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European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1973-1974

2 July 1973

DOCUMENT 110/73

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

submitted by Mr SPRINGORUM, Chairman,

on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

on the outcome of the Council of the European Communities meeting on
22 May 1973 on energy problems

PE 33.294/fin.

The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the outcome of the meeting of the Council of the European Communities on 22 May 1973 to discuss energy problems;
 - having regard to the final communiqué issued at the meeting of Heads of State or Government of the Member States of the European Communities and the States applying for accession held in Paris from 19 to 21 October 1972;
 - having regard to its previous decisions, in particular
 - that of 12 October 1972 on the security of adequate Community energy supplies with a view to safeguarding, promoting and further developing the Community's competitive ability on the world market, as a pre-condition for economic growth, full employment and a progressive social policy¹, and
 - that of 8 May 1973 on the communications from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 175/72 (a) and (b)) on
 - (a) the progress necessary in Community energy policy,
 - (b) energy policy: problems and resources for the period 1975-1985²;
1. Welcomes the fact that the Commission has succeeded in reactivating the debate on a Community energy policy and urges it to be unremitting in its efforts to implement this policy in the face of all possible future setbacks;
 2. Likewise welcomes the fact that the Council has for the first time held a meeting devoted exclusively to questions of energy policy, despite the considerable lag behind developments in this field, and that it approved in principle a number of Commission proposals and declared its intention of holding further meetings on energy policy in the fairly near future;
 3. Regrets to note, however, by contrast with the Commission, that while acknowledging the urgency of the problems to be solved, the Council was unable to lay down guidelines for a Community energy policy, although the Commission had submitted to it adequate proposals and priorities, which had been approved in principle by the European Parliament;

¹ OJ No C 112, 27 October 1972, p. 32

² OJ No C 37, 4 June 1973, p. 19

4. Further regrets that despite its powers, the Council was unable to reach any trade policy decisions with regard to hydrocarbons, having failed to achieve the necessary unanimity, and that it has therefore not yet carried out the task assigned to it by the Paris Summit Meeting in the matter of energy policy;
5. Refers to its repeated past observations that
 - (a) in view of general political developments, there is no longer any alternative to a Community energy policy and consequently to the provision of the necessary powers, pursuant initially to Article 235 and subsequently to Article 236 of the EEC Treaty,
 - (b) the situation will become more difficult the longer the Member States pursue separate energy policies, instead of acting through the Community institutions, since this will affect and even jeopardize attainment of the aims of the Treaty.
6. Urges the Commission not to abdicate its responsibility to take initiatives in the area of energy policy and thus forestall the danger of being pushed aside by the Governments of the Member States;
7. Is of the opinion that in the interests of securing the Community's energy supply, the Council must take the decisions it has been deferring and agree as early as October of this year on the priorities to be established in the matter of energy policy;
8. Considers in these circumstances that research on new sources and better use of available sources of energy is more necessary than ever and accordingly urges the Council and the Member States once again to provide the Commission forthwith with the requisite powers, where these are not already granted by the ECSC Treaty and the EAEC Treaty;
9. Considers that it will be the Council's own fault if the security of the Community's energy supply in the long term is jeopardized by its intention not to decide until the end of 1973 at the earliest on the new proposals to be made by the Commission on
 - the development of cooperation between energy importing and exporting countries;
 - better use of nuclear energy,
 - the utilization of natural gas,
 - the environmental protection problems related to energy policy,

- the rational use of energy and particularly the waste of energy,
 - research on new sources of energy,
 - the role of coal within the Community;
10. Requests the Council therefore to settle these questions in October 1973 along with the other matters on which decisions are to be reached at that time;
 11. Requests its responsible committee to continue keeping a close watch on energy policy developments and to report to it where necessary;
 12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

European Communities

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Working Documents

1973-1974

2 July 1973

DOCUMENT 115/73

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 111/73-I) for a Directive modifying the Directives of 14 June 1966 concerning the marketing of beet seed, of seed of fodder plants, of cereal seed and of seed potatoes, the Directive of 30 June 1969 concerning the marketing of seed of oil and fibre plants and the Directives of 29 September 1970 concerning the marketing of vegetable seed and the common catalogue of varieties of species of agricultural plants

Rapporteur: Miss A. LULLING

PE 33.436/fin.

By letter of 21 June 1973, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the Treaty establishing the EEC, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Council Directive modifying the Directives of 14 June 1966 concerning the marketing of beet seed, of seed of fodder plants, of cereal seed and of seed potatoes, the Directive of 30 June 1969 concerning the marketing of seed of oil and fibre plants and the Directives of 29 September 1970 concerning the marketing of vegetable seed and the common catalogue of varieties of species of agricultural plants.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal for a directive to the Committee on Agriculture.

The Committee on Agriculture appointed Miss Lulling rapporteur.

The committee considered the proposal for a directive at its meeting of 14 and 15 June 1973, in anticipation of the request for an opinion, and, at the same meeting, unanimously adopted the following motion for a resolution.

The following were present: Mr Houdet, chairman; Mr Vetrone, vice-chairman; Miss Lulling, rapporteur; Mr Baas, Mr Brugger, Mr Durieux, Mr Fröh, Mr Héger, Mr John Hill, Mr Hilliard, Mr Kavanagh, Mr De Koning, Mr Laban, Mr Ligios, the Earl of Mansfield (deputizing for Lord St. Oswald), Mr Martens and Mr Scott-Hopkins.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Directive modifying the Directives of 14 June 1966 concerning the marketing of beet seed, of seed of fodder plants, of cereal seed and of seed potatoes, the Directive of 30 June 1969 concerning the marketing of seed of oil and fibre plants and the Directives of 29 September 1970 concerning the marketing of vegetable seed and the common catalogue of varieties of species of agricultural plants.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM (73) 735 final),
 - having been consulted by the Council, pursuant to Article 43 of the Treaty establishing the EEC (Doc. 111/73),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 115/73),
1. Notes that the proposal contains a number of measures intended to facilitate the marketing of the plants or seed referred to in the Directives of 14 June 1966;
 2. Endorses the economic arguments put forward by the Commission on the need to extend until 1 July 1974 the provisions of Articles 15 and 16(2) of the directives of 14 June 1966 whereby Member States may take decisions regarding equivalence insofar as no Community decision has so far been reached, and on the addition of an Article 33a to the Directive of 29 September 1970 concerning the marketing of vegetable seed, authorizing Member States to allow the marketing in their territory of seed harvested before 1 July 1973 which does not fully comply with the requirements laid down as to germination;
 3. Notes also with satisfaction that the proposal provides for amendments made to the content of the annexes to the basic directives. as a result of progress in scientific or technical knowledge, to be adopted according to the Standing Committee procedure, as stipulated in the Directives of 14 June 1966;
 4. Invites the Commission to publish the basic directives in a single text embodying all the subsequent amendments in order to allow everyone concerned to obtain a comprehensive view of the provisions in force;

5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report of its committee to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The Committee on Agriculture was instructed to consider a proposal for a directive amending the Directives of 14 June 1966 concerning the marketing of beet seed, of seed of fodder plants, of cereal seed and of seed potatoes, the Directive of 30 June 1969 concerning the marketing of seed of oil and fibre plants and the Directives of 29 September 1970 concerning the marketing of vegetable seed and the common catalogue of varieties of species of agricultural plants. The essential purpose of these amendments is to profit from the experience acquired during six years of application of the basic directives of 14 June 1966 (CJ No.125, 11 July 1966).

2. The proposal under consideration contains what may be described as horizontal provisions, where identical measures apply to several basic directives, and specific provisions relating exclusively to individual directives.

I. Horizontal provisions

3. Packaging

The new provisions on packaging relate to beet seed, (Article 1) and seed of fodder plants (Article 2).

They lay down Community rules for packaging, whereas hitherto some latitude had been allowed Member States.

4. Labelling

Amendments concerning small packages are introduced in certain parts of the annexes to the basic directive. It has been found in the past that the obligatory information was too detailed and could not be fitted onto the labels.

5. Establishment of equivalence

Article 15 and 16(1) of the various basic directives stipulates that the Council shall establish on a Commission proposal, whether seed of plants produced in third countries may obtain a certificate of equivalence to Community seed conforming to the provisions of the directives. Until the Council has announced its decision, Member States may themselves establish equivalence. This provision was due to expire on 1 July 1969, but had been extended to 1 July 1973.

The proposal under consideration extends this facility once again in the case of beet seed, seed of fodder plants, cereal seed (Article 3) and seed of oil plants (Article 5). It would seem that this extension is especially intended to cater for imports from East Germany, from which West Germany imports a certain number of seeds in respect of which the Council has so far failed to take any decision as to equivalence.

6. Procedure for amending the annexes

Articles 21a of the various directives and 40a of the Directive on vegetable seed stipulate that amendments made to the annexes as a result of progress in science or technology shall be decided by the Council (amended Directive of 30 March 1971; see OJ No. L 87, 17 April 1971).

The intention underlying the text under examination is to replace the Council decision by a decision taken by the Commission through the Standing Committee. The Committee on Agriculture endorses this proposal, which conforms to the views expressed by the European Parliament on many occasions, with particular satisfaction, since in the case of directives on seed the Standing Committee uses the procedure advocated by the European Parliament, namely the management committees procedure.

II. Specific provisions

7. The most important of these provisions relates to the marketing of cereal seed (Article 3). The basic directive stipulates at least one official field inspection of the seed each year. However justified such a system may be in theory, it has proved impossible to implement in practice owing to the large areas of land under seed cultivation in some of the Member States. Moreover, these inspections by highly qualified inspectors have to be carried out within a two-month period, which gives rise to problems concerning the remuneration of such inspectors.

From now on it is proposed that this inspection be carried out in advance, i.e. on the two generations of pre-basic seed immediately preceding the basic seed. The official field inspection is to be restricted to a random check of at least 20% of the crops of each species.

This provision, which has been introduced on a trial basis, is valid only to 31 December 1978 and relates exclusively to seed of autogamous species.

8. Another specific provision, of a technical type, stipulates the addition of Phleum bertolonii to the list of seed referred to in the basic

directive on the marketing of fodder plant seed.

9. Finally, it is proposed to extend until 1 July 1975 the possibility of allowing the marketing of seed harvested before 1 July 1973 and not complying fully with the requirements specified in Annex II as regards germination. Such seed is subject to special labelling. These measures are of particular concern to the new Member States and are intended to avoid the need to destroy certain existing stocks that do not meet Community requirements.

III. Publication of all the provisions

10. The lengthy research which the rapporteur had to undertake to assemble all the current provisions prompts him to request the Commission to issue a single publication containing the basic directive and subsequent amendments thereto.

Since this suggestion only involves the compilation of existing texts, it would not even be necessary to submit a formal proposal to Parliament or the Council. An informative publication of this kind would avoid any dispute as to the content of the directives whilst providing interested persons with a complete text of current laws.

The Commission had in fact suggested such an arrangement in a proposal submitted to Parliament previously.

