



Going Public: Open Hearings To Be Held

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Although the monthly meetings of European Parliament Committees are normally held behind closed doors an increasing number of Committees are opting to hold public hearings on matters of topical interest and major public concern. Representatives of the Commission – frequently the Commissioners – are questioned and evidence is also heard from invited experts. The most recent hearing was held in Brussels on 31 January by the Political Affairs Committee. The subject was “Developments in **Afghanistan** and the political repercussions for the European Community”. Commission President Roy Jenkins took part following his recent talks in Washington.

Other hearings already held include air traffic control and oil pollution and maritime safety. Following the Afghanistan hearing the Political Affairs Committee is drawing up plans for a hearing on the proposed Madrid follow-up **Conference on Security and Cooperation** in Europe.

World hunger will be the subject of a hearing in Brussels on 18 and 19 February organised by the Committee on Development and Cooperation together with Members for the Political Affairs, External Economic Relations and Agriculture Com-

mittees and representatives from Community institutions. Among those participating will be: the President of the World Food Council Mr Tango of the Philippines, the President of the United Nations North-South Commission Willy Brandt, the President of the United States hunger (“Carter”) Committee Mr Linovitz, and Ministers from developing countries including Senegal and Bangladesh.

Consumer protection policy is to be the theme of a hearing arranged by the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection Committee to be held on 26 and 27 February in Dublin Castle and chaired by committee chairman Kenneth Collins (Soc/UK). Topics covered will include the Community’s action programme, public and after-sale services, information (including labelling) and education, pricing policy and distortions and non-profit and cooperative undertakings. Representatives from the Commission, Economic and Social Committee, European consumer, family, advertising, co-op, mail order, trades unions, agriculture and industry, chamber of commerce, local authority organisations, UNESCO and OECD have been invited to participate.

Inter - Parliamentary Links

“I attach the most extreme importance to links between Europe and the United States”, the President of the European Parliament, Madame Simone Veil told the press club in Washington on 28 January at the start of a week of consultations between Members of the European Parliament and a delegation from the United States House of Representatives. The following day she held talks with President Carter. British Members Roland Boyes (Soc/Durham), William Newton Dunn (Dem/Lincolnshire), Sir David Nicolson (Dem/London Central), and Alan Tyrrell (Dem/London East) were also among the European MEP’s who were to spend the week discussing such questions as action after Afghanistan, East-West relations, drug trafficking and compare notes on common constituency ques-

tions. This was one of many regular meetings that take place under a widening network of links with parliamentary organisations throughout the world.

Meetings have been held or are planned with other parliamentary delegations including Greece, Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Israel, South and Central America, Australia, New Zealand and SE Asia (ASEAN). A delegation from the Japanese Diet will visit Parliament in Strasbourg from 11–14 February and the Joint Committee of the Consultative Assembly of the Lomé Convention (bringing together one representative from each of the African, Caribbean and Pacific partner states and an equal number of MEP’s) will meet in Arusha, Tanzania from 25–29 February.

Preparations for new 1980 Budget

The European Commission is due to adopt a new budget draft in Strasbourg on 13 February. Commissioner Tugendhat in presenting it to Parliament the following day will be trying to bridge the gap between the views of Parliament expressed in the December rejection resolution (see Digest No 2) and of the Council. Mr Tugendhat has already suggested that the Commission’s proposals for non-compulsory – including regional and social – expenditure are likely to be “modest”. A pointer to proposed compulsory spending (some three-quarters of the budget, mainly agriculture) will be given when Commissioner Gundelach speaks to the House on farm prices on 11 February.

Implications for the UK’s contribution will then be clearer.

Mr Tugendhat did, however, imply that whilst the Commission’s budget draft would propose grounds for compromise, nevertheless certain priorities including regional and social funds remained to be determined. “We have to look at each fund on its merits . . . the views of Parliament on the level of monetary expenditure will certainly call for a certain amount of caution in some areas and it will of course be necessary for Parliament to make a choice in its priorities . . .”

The level of agricultural expenditure remains the main stumbling block between Parliament and the Council.

Work in Progress

A Commission proposal or other communication is normally submitted to one committee which appoints a rapporteur to draw up a report. As accepted by the committee the report is debated in plenary session. In some cases the Commission document is also sent to

one or more other committees for a subsidiary opinion.

Copies of European Commission proposals may be obtained from the European Commission Information Office, 20, Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QQ. (Tel: 01-727 8090).

Completed reports by European Parliament committees may be obtained from the European Parliament Information Office, 20, Kensington Palace Gardens, London W8 4QQ. (Tel: 01-229 9366).

Please quote reference numbers.

DOCUMENT	SUBJECT	Main Cttee	Other Cttee
COM(79)694	Proposal for a directive on the harmonization of provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action relating to the rules governing turnover tax and excise duty applicable in international travel.	Econ.	
COM(79)710 fin/2	Proposals from the Commission concerning changes in the common agricultural policy to help balance the markets and streamline expenditure.	Agric.	Budget
COM(79)623	Proposal for a regulation amending Regulation No. 726/79 as regards the granting of financial support for projects to exploit alternative energy sources.	Energy	Budget
COM(79)688	Proposal from the Commission for a directive amending Directive 72/159/EEC on the modernization of farms.	Agric.	
COM(79)691	Proposal from the Commission for a directive on health and veterinary inspection problems upon importation of bovine animals and swine and fresh meat from non-member countries.	Legal	
COM(79)699	Proposal from the Commission for a directive on the protection of workers from harmful exposure to metallic lead and its ionic compounds at work.	Env.	
COM(79)723	Proposals from the Commission for: a) a regulation amending for the third time the Financial Regulation of 21 December 1977 as regards the use of the ECU in the general budget of the European Communities. b) a regulation on the replacement of the European unit of account by the ECU in Community legal instruments.	Budget	Econ.
COM(79)725	Proposal from the Commission for a decision introducing a Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products.	Env.	
COM(79)736	Proposal from the Commission for a regulation on the arrangements applicable to agricultural products and certain goods resulting from the processing of agricultural products originating in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States or in the overseas countries and territories.	Dev.	Agric. Budget
COM(79)675	Proposal from the Commission for a regulation extending the arrangements applicable to trade with the Republic of Cyprus beyond the date of expiry of the first stage of the Association Agreement.	Ext.	Agric. Budget

Other documents referred to Committee

EP 606/79	1979 annual reports on progress achieved towards European Union drawn up by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Commission.	Pol.	
COM(79)672 fin	Reports from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on state aids to shipbuilding.	Econ.	

Authorisation from the President for own initiative reports

—	The effects of Greece's, Portugal's and Spain's accession to the Community on Community agriculture and fisheries.	Agric.	
—	Relations between the Community and ASEAN countries.	Ext.	
—	Shorter working hours	Social	
—	Transport relations between the Community and Greece	Trans.	
—	Youth	Youth	
—	The information sector in the Community in general and Parliament in particular	Youth	
—	Mrs Weiss' proposal to create a European Institute	Youth	
—	The situation of and social security arrangements for persons engaged in the arts (painters, musicians, etc).	Youth	Social

Guide to Committees

<i>Pol.</i> <i>Political Affairs</i>	<i>Legal.</i> <i>Legal Affairs</i>	<i>Youth.</i> <i>Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport</i>
<i>Agric.</i> <i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Social</i> <i>Social Affairs and Employment</i>	<i>Dev.</i> <i>Development and Co-operation</i>
<i>Budget</i> <i>Budgets</i>	<i>Region</i> <i>Regional Policy and Regional Planning</i>	<i>Control</i> <i>Budgetary Control</i>
<i>Econ.</i> <i>Economic and Monetary Affairs</i>	<i>Trans.</i> <i>Transport</i>	<i>Rules</i> <i>Rules of Procedure and Petitions</i>
<i>Energy</i> <i>Energy and Research</i>	<i>Env.</i> <i>Environment, Public Health, and Consumer Protection</i>	
<i>Ext.</i> <i>External Economic Relations</i>		

Action taken on Parliament's Opinions

Each month the European Commission reports on the action it has taken in response to the Opinions previously expressed by Parliament. In December Parliament voted on 12 proposals from Commission. Reporting back in January, the Commission said:

1. In eight cases Parliament adopted Committee reports (working document No. given in brackets) which made no amendments to Commission proposals. These were:

- Report by Mrs Hoff on the ECSC levy for 1980 (582/79);
- Report by Mr Schmitt on the proposal to open a Community tariff quota for frozen buffalo meat (545/79);
- Report by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli on proposals concerning the import of olive oil originating in Tunisia, Algeria or Morocco, and the import of certain agricultural products originating in Tunisia (546/79);
- Report by Mr Jürgens on the

proposal for a regulation on the establishment of a common organisation of the market in certain products listed in Annex II to the Treaty (564/79);

- Report by Mr Buchou on the regulation concerning export aids in the case of agricultural products eligible for special treatment when imported by third countries (553/79);
- Report by Mr Maher on the decision authorising the United Kingdom to grant national aid to milk producers in Northern Ireland (565/79);
- Report by Sir Henry Plumb on the proposal concerning the application of VAT to the hiring-out of movable tangible property (550/79).

2. In one case Parliament through the procedure without report, approved Commission proposals without amendment. This was a directive on the colouring matters authorised for addition to medicinal products.

3. In three cases the Commission was

unable to accept the European Parliament's amendments:

- Report by Mr Giummarra on the proposal for a regulation setting up a Community system of reliefs from customs duty (548/79);
- Report by Mr Remilly on the directive on the emulsifiers, stabilizers, thickeners and gelling agents authorized for use in food-stuffs (551/79);
- Report by Mr Newton Dunn on the decision concerning chlorofluorocarbons in the environment (570/79).

4. Orkney & Shetland Aid

At its October 1979 part-session the European Parliament asked the Commission to make a grant towards repairing the damage caused by the disaster affecting agriculture in the Orkney and Shetland Islands. In response to this request, on 11 December 1979 the Commission awarded emergency aid amounting to 500,000 EUA to Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles.

Replies to Members' Questions

Opening Times – Richard Cottrell (Dem/UK)

The Commission has no plans to seek to harmonise licensing hours in the Community.

Human Rights & Lomé II – Karel Van Miert (Soc/Bel)

The Commission regrets that it has not been possible to include a reference to the dignity of a man and respect for human rights in the preamble to the new Convention. It does, however, welcome the resolution adopted by the OAU summit in July and Commonwealth Lusaka declaration, and statements on the rights at the signing of Lomé II on 31 October. It adds, "the Community will continue, where it sees fit, to denounce serious and flagrant breaches of fundamental human rights and, in the event of such a breach, to ensure that Community aid is really used to meet the needs of the people in the recipient country."

Is Toxaphene carcinogenic? – Ernest Glinne (Soc/Bel)

The insecticide Toxaphene has limited authorisation for use in Germany, France, Ireland and UK. Consumer protection measures exist to limit residues in fruit, vegetables and feedingstuffs. Research work in the United States, where it is more widely used, has indicated that it would be carcinogenic. The Commission intends to consult the Scientific Committee on Pesticides and take any additional safety measures required.

Regional and Social Funds – Michael O'Leary (Soc/Irl)

The percentage paid to Member states in each year was as follows:

	Bel	Dk	Ger	Fr	Irl	It	NL	UK	Total
1974	1.9	2.2	7.8	13.2	6.4	40.1	2.9	25.5	100
1975	0.6	0.7	7.5	15.6	9.8	25.0	0.7	40.1	100
1976	3.8	8.1	20.3	12.1	4.6	15.1	5.3	30.7	100
1977	2.1	3.1	12.0	11.2	8.4	28.3	2.6	32.3	100
1978	4.2	1.3	18.5	18.3	10.9	10.2	5.1	31.4	100

UK under-represented on staff – Hans Nord (Lib/NL)

Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands are under-represented on the staff of the Commission, Mr Tugendhat admitted during Question Time on 14 January. The Commission's services would pay particular attention, within the provisions of the Staff Regulations, to candidates from deficit countries when posts were being filled, and ensure wider distribution of press advertisements.

Refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam – Hans-Gert Pöttering (EPP/Ger)

The Commission actually considered sending a ship to the China Sea in order to help rescue the 'boat-people', but did not do so because of lack of staff and experience of such a complex undertaking. Instead it decided to allocate the 10 million EUA (about £7 million) voted in July 1979 to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This ensured coordination and speed.

Permanent and Temporary Commission Staff by Grade and Nationality (1979) (Commission answer to André' Damseaux (Lib/Fr))

Grade	Ger	UK	Fr	It	Bel	NL	Lux	Dk	Irl	Other	Total
A	421	329	448	392	303	135	64	69	61	11	2233
B	291	141	297	242	479	128	98	47	21	10	1754
C	323	143	331	427	1171	102	235	85	55	21	2893
D	17	11	17	171	148	5	35	1	1	2	408
LA	187	179	105	186	162	108	10	110	15	32	1094
Total	1239	803	1198	1418	2263	478	442	312	153	76	8382

Replies to Members' Questions

EAGGF Funds for Lincolnshire/Grimsby — William Newton Dunn (Dem/UK) Guidance Aid to Lincolnshire:

Year	Number of projects	Aid granted (£)
1973	4	225,829
1974	2	133,577
1975	1	50,000
1976	4	295,578
1977	—	—
1978	1	10,098
1979 (June)	2	345,961
Total	14	1,161,043

Aid to Grimsby

Year	Number of projects	Aid granted (£)
1973	—	—
1974	5	1,317,856
1975	7	542,065
1976	3	225,062
1977	—	—
1978	4	253,728
1979 (June)	1	31,982
Total	20	2,370,693

Punts and Pounds — John Taylor (Dem/UK)

Passengers on ferries to Ostend were alarmed to discover that for Allied Irish Bank and Bank of Ireland cheques of £50 issued in Belfast they were only being offered £42 by the Brussels Lambert Bank. This happened because the issuing banks had their registered offices in the

Republic of Ireland and this had misled the Belgian bank's employee. Such an error should not reoccur, says the Commission, as cheques drawn on banks in the Republic are to be pre-printed with the symbol of the Irish punt.

Driving on the Left or Right — Michael O'Leary (Soc/Irl)

The Commission favours driving on the right. This would facilitate trade and might contribute to road safety. However, in view of the expense of changing over and low priority it has no plans to submit a proposal on this subject.

Community assistance for the West Midlands Transport Authority for research on electric public vehicles — John M Taylor (Dem/UK)

The 1980 preliminary draft budget had envisaged such research. The Commission has published a notice in the Official Journal inviting applications for assistance for energy saving developments. All applications will receive due consideration.

Greek alcohol prices — Alasdair Hutton (Dem/UK)

The Community considers certain provisions of pricing measures introduced by the Greek authorities in order to contain inflation to be discriminatory in effect — particularly against Community exports of alcohol. The Commission has raised the matter with the Greek authorities

with a view to the rapid abolition of these measures.

EEC Agricultural stocks — Richard B... (Soc/UK)

1. Private store (mid 1979):

Product	Quantity	Value (m EUA)
Butter	150,946 t.	501.3
Beef	5,500 t.	14.0
Wine	11,080,000 hl	281.7
Pigmeat	78,000 t.	210.9
EEC TOTAL	—	1,007.9

2. Public storage (mid 1979):

Product	Quantity	Value (m EUA)
Common wheat	1,046,406 t.	181.245
Barley	63,171 t.	10.809
Rye	461,713 t.	85.708
Durum wheat	180,512 t.	35.294
Milk powder	437,536 t.	450.179
Butter	376,138 t.	157.319
Olive oil	96,298 t.	114.844
Oilseeds	121 t.	0.044
Frozen beef	113,119 t.	211.793
Boned beef	41,658 t.	45.440
Preserved beef	6,294 t.	12.934
Tobacco	27,192 t.	53.028
EEC TOTAL	—	2,158.637

Bookshelf

Wood, David and Alan Wood

The Times guide to the European Parliament 1979. £12.50.

An alphabetical listing with biographies and photographs of the 410 Members. Gives voting figures for each Member State, a summary of the election campaigns and manifestos.

Coombes, David

The future of the European Parliament. Policy Studies Institute. £3.95

Assesses the potential of the European Parliament as a political force bearing in

mind the changing roles of national parliaments.

Coombes, David et al.

European integration, regional devolution and national parliaments. Policy Studies Institute. £2.25.

The effect of membership of the Community upon the parliaments and regional authorities in Germany, Italy and the UK.

After the European elections.

Government and Opposition
A Journal of comparative politics,
Vol. 14, No. 4, Autumn 1979. £3.25.

Articles by several authors on the elections and the European Parliament.

Klepsch, Egon

Two-way street: USA-Europe arms procurement. Brassey. £5.00.

A reprint of the 1978 European Parliament report with a foreword by the Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Rippon.

Webb, Carole

Eurocommunism and foreign policy. Policy Studies Institute. £2.95.

Reviews the Communist parties in Italy, France and Spain with a chapter on their attitudes towards the Community.

Visits

We regret that following an avalanche of applications all European Parliament financial aid for group visits in 1980 to Luxembourg and Strasbourg has now been provisionally allocated. There is already a long waiting list in the event of any cancellations. Facilities for groups not seeking financial aid are also fully stretched and access to the public gallery cannot be guaranteed in advance.