

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the
Council for/

- a Directive on brucellosis, tuberculosis and swine fever and prolonging certain derogations granted to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom (Doc. 465/78)
- a Directive authorizing the Italian Republic to postpone the notification and implementation of its national plans for the accelerated eradication of brucellosis and tuberculosis in cattle (Doc. 466/78)

Rapporteur : Mr C. DURAND

1.2.2.

By letter of 23 November 1978 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for

- a directive on brucellosis, tuberculosis and swine fever and prolonging certain derogations granted to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and
- a directive authorizing the Italian Republic to postpone the notification and implementation of its national plans for the accelerated eradication of brucellosis and tuberculosis in cattle.

The President of the European Parliament referred these proposals to the Committee on Agriculture.

On 13 December 1978 the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Durand rapporteur.

It considered these proposals at its meeting of 19 December 1978.

At the same meeting the committee adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement with 8 votes in favour and five abstentions.

Present: Mr Hughes, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Durand, rapporteur; Mr Andersen, Mr Brugger, Mr Corrie, Mr Cunningham, Mrs Dunwoody, Mr Halvgaard, Mr Lemp, Mr Willi Müller, Mr Brøndlund Nielsen, Mr Scott-Hopkins and Mr Vitale.

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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 proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for

- a directive on brucellosis, tuberculosis and swine fever and prolonging certain derogations granted to Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom
- a directive authorizing the Italian Republic to postpone the notification and implementation of its national plans for the accelerated eradication of brucellosis and tuberculosis in cattle

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 465/78 and Doc. 466/78),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 544/78),
1. Approves the Commission's proposals;
 2. Expresses the wish that an appropriate Community policy will be adopted and implemented in the veterinary and plant health sectors.
 3. Calls on the Member States which still require authorization to apply national rules and maintain protective measures in respect of infectious diseases in cattle or to postpone the date for the implementation of Community rules for the eradication of brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis to cooperate immediately and fully in the establishment of a Community policy in the veterinary and plant health sectors so that those barriers to intra-Community trade in cattle and meat which still exist can be eliminated.

¹ OJ No. C 289, 2.12.1978, p. 4 and 6

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The proposal authorizing the Italian Republic to postpone the notification and implementation of its national plans for the accelerated eradication of brucellosis and tuberculosis in cattle is designed to take account of the difficulties which Italy is experiencing in drawing up and implementing its national plans for the eradication of the infectious cattle diseases in question.

Council Directive 78/52/EEC¹ imposes on the Member States the obligation to put into effect the necessary legal and administrative provisions for the implementation of national plans for the accelerated eradication of brucellosis, tuberculosis and enzootic leucosis in cattle. These plans must satisfy specific technical criteria and be approved by the Commission in order to qualify for Community financial aid.

The difficulties which have arisen in Italy result from the transfer of powers to the regions whereby the latter are responsible for the drawing up and application of national plans. Before applying the plans the regions first have to forward information concerning the drawing up of the plans to the Government in Rome.

So far, the Commission has not been able to approve one single plan from Italy, because of the transfer of powers in this sector to the regions, and consequently no financial aid has been granted. This involved a general problem resulting from the process of decentralization in Italy which also causes delays in other sectors of the common agricultural policy, for example in the implementation of the common structural policy. Needless to say, it is primarily in Italy's own interests that its herds of cattle should be freed from brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis and that the plans for this sector should be submitted with all speed so that the Commission can approve them and then grant financial aid.

The one-year extension of the deadline for the implementation in Italy of the Community's programme must therefore be considered sufficiently lengthy if some pressure is to be exerted for the rapid submission of the eradication programmes.

¹ OJ No. L 15, 19.1.1978, p.34

The other proposal concerns the prolongation of the derogations from Community provisions granted to the new Member States in respect of brucellosis, tuberculosis and swine fever.

These Member States are thereby authorized to retain their national provisions in 1979 pending the implementation of Community rules to eradicate infectious diseases in cattle.

A few technical problems have arisen with respect to the harmonization of the provisions on brucellosis and tuberculosis but the Commission expects that they will be solved in time for proposals to be submitted to the Council during the first half of the following year.

In the past eighteen months the Council has made up a lot of ground by adopting basic texts in the veterinary sector. It is now up to the Commission to make a start on the implementation of the measures. The Committee on Agriculture is pleased to note this progress because in the past it has repeatedly blamed the Council for the delay in the harmonization of national veterinary provisions and accused it of a lack of political volition in this respect.

In the case of swine fever, Community rules are being drawn up; they will be submitted to the Council and European Parliament during December 1978. National rules can then finally be dispensed with and the new Member States' markets opened up to trade in meat and live animals from the other Member States, making intra-Community free trade a reality.

The health standard of cattle herds in the new Member States is high; nonetheless, it should be noted that Community rules provide a guarantee that this high standard will be maintained and that the new Member States need have not cause to fear that the health of their herds might be adversely affected when free trade in animals and meat from the other Member States is introduced. It is important particularly for the new Member States to realize that effective Community cooperation offers the best guarantee of a high level of health protection and that national protective measures will then be superfluous. A fundamental objective of the common agricultural policy - and of the Treaty of Rome itself - is at stake here, namely the realization of free, unhindered trade.

The Committee on Agriculture supports the policy being pursued by the Commission and Council and approves the proposals.

