisions in road transport;
- Siegfried MEISTER¹ on the harmonization of legislation concerning driving licences and the technical checks on motor vehicles;
- Luigi NOE on the Community's uranium-enrichment capacity;
- Jean-Pierre GLESENER on the Community's industrial development contract;
- Nicolas KOLLWELTER on the procedure for the preliminary examination and discussion of future provisions in the transport sector;
- Maurice DEWULF on a review of the activities of the European Development Fund and the problems of technical and financial cooperation with the Associated African States and Madagascar;
- J. A. MOMMERSTEEG on the political unification of Europe;
- J. DE KONING on agricultural prices;
- Peter BRUGGER on the statute for the European Company;
- C. A. BOS on internal economic problems connected with the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark and on the new arrangements with the remaining EFTA States;
- Karl MITTERDORFER on structural regional policy;
- Hans-Edgar JAHN on the EEC-Greece Association.

¹ will cease to be a member of the German delegation as from the next session of Parliament

IN BRIEF

The parliamentary delegation from the German Federal Republic has been renewed. The new members, who will take up their duties at Parliament's next part-session which starts in Strasbourg on 12 March, are:

- Erik Bernhard BLUMENFELD
- Isidor FRUH
- Kurt HARZSCHEL
- Dott. Egon KLEPSCH
- Karl-Heinz MURSCH
- Dott. Klaus-Peter SCHULZ (Berlin)
- Dott. Hanna WALZ

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Mr Mario SCELBA has been asked to submit to the enlarged Bureau of the European Parliament a draft opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee on certain institutional problems relating to Parliament's supervisory powers under the ECSC Treaty.

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Mr Heinrich AIGNER has been appointed vice-chairman of the Committee for Finance and Budgets. He has prepared a supplementary draft budget in which Parliament's political responsibility in budgetary matters is clearly indicated.

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The parliamentary committees have approved the following reports submitted by members of the Christian Democratic Group:

- Political Affairs Committee: Report by Mr MULLER on the Summit Conference and the problems posed by the broadening of the Community's relations with the Mediterranean countries;
- Committee for Finance and Budgets: Report by Mr AIGNER on the state of the European Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for 1973;
- Committee on Agriculture: Report by Mr VETRONE on intervention measures in the beef and veal sector; opinion by Mr DE KONING on food aid; opinion by Mr MARTENS on the tariff quota for eels;

- Committee on Social Affairs and Health Protection: Report by Mr VANDEWIELE on the harmonization of legislation concerning cocoa and chocolate products;
- Committee on External Economic Relations: Report by Mr DEWULF on horticultural products;
- Legal Affairs Committee: Supplementary report by Mr HEGER on the coordination of provisions concerning guarantees in commercial law;
- Committee on Energy: Opinion by Mr VANDEWIELE on policy on competition;
- Transport Committee: Report by Mr BERTRAND on international passenger transport; report by Mr NOE on air transport in Europe.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: A new impetus for Europe

by François BORDRY

All the Community institutions now reflect the changed situation created by the accession of three new countries. The new Member States are now represented in the Commission, where they hold important responsibilities, and in the Council of Ministers. At its first part-session in 1973, held in Strasbourg from 15 to 19 January, the European Parliament also acquired 43 new members from Britain, Ireland and Denmark.

For Parliament, the enlargement has brought with it the need to adapt its working methods to a broader membership and to the additional responsibilities of a larger Europe. It has also raised the hope that new blood will revitalize an important enterprise which has unfortunately tended to be dominated by discussions too technical to be always readily understood by the general public. Finally, it has created the expectation that Parliament will have more frequent opportunities for debates of a high political standard. This means that we are moving step by step towards a Parliament endowed with effective legislative powers and elected by direct universal suffrage by all the peoples of the Community. A genuinely democratic Europe is therefore our ultimate hope.

A spur to even greater efforts

The European Parliament's strength should have increased from 142 to 208 as a result of enlargement. Because of Norway's decision not to join the official number of Members is only 198. The real number, though not for long we hope, is in fact only 183, following the refusal of the British Labour Members to take their seats in Strasbourg. It seemed a poor start for an enlarged Europe in general, and for the Parliament in particular.

In fact, however, these two setbacks for convinced Europeans might act as a spur to even greater efforts. The Norwegians' refusal, followed by that of the British Labour Members (to which can be added the half-hearted result of the French referendum in April 1972) prove clearly

that the construction of Europe can progress only if we succeed in capturing the interest of the people themselves and persuading them to participate. And the true representative of the Community's citizens is the European Parliament. To keep the European public as a whole properly informed, and not merely those specific professional categories concerned solely with their own interests, Europe must become less technocratic.

Thus a number of elements now combine to enable the European Parliament to break the vicious circle which has so far prevented it from carrying sufficient weight in the Community's decision-making process; until the European Parliament holds effective powers, it cannot be elected by direct universal suffrage, and until it is elected by direct universal suffrage, it cannot be given greater powers...

The British offensive

The arrival in Strasbourg of the British Members might provide the opportunity for a new departure. On the very first day, the Conservative delegates made their mark. After recalling the part which Britain wished to play in the construction of Europe, their leader, Mr Peter KIRK, immediately launched a broad offensive to strengthen the role of the European Parliament, 'for on its health depends the health of the Community'. Following this 'inaugural' speech, the Conservative Group issued a memorandum of more than twenty pages on the improvement of Parliamentary procedures.

Their argument was a simple one: according to the Conservatives, the European Parliament has a number of latent and potential powers which it must utilize to the full by turning to better account the opportunities which arise, in order to exert more effective and visible pressure on the other European institutions and to encourage public interest in the process of European unification. Numerous proposals have been put forward, which will have to be studied carefully and no doubt amended, but which all aim at giving political debates precedence over technical debates (which, although important, can be held in the Parliamentary Committees), at facilitating the organization of debates on topical problems (by improving in particular the opportunities for putting oral questions to the Commission and Council), and finally at utilizing procedural instruments to the full (even if necessary by tabling a motion of censure on the Commission).

A promising initiative

This British move was given a frosty reception by some, in so far as the Conservatives seemed to be criticizing the procedures followed so far by the European Parliament. In fact it seems that the British should be congratulated, since on the one hand the Conservatives re-affirmed unequivocally their intention of respecting the customs prevailing in the European Parliament, while on the other hand, the British initiative tends towards the very aims, as far as the political aspect of the problem is concerned, which the Christian Democratic Group has been persistently and vigorously pursuing.

The Conservative Group's new proposals must of course be examined in detail, in order to select those which should be implemented as a matter of the greatest urgency, but we must at the same time make sure that the chance of a new departure is not missed.

It is in the European Parliament's own interest to be in a position of strength for the great debate leading up to the creation of a "European Union" in 1980, in accordance with the decisions taken at the Paris Summit Conference.

A coherent whole

The Conservatives have no intention of working in isolation. They have of course formed a separate group, together with two Danish Conservatives (leaving the Gaullists as only 'uni-national' group), but they will be cooperating closely with the Christian-Democratic Group on all important political issues. A liaison committee between the two groups will meet frequently to consolidate this cooperation: it consists of the Bureaus of the two groups, which is an indication of the value both groups attach to this close cooperation. At the meetings of the Bureau of the European Parliament prior to enlargement, the Conservatives expressly asked to sit next to the Christian-Democratic members in the Chamber and their request was granted.

Finally, it must be remembered that the Christian-Democratic Group has itself expanded as a result of enlargement; it has been joined by the three Irish Members of Fine Gael, Mr Richie Ryan, Sir Anthony Esmonde and Mr Charles McDonald.

The Christian-Democratic Group remains the largest group in the European Parliament with 55 seats, followed by the Socialist Group with 43 seats.

The unit formed by the Christian-Democratic Group and the Conservative Group does not enjoy an absolute majority in the Assembly, but it will be the largest and most coherent element, especially as the belated arrival of the Labour Members in Strasbourg will only result in a fairly deep division of the Socialist Group unless the Labour Members and the other European Socialists succeed in ironing out their fundamental differences concerning the European Community.

The dialogue between Parliament and the Brussels Commission will also be improved as a result of enlargement. François-Xavier Ortoli's first speech in Strasbourg was given a warm reception. But most important of all, relations with the European Parliament have for the first time been specifically entrusted to a member of the Commission, Mr Scarascia-Mugnozza, Vice-President (Italy, Christian Democrat). This too must be seen as a highly positive factor.

The closer ties with the Commission will undoubtedly improve the quality of parliamentary work, and will even enable Parliament to consolidate its character as a sovereign institution.

Generally speaking, a Parliament with greater authority and powers will pave the way for democratic equilibrium in the Europe of tomorrow. Enlargement has undoubtedly brought us nearer to this goal.

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