

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

1979 - 1980

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DOCUMENT 1-626/79

## Motion for a resolution <sup>(1)</sup>

tabled by Mr **LIGIOS**

on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the campaign against African swine fever

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<sup>(1)</sup> Unanimously adopted by the Committee on Agriculture at its meeting of 17/18 December 1979.

Present: Sir Henry Plumb, chairman; Mr Caillavet, vice-chairman; Mr Ligios, vice-chairman and rapporteur; Mrs Castle, Mr Clinton, Mr de Courcy-Ling (deputizing for Mr Kirk), Mr Curry, Mr De Keersmaecker (deputizing for Mr Colleselli), Mr Früh, Mr Gatto, Mr Helms, Mr Howell, Mr Jürgens, Mr Maffre-Baugé, Mr d'Ormesson, Mr Pranchère, Mr Provan, Miss Quin, Mr Sutra de Germa, Mr Vernimmen, Mr Wettig and Mr Woltjer.



The European Parliament,

- considering that it is vital for the Community to take urgent action to eradicate African swine fever,
- considering that this disease has been spreading in parts of the Community for more than two years, leading to the destruction of almost the entire pig stocks,
- considering that African swine fever is spreading in Sardinia and has come directly from the African continent,

1. Requests the Commission to give urgent consideration to the situation which has arisen in parts of the Community as a result of African swine fever, which appeared over two years ago, necessitating the destruction of 80% of pig stocks, and threatens to spread to other regions unless strong measures are taken to bring it under control;
2. Requests the Commission to propose immediate financial aid by the Community to eradicate African swine fever in the Community in cooperation with the Member States concerned;
3. Requests the Commission to extend the measures already envisaged for Malta and Spain to include the African countries from which African swine fever is spreading directly into parts of the Community;
4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. African swine fever is a viral disease which is extremely contagious since it can be carried not only by animals but also by meat and by the waste often used in pigswill. The principal features that distinguish it from European or classical swine fever are the type of virus and the course of the disease, which in general is more severe and nearly always fatal. The virus spread from Africa, where it is always present in healthy carriers such as wild boar, reaching France via Portugal and Spain on three occasions, and also Italy.

2. At present there are centres of infection in Spain and Malta and, as far as the Community is concerned, in Sardinia. The Community has earmarked 5 million EUA to support measures to combat African swine fever in Malta and throughout the Iberian peninsula, the purpose being to eradicate it from these neighbouring countries and hence prevent it spreading to the Community.

However, these measures are inadequate. In view of the local trade between North Africa and Sardinia, it is not enough to combat the disease in the Iberian peninsula and Malta; similar action to that taken in Turkey to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease is required to ensure that the disease-free zone includes the African countries.

In addition, since the end of 1972 the Community has provided 2.723 million EUA for a research programme in the field of classical and African swine fever<sup>1</sup>. Five specialized laboratories, in the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Spain and Portugal, are at present carrying out studies into the African swine fever virus (ASFV), its resistance and properties, antigens, immunobiology and pathogenesis. According to the Commission's report, these studies have enabled significant progress to be made.

3. The situation in Sardinia has reached catastrophic proportions. Its pig stocks have been decimated: since no preventive vaccination was carried out, vast numbers of pigs have had to be slaughtered - 80% of a pig population which totalled around 300,000 at the beginning of 1977. In addition there is a risk that this epizootic disease may spread to other Community regions, in spite of drastic health measures such as the ban on exports of pigmeat products from Sardinia to the mainland.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Commission's report to Council and Parliament of 28 June 1978, COM(78) 294 final

4. Under Item 3102 of the budget, which provides an appropriation of 2.5 million EUA, likewise for 1980, for assistance in the event of outbreaks of epizootic diseases<sup>1</sup>, the Community refunds 50% of the expenditure incurred by Italy to combat this appalling disease; the refund was 2 million EUA in the period 1978-79. However, this is not enough: it is essential for the Community to take action on a much wider scale to eradicate African swine fever from Community territory. This calls for the implementation of a programme similar to the one introduced in 1977 to eradicate brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis among cattle, which provides substantial budget appropriations - roughly 130 million EUA - for the three-year period covered by the programme and reimburses the Member States at the rate of 60 EUA for each cow and 30 EUA for every other head of cattle slaughtered as part of the measures to combat the diseases in question.

5. It is therefore a matter of urgency for the Commission to submit a programme of this kind, backed by adequate funding, and for the Council to adopt it as soon as possible. Only by taking immediate action can African swine fever be eradicated.

The Committee on Agriculture therefore requests the European Parliament to adopt this motion for a resolution.

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<sup>1</sup> See Council Decision No. 77/97 of 21 December 1976, OJ No. L 26, 31.1.1977

