

## No protection, please, but.....

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A new crisis for the European Community is beginning to loom in the Mediterranean. On Thursday January 19 the European Parliament passed a report from its Agriculture Committee which voiced strong criticism of the way farmers in Southern Europe are being treated. There could be significant consequences for the Common Agricultural Policy, for the external trade policy of the Community, and for the prospects of Greek, Portuguese and Spanish membership.

To begin with, the report contains significant statistical evidence that the farmers of S. France and Italy — among the poorest in the Community — are getting an increasingly raw deal out of the CAP. Price support expenditure is going to “northern” products like milk, rather than “southern” products like fruit and vegetables; indeed it is likely that milk will absorb no less than 42% of the total in 1978, as compared to only 15% for all Mediterranean products (fruit and vegetables, wine, tobacco, olive oil and durum wheat). The CAP was actually increasing inequality, complained Italian Christian Democrat Ferruccio Pisoni.

The more disturbing aspects of the report and of the debate, however, concerned Mediterranean products from outside the Community. The subject had hit the headlines, noted Mr Pisoni, because of the Greek, Portuguese and Spanish applications for Community membership; but various association agreements already signed with Mediterranean countries were already bringing matters to a head. They had, in the words of the resolution, “helped to aggravate the already precarious position of the Community’s Mediterranean regions”. “We don’t want protectionism”, concluded Mr Pisoni, “but.....”

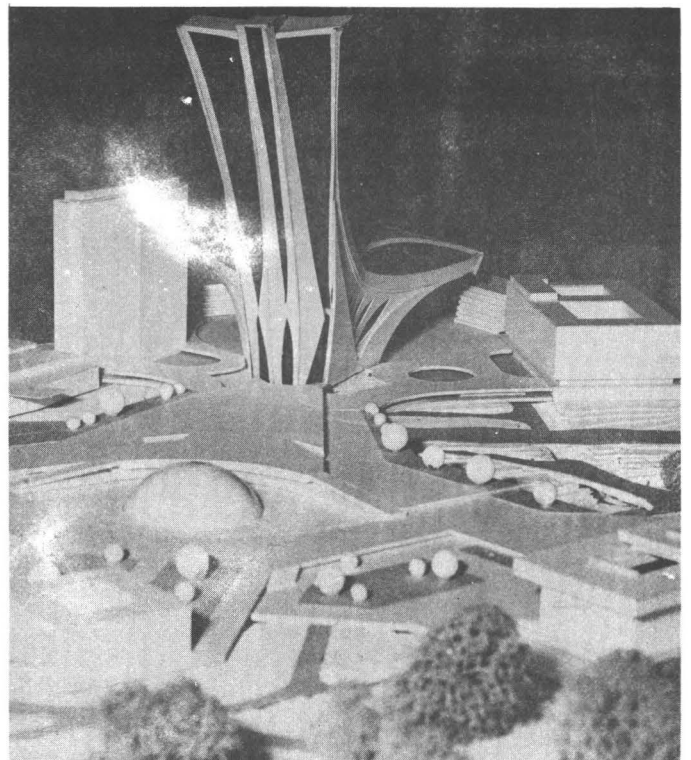
Protection, indeed, was the main theme of the debate. Mark Hughes (Soc/UK) attacked the resolution with all the logic and verve of Cobden: “As long as protectionism allows the producer to keep using inefficient farming methods, so long will this Community and others have to pay an even higher price to induce the necessary changes.”

In this, he received the significant support of Commissioner Gundelach at the end of the debate. The end result of shutting out third countries’ exports would be that they, in turn, would shut out imports from the Community. “I would remind the House that Italy is exporting oranges with refunds from the Community; it was self-defeating to “clog up the channels of trade”.

But there was clearly a groundswell of unease in the Parliament that was not going to be stilled by appeals to classical economics. Hourly costs in agriculture in southern Italy, Mr Pisoni had pointed out, were between 2,300 and 2,800 lire an hour; in neighbouring North Africa they were between 1,500 and 1,800 a day. How was open competition possible? Like the report, he also mentioned “the frustration of southern farmers who are forced, for example, to destroy tons of peaches while the German market is being flooded with Greek peaches”.

The House also took the point that if the Mediterranean farmers were forced out of agriculture, there was very little else for them to do. Commissioner Gundelach himself noted this, and concluded that the real answer lay in more investment and in structural reforms which the Commission was even now proposing. When the vote came, however, it was clear that the majority of Members suspected such reform would be too little and too late. All Mark Hughes’ amendments were defeated, and the protectionist clauses passed.

Parliament’s report has no legal or binding effect — it is an “own initiative” report, not based on a specific Commission proposal. It is, however, a significant “shot across the bows” of both Council and Commission. Political pressure against both enlargement and Mediterranean association agreements are clearly building up.



What is it? see back page.

## Community health warning

The cigarette is more lethal than the motor car; yet there are 43 directives concerning road traffic and none to regulate the sale or use of tobacco. In reply to this call by Vera Squarcialupi (Com/It) on Tuesday January 17 to initiate a Community-wide campaign to reduce smoking, Commissioner Henk Vredeling agreed there was an alarming correlation between smoking and cancer. Commissioner Richard Burke felt useful measures would include, if enforceable, a ban on the sale of tobacco to minors and a convincing education campaign. The Council had also, he informed the House,

asked the Commission to draw up a report on the results of the UK surtax levied on cigarettes with high tar-yields.

James Spicer (Con/UK) commented that this measure had been effective in the UK, but warned against excessive legislation. We might, he added, finish up introducing compulsory jogging on the grounds that it was healthy. John Corrie (Con/UK) felt that cigarette advertising was in fact useful as it presented the consumer with a choice. Tobacco firms, he said, should be actively encouraged to produce tobacco substitutes. In reply to the debate Commissioner Burke reported that in 1976 the fiscal revenue from tobacco in the UK had been £1,880 m.

## A fair wind for EMU

There is no doubt about President of the Commission Roy Jenkins' determination to relaunch, if he possibly can, Economic and Monetary Union. In a major speech to the European Parliament on Tuesday January 17 he developed the case made in Florence in November last year: that EMU is essential to rescue the Community from the present economic doldrums, and meet the challenge of enlargement.

The relaunching of EMU, President Jenkins said, had already "received a fair wind from the European Council". In general, it seemed to get one from the European Parliament, too, though there were several complaints that the time allocated to the debate was insufficient.

There were doubts, however. Lord Bruce (Soc/UK) and John Prescott (Soc/UK) were firmly of the opinion that talk of EMU was premature. First, the disparity between the rich and poor areas had to be narrowed. And Winnie Ewing (Ind/UK) feared it would lead to even more centralisation —

"small is beautiful too", she concluded.

In a robust summing up, however, President Jenkins defended the need for some long-term strategy. Progress could not really be made on the day to day problems without a sense of direction. And he directly confronted the Bruce/Prescott thesis by maintaining that there had to be some discernible benefit for the strong as well as the weak — mere re-distribution would not be accepted. And it was not necessary for there to be equality of economic performance for benefits to be felt by all.

## Hayward and Underhill in Luxembourg

The Labour Party has still not formally decided to take part in European elections. The national executive on January 22 once more postponed a decision, notwithstanding the fact that, several months ago, practical arrangements on how to choose candidates were decided.

Meanwhile, general secretary Ron Hayward and national agent Reg Underhill spent two days the previous week in Luxembourg at the January plenary. At the end of the visit Mr. Hayward stressed that, in the 1975 referendum, he had voted against while Mr. Underhill had voted for.

by its own decision, not taken part) was, he said, too "federalist". It would be more beneficial to discuss "guidelines" for the socialist parties in the Nine, leaving each one to fight the elections in its own way.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hayward thinks that there is a major information job to be done



But European elections would take place (though even 1979, in his view, was over-hasty) and the Labour Party ought to take part in them.

On the other hand, after sitting in at a meeting of the Confederation of Socialist Parties in the Community, he doubted the possibility of achieving a common manifesto. The draft document (in the drawing up of which the Labour Party had,

about the Community. "Lots of things are being blamed onto the Common Market which are nothing to do with the Common Market." He doubted, too, that the ignorance of the British people was any worse than in other countries, and urged the European Parliament's secretariat and the Commission to produce simple, factual information about the Parliament and the Community.

## The fight for Dansk

Hardly any topic seems to bring out the old Adam of nationalism in the European Parliament as much as language. This was quite apparent on Tuesday January 17, when new Italian Member Mario Fioret (CD) indignantly brought up the reported suggestion by Commissioner Haferkamp that the Community should use only French, English and German as working languages. Commissioner Tugendhat explained quietly that this was only for "certain internal documents" but Question Time at once woke up.

Christopher Price (Soc/UK) weighed in with the observations that 70% of the Parliament's expenses were due to its

"linguistic and geographical momentum", and that something would have to be done anyway when the total of languages expanded to nine (i.e. plus Greek, Portuguese and Spanish). But Kai Nyborg (EPD) and Karen Dahlerup (Soc) immediately sprang to the defence of Danish (probably the most threatened language), compelling the Commissioner to re-affirm "equal rights... for languages not so widely spoken". Sir Geoffrey de Freitas (Soc/UK) observed that the directly elected Parliament might have in it "men and women who don't know one single word of a foreign language". "If people were appointed... on the basis of linguistic ability", replied Tugendhat, "some of us would not get very far".

## Getting off the ground

"It requires little imagination to visualise the cut-throat murderous competition for the helicopter market." This was how Tom Normanton (Con/UK) saw the situation when on Tuesday, January 17 the House considered proposals for aid to the Community aeronautical industry — which employs some 500,000 in the Community — with particular emphasis on helicopters and airframes. Several Members urged greater competitiveness with the United States in this field. To achieve this, Lord Bruce of Donington (Soc/UK) pointed out, the Community should make available vastly greater funds, which at present amounted to only 0.7% of the GDP. James Spicer (Con/UK) warned that people in his own constituency employed in the aircraft industry feared their jobs were in jeopardy.

## Prairie fires

"Today states... have enormous powers to promote unhappiness and to deny the opportunity for happiness." Thus Sir Derek Walker-Smith (Con/UK) summed up the House's concern to promote human rights when it debated the Nine's obligations under the Final Act of Helsinki on Wednesday, January 18, with particular reference to separated families in Eastern Europe. Everyone, he said, should be assured of the basic human right to leave his country and to return to it.

Amnesty International handles nearly 5,000 cases of human rights violations each year, reported Charles McDonald (CD/Irl), when on the same day the House expressed its approval at the award of the 1977 Peace Prize to that body. John Prescott (Soc/UK) went further and suggested that Community resources be made available to Amnesty. He urged that member states curb all abuse of human rights within their own territories and to suspend aid to countries where undemocratic acts are perpetrated.

"All our work is about human freedom," stated Bob Edwards (Soc/UK) when the House on Thursday, January 19 condemned the recent deportations of political and trade union leaders in Chile. It was essential, he said, to prevent the violations of human rights in Latin America from spreading "like a prairie fire". Lord Bethell (Con/UK) commented that while he was delighted that all political groups supported the motion he had noted with dismay in the past that wherever oppression by the Soviet Union was being discussed the Communist Group chose not to intervene.

## Paper chase

"We in Europe are profligate in the use of raw materials, energy, food and other priceless products." This was Tom Normanton's (Con/UK) indictment when the House debated paper recycling on Friday January 20. The Community could, he said, increase the proportion of recycled paper utilised to 58%. He warned, however, that the development of a de-inking process — designed to turn newspaper back into paper for printing — should not result in excessive energy consumption. Lord Murray of Gravesend (Soc/UK) said he welcomed any measure which would reduce our 50% dependence on imports of paper. He added that it would be useful to devise ways to organise the collection of waste paper.



## Temptation resisted

Commenting on the inaugural address of the new President of the Council, Danish Foreign Minister Knud Andersen, Lord Ardwick (Soc/UK) expressed a feeling common among MEPs when he underlined that the power to act against the unemployment facing the Community countries (and many more besides) lay with the member governments. "All the Commission does is to urge them on in these worthy causes, and that is all that we in this Parliament can do too."

Mr. Andersen shared this unease. The economic crisis, he stressed, had revealed the vulnerability of Europe and its dependence on cooperation with the rest of the world. The Nine had slowly learned to adapt themselves to working together under adverse conditions and they had resisted the temptation to retreat into national protectionism and to disregard the rest of the world. In particular, he argued, the Community had lived up to its responsibilities to the Third World, whose own problems had been to an even greater extent exacerbated by the crisis. But without being as specific about monetary union as had been Commission President Jenkins the previous day Mr. Anderson did stress how, in his Government's view, the monetary "snake" (whereby some Community currencies are linked together) remained the basis of a return to true monetary cooperation between the Nine.



Knud Andersen

## Rhodesia

As the Rhodesian impasse drags on, so does sanctions-busting. And by major European concerns, alleged Christopher Price (Soc/UK), including the big Belgian banking concern Société Générale de Banque which has links with air-cargo firms registered in Gabon which fly goods from Rhodesia to Zaire. Council President Andersen reminded the house that Community governments had recently once more had their attention drawn to the need to respect UN rules. But his compatriot Uwe Jensen (EPD/Dk) argued that the Community should not interfere in Rhodesia and that companies should be free to trade where they liked; and Mr. Andersen, speaking as Danish Foreign Minister, felt obliged to intervene once more to say that this view was not at all widely held in Denmark. For Lord St Oswald (Con/UK) sanctions were now irrelevant: the need was to get a peaceful internal settlement on the lines Ian Smith proposed.

## Regional Fund — the x ingredient

The future of Community Regional policy — the main bone of contention in December (see *EPR* 42) — was back in the limelight at the start of Parliament's New Year on Monday January 16. A new way emerged to put back into the Regional Fund the 75 million EUA (£59 m.) which Parliament failed to get into the 1978 budget.

Ostensibly, the debate was on the Commission's report for 1976; and as Russell Johnston (Lib/UK) noted when introducing his report on the subject, "reports on annual reports are seldom... the most instructive documents." Early on in the debate, however, Commissioner Giolitti turned the whole focus of attention with a detailed account of what is happening in the Council of Ministers on the new Fund for 1978-80. Certain problems had been solved, he announced — for example, the "quotas" to be allocated to each Member country. Others were still under discussion: most important, the question of the "x" quota — a sum for distribution at the sole discretion of the Commission, and untied to any particular country. On this, said the Commissioner, "obstacles are strewn our path in Council".

The "x" factor, however, was identified by both Mr. Johnston and Mr. Giolitti as the key to the whole policy. As long as

money was allocated to specific countries, there could be no guarantee of "additionality" — i.e. that the money spent on a particular project really was "additional" to what governments would have spent anyway. There were suspicions, voiced by Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Con/UK) among others, that some national Exchequers were pocketing the money. And this, as the Commissioner noted, made nonsense of the whole operation: "additionality is the *raison d'être* of the Fund".

But controversy on the "x" quota is one element of a wider debate; to what extent can the Regional Fund be taken out of the hands of national governments altogether? New Irish EPD Member Sean Brosnan told of one Irish firm who were outraged when Commission officials came to examine their books to see how Regional Fund money had been spent. As far as the firm was concerned, the money appeared to come from the national government.

## Towards a positive foreign policy

There have been "real successes in working towards a common European foreign policy," as Conservative leader Geoffrey Rippon remarked to Parliament on Wednesday January 18. This very progress, however, has focused attention on the organisational deficiencies of "political co-operation" (as it is called) — nothing, for example, is said about it in any of the Treaties. So the European Parliament has suggested a number of improvements.

Introducing his report on the subject, Erik Blumenfeld (CD/Ger) noted that most national parliaments are fast losing the ability to control European foreign policy, partly because this is now being co-ordinated at Community level. The European Parliament was entitled to be informed through quarterly "colloques" in the Political Affairs Committee, but could only make minimal contributions to the formulation of policy. Meanwhile, despite technical improvements like the COREUNET communications system between foreign ministries, the institutions for determining policy were unsatisfactory.

Perhaps the worst aspect, however, as Mr. Rippon later emphasised, was that "political co-operation so far has seldom led to anything more than the Community simply reacting to events". But Parliament could help to remedy this: the resolution called on the Foreign Ministers to take account of foreign policy guidelines laid down by the Parliament. The distinction between "Community" matters (i.e., those covered by the ECSC, EEC and Euratom Treaties) and "political co-operation" matters should also be ended; and the organisational reforms suggested in the Tindemans Report should be implemented.

## Worst things at sea

The best framework in which the Community can work to secure safety for ships' crews is through the United Nations, Commissioner Giolitti told John Prescott (Soc/UK) on Monday January 16. In fact the Commission was currently considering taking a common position on pollution of the sea especially by oil. Mr. Prescott reminded the House of the Globtik Venus episode and warned that if ships' crews could not be assured of satisfactory working conditions and standards of safety the seamen's unions would call for co-ordinated strike action this summer.

## 15 out of 16 in December

At its session in December Parliament voted favourably on 12 of the 16 Commission proposals which it debated. On three of these the House had made amendments which were acceptable to the Commission, Commissioner Giolitti reported on Monday, January 16. The Commission had not, however, accepted amendments to a proposal for a survey on agricultural holdings.

## Air Fares

Commissioner Vouel told Kai Nyborg (EPD/UK) that the Commission was preparing a regulation concerning air fares. He agreed with Lord Bethell (Con/UK) that fares within the Community were too high because of agreements made with IATA.

## Falkland Islands

President Andersen told John Osborn (Con/UK) that a Council decision concerning co-operation with associated countries would benefit the economy of the Falkland Islands. He told Lord Murray of Gravesend (Soc/UK) and Winifred Ewing (Ind/UK) that supporting the Islands against the claims of Argentina was not within the Council's competence.

## Ceylon Tea

Commissioner Tugendhat told Bob Edwards (Soc/UK) that the Sri Lanka tea industry would be on the agenda at the session of the EEC-Sri Lanka Joint Committee in the spring of 1978.

# Unofficial Journal

There is no doubt what the main talking point was at the European Parliament's January sitting — the Luxembourg Government's plans for a vast new building to house the directly elected Parliament. It started off as a rumour; became a leak to the press; and before long copies of the plans were proliferating as fast as they could be xeroxed.

"Centre 300", if it ever comes off, will be of awesome design, size and cost. The work of French architect Roger Taillibert (the man behind the Olympic stadium in Montreal) it will look something like a gigantic aeroplane with no wings and an extended tail — or, as some put it more unkindly, like a huge goose. Its main feature will be a 168 metre tower, leaning at an angle of some 30 degrees from the vertical over the motorway, and containing individual offices for the 410 MPs. Counter-balancing this will be a large "body" with a Parliament Chamber capable of taking up to 765.

Not surprisingly, the first reaction of most people was: how much? The answer is some £75 million, which would be put up by a consortium of banks operating in Luxembourg, and guaranteed by the Government. No cost, then, so far to the Community taxpayer. The estimated annual rent, however, could be something in the region of £4 million which definitely *would* fall on the Community budget.

The real issue, however, is not

(principally composed of those who despair of ever getting efficient air connections to the other two cities) want to move to Brussels. Hence Luxembourg's dramatic pre-emptive strike.

## Much ado about O

*More curiosities of the Community: if you get hold of Commission regulations (EEC) 2 (January 2), 5 (January 3), 10 (January 4), 18 (January 5) and 44 (January 11) of this year, all printed impeccably in the "Official Journal", you will find that they each consist of 4-column tables giving the "premiums to be added to the import levies on cereals, flour and malt". This category is carefully broken down into 16 sub-headings (from "common wheat and meslin", through "grain sorghum" to "unroasted malt, other than that obtained from wheat, other than in the form of flour"): 64 figures in all.*

*They are all "O"!*

## Tories not at prayer?

Hard on the heels of the Ulster Unionist Council, which sent a delegation to the European Parliament in December, came Dr. Ian Paisley, MP, and 23 other members of the Ulster Democratic Unionist Party. Unlike the official Unionists, who were divided over UK membership of the Community, Dr. Paisley's flock were vigorously opposed at the time of the referendum — partly perhaps, because they saw undue Catholic influence in what, by an accident of history, is known as the Treaty of Rome.

During their visit the DUP talked to MPs from the Conservative and the Progressive Democrat Groups (the latter in the person of Dublin Senator Michael Yeats), as well as an Independent (Winnie Ewing). They had hoped to talk to one of the Dutch Calvinist members of the

## The PK room

*A plaque commemorating the late Sir Peter Kirk was unveiled in Luxembourg by President of the European Parliament Emilio Colombo on Thursday, January 19. The committee room in the Parliament's headquarters normally used by the European Conservative Group, of which Sir Peter was leader from the beginning of 1973 until his death in April 1977, will from now on be known as the "Peter Kirk Room".*



*Present at the unveiling were Lady Kirk and members of the family, representatives of the political groups in the Parliament, of the Parliament staff, of the European Movement, and of Sir Peter's former constituency, Saffron Walden.*

## No BB

One or two British Members of the European Parliament seemed a little disappointed as the January sitting in Luxembourg closed on Friday 20. Several newspapers (for example, the "South Wales Echo" and the Middlesbrough "Evening Gazette") had run stories just before Christmas promising that none other than Brigitte Bardot would be addressing the European Parliament in January — on the subject of seal hunting.

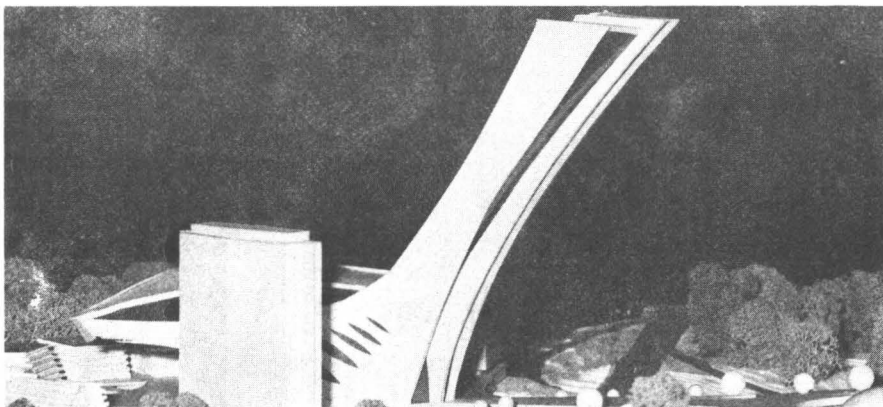
But first, seals didn't appear on the agenda at all. And then Miss Bardot didn't turn up. What went wrong?

The answer lies in the continuing confusion between the Assembly of the nine Community countries (i.e., the European Parliament) and the Assembly of the 20-country Council of Europe, made that much more confusing in that both meet in the Palace of Europe in Strasbourg. As it happened, Brigitte was speaking on seals, but on January 24 to the Council Assembly. Moreover, the European Parliamentarians only missed her by a whisker; two days later the Council Members were joined in Strasbourg by the European Parliamentarians for a joint discussion on human rights.

## No connection

*Meanwhile, "Woman's Own" has been carrying out a number of surveys of public opinion. "4,000 voiced your feelings on the complicated issue of direct elections to the European Parliament," the Editor reported, "10,000 told us about your dreams — and pretty saucy they were, too."*

K.P.G.



financial. "If the Luxembourg Government wishes to chance its arm," remarked Jim Spicer (Con/UK), "then that is their own affair." What had Members and staff alike rushing off to form cabals in every office, bar and corridor is the effect on the undeclared war between Luxembourg, Strasbourg and Brussels to become the eventual "capital of Europe". Where the elected Parliament goes, it is plausibly argued, the power will eventually lie. And Strasbourg struck the first blow at the beginning of last year by opening the "Palace of Europe" — at present, the only Parliament building capable of taking the 410 elected Members. A very large lobby

Christian Democrat Group — but both have just gone off to join the new Dutch Government. Instead, however, a fascinating discussion took place with a Dutch official of the Group, who didn't do badly at all when asked by Dr. Paisley to define "Christian" in "Christian Democrat", and say why the British Conservatives hadn't joined. "We agree with you," commented a delighted Dr. Paisley at the end, "that the Conservatives are not a particularly Christian party!"

After the visit, Dr. Paisley told the press that he was still opposed to the Community; but that would not stop him standing for the European Parliament.