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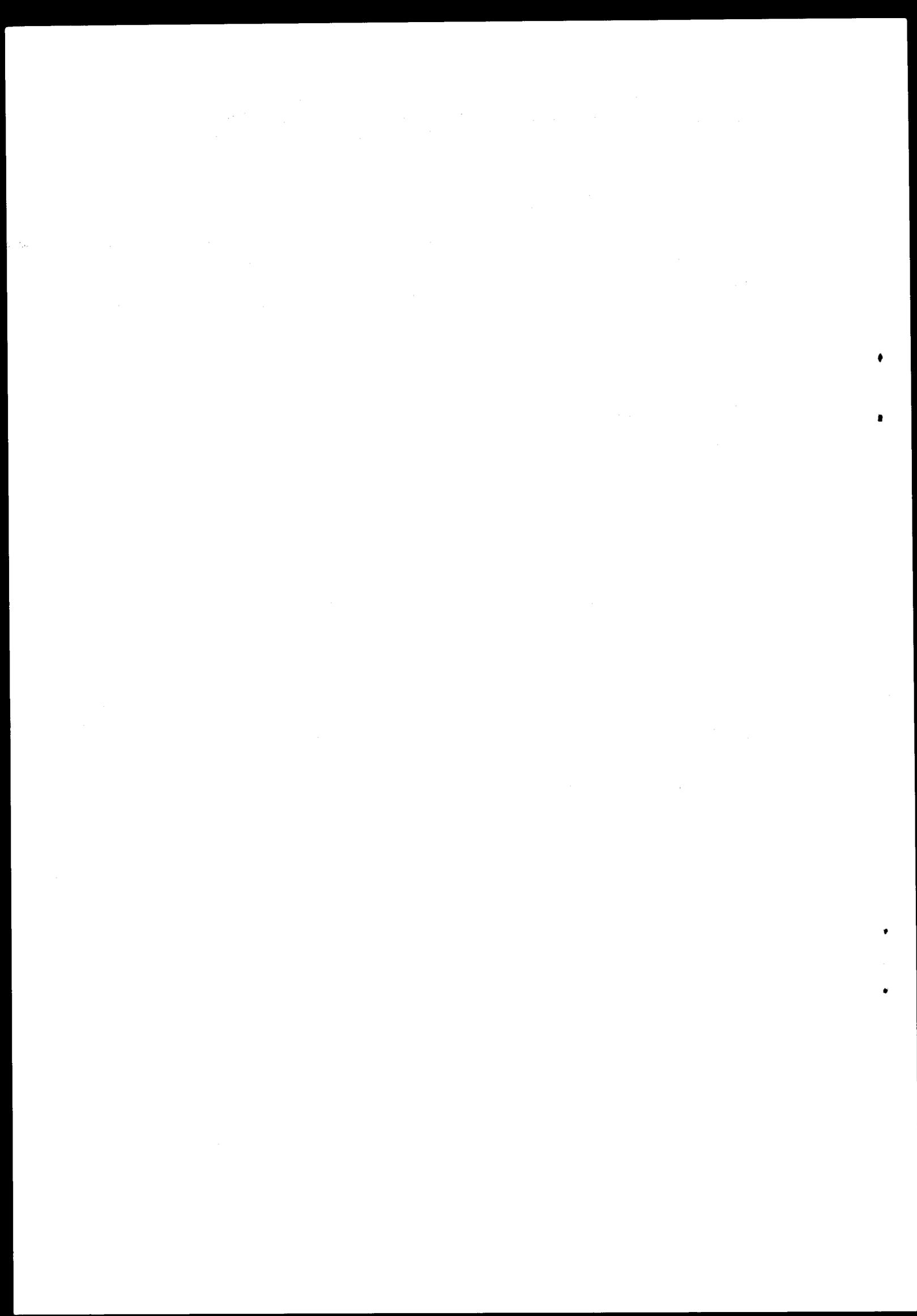
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BERLIN STUDY MEETING

The Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament held a study meeting presided over by its chairman, Hans August LÜCKER, from 9 - 11 September in Berlin.

The meeting was attended by almost all the members of the Parliamentary Group and dealt with two basic topics - the Community's social policy and the multinational companies - and included a wide-ranging debate on several topical political questions.

The Group thus had an opportunity to express its own position on the informal meeting of Heads of State or Government which was held in Paris on 14 September, a position of concern but not of pessimism, summarized in this communiqué:

'In view of the forthcoming meeting of Heads of State or Government, planned to take place in Paris on 14 September, the Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament expresses its deep concern over the fact that the course presently pursued by the national governments is leading away from the true road to European union. Intergovernmental cooperation or, what is worse, bilateral agreements within the European Community are no substitute for the vitally necessary progressive integration of the Community's institutions and their effective democratic control. The principle of fruitful cooperation between Parliament, Commission and Council marked the beginning of a development corresponding to that expressly demanded by the Treaty of Rome. In recent years, however, the Council has increasingly favoured national interests at the expense of the Parliament and the Commission by regarding its functions as those of an intergovernmental conference rather than of an organ of the Community, and this has had regrettable effects upon the balance of power.

The Christian-Democratic Group demands full restitution of the Commission's powers of initiative, and in this connection takes the view that the Commission should take part in all meetings of the Heads of State or Government.

Equally important is a rapid and appreciable strengthening of the European Parliament's rights of participation and control, coupled with the election by direct suffrage of its Members, which is provided for in Article 138 of the Treaty establishing the EEC and is now long overdue.

Only the implementation of these measures can open the door to a Political Union capable of convincing the peoples of Europe and prompting them to make the sacrifice needed for what is a great aim.'

The Chairman of the Christian-Democratic Party of Berlin, Mr LORENZ, took part in the work of the Group.

The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr SICKERT, and the Mayor of Berlin, Mr SCHÜTZ, also talked to members of the Group at a luncheon. Mr KLEPSCH, deputizing for the Vice-President of the Bundestag, Mr Kai Uwe von Hassel, welcomed the Christian-Democratic parliamentarians to Berlin.

The following is the text of the final communiqué:

'The Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament held a study meeting presided over by its chairman, Hans-August LÜCKER, from 9 to 11 September in Berlin.

The Group first of all expressed its satisfaction at the decision of the President-in-Office of the Council to invite the Heads of State or Government of the Nine to a dinner. It regarded this gesture as a positive expression of the will to revitalize Europe.

The Group discussed mainly problems in connection with the social policy of the European Communities and expressed its regret that the Council of Ministers has still not implemented the Social Action Programme proposed by the Commission and approved both by the European Parliament and by the Council.

The Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament indicated a number of priorities requiring urgent attention, in particular the strengthening of the European Social Fund, vocational training policy, full employment in the context of the fight against inflation, social security, and the safeguarding of workers' incomes and of women's employment.

The Group went on to discuss the Migrant Workers' Charter - to be implemented in 1976 - and called on the Commission to submit the proposals already announced. Special attention was paid to the problems of workers from third countries; the Christian-Democratic Group spoke in favour of the abolition of any form of discrimination against this category of workers.

The Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament decided in conclusion to intensify the work of the working party it had set up and to open a constructive dialogue with the trade union bodies recently constituted at European level.

After discussing the problem of the multinational companies and underlining their importance for technological progress and the dissemination of new knowledge, the Group emphasized that the existence of multinational companies also presented problems of a political, economic and social nature. It insisted that a watch should be kept on the integration of multinational undertakings and contact established with the trade union organizations to guarantee cooperation between the various interests represented in these companies.

The Group considered the agricultural situation in the Community, expressing its concern and its solidarity with the farmers. It would continue to do all in its power, in cooperation with the Commission, to work out the necessary measures to secure for this category of worker an equal income with other categories.

This will be the Group's position at the special sitting of the European Parliament on Monday, 16 September.

The Group went on to consider the international political situation following the various events of the summer.

As regards the Greek-Turkish crisis, the Christian-Democratic Group calls for every effort to be made to maintain the independent status of Cyprus, the protection of the refugees and the granting of the economic aid provided for in the Association Agreement. The Group calls on the three guarantee powers (Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom) to pursue these goals, and for the preparation of a meeting between a European Parliament delegation and the Greek Parliament.

The Group welcomed the opening of a dialogue between the EEC and the Arab countries, and expects this to lead to a cooperation agreement with the Arab world and also with Israel.

The Group expressed its satisfaction at the decolonization of the Portuguese territories and at the democratic developments in Portugal.

In conclusion, the Group will spare no effort to support the Commission's intention to grant a substantial loan which will enable national economies now experiencing difficulties to be brought back into equilibrium and further progress to be made towards Economic and Monetary Union.'

BONN : TWO IMPORTANT MEETINGS

From Berlin to Bonn: there has been a great deal of hard work since the summer recess, but effort has been rewarded by results.

A meeting was held on 19 September at C.D.U. headquarters in Bonn between the chairmen of the Christian-Democratic parliamentary groups in the EEC Member States and the Bureau of the Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament. As Mr LUCKER, Chairman of the Group, emphasized, the meeting was intended to provide an opportunity for an exchange of views between the C.D. Group at the European Parliament and those directly responsible for Christian-Democratic Groups in the national parliaments. The discussions - which were concerned with the various aspects and problems of the present international political situation - were based on three brief reports drawn up by Mr GIRAUDO, (Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament), Mr BERTRAND (Chairman of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment of the European Parliament) and Mr AIGNER (Christian-Democratic Group representative in the Committee on Coordination with the Council of Ministers). The speakers gave a short introduction to the main elements of the present situation in the Community, both from the general point of view and with reference to the specific problems of the next European 'Summit', and the powers of the European Parliament vis-à-vis the national parliaments.

The reports and the debate showed the usefulness of the meeting: moreover, all the participants expressed the hope that it would be repeated at regular intervals, above all because of the great importance of reciprocal information and joint effort at one of the most critical and uncertain junctures in the history of the Community institutions.

The Chairman of the Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament, Mr LUCKER, had invited the Secretary-General of the Portuguese Democratic Peoples Party, Mr Francisco Sa Carneiro, and the Vice-Secretary, Dr Allegria, who were in Brussels on a visit to the European Commission, to the eve-of-meeting dinner. Speaking in Bonn, Mr Carneiro described the political situation in Portugal and hoped for increased EEC support for the efforts to reconstruct a democratic Portugal and to integrate it into the life of Europe.

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A meeting of the Bureau of the European Christian-Democratic Union was held on 20 and 21 September under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chairman of the ECDU, Mr Herbert KOHLMAIER.

Current problems in the international political situation were considered and discussed at the meeting, as well as problems of East-West relations and the question of the future development of the European Community.

The Bureau adopted the following resolutions at the end of the meeting:

I.

Détente between the United States and the Soviet Union is essential to avoid the disastrous consequences of a nuclear war and the dangers of an intensification of the arms race; its achievement is thus an essential goal not only for the two countries in question but also for the entire world.

The development of a genuine policy of détente depends on maintaining an effective balance of forces at all stages of disarmament; this policy must not, however, allow certain countries to impose their own viewpoint on major world problems.

Détente should not be seen as an end in itself, but rather as a means to ensure a lasting peace. It must therefore progressively create a new international order which is no longer based on a nuclear balance of forces but on cooperation between peoples and on the transfer from bi-polarity to multi-polarity. The active participation of Europe is needed to achieve this aim. For this reason it is essential and urgent to go beyond a mere coordination of policies - which is useful but not sufficient - to a genuine Community foreign policy.

The Europeans must become aware of their responsibilities in the defence sector.

The European Christian-Democratic Union attaches great importance to the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) and to the negotiations on mutual and balanced forces reduction in Central Europe (MBFR). These two Conferences are closely linked on the political and practical levels.

In the view of the European Christian-Democrats, the CSCE should be in a position to make a real contribution to the solution of political and military problems in central Europe.

The ECDU believes that détente must respect the freely concluded Treaties, and it calls for the free movement of persons and ideas.

By preventing the predominance of one country over another, the mutual and balanced reduction of forces can lead to a decisive solution to the political problems of progress towards détente, which can only take place in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Reduction of military forces and a genuine reduction of tension must therefore proceed hand in hand.

The ECDU reaffirms the support of European Christian-Democrats for the Atlantic Alliance which today, as it did thirty years ago, represents a choice for freedom: its existence must be safeguarded and to this end universal support is necessary.

The European Christian-Democrats give warning of the dangers to the Alliance which would result from a conflict between its members. They draw attention to the disastrous consequences for peace of any relaxation of the joint effort and declare themselves opposed to any reduction in the overall strength of the Alliance which could result from major political and economic changes in its member countries.

The Christian-Democrats reemphasize the need to further improve the system of permanent consultations between the members and particularly between the United States and its European allies.

II.

In view of the situation on the world markets for energy and raw materials, the ECDU calls for the drawing up of a new political strategy. Available resources should not be wasted but utilized in the interests of the world as a whole and the developing countries in particular.

While the industrialized countries of the West are now having to import rather than export capital, and the opposite obtains for the petroleum producing countries, the developing countries are threatened by a deterioration of their economic and financial well-being. This state of affairs poses economic - and thus political - problems of particular magnitude which can be solved only by agreement between the countries concerned.

The ECDU hopes that, in its internal affairs, the Community will show genuine solidarity in seeking a solution to these vital questions and will speak with one voice, particularly in its relations with the countries which at present have a serious balance of payments deficit.

It supports the floating of a European loan, which it considers the most appropriate instrument for channelling movements of capital and for going some way towards balancing the growing trade and payments deficits of certain industrial countries.

One essential condition for the success of this strategy is an effective fight against world inflation, particularly in the Community countries. This can only be achieved through an improved organization of the world monetary system.

III.

No European country can solve its problems alone. They can only be solved through close cooperation between the States, the necessary framework for which has been created by the Treaties of Rome. If these Treaties have until now failed to yield the results which could have been legitimately expected, the blame lies with the governments which refuse to countenance a transfer of sovereignty, without which the institutions are not able to become fully functional.

This is why the Council of Ministers should return to the principle of majority voting, why the Commission should be given all necessary powers to reflect the general interest of the Community, and why the powers of the European Parliament should be strengthened by means of elections by direct universal suffrage. Elected members of Parliament would effectively represent the will of the electorate and would be able to exercise control over the European institutions.

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IV.

The European Christian-Democrats express their profound satisfaction at the present process of restoration of democratic rule in GREECE, and assure the Greek people of their support in the present situation which is to lead Greece back to full participation in the construction of a free and democratic Europe.

Only direct negotiations under the auspices of the guarantor powers - Great Britain, Greece and Turkey - can bring to Cyprus a peaceful, just and durable solution which guarantees the two ethnic groups their full and legitimate rights, whilst avoiding recourse to violence and assuring a joint effort of humanitarian aid to the population in their time of need.

The reconstruction of democracy in PORTUGAL is, after such a long period of totalitarian rule, going through a difficult period. The countries of Europe and the forces of democracy in Europe are being called upon to give concrete and immediate political, economic and social assistance to enable Portugal to play its part in a democratic Europe moving towards unity.

The European Christian-Democrats firmly believe that the people of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa must be granted full sovereignty in peace and freedom and must seek peaceful solutions to the problems confronting them.

These new independent African countries will be able to find their place in the framework of the associations of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries with the European Community.

V.

- The European Christian-Democratic Union is observing the political situation in CHILE with great concern.
- The European Christian-Democratic Parties resolutely condemn the politics of violence, wherever they may be practised.
- They therefore support the firm position of the Chilean Christian-Democrats and together with them emphatically condemn the violation of the rights of man by the military dictatorship.
- The ECDU calls for the lifting of the ban on political parties and hopes that a government can be formed as soon as possible under a constitution based on the principles of law and liberty.
- A policy of internal stability, guaranteeing social progress and justice to all groups of the population, can only be achieved in the framework of a democratic, free and pluralistic state.

VISIT OF THE PORTUGUESE D.P.P. DELEGATION

A delegation from the Portuguese Democratic Peoples' Party, led by the Secretary-General, Mr Francisco Sa Carneiro, had talks on 16, 17 and 18 September with the European Commission, with the Belgian Christian Social Party and with the European Christian-Democratic Union.

After a meeting with the President of the EEC Commission, Mr Xavier Ortoli, Mr Sa Carneiro met Vice-President SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA and Commissioner LARDINOIS. The Secretary of the DPP explained that his Party laid great stress on relations between Portugal and the EEC and expressed his confidence in the EEC's support for the effort of constructing a new, free and democratic Portugal enjoying close ties with Europe.

After the meeting with the Belgian Prime Minister, Mr TINDEMANS, with Mr VAN ELSLANDE, and with the President of the Senate, Mr HARMEL, both sides expressed the wish to establish closer cooperation with a view to consolidating democracy in Portugal and to drawing that country more closely into the life of the European Community at a time when it was having to confront a series of economic and social crises and speed up the decolonisation process which was already under way.

Lastly, the Portuguese Delegation met the chairman of the Christian-Democratic Group of the European Parliament, Mr LÜCKER, and other members of the ECDU. With the help of the ECDU and the Belgian PSC-CVP Party, the European Commission is in the process of drawing up a training programme for young Portuguese, with a view to broadening the base for European integration and enhancing the opportunity for widening the agreement between Portugal and the EEC and the position of the Portuguese migrant workers in the Member States in the framework of the European statute for migrant workers.

TROUBLE IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

by Mr Jan de KONING

During the summer a wave of unrest suddenly swamped a large part of European agriculture. At a time when they are normally busy in the fields, farmers left their work and took to their tractors to demonstrate and block the roads, expressing their radical claims to the governments at hastily improvised and often bellicose meetings.

What caused this eruption? There are a variety of inextricably linked reasons.

Direct reasons

- inflation, which has been causing continual cost increases for years, has reached a critical level. Agriculture is feeling the consequences in the form of hefty increases in interest rates on borrowed capital (and the loans themselves have been increasing), labour and construction costs, material costs, etc.;
- the energy crisis has led to sharp price increases for oil and gas, and for chemical and plant protection products;
- the production crisis for fishmeal in Peru and for soya has led to rapid increases in the prices of animal feedstuffs. The poor forage grain harvests in the USA and Canada will lead to further price increases;
- the market for meat, which collapsed last year, has not yet recovered. This problem is doubly dangerous: calves and piglets which were bought in at high prices and reared on expensive feedstuffs must today be sold at an enormous loss;
- devaluations and revaluations have increased the problems. Devaluations and their consequences mean increased costs for raw materials and associated products; revaluations reflect on finished products.

The result of these developments is that income in the agricultural sector is falling while it is rising in other sectors. The farmers see this as discrimination damaging to them.

Indirect causes

There are, apart from the immediate causes, other less direct ones which have led to considerable discontent in the agricultural sector:

- throughout Europe, agricultural incomes are below those of other sectors; the difference is often significant;

- social security for independent farmers and, overall, for the agricultural middle classes is, where it is provided at all, clearly inferior to that enjoyed by workers in other sectors;
- working hours are long; holidays are virtually unknown. Farmers feel themselves to be the outsiders in a prosperous consumer society.

The farmers attribute this situation in large measure to the national and European authorities which have deliberately held down prices for agricultural products in order to placate the consumer.

These accusations are only partially correct. The past 15 years have been characterized by considerable surpluses of agricultural products which have inevitably depressed price levels. Only last year did this trend show a change. It can be said that the national and Community agricultural policies have, over this period of time, prevented the destruction of European agriculture. However, the measures which have been taken have often been so complicated, and the decision-making mechanism so involved, that they have led to an increase in the unrest.

Ways to a solution

It may be concluded from what has been said that the problems in the agricultural sector constitute a complex of problems which can only be solved in terms of a global settlement. Such a settlement must look at :

- agricultural price policy. Agricultural prices should be adjusted to take account of increased costs, particularly now that world market prices for certain products - such as cereals and sugar - are at a level considerably above the European one. Such a move is obviously unlikely to be well received by the governments in their fight against inflation, but this fight cannot be engaged at the expense of the farmers;
- farmers' social position. The adverse position as regards social security must be rectified. For too long the idea has prevailed that social security should not be granted to private entrepreneurs. An entrepreneur faces no fewer risks than an employed worker. Farmers who are unable to continue working on the land should have the opportunity for retraining, and it is above all essential that alternative jobs be created. This calls for considerable progress in the field of Community social and regional policy;
- monetary stability. Revaluations and devaluations disrupt the common agricultural policy and adversely affect farmers' incomes. A well coordinated economic and monetary policy in the Member States, as a step towards economic and monetary union, is essential if the common agricultural market is to be safeguarded;

- the differences in fiscal legislation among the Member States are far too great, even more so than the differences which exist in tax rates: these differences distort fair competition between the agricultural producers in the Member States. In the countries with high rates of direct taxation, the agricultural sector occupies an extremely unfortunate position as a result of fluctuating revenues.

Fiscal arrangements must in future take more account of the fact that the entrepreneur - particularly in agriculture with its significant concentrations of capital - must not only live from his income, but must also make investments and provide for his future. There is in fact a need, pending a harmonization of fiscal systems in Europe, to establish as a matter of priority fiscal arrangements for European agriculture. This would involve considerable infringement of Member States' sovereignty;

- structural reforms. Too many farms are too small, poorly planned and poorly laid out, with inadequate irrigation systems and outdated buildings. Such farms, regardless of what type of price policy is applied, cannot be made even reasonably profitable. The modernization of European agriculture is therefore absolutely essential. In an industrialized society only modern and highly mechanized farming can survive. A structural policy aimed at carrying out such modernization should be implemented as soon as possible in all Member States. All the measures which need to be taken to solve the agricultural problem in Europe have one thing in common - they all depend on a strengthening of European integration. Agriculture in Europe will only move forward in the context of a genuine European Community.

