

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1978 - 1979

11 December 1978

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ORAL QUESTIONS

Pursuant to Rule 47a of the Rules of Procedure

for QUESTION TIME on 12, 13 and 14 December 1978

PE 56.031

In accordance with the directives on the conduct of Question Time, questions may be answered only if the questioner is present or has notified the President in writing, before Question Time begins, of the name of his substitute.

Questions to the Commission which have not been answered on Tuesday for lack of time are called on Thursday. If the questioners are unable to attend, they may of course, notify the President in writing of the name of their substitute before the questions are called on Thursday.

1. Question by Mr KAVANAGH (H-312/78)

Subject : Aids under the Social Fund for the employment of girls

Does the Commission make any conditions to the Member States, when granting aid for training of the young unemployed under Article 501 of the Social Fund, that a proportion of such aid should be given over to measures to combat unemployment among young girls; will the Commission ensure that such a provision is included in the proposals it is at present preparing?

2. Question by Mr BRUGHA (H-330/78)

Subject : Small and medium sized undertakings

What progress has the Commission made in formulating a policy for small and medium sized undertakings?

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3. Question by Mr NYBORG (H-331/78)

Subject: Goods and passenger transport by road

Does the Commission intend to take steps to get rid of discriminatory national transport regulations so that goods and passenger transport by road in the Community may operate without impediment and, if so, what steps will it be taking?

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4. Question by Mr FITCH (H-346/78)

Subject: Public supplies contracts

Would the Commission suspend the second directive on public supplies contracts?

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5. Question by Mrs SQUARCIALUPI (H-349/78)

Subject: Financing of immigrants' newspapers

What criteria are applied in granting Community aid to newspapers of Italian immigrants in the EEC countries, and on what grounds is this aid confined entirely to publications that are members of Federeuropa?

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6. Question by Lord MURRAY of GRAVESEND (H-350/78)

Subject : Progress in implementation of the Council Recommendation on the principle of the 40-hour week and 4 weeks annual holiday

What progress has been made to date in the member states, towards implementing the Council Recommendation of 22 July 1975 (1), on the principle of the 40-hour working week, and 4 weeks annual holiday, in view of the fact that the deadline for implementation is the end of 1978?

(1) OJ No L 199, 30.7.75, p. 32
(Recommendation 75/457/EEC)

7. Question by Mr CIFARELLI (H-352/78)

Subject: Working hours in the EEC

Does the Commission consider that the reduction of working hours would be an effective means of preventing further unemployment?

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8. Question by Mr SCOTT-HOPKINS (H-313/78)

Subject : Community Trade in Agricultural Products

What is the Commission's view of the imbalance of trade in agricultural products between the USA and the Community, and does the Commission consider it takes sufficient account of international economic and political aspects in its management and planning for the future of the Common Agricultural policy?

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9. Question by Mr ELLIS (H-324/78)

Subject: Financial aid measures for coal and nuclear energy

The British Government has recently announced a £ 17 million scheme to sell an additional 3 million tons of coal to power stations during the winter period to help reduce current stocks of 30 million tons. Are similar measures being taken by other Member State Governments, and what short-term measures can the Commission take to encourage such schemes?

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10. Question by Sir Brandon RHYS-WILLIAMS (H-319/78)

Subject : Animal Welfare

Is it the opinion of the Commission that slaughterhouses in the United Kingdom have sufficient unused capacity to handle the additional demand for slaughtering facilities that would arise in the event of a ban on exports of live animals?

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11. Question by Mr OSBORN (H-278/78)

Subject : Waterway and sea links

What consideration has been given to waterway and sea links across the North Sea, as part of the transport infrastructure review, and what specific discussions have been held with the British Government and the British Waterways Board about the scheme to enlarge the South Yorkshire Navigation canal?

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12. Question by Mr NOE' (H-342/78)

Subject: Possibility of a future shortage of energy supplies

In view of the outcome of the recent Austrian referendum, does the Commission not think that there is an urgent need to promote research into the effects which a future shortage of energy supplies may have on society and subsequently give wide publicity to the findings?

13. Question by Mr HALVGAARD (H-343/78)

Subject: Coal imports from third countries

Does the Commission not feel it desirable, in view of the critical energy situation in the Community, to import a substantial amount of the Community's coal requirements from third countries where the price of coal is lower than in the Community?

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14. Question by Mr HOWELL (H-347/78)

Subject : Dairy Sector Measures

What is the Commission's assessment of the overall impact of the dairy non-marketing and conversion schemes currently in force, and in particular has it noted any tendency for applications for premiums to come from those countries in which the dairy surplus problem is greatest?

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15. Question by Lord BESSBOROUGH (H-348/78)

Subject : The Community's trade agreement with China

Will the Commission state how the Joint Committee will foster and monitor trade between the European Community and the People's Republic of China?

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16. Question by Mrs EWING (H-356/78)

Subject : Community Financing

Will the Commission comment on the paper widely reported to have been drafted by one of their members, Mr. Tugendhat, containing proposals for the reform of Community financing and the need for some redistribution of wealth within the Community.

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17. Question by Sir Geoffrey de FREITAS (H-359/78)

Subject : Opening up of government contracts to companies
from all Community countries

Which Governments in the Community have followed the example of the British Government and applied the directive designed to open up Government contracts to companies from all Community countries and which Governments not applying the directive have undertaken to do so within the next six months?

18. Question by Mr BROEKSZ (H-362/78) *

Subject : Development of trade between the ACP countries
and the Community

According to data published by the Statistical Office of the European Communities, exports from the ACP countries to the Community fell in the first half of 1978 by 8% compared with the first half of 1977, while trade in the other direction grew by 8%

As a result, the ACP countries' share of imports into the European Community fell from 7.4% to 6.8%, while the EEC's trade balance with the ACP countries actually shows a surplus for the first time in many years.

What measures does the Commission intend to take - both in the short and the longer term, as part of the negotiations on the renewal of the Lomé Convention - to check this undesirable development ?

* Will not be called if item 306 is kept on the agenda

19. Question by Mr KLEPSCH (H-364/78)

Subject : Publishing practice of the Commission in respect
of customs regulations

In Official Journal No. C 262 of 6 November 1978 the Commission published a welcome summary of customs preference regulations as at 1 July 1978.

Does the Commission agree that in view of the changes expected to take effect on 1 January 1979, publication in the penultimate month of 1978 is a matter largely of historical interest ? What are the reasons for the delay in publication ? Would there not be more sense in publishing summaries of this kind before the relevant date, so that importers could obtain an idea of the regulations applying in future and make better use of them ?

20. Question by Mr EDWARDS (H-365/78)

Subject : Improper pressure by multinational corporations

Has the Commission's attention been drawn to a pamphlet entitled : 'Infiltration of the UN System by Multinational Corporations', and in particular to the authentic documents showing how multinational companies manoeuvre to obtain nominees on important advisory bodies of international organizations ?

What action will they take to prevent such improper pressure from being applied to decisions by the Commission ?

21. Question by Mr RYAN (H-366/78)

Subject : Postal services within the Community

It appears to many citizens of the Community that delays in intra-Community postal services are on the increase and that recent years have seen a serious disimprovement in the reliability and speed and an increase in the cost of postal services.

What specific Community action is contemplated to arrest the deterioration in postal services within the Community?

22. Question by Mr McDONALD (H-368/78) *

Subject : Imbalance in the Community's trade in agricultural products

Eurostat Foreign Trade Statistics show a serious imbalance in the Community's trade in agricultural products. Exports are approximately 40 % of imports of food, beverages and tobacco.

Does the Commission think that the agreement on agricultural produce, currently being negotiated in GATT will help this imbalance?

23. Question by Mr COINTAT (H-375/78) ~~23~~

Subject: Suspension of prior determination of refunds on butter exports to the Soviet Union

Why did the Commission suspend the advance fixing of refunds on butter exports to the Soviet Union, although these had complied with the normal rules of the international market?

* Will not be called if items 314, 315 and 316 are kept on the agenda

** Will not be called if item 310 is kept on the agenda

24. Question by Mr SCHMIDT (H-376/78)

Subject: Talks between COMECON and the EEC

According to press reports, the three-day talks between COMECON Secretary Fadejew and EEC Vice-President Haferkamp were broken off without tangible results.

How does the Commission view the prospects for a resumption of the EEC-COMECON dialogue?

25. Question by Mr NORMANTON (H-381/78)

Subject : Taxes other than turnover taxes which affect the consumption of manufactured tobacco

In view of the fact that only two Member States (France and Italy) appear to have failed to implement Directive 77/805¹ with regard to the fixing of rates of excise taxes that fall within the limits specified in that directive, will the Commission state :

What steps it has taken to ensure that the Directive is implemented at the earliest opportunity and its intention to ensure that the implementation by France and Italy is by retroactive effect to 1 July 1978 so that compliance with Community Law is respected uniformly by all Member States.

26. Question by Mr HOFFMANN (H-383/78)

Subject : "Hoffmann-Laroche" case

What was the total legal cost undertaken by the Commission for the defence of Mr Adams in Switzerland against charges of espionage?

¹ O.J. No. 338, 28.12.1978, p.22

27. Question by Mr HANSEN (H-384/78)

Subject : "Hoffmann-Laroche" case

When does the Commission expect the European Court to rule on the appeal by Hoffmann-Laroche against the fine imposed on it by the Commission for certain illegal activities?

28. Question by Mr FORNI (H-385/78)

Subject : "Hoffmann-Laroche" case

Will the Commission make a statement on any further action or legal proceedings it plans to undertake in defense of Mr Adams?

29. Question by Mr PRESCOTT (H-386/78)

Subject : "Hoffmann-Laroche" case

Has the Commission called for the convening of the Joint Committee set up under the agreement between the Community and Switzerland to discuss the implications of the conviction of Mr Adams for espionage?

30. Question by Mr PORCU (H-387/78)

Subject: West German steelworkers' campaign

In the light of the proposals for shorter working hours it has put forward in the social policy section of its plan for restructuring the iron and steel industry, does not the Commission consider that it should support the West German steelworkers' campaign to have their working week reduced to 35 hours?

31. Question by Mr CORRIE (H-388/78)

Subject : Trade Agreement with China

The Community's steel, shipbuilding and oil rig construction industries are among the most hard pressed as a result of the recession and their products meet the needs specified in China's Ten Year Plan. What action is the Commission taking to bring together Chinese and European enterprises such that firms may begin to benefit from the trade agreement with China?

32. Question by Mr DALYELL (H-308/78)

Subject : Non-utilisation of Community funds

Since November, what action has the Council taken with regard to non-utilisation of appropriations for payments from the Social and Regional Funds, as illustrated in the report on the Financial Situation of the European Communities on 30 June 1978 recently submitted by the Commission to Council and Parliament, and what action does it plan to take?

33. Question by Sir Geoffrey de FREITAS (H-317/78)

Subject : Transit of goods from one Member State to another

What has been done during 1978 to facilitate the transit of goods from one Member State to another ?

34. Question by Mr SEEFELD (H-326/78)

Subject : The Mannheim Convention

Can the Council state the reasons why the negotiations on the accession of the Community to the Mannheim Convention and its participation in the work of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine have reached deadlock, and also which Member States have expressed misgivings, together with the nature of these misgivings?

35. Question by Mr L'ESTRANGE (H-341/78)

Subject : Trade in processed beef between the Republic
of Ireland and the United Kingdom

Given the anomalies caused by the application of MCA's in
trade in processed beef between the Republic of Ireland and
the United Kingdom, would the Council say what steps have been
taken to correct the situation?

36. Question by Mr BROEKSZ (H-344/78)

Subject: Powers of the directly elected Parliament

Does the Council share the view that, as the directly elected
Parliament will be a direct continuation of the present Parliament,
the provisions of Article 138(3) of the Treaty of Rome have now been
satisfied and that the only modification to this Treaty has been to
the number of Members referred to in Article 138(2), and that,
consequently, all the rights and obligations of Parliament may be
determined only by Parliament itself?

37. Question by Mr DONDELINGER (H-345/78)

Subject: The Darquier de Pellepoix affair

Does the Council not think that, within the framework of the current
negotiations for Spanish membership, it ought to ask the Government
of H.M. the King of Spain to extradite the criminal Louis DARQUIER,
called de Pellepoix, Commissioner General for Jewish Affairs in the
Vichy Government from 1942 to 1944 and responsible for the deportation
of 75,000 French Jews, sentenced to death in his absence on 10 December
1947, who recently insulted the memory of the 6,000,000 victims of Nazism
in an aberrant (though not irresponsible) racist statement published in
the French weekly magazine 'L'Express' of 4 November 1978?

38. Question by Mr BORDU (H-351/78)

Subject: Multilateral trade negotiations in GATT

Can the Council describe the numerous forms of pressure being exerted by the United States during the multilateral trade negotiations in Geneva? Has it given Commissioner HAFERKAMP specific instructions to resist this pressure?

39. Question by Mrs DUNWOODY (H-353/78)

Subject : Council decision on the Draft Directive relating to equal treatment for men and women as regards social security

Can the Council report on the progress achieved at its recent meeting relating to the draft directive on equal treatment for men and women relating to social security?

40. Question by Mr LEZZI (H-354/78)

Subject: Proposals to extend the Social Fund by measures designed to combat youth unemployment

What was the outcome of the Council's discussions at its recent meeting on the Commission proposals for Social Fund measures to combat youth unemployment?

41. Question by Mr KAVANAGH (H-355/78)

Subject : Taxation Policy

Has the Council examined the situation relating to the distribution of the burden of taxation within the Member States of the Community, and is it satisfied that the economic policies being pursued by Member States will bring about an equitable situation, necessary if the "economic and social progress" and "constant improvement of the living and working conditions", of the Preamble to the Treaty of Rome, are to become a reality?

42. Question by Mrs EWING (H-357/78)

Subject : Financing of Community Expenditure

Will the Council state what proposals they have to alter the present arrangements for financing Community expenditure bearing in mind that the proportion falling on the United Kingdom is excessive taking the state of the economy of the United Kingdom and other factors into account.

43. Question by Mr HOWELL (H-361/78)

Subject : Emergency Aid to East and South East England

Following the Commission's unsatisfactory answer to my questions on this subject in the first October part-session and the November part-session will the Council state what information it has received about the allocation of the 1 million EUA given by the Commission as emergency aid to East and South East England following the storms of 11 - 12 January 1978, and will it state what action it proposes to take to ensure proper accounting by Member States for such grants of Community funds?

44. Question by Mr BETTIZA (H-363/78)

Subject : Delay in concluding the EEC-Yugoslavia negotiations

Could the Council give the reasons for the delay in concluding the EEC-Yugoslavia cooperation agreement, which should enter into force on 1 January ? Is it aware of the negative impact which any delay would have on public opinion in Yugoslavia in particular and Eastern European countries in general ?

45. Question by Mr RYAN (H-367/78)

Subject : International Monetary Fund and the World Bank

Each member of the EEC has a particular quota and related voting strength and representation in the international Monetary Fund and in the Institutions of the World Bank. What discussions have taken place, or are contemplated with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in relation to the proposed European Monetary System and the respective representation, voting powers and quotas of European states in those institutions?

46. Question by Mr McDONALD (H-369/78)

Subject : VAT levies on fresh dairy products

In its report on the situation in the milk sector, the Commission gives as one of its main aims the encouragement of the consumption of fresh dairy products.

Would the Council confirm that in some member countries the rate of VAT on fresh dairy products (eg. yoghurt), is higher than the rate levied of products which are in competition but which contain little or no dairy fat (eg. ice).

47. Question by Mr FLÄMIG (H-370/78)

Subject : Recent action by the Council on energy policy

What progress has the Council made in carrying out the terms of the Parliament's Resolution of October 12 which called upon the Council of Ministers to adopt, as a matter of urgency, outstanding Commission proposals on Community energy policy in line with the declaration made by the European Council at its meeting in Bremen and how far does the Council feel that Community measures are needed to reduce the Community's dependence on imported energy sources?

48. Question by Mr HOLST (H-371/78)

Subject: Nazi war criminals enjoying political asylum in Spain

In the context of the negotiations on Spain's membership of the European Community, does the Council intend to urge that country to hand over persons who have been convicted in Community countries for offences committed during the Second World War but who obtained political asylum in Spain during the Franco period?

49. Question by Mr FELLERMAIER (H-377/78)

Subject: Meeting between EEC and ASEAN Ministers

How does the Council view the results of the meeting between Ministers of the EEC and ASEAN?

50. Question by Mr OSBORN (H-380/78)

Subject : Public transport

How far the view, expressed by the President of the Commission (at a speech in London on 25 September 1978 to the World Planning Congress), that society must become less dependent on the car and revert to public transport, reflects the view of the Council of Ministers, and what in his view would be the impact of promulgating such a policy on the European motor industry, employment in the industry and the general economy and economic activity?

QUESTIONS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE NINE MEMBER STATES OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEETING IN POLITICAL COOPERATION

51. Question by Mrs EWING (H-358/78)

Subject : United Nations Declaration on Rights of the Child

Will the Foreign Ministers co-ordinate their policies on child labour with particular reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the I.L.O. Report on Child Labour which comments on the fact that very few States have ratified the I.L.O. Convention on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment; and will they raise the matter as an issue in dealings with Third Countries.

52. Question by Mr L'ESTRANGE (H-372/78)

Subject : Rhodesia

What is the attitude of the Ministers to the possibility of "all party" talks in Rhodesia?

53. Question by Mr MITCHELL (H-373/78)

Subject : Actions for the release of Mr Koraila

Are the Foreign Ministers prepared to make representations to the Nepalese Government to secure the release of Mr Koraila, leader of the Nepalese democratic opposition, from his long-lasting imprisonment?

54. Question by Mr PRESCOTT (H-374/78)

Subject : Actions for the release of Mr Kim Dae Jung

Are the Foreign Ministers prepared to make representations to the South Korean Government to secure the release of Mr Kim Dae Jung, leader of the South-Korean Democratic Opposition, from his long-lasting imprisonment?

55. Question by Lord BETHELL (H-382/78)

Subject : Cyprus problem

To ask the foreign ministers whether various aspects of the Cyprus problem, in particular the November 9, 1970, general assembly vote and forthcoming decision of the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe on the report of the Commission of Human Rights, have been discussed within the machinery of political cooperation and whether they will explain why it has not been possible to reach a united position on these two matters.