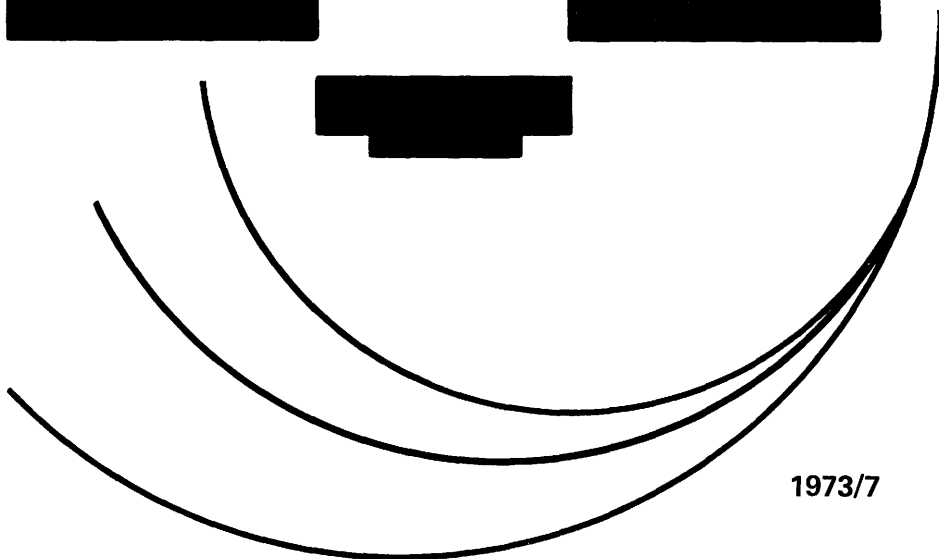


European parliament

information

PARLIAMENT IN SESSION



1973/7

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P A R T I

**The European Parliament met in session
from 18 to 20 September 1973.**

**Parliament asks for 52m u.a. (£26m)
cut in Community budget for 1973**

The sale of 200,000 tons of EEC butter to Russia at something like 7 pence per pound did not go down very well with the general public. Nor, when the bill for 300 million u.a. was presented, did it go down very well with the European Parliament. It was calculated that the difference between the sale price and world market rates at the time of the sale came to 52m u.a. (*) It was this amount that Parliament wanted lopped off the budget for 1973.

Replying to the debate on the draft supplementary budgets, the Commission rejected Parliament's criticisms but it was soon clear the House intended to force the issue, as it did when at length the vote was taken.

The debate began when Parliament resumed for three days of sittings on 18, 19 and 20 September. On the Tuesday afternoon Mr Heinrich Aigner (German, Christian Democrat) presented reports on each of draft supplementary budgets Nos. 2, 3 and 4. Nos. 2 and 3 are discussed below. It was No. 4 that contained the relevant item.

Presenting his report, Mr Heinrich Aigner was surprised at the sheer size of the supplementary budget. The amount involved was 871,356,050 u.a. He understood that estimates were made a long time before the event but suggested that the Commission's forecasting was bound to be more realistic if the proper timetables were adhered to. As for the argument that world prices were not known, he thought the Commission could devise procedures enabling it to hold decisions until the last possible day.

(*) 300 u.a. per ton increased by an export subsidy of 1200 u.a. per ton leaves a shortfall of 260 u.a. per ton. This multiplied by 200,000 gives 52m u.a. (1 unit of account is equal to 0.8867088 grams of fine gold).

Referring to the special circumstances, i.e. enlargement and the monetary situation, Mr Aigner agreed that the first of these, on which the Commission's figures were out by 216m u.a., would not recur. He was less hopeful about the effects of the floating lira and the floating pound.

Turning to the Russian butter deal, he noted the Commission had included the surprising figure of 300m u.a. for this purpose.

The intervention price for butter was 1760 u.a. per ton and the export subsidy was 1200 u.a. The minimum selling price should therefore have been 560 u.a. per ton. But the actual selling price was 300 u.a. per ton, which meant the Community had to pay out a further 260 u.a. per ton. 1200 per ton was guaranteed from the Community funds but the shortfall was not, so that on 200,000 tons the difference was 52m u.a.

This was something that Parliament simply could not accept. Its legal position and its political situation made this impossible. There was also the fact that the money made from the deal was said to be going to finance one of the Communist parties in the Community. The opponents and enemies of the Community were being financed from Community funds. These, said Mr Aigner, were things that had to be said.

Mr Petrus Lardinois had stated in committee that the surplus situation would change completely for all agricultural products within a few years. But, he asked, what would the Community do if a developing country such as India asked for butter? Would it ask more from India than from an industrial state, the bulk of whose expenditure was on armaments and weapon systems? This would be impossible. Could one ask more from the United States, which contributed so much to European security, than from Russia? He concluded by saying Parliament should not accept any share of responsibility for the 300 million u.a. On behalf of the committees concerned he moved that draft supplementary budget No. 4 be reduced by 52m u.a.

Mr Georges Spénale (French, Socialist) appreciated the difficulty of making estimates; he understood enlargement had been an unknown quantity and he recognized the monetary situation could not have been foreseen. But, he added, the Community would be entirely self-financing in 1975. The difficulty then

would be that only the rate of the Value Added Tax would be in any way elastic and that once the VAT rate for the year following(*) had been decided it would be almost impossible to go back on it.

How, he asked, would such a deal as the present one then be conducted. 'Will you propose increasing the VAT in the Community to make a gift of 52 millions on a butter deal at a price below that quoted to the Third World, to a dealer who is also a State?' he asked.

The Socialist Group, he said, unanimously supported the modification tabled by the Committee on Budgets to strike out the 52m u.a.

Speaking for his Group, Mr Rafton Pounder (European Conservative) considered it was a serious indictment of any agricultural price support system that it was possible for vast surpluses of any given commodity to accumulate. Yet this was precisely what had happened with the famous butter stocks. He was highly critical of the butter sale to Russia which was, he felt, a fiasco which had dissipated a great deal of public goodwill. But what was disturbing was that there was no guarantee there was not going to be another butter mountain to be disposed of at a charitable price. The European Conservative Group supported Mr Aigner's proposals.

Mr Luigi Marras (Italian, non-attached) said the European Communists had always condemned the present market intervention policy; the situation would never have arisen had there been a better balance between structures and market. He was surprised at Mr Aigner's insinuation that the butter deal had served to finance the election campaign of a party represented in the House. Such things should not be said unless they could be proved. It lowered the tone of the House. He and his colleagues would not support the modification proposed.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (European Conservative) asked why supplementary estimates were needed and whether the Council and the Commission used the correct methods in arriving at their forward estimates. Were price levels right?

Analyzing the problem he said estimates in the milk sector were 630m u.a. out. 300m u.a. related to the Russian butter deal, 200m u.a. and another 175m were for compensatory payments and monetary compensation Hence prices were too

(*) the present understanding is that the rate could be up to 1 point of VAT.

high. Referring to the sale of butter, he said it was a disastrous deal. But what concerned him most was that there must be an imbalance somewhere if the agricultural policy was creating surpluses. Something must be wrong if one had a surplus of soft wheat and at the same time imported fodder cereals into the Community. This was complete lunacy.

It was not as if there were any benefit to the housewife. It seemed to him there was a gap between the policy-makers at the Commission and their costing services. They should be working hand in glove all the time. The flow of information had to be improved and Member States could help but the real answer was to go to the basic causes of the problem, the policies themselves. These had to be changed.

Mr Alfred Bertrand (Belgian, Christian Democrat) was glad to learn from Mr Marras that the Communist parties were not against the Community but that they were, on the contrary, grateful because the motherland, the Soviet Union, was able to eat capitalist butter at bargain prices. Whether the Russian housewife would have butter at such prices in future would naturally depend on the size of the butter mountain in the Community. He did not know whether there would be one but he was glad to note the present East-West opening on the problem of butter.

Mr Charles Héger (Belgian, Christian Democrat) said the general public had reacted unfavourably to the deal and this was understandable.

Mr Aigner thought the Soviet Union's having to buy surplus products from the European Community was sufficient comment on the Russian economic system. He said he had no proof that the money made on the butter deal was used to finance Communist parties but that this had every appearance of being the truth. Everything had to be done to ensure that Communist parties were not financed from Community funds.

In reply to the debate, Mr Cheysson said that it was not possible to forecast 18 months ahead. The volume of production depended on the weather and it was not possible to be accurate to within 5 o/o. It had not been possible to anticipate monetary developments and prices were set eight months before the budget. Then there were world prices. CAP was blamed for everything, but it had brought more settled prices. On the Chicago market, soft wheat prices had gone up by 65 o/o within a period of two weeks while in Europe they stayed the same. This meant stable prices to the Community.

He suggested that doubters should study United States price increases in August. How could the EEC make precise forecasts? 70 % of the budget was absorbed by EAGGF and, although this would go down to 60 %, it would still be in sharp contrast to national budgets where the percentage was scarcely more than 5 to 7 %. The butter deal was the cheapest possible. In reply to criticisms of irregularity he said that the normal procedure had been followed. The Dairy Produce Management Committee had been consulted, as had the Governments, in line with instructions laid down in 1969. He noted the European Parliament's proposal to deduct 52m u.a. from the budget, but asked where the Community would then find this amount of money. Would it take it from food aid? Such a cut was impossible. He said that Parliament knew it was.

Mr Petrus Lardinois said that CAP should be reviewed and the Commission would make proposals. He hoped that the present debate would help here. He questioned the figures quoted and challenged the suggestion that the butter could have been sold at 560 u.a. a ton instead of 300. The repayment figure depended on timing. The United Kingdom had not objected to the deal, but would probably have objected to such a deal with Russia. As to any profits which may have gone to Communist parties, he said that he was sure that if Russia wished to support Communists it would not need to resort to such means of doing so.

He said he could understand an Englishman describing the deal as disgusting. But he pointed out that importing countries could only see the surplus whereas exporting countries knew that the value of the food in question was nil. 'We shall,' he said, 'try to improve CAP, but let us try to understand that surpluses may be worth nothing or far more than the market value.' The 250 million people in Europe had far fewer difficulties than the USSR, USA or Japan with their food policy. Europe's agricultural policy was the best.

In the debate Mr Ivar Norgaard said that the Community had been confronted with two kinds of difficulty: (1) the estimates had been drawn up in June 1972 when production and consumption could obviously not be assessed very accurately; (2) enlargement had brought changes and the world monetary situation had not been anticipated.

The Council was conscious of the need for economy.

Mr Ivar Norgaard thanked the European Parliament for delivering its opinion at this session.

To allow time for the tabling of proposed modifications the debate was than adjourned.

Draft supplementary budget No. 4 was put to the vote two days later, on Thursday morning.

Mr Aigner made it clear that the modification proposed to reduce appropriations in Title 6, Chapter 62, Article 621 of the budget by 52m u.a. had the unanimous support of the Committee on Budgets. His criticism was not directed against CAP or the Commission but against the fact that Parliament had not been informed, a point moreover that other speakers had made.

In reply Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said: (1) the sale was legally valid; (2) without it, the supplementary budget would have been much greater; (3) the Commission was ready to examine any means of informing Parliament if any similar transactions were envisaged in future; (4) the Commission would try to act on markets to avoid structural surpluses.

He urged Parliament to reject the proposed modification.

Mr Aigner disputed Mr Scarascia Mugnozza's statement that the supplementary budget would otherwise have been greater. He argued it would have been lower.

Mr Jan Baas (Dutch, Liberal) said he had asked Mr Lardinois about the Commission statement that Parliament would be consulted over similar transactions in future. Mr Lardinois had said 'yes'. Mr Baas had asked if this was a complete change in policy and Mr Lardinois had said 'yes'. Mr Baas disputed Mr Aigner's claim that the cost would have been less had the deal not gone through. The quality of the butter would have suffered in cold storage. He agreed the Commission's case was weak.

There were 400,000 tons of butter in cold storage at present and it was likely there would be a surplus problem to contend with before the end of the year. But he considered Mr Aigner's verdict was a political one and less consistent with Parliament's responsibility regarding the budget. The majority of the Liberal and Allies Group had therefore decided to reject the modification.

Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German, Socialist) said Mr Baas had re-opened the debate. He said it was quite clear that both at the meeting of the Committee on Agriculture of the European Parliament and during question time all Groups,

including the Liberal and Allies Group, had rejected any responsibility for the scandalous butter transaction. This was because nothing was being done to alter the structure of the milk and fat market; the problem was simply being shelved for a few months. The Commission had to propose measures to ensure that such emergency transactions were not necessary.

The Commission had had the chance to talk to Parliament and the Commission certainly found an opportunity to do so when it found it necessary. In this case it had to be made clear that it was not a matter of money but of Parliament's determination not to accept the situation. The question was not how many tons would be in storage at the end of the year but whether one would have to resort to another such miserable transaction at the expense of the taxpayer.

Mr Aigner pointed out that the committees did not take the matter lightly. If Parliament approved the budget this would be a political and commercial confirmation of the transaction. He was naturally glad to hear that the Commission would in future consult Parliament but, as Mr Spénale had pointed out, this had been a binding commitment since 1971 which had been disregarded in this case. Parliament could not accept responsibility.

Mr Per Dich (Danish, non-attached) said he was not in favour of the modification because this would imply that he agreed that it was possible to administer the market regulations which were, he said, out of date and reactionary.

Mr Lucien Radoux (Belgian, Socialist Group) said that he accepted Mr Aigner's modification solely from the standpoint of relations between institutions.

The proposal for a modification was then put to the vote and carried.

The motion for a resolution in the report by Mr Aigner was then voted on. This made the following recommendations on the additional appropriations for the EAGGF:

- (1) forecasting expenditure would be easier if prices were set on the dates laid down,
- (2) Member States should give the Commission better production forecasts and market data. The Commission should have its own forecasting service,

- (3) price-setting should be used to channel production to non-surplus areas,
- (4) provisions in the denaturing of common wheat should be changed to phase out this practice,
- (5) some Member States needed to move faster so as not to delay aid payments on olive oil, durum wheat and tobacco,
- (6) third country markets needed to be better known,
- (7) progress to economic and monetary union would help CAP,
- (8) progress towards modernizing agriculture (under directives of 17 April 1972) should be speeded up to channel production more skilfully and achieve more competitive prices that still guarantee a fair income to farmers.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973.

Social Fund

The other major issue was the Social Fund. The sums shown in the budget were:

70 million u.a. in Chapter 50
110 million u.a. in Chapter 51

Parliament proposed adding
120 million u.a. to give a total of
300 million units of account.

Mr Heinrich Aigner (German, Christian Democrat) said 120m u.a. had been included in the Commission's preliminary draft budget but that this had been set aside because it was not yet possible to take a decision on social policy.

Mr Georges Spénale (French, Socialist) pointed out that when the Commission had originally asked for the 120m u.a. it had given very good reasons why this was essential. It was then stated, after the 120m had been cut out, that the matter would be reconsidered on 21 September. Mr Claude Cheysson had said

that Member States' practices differed widely and that the time had come to improve the organization of the Social Fund. Mr Spénale found the situation paradoxical. The Socialist Group felt that Europe had to amount to more than an agricultural policy and a customs perimeter. His aim, however, was to make it easier for the Council. If the 120m u.a. for social policy were re-inserted on the draft supplementary budget the Council would not have to refer to Parliament again.

Miss Astrid Lulling (Luxembourg, Socialist) said the Committee on Social Affairs and employment wanted to increase the resources of the European Social Fund by 120m u.a. to meet expenditure pursuant to the Council's decision of 1 February 1971.

Whoever sought the help of the Social Fund had to go via the Governments to the Commission. Help given was equal to that given by the public authority concerned, i.e. a maximum of 50 0/0 of the cost. Hence all requests for aid could be regarded as valid. The influx of requests, however, had confronted the Commission with a difficult and delicate choice. The Commission would then either bring its budget into line with requests made or it could make a selection.

Miss Lulling drew attention to the insecurity of project promotions here. The situation was aggravated by the variations in employment policy. Without the necessary funds, only the lucky ones won at the lottery of priorities the Commission had to resort to. Miss Lulling stressed the dangers of horse-trading in this field. The new Social Fund had raised hopes as had the Summit Conference in October 1972. The Governments had emphasized the link between social policy and economic and monetary union. Was not the whole process of uniting Europe now being called into question?

Speaking for the Christian Democratic Group, Mr Alfred Bertrand said Parliament had proposed increasing the original sum proposed of 110m u.a. by 30m u.a. It had done so in the belief that enough funds should be available to cover the activities of the renewed Social Fund. The present situation conflicted with the spirit of the Paris Summit and it was regrettable the Governments were still hanging back in the social sphere. His group supported the modification proposed.

Mr Aigner agreed. Parliament expected action in the social field.

In reply Mr Cheysson said the Commission was in complete agreement with Mr Spénale. Either Europe would be successful in the social field or it would fail completely. This was a matter of great concern. The Commission wanted Europe's social policy to come into operation as soon as possible.

The 120m u.a. in question had not been set aside. The Council had not yet decided its attitude and it would be wrong for the Commission to try to force the Council's hand without waiting for the further discussions requested.

Mr Ivar Norgaard, President of the Council, confirmed what Mr Cheysson had said. The discussions had simply been deferred. He would pass on Parliament's views to the Council on 21 September. He was sure they would carry weight. He hoped the Governments would be able to reach a positive conclusion.

The modification was moved on Thursday morning.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973.

Euratom

(Draft supplementary budget No. 3)

The purpose of this supplementary budget was to allocate sums earmarked for research and investment pursuant to Council decisions of 5 February, 14 May and 18 June 1973.

The 1973 budget originally included 87m u.a. of commitment appropriations and 85.5m u.a. of payment appropriations. But the Council decisions did not involve the full amount of the payment appropriations (85.5m u.a. approximately) but 75.5m u.a. This represented a reduction of some 9.9m u.a. in the available funds.

It was, however, noted that for the first time since 1967 the Community had a budget which made provisions for a multi-year research programme.

The motion tabled took note of this draft supplementary budget. It stressed that the budget must be comprehensive and that the annual appropriations for research must be apportioned normally from the next financial year onwards.

With reference to the Euratom research budget, Mr Aigner said that the funds ought to be at a credible level. It was a shameful programme: 75.5m u.a. only was the whole basis for a research programme for a whole continent. Parliament, he said, wanted the Council to encourage research and he suggested recourse to Article 235 of the Treaty.

In reply, Mr Cheysson spoke of the difficulty of making forward estimates. He agreed with Mr Aigner about Euratom being so unambitious.

The motion was submitted to the whole House on Thursday morning.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973.

Norway
(Draft supplementary budget No.2)

The supplementary budget covered the non-accession of Norway and expenditure incurred since the 1973 general budget. The overall effect was a reduction, as follows:

4,245,282,241 u.a.
17,384,788 u.a.
<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
4,227,897,453

The non-accession of Norway meant the budget could be cut by 3 0/o.

Cereals
(Draft supplementary budget No. 2)

The Council rejected the Commission's proposal to reduce the cereals allocation (chapter 60 of the budget) of 812.4m u.a. by 15m u.a. What was curious was that the Commission later proposed an increase in this chapter of 61.7m u.a. in supplementary budget No. 4. Parliament found it illogical to propose a reduction in one supplementary budget and then an increase four times greater than the reduction in another.

In the motion tabled for the House's approval, the Commission's attention was drawn to the need for

- (1) greater accuracy in some of its budgetary estimates,
- (2) ensuring appropriations are approved before being used, and
- (3) providing Parliament with full details about decisions with budgetary implications.

In the debate Mr Aigner found it incomprehensible that the Commission's draft budget for the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund included a cut for cereals and, two months later, an increase equal to four times the original amount.

Mr Aigner also commented on the budget appropriations for new officials. This was because the Commission was split up in seven buildings. Hence the difficulty of co-ordinating its work and the need for such extra staff as messengers.

The motion was moved at the sitting on Thursday morning.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973.

**Statements made by Mr Jacques Chirac,
French Minister of Agriculture**
(Oral Question with debate
by Mr Francis Vals for the Socialist Group)

The question read:

'Recently the French Minister of Agriculture has criticized members of the Commission of the European Communities for taking both too much and too little account of national interests.

Furthermore, the French Minister of Agriculture has taken the unusual course of commenting on the attitude of the government of another Member State of the European Communities to further European integration.

We therefore ask:

1. What steps has the Commission so far taken to refute these allegations?
2. Is the Commission of the opinion that such criticisms are calculated to promote the creation of economic and monetary union and the further development of the Community towards a European union? '

Acting for Mr Vals, Mr Jan Broeks (Dutch, Socialist Group) summed up the controversy touched off by Mr Chirac's statements on Germany's attitude to the EEC.

In reply, Mr François-Xavier Ortoli said the members of the Commission were independent. The Commission was a collegiate body for whose decisions all Commissioners were responsible. He thought that difficult discussions were normal and inevitable and helped Europe to progress but that polemics were useless. It was moreover not for the Commission to reply on behalf of the German Government.

Sitting of Wednesday, 20 September 1973.

Commission action on resolutions agreed to by Parliament

One highly satisfactory innovation in July was a statement by Mr Scarascia Mugnozza on action taken by the Commission on motions agreed to in the House. Such statements provide a useful measure of Parliament's real influence and make it easier to follow what happens to texts once the European Parliament has agreed to them.

Once again it was Mr Scarascia Mugnozza as Commissioner responsible for relations with Parliament, who outlined action taken. His statement was very detailed.

On 31 July the Commission had, as requested, sent Parliament a report on the application of farm modernization directives.

The Commission had made a close analysis of Parliament's comments on mopeds, fertilizers and cosmetics. The Commission's original proposals would be altered accordingly under Treaty Article 149,2 (*).

Some of the points made by Parliament on ecology had been incorporated in the programme adopted by the Council on 19 July. These concerned:

- (1) polluting agents;
- (2) quality aims;
- (3) product harmonization;
- (4) disposal of radioactive wastes;
- (5) protection of migrant birds;
- (6) improving the working environment;
- (7) publication of an easy-to-understand summary of Commission statements;
- (8) compilation of an elementary school text book.

The Commission accepted that the main polluting agents in the air and water should come under Community control. The Commission would also be making proposals this year on the plan of the European Foundation on improving working and living conditions.

As for Parliament's being represented at international negotiations, this raised specific problems that would have to be solved in the wider context of ecological policy.

Parliament had also called for social security measures on behalf of Turkish workers in Europe. The Commission hoped to make appropriate proposals at the beginning of November. The Council would soon be approving regulations giving effect to the commercial clauses in the additional protocol. These ought to come into operation on 1 November.

As regards Parliament's resolution on Economic and Monetary Union, the Commission would be submitting practical proposals for promoting stability, economic expansion and full employment, improving the procedure for coordinating and using budgetary instruments and setting up a Community institute for economic analysis and research.

(*) Article 149,2 'As long as the Council has not acted, the Commission may alter its original proposal, in particular where the Assembly has been consulted on that proposal'.

The Commission had also put forward proposals on pooling reserves and better credit arrangements with the Community.

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza then gave a detailed outline of the Commission's position on regional policy.

The President of the European Parliament, Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer, thanked Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission, for his statement. Parliament, he said, attached special importance to this form of cooperation.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council of the European Communities

Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Community
by Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker

'Will the Council make a statement on the development of relations between the People's Republic of China and the Community?'

In reply, Mr Ivar Norgaard said there had been no new developments. Were the Community to receive any communication from China, the Council would look into it with the greatest interest.

Sir Douglas then asked what action had been taken on his suggestion for meetings between members of the European Parliament and the Assembly in China.

Mr Norgaard said it was not within the terms of reference of the Council to take the initiative. There had been contacts between the Chinese and individual Council members but his impression was that they were still feeling their way.

Need for a Political Secretariat
by Sir Tufton Beamish

'What further consideration has been given to the urgent need to set up a Political Secretariat; will the Council now announce its terms of reference, composition and location?'

Mr Norgaard replied that this was not a matter within the terms of reference of the Council. The President of the Conference of Foreign Ministers would inform Parliament of decisions taken regarding political cooperation at its sittings between 16 and 19 October.

Sir Tufton Beamish asked Mr Norgaard to convey to the Council Parliament's great dissatisfaction that there were no regular opportunities to debate the Community's foreign relations.

Mr Norgaard said he understood the European Parliament was dissatisfied. He stressed, however that the rules were laid down and must be followed. The matter was outside the Council's terms of reference.

Mr Lucien Radoux (Belgian, Socialist) asked whether setting up a political secretariat might not be prejudicial rather than beneficial.

Mr Norgaard said it would be for the ministers to decide on how to give effect to the Davignon arrangements. His understanding was that senior officials would be involved.

European Committee on Research and Development
by Mr Noè

1. 'Is it intended to follow up the Commission's proposal to establish a European Committee on Research and Development?'
2. Is the Council of the opinion that a modern facility for preparing decisions in the field of science and technology policy is essential to avoid misuse of funds intended for this purpose?'

Mr Norgaard replied that on 14 July 1972, the Commission had drawn up a memorandum on the means and ends of a European policy for scientific research and technological progress. The idea was to set up a European Committee comprising experts from university and research centres. It was to advise on Community policy in this field. A European Committee on Research and Development was set up on 4 April 1973. It was working out proposals for action in this sphere. The Council was required to make a statement by 1 January 1974. It was aware of the importance of this issue.

Mr Noè asked whether it would not be better to have full-time experts from the various disciplines working as a team.

Mr Norgaard said he was sure that the research institutes involved were closely attentive to developments in this field.

Mr Pierre Giraud (French, Socialist) asked whether the multiplication of consultative committees was really getting problems solved.

Mr Norgaard replied that the Council was still waiting for proposals and that there was still time to deal with them.

Relations between the EEC and COMECON by Mr Cousté

‘Further to recent contradictory statements by prominent European figures, the Council is requested to clarify the true state of relations between the European Economic Community and COMECON.’

Mr Norgaard replied that when the Danish Foreign Minister was in Helsinki in July he had been told that COMECON had decided to seek contacts with the European Community and this was confirmed in a conversation between Mr Gaston Thorn (Luxembourg Foreign Minister), Mr Kosygin and Mr Gromyko in Moscow.

Mr Norgaard said that on 27 August he had met Mr Fadayev, General Secretary of COMECON in Copenhagen. This was an unofficial approach. He suggested that COMECON and the European Community should enter into contact to promote cooperation. Were any agreement possible, he suggested a delegation should be at a very high level. Mr Norgaard had said that the Council would have to look into this matter and then give him an answer.

Mr Cousté said Parliament was very concerned about this approach. What were the principles underlying it? He asked whether the Soviet Union’s role here was not such as to deprive other COMECON countries of their freedom of movement to establish bilateral relations with the Community.

Mr Norgaard said the Council would meet on 21 September to frame its answer to Mr Fadayev. He had indicated that most of the matters arising were normally

dealt with by the Commission. He pointed out, however, as regards the Soviet Union's leading role in this approach that Mr Fadayeve had told him he was authorized to speak for all the COMECON countries.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (European Conservative) asked Mr Norgaard what the Community stood to gain.

Mr Norgaard replied that it was too early to say.

Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German, Socialist) suggested that the great difference between COMECON and the European Community was that the Nine could act supra-nationally.

Mr Norgaard replied that there were differences in structure and that this might have a bearing on the discussion.

Sir Tufton Beamish asked for an assurance that there would be no departure from the Community's present practice of consulting Parliament on plans for bilateral agreements with COMECON countries. He also wanted to know what the word 'unofficial' meant when Mr Norgaard said his talks with Mr Fadayeve were unofficial.

Mr Norgaard replied that they were unofficial because Mr Fadayeve spoke only to him. This was a private conversation with a Danish Minister who happened to be President of the Council. The European Parliament would be consulted as and when developments occurred.

Mr Hans Jahn asked Mr Norgaard if the Council would take care in any talks with COMECON to ensure that progress to political union was not jeopardized.

Mr Norgaard replied that he had taken Mr Fadayeve's approach to be a probe towards commercial and economic negotiations. It was not political.

Lord Gladwyn asked for an assurance that any COMECON delegation would only negotiate with the Commission.

Mr Cousté asked whether some thought could also be given to bilateral relations between the Community and each of the COMECON countries.

Mr Norgaard replied that obviously any COMECON States which still wanted to negotiate individually with the Community would be able to do so. There was no question of any change in relations and the Community would not induce other European countries to hand over relations to COMECON. It was up to them.

Council meeting in Tokyo
by Mr Laban

‘Can the Council give the reasons for its decision to hold an official meeting in Tokyo on 11 September 1973, as a result of which the number of meeting places of European Community bodies is further increased?’

Mr Norgaard replied that it had been necessary to agree on a joint position prior to the GATT meeting. In reply to supplementary questions from Mr Laban, Mr van der Hek and Mr Fellermaier, he pointed out that the Commission had been present at the three different meetings held. He thought the results achieved demonstrated the expediency of holding Council meetings in Tokyo because the result had been so successful in respect of all the groups of countries involved: the United States, Japan and the developing countries.

Questions to the Commission of the European Communities

Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the Commission, said he would take the following seven questions together:

1. Transport costs incurred for part-sessions of the European Parliament in Strasbourg
by Mr Manfred Schmidt (German, Social Democrat)

‘Does the Commission consider that the cost of transporting the secretariat of the European Parliament from Luxembourg to Strasbourg for part-sessions, which requires approximately one million units of account in the Parliament’s budget each year, is really necessary?’

2. Other expenditure incurred by holding part-sessions of the European Parliament in Strasbourg
by Mr Willi Müller (German, Social Democrat)

‘Is the Commission aware that this figure covers neither the cost of duplicating office facilities in Strasbourg and Luxembourg, of the necessary telephone and telex lines, and of wear and tear on equipment, nor the loss of expensive working time taken up in travel and the inevitable reduction in the efficiency of staff due to these frequent and tedious journeys?’

3. Review of the Decision of 8 April 1965 on the provisional location of certain institutions and departments of the Community
by Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German, Social Democrat)

‘Does the Commission think that, following the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark to the Community, the time has now come to consider the desirability of reviewing the Decision of 8 April 1965 by government representatives of the Member States on the provisional location of certain Community institutions and departments; and does the Commission feel that the decisions taken on that occasion to have three provisional seats for the Community institutions meets the requirements of the present situation following the enlargement of the Communities on 1 January 1973?’

4. Advantages of concentrating the Community institutions at a single centre
by Mr Hans Lautenschlager (German, Social Democrat)

‘Does the Commission recognize the vital need to concentrate the Community institutions at a single centre not only in the interests of greater efficiency but also to enhance the Communities’ political impact?’

5. Proposals for concentrating the institutions of the European Communities at a single centre
by Mr Horst Seefeld (German, Social Democrat)

‘Does the Commission intend to submit proposals for concentrating the institutions of the European Communities at a single centre, and has it considered whether it might be expedient to create a “European district”?’

6. Location of the Commission and the Parliament
by Lord Reay (European Conservative)

'Does the Commission not agree that the location of the Commission and the Parliament in cities 400 km. apart is as unsatisfactory for the Commission as it is for the Parliament, and if so, what does it propose to do about it?'

7. Annual report by the Commission on the location of Community bodies
by Mr Walter Behrendt (German, Social Democrat)

'Is the Commission prepared in future to submit also to the European Parliament the annual report "on the situation concerning the location of Community bodies and departments and on the possibility of taking new steps to give effect to this provision, account being taken to ensure the proper functioning of the Communities" which it presents to the governments of the Member States pursuant to Article 10(2) of the Decision of 8 April 1965 by the representatives of the governments of the Member States on the provisional location of certain bodies and services of the Communities, and to inform it in retrospect of the last three annual reports?'

Mr Ortoli said these questions were not a matter for the Commission or even the Council. The provisional seat of the institutions had been decided by the Member States on 8 April 1965.

The Commission was concerned but in answer to Mr Schmidt and Mr Müller he said it was hard to calculate costs accurately. At the time of the Summit the Commission had suggested the idea of a single seat should be examined. The suggestion was not taken up. He hoped nonetheless that there would be a decision soon. He told Mr Fellermaier that enlargement alone did not change the nature of the problem. The first problem, however, might be to determine what the European Union was to be like before deciding on where the institutions were to be located.

In reply to Mr Lautenschlager he said that the present situation was full of nothing but disadvantages. But there was also the problem of what he called the presence of Europe. This led him to question absolute centralization. Parliament had been sensitive to this: it held meetings elsewhere than in Brussels, Luxembourg or Strasbourg. No doubt there would have to be centralization but he personally did not rule out reasonably spread-out localizations, although he

recognized that links between Parliament, Council and Commission were of a particular kind. In reply to Mr Seefeld and Lord Reay he said the Commission had raised the matter several times.

In reply to Mr Behrendt, Mr Ortoli said the Commission would suggest the Governments forward the report he mentioned.

Mr Schmidt asked if it could be said the costs involved were substantial.

Mr Ortoli did not think the expenditure was negligible. There was, however, something that struck him: Europe was not making its presence felt. It was not making its presence felt enough in the Member States to explain what Europe was and what it could be.

Mr Müller asked Mr Ortoli if he agreed with President Berkhouwer's estimates that it cost BF 82m having the institutions located in different places.

Mr Ortoli said he had no reason to dispute the figure and he had not taken care to check it, as the Honourable Member would appreciate.

Mr Fellermaier asked if Mr Ortoli agreed that the Community bodies concerned had to take measures to remedy the present parlous state of affairs if only to improve their efficiency.

Mr Ortoli replied that he hoped some final answer would be worked out. The Commission would do all it could to help.

Mr Fellermaier referred to Article 216 of the Rome Treaty (stipulating a seat must be established) and asked whether the Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, should not see that this stipulation was implemented.

Mr Ortoli agreed. The Commission would make proposals in due course.

Mr Yvon Bourges asked for an assurance that the problem would be dealt with as a whole, bearing in mind its political implications.

Mr Ortoli said this was a matter for the Member States.

Mr Egbert Wieldraaijer referred to the Service Regulations of Officials stipulating staff had to be able to work.

Mr Ortoli in reply said the various departments were at present operating smoothly. In reply to Mrs Marichen Nielsen he said he could only repeat he was in favour of reasonable centralization but that he hesitated as to whether there would be absolute centralization.

Mr Mario Scelba made the point that it was for Parliament to decide on the organization of its affairs.

Mr Lautenschlager asked Mr Ortoli about not meeting other than in Strasbourg, Brussels and Luxembourg.

Mr Ortoli said agreements had been reached establishing the provisional seats of the institutions. They had to be put into effect.

Mr Seefeld asked Mr Ortoli about a federal district.

Mr Ortoli said the Commission had not looked into it. Nor had any previous Commission. But this did not mean the matter might not be raised again.

Lord Reay suggested Governments of the Member States were not going to ignore the views of the institutions. Would the Commission move from Brussels rather than let the present situation endure or would they argue it was impracticable? And what would the Commission think if Parliament held all its sessions in Luxembourg except for the constituent session in March?

Mr Ortoli replied that the future had first to be clarified. The Commission hoped for a solution. He did not think it the right time to support the idea of leaving Brussels and he did not think the Commission would propose to do this. It was, however, not for him to comment on how Parliament's sessions were organized.

Miss Lulling asked if it was not preferable to dwell on more important items in the budget than operating expenses which (i) precluded any disadvantageous centralization and (ii) ensured Europe's presence was felt in more than one city, than to call in question decisions concerning Luxembourg.

Mr Ortoli said it was not for him to comment.

Cereal harvest 1972 and 1973
by Mr John Brewis (European Conservative)

'What is the Commission's estimate of the tonnage of the cereal harvest in the Community this year, how does it compare with last year, and what is the percentage increase in price likely to be payable by consumers?'

Mr Petrus Lardinois said the Commission had approximately the same estimate of the tonnage of the cereal harvest for this year as for last year. The overall wheat harvest last year was 41m tons in the Nine and this year they expected about half a million or one million tons less; the maize harvest was expected to be 1m tons larger. It was difficult to estimate how far consumer prices might rise because there were factors which could not be assessed yet. It was expected world market prices would be higher than for last year.

Mr Lardinois assured Mr Brewis that the Commission was keeping up with the situation on cereal prices and their possible effect on livestock production in the new Member States and in Italy where special circumstances had created tension on the cereal market.

Budgetary implications of butter exports to the USSR
by Mr Georges Spénale (French, Socialist Group)

'A special refund of 1,500 u.a. per ton was paid on the 200,000 ton of butter exported by the Community to the USSR. This implies a charge of approximately 300m u.a. on the Guarantee Section of the EAGGF.'

What budgetary resources and what procedure were used to cover, or will be used to regularize this transaction, given that Parliament, as budgetary authority, was not consulted?'

Mr Lardinois said the matter had been discussed on the previous day and he would like to repeat merely what had been said by Mr Cheyssou. The butter production situation in 1968 had been difficult. The Council then gave very wide powers to the Commission to deal with the problem. In March of this year the situation regarding butter stocks was very difficult indeed and the Commission felt it had to act. The Commission made a proposal to the Council and the transaction concluded was the best deal that could be had. The Commission fully realized the political implications which followed from that sale and understood that Parliament was worried by it. The Commission was ready to look into any possible way of improving consultation with Parliament.

Mr Spénale said Mr Lardinois' statement was a step forward, but he wondered if the Commission was aware of correspondence exchanged between the Parliament and the Council in 1969 and 1972 referring to certain decisions which had financial repercussions, and in relation to procedural steps which should be taken in consultation with Parliament.

Mr Lardinois said Parliament knew that the Commission must make the best use of what existed. The situation regarding the next financial year was better. The Commission thought there was going to be a reduction in butter stocks; he wanted to point out that by selling butter to the USSR they had got rid of stocks which had been built up in 1972 in the original Six, plus tonnage imported from third countries.

Application of the system of generalized preferences to East-European countries
by Mr Van der Hek

'Does the Commission share the Council's opinion that, in principle, any requests from other East-European countries to benefit, like Romania, from the EEC offer made under the system of generalized preferences for developing countries should receive a favourable reply?'

In reply Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said each case should be considered on its merits.

Information on computer programs
by Mr Springorum

'Why has the Commission based proposals for two Council decisions:
— on a research and training programme of European Atomic Energy Community in the field of information on computer programs;
— on a directive to the Commission on the negotiation of an agreement to set up a European information centre for computer programs (COM (73) 985 final)

on Article 7 and Article 101 of the Euratom Treaty instead of Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, given that neither proposal is even remotely paranuclear in character?'

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said that under the research and training programme the scope of the Joint Research Centre's activities was to be broadened to enable the Community to take part in COST 12 and set up a European information centre on computer programs.

Harmonization of professional qualifications
by Lord O'Hagan

'Which professional qualifications does the Commission intend to harmonize?'

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said the Commission did not regard harmonization as an end in itself but as a way of promoting manpower mobility. The Commission, he added, would be holding hearings from 22 to 26 October for all those involved in training doctors. This would help expedite the Council's work on directives concerning the medical profession.

Lord O'Hagan asked about safeguards for the individual's freedom of choice of doctors.

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said this would be a new experience but he thought he could guarantee everything would be done to ensure people retained their present rights.

Food supplies and needs inside the EEC
by Mr Yeats

'Has the Commission any plans for ensuring that the so-called food surplus in Europe is made available to meet the dietary deficiencies that exist amongst such sections of the population as:

- social welfare recipients,
- migrant workers,
- those who are members of particularly large families,
- the aged?'

Mr Lardinois said plans of this kind were already in application in a number of sectors.

Mr Yeats asked whether, when CAP was reviewed, food supplies would in future be channelled to those most in need.

Mr Lardinois replied that the costs were often a problem here.

Sir Brandon Rhys-Williams asked about the possibilities of a minimum wage guarantee.

Mr Lardinois agreed with him about food aid. Social security was much further advanced in Europe and this kind of help could be limited to special cases. He agreed efforts must be made to develop similar systems for minimum incomes in the Member States.

Mr John Hill asked if it were sensible to apply VAT to food.

Mr Lardinois thought the Community ought to develop to the point where everyone was able to pay for the necessities of life.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Statement on Chile and the Soviet Union

The President expressed his concern about recent events in Chile, particularly at a time when Parliament was making ready to enter into relations with the South American Parliament. Now that the Conference on European Security and Cooperation has opened in Geneva, he said it was his duty to state that any restriction on the freedom of the individual in the Soviet Union could seriously threaten these attempts to achieve détente.

A petition was subsequently filed on the seizure of power by the armed forces in Chile and this was referred to the Legal Affairs Committee.

Sitting of Tuesday, 18 October 1973

Supplies of soya beans and other proteins for animal feeds

Oral question with debate

by Mr James Scott-Hopkins
on behalf of the European Conservative Group

‘In view of the situation which has arisen over supplies of soya beans in the Community and its implications for other sources of protein for animal feeding stuffs, will the Commission state what action it proposes to take?’

Mr Scott-Hopkins said a serious situation had arisen in the summer because the Community had been deprived of one of its sources of protein, soya beans. This had coincided with a shortage of fishmeal from Peru because of the lack of anchovies off the coast there.

In reply, Mr Petrus Lardinois, the Commissioner responsible for agriculture, welcomed the question. This was a matter of moment. The United States had panicked and this was hard to accept. He had made this point during his talks with the United States Administration in July. He had told them that the breach of long term contracts on which imports and exports depended could do more harm than all the good of the Kennedy, Dillon and Nixon rounds put together. He had drawn attention to the adverse effect this could have in throwing up new barriers.

He pointed out that the United States had requested the Community not to go in for soya beans itself and to charge no levies on soya bean imports. The Community therefore felt entitled to the same access to the soya bean market as the stockbreeders and consumers of the United States. After all, the EEC bought 50 0/o of the United States' exports of this product.

The alternative was for Europe to aim at self-sufficiency. This would involve concerted efforts by the chemical industry and agriculture, but the snag was it would be expensive. He hoped that the Community would not have to choose between security and higher prices.

He mentioned that in August the prices of all agricultural products in the United States from cotton to poultry had risen by 20 0/o. This was a blow to both milk and meat production and the effects would continue to be felt for a long time.

The United States Administration had overlooked the fact that when prices went up, consumption went down. They had forgotten that when speculation took over a raw material market, the panic situation rarely lasted. When he had been in the United States the people there were just beginning to see the harm they had done themselves, both in respect of their position in Tokyo and to their own private enterprise approach in international trade.

He expressed admiration for the United States Minister of Agriculture. By comparison with the criticism to which he had been subjected, the Russian butter deal row seemed insignificant.

Looking ahead, the answer was to increase protein output, and indeed the Council had asked the Commission for proposals. Nothing had been done with regard to soya beans, and he suggested it might be possible to build up reserve stocks. The Community ought to learn from this experience. The fact that the EEC did not panic was to its credit and it had certainly enhanced the status of

the Community. A way of solving this problem would have to be found that involved no unacceptable sacrifices from CAP but gave the Community a feeling of security for the future.

Mr Marcel Lemoine (French, non-attached) said that the effects on European agriculture had been disastrous. Europe's dependence on a single supplier seriously threatened livestock production throughout the Community. He called for speedy action through international commodity agreements. He thought that technical and financial aid should be given to promote protein plant production. It was possible to grow soya beans in France and throughout the Community. Appropriate assistance should be given.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Council Meetings

In a statement on improving the working methods of the Council Mr Norgaard said that the preparation of Council meetings should be such as to give Member States one week in which to prepare statements, negotiate with Parliaments and any other interested parties. As to the venue, he hoped for better arrangements. He wanted to cut out night sessions and to speed up decisions. He added that it would be regrettable if the time schedule laid down by the Summit Meeting were not adhered to.

Sitting of Tuesday, 18 September 1973

Meetings of the Council and of the Foreign Ministers of the Member States (Oral Question with debate)

On behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, Mr Alfred Bertrand addressed the following question to the Council:

'The Political Affairs Committee asks the Council why its members decided to meet, as the Foreign Ministers of the Member States, on the morning of 23 July 1973 in Copenhagen, and, as the Council of the Communities, in Brussels on the afternoon of the same day.

Does the Council not regard this procedure as seriously detrimental to the coherence of Community action and that of the Member States as part of the Community and as an additional source of confusion and dissatisfaction to public opinion?'

Opening the debate Mr Bertrand said that he had been asked if it were true that the nine Foreign Ministers met in Copenhagen inter-governmentally in the morning and in Brussels ministerially in the afternoon. He had been asked if these men had so much time? Did they not get tired? Were they not embarrassed by the waste of money? Mr Bertrand said that the estimate of the cost was 3 million Belgian francs. He had here been unable to reply. He had said that he would put the question to the Council. Mr Bertrand said that Foreign Ministers should keep their feet on the ground and try to avoid such situations. He was disappointed with the Council's statement because he had expected more. He hoped for something better in October, particularly bearing in mind the large number of Commission proposals pending.

Mr Norgaard said that meetings were governed by rules and the Council could not comment on the Foreign Ministers' Conference. The case referred to was an unfortunate coincidence and there must be no repetition of it.

Mr Radoux said that if the European Parliament were to show the same respect for form as had the Council and the Conference of Foreign Ministers, it could say that it was for the Danish Foreign Minister to reply. Respecting forms by going to Copenhagen in the morning and Brussels in the afternoon meant nothing more nor less than safeguarding the sovereignty of the Member States. Wednesday's meeting between the Political Affairs Committee and the President would not take place because of scruples about form. This was why this meeting had been deferred.

Sir Tufton Beamish said that after hearing Mr Norgaard's statement he was filled with concern. He said 'it is the Press which tells us what the Conference is about. Unless we are on the Political Affairs Committee we have little access to information.' He said that if the European Parliament could not debate foreign policy, what could it debate? And if it could not debate foreign policy it was not a Parliament – or at least not a Parliament he wanted to be in.

Lord Gladwyn said the situation was verging on the absurd and that absurdity was not a quality which organizations that wished to be taken seriously ought to cultivate. Was this the proper approach to European unity in seven years' time?

Mr Blumenfeld said that it seemed that on unimportant matters the Council preferred to meet outside Community bodies. It was intolerable and incomprehensible that the Council did not more firmly resist one Member State's interpreting political factors as it suited it. The Political Affairs Committee had a right to be informed. For it to go to Copenhagen went against the Community grain. The meeting between the President and the Political Affairs Committee was not possible because Parliament was meeting in Luxembourg and not Strasbourg. 'If we are here,' he said, 'this is where the Council has to answer questions. We shall never accept a situation where Governments are not prepared to come here.'

Mr Giovanni Giraudo (Italian, Christian Democrat) pointed out that it was not Parliament but the Council which had, in the Davignon Report, initiated the discussions between foreign ministers and the Political Affairs Committee. In July, the President of the Council had agreed these discussions be held four times a year to correspond with the quarterly meetings of foreign ministers.

As to the venue, Parliament had asked that the discussions be held where the foreign ministers were meeting. It was, however, now being proposed that the meeting be held in October, a month after the foreign ministers had met. This would make the discussions quite pointless, bearing in mind the immediacy of current topics: the negotiations with the United States and President Nixon's visit to Europe. Parliament needed to learn the relevant details from the Council and not only from the newspapers. The Europe all were seeking had to be the same.

Replying to the debate Mr Norgaard said Lord Gladwyn had asked a very pertinent question: was this the best way of implementing the Paris Summit commitment?

The distinction between the Council and the Conference of Foreign Ministers was a legal one. It was on this basis that the Danes had voted for the Common Market. It was also useful to cooperate on foreign policy but the European identity, the European foreign policy, still had to emerge. Attempts were being made in this direction, in line with the Paris Summit and in the meantime it was best to stick to the rules.

Sitting of Tuesday, 18 September 1973

Emergency Resolution on Council decision-taking

Parliament having voted to consider as a matter of urgency a resolution by the Socialist Group, Mr Jan Broeksz (Dutch, Socialist Group) said they had been informed by the Commission that 400 items were awaiting decision and there was a clear need for an improvement in decision-making procedures by the Council of Ministers. The date set by the Summit Meeting – June 30 1973 – as a deadline for this purpose had not been met by the Council. It seemed that national interests always prevailed in the Council over Community interests. It was not for the Parliament to state how the Council should solve the problem, but Parliament did have the right to ask the Council to take into account their opinions and suggestions.

Mr Broeksz, outlining the terms of the resolution, said they wanted the Council to consider various proposals, including the possibility of transferring certain minor powers to the Commission. They also suggested that where there were clear majorities in the Council, for instance seven members in favour, then the Ministers of the other two countries should bow their heads, accept the position and abstain. It was difficult to reach decisions which did not have any bad effects on some of the nine countries, but national interests should not supersede Community interests.

He asked Parliament to make it clear to the Council that the House was embarrassed and dissatisfied that the June 30th deadline set by the Summit had not been met.

Mr Hans-August Lücker (German, Christian-Democrat) for the Christian Democrats supported the resolution and Mr Peter Kirk (European Conservative) for the Conservatives said they did not have time to study it as it had not been circulated to them. They did have amendments ready and would insist on discussion of the amendments unless the matter was referred to the Political Affairs Committee. The Group supported in principle the resolution.

For the European Progressive Democrats Mr Michael Yeats also expressed support in principle, but said several of the proposals, particularly the matter of transferring powers to the Commission, were worrying. He suggested that if that portion of the resolution was withdrawn, the House could probably agree on most of the other sections.

Mr Broeksz said he regretted that the motion had to be tabled at such a late hour. His Group would agree to refer the resolution to the Political Affairs Committee on condition that the Committee dealt with it as quickly as possible and reported back to Parliament in time for a debate at the next session in October.

Mr Giovanni Giraudò (Italian, Christian-Democrat), Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee, undertook to have the resolution placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee on 27 September and to report back in time for a debate at the session beginning on 4 October.

This procedure was agreed.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973

Rules of Procedure

Mr Léon Jozeau-Marigné (French, Liberal and Allies Group) presented a report on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee on an amendment to Rule 7(1) and (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, concerning the election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the Parliament, and an amendment to Rule 41(5), concerning elections for the Bureaux of the committees; and on a corresponding amendment to Rule 35(6), concerning the voting procedure in the case of appointments. (Doc. 153/73).

The purpose behind this report, he said, was to bring the Rules of Procedure into line with Parliament's practice of holding elections without a secret ballot.

Lord O'Hagan expressed his concern about the status of non-attached Members.

Mr Jozeau-Marigné assured him the amendments would not jeopardize their status.

The motion was put to the vote.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Aerosols

Debate on the report drawn up by Sir Anthony Esmonde (Irish, former Member, Christian-Democratic Group) on Commission proposal for a directive to approximate Member States' laws on aerosols.

Presenting the report for Sir Anthony Esmonde, Mr Hans Jahn (German, Christian-Democrat) said the present position in the Community was an obstacle to adequate, uniform safety precautions, consumer protection and the free movement of goods.

The difficulty was that the Commission had opted for parallel national and Community legislation.

In the motion tabled, the House was asked to state it was unable to accept this dual dispensation.

It was also felt that the contents of aerosols should be covered by the directive, that details of contents be clearly stated on labels and that the wording should be in the local language.

With 800 million aerosols in circulation in the Community, the motion expressed concern at the pollution risk. The Commission was asked to initiate research into ways of disposing of these 'once-only' containers.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Coffee and tea extracts

Debate on the report by Mr Augusto Premoli (Italian, Liberal and Allies Group) on the Commission proposal for a directive to harmonize the laws of the Member States on coffee and tea extracts and their substitutes, including chicory and blends based on these extracts.

Mr Premoli said the point at issue was the degree of extraction representing the quantity of unroasted coffee used in making one kilogram of extract.

According to the directive, two types of product may be sold in the Community – soluble coffee or coffee extract corresponding to the traditional product and that which must be labelled ‘manufactured from less than 2.3 kg of unroasted coffee per kg of extract’. Both products may be obtained solely by aqueous extraction of roasted coffee and contain only soluble constituents of coffee. Extraction by acid hydrolysis was expressly forbidden.

The distinction between the two types of product hinged on taste which in turn depended on the origin and variety of beans used, the degree of extraction, the degree of roasting and the water used in the process. The degree of extraction was the most important. Hence the need for details to be given on labels. To avoid undue complexity, the products were divided into two groups only, depending on degree of extraction.

The Committee on Public Health and the Environment was unimpressed by the Commission’s proposals and failed to see the logic of the distinction required. It advocated abolishing this arbitrary division. It felt that ‘soluble coffee’ should be a permitted legal designation only for products manufactured from not less than 2.3 kg of coffee per kg of finished product.

In the motion tabled, the Commission was criticised for the time being taken in eliminating technical obstacles to trade in foodstuffs. It was, on the other hand, congratulated for consulting consumer and producer organizations in preparing the directive. The motion stated it was in the interest of producers and consumers for the designation ‘coffee extract’ or ‘soluble coffee’ to be permitted only for products made from more than 2.3 kg of unroasted coffee per kg of the finished product. The Commission was urged to modify its directive accordingly.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Voting rules

The Commission submitted proposals for a directive to amend and supplement Directives further to enlargement.

The proposed directive amended the voting rules on various committees to bring them in line with the Council of Ministers (this was purely technical and was an effect of the non-accession of Norway), and also drew the area demarcation lines for statistical surveys.

When the Commission proposals were discussed, Mr James Scott-Hopkins (European Conservative) wondered whether all the relevant points had been dealt with.

Replying on behalf of Mr Petrus Lardinois, Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities, said that his colleague agreed with the conclusions of the Committee on Agriculture. The amendments suggested would be adopted.

In the motion tabled for approval by the whole House, the Commission was criticized for the delay in submitting these proposals. It was also asked to make a technical amendment to them.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Almonds

The Commission proposed to lift the common customs tariff duty on almonds. Mr Christian de la Malène (French, Group of Progressive European Democrats) moved that the Commission's proposals be approved.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973

Imports from Turkey

The Commission made proposals designed to increase imports of agricultural products from Turkey. Mr Jan Baas (Dutch, Liberal and Allies Group) moved that these proposals be endorsed.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973

Skimmed milk powder as food aid

The Commission proposed to improve its emergency operations, particularly for the benefit of SAHEL countries and Chile. Mr Horst Seefeld (German, Socialist Group) moved that the Commission proposals be endorsed.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973

Carriage of goods for hire or reward

The Commission had submitted proposals to extend the liberalization of trans-national carriage in small lorries and for certain types of transport to carriage on own account.

Mr James Hill (European Conservative) moved the Commission proposals be approved.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 19 September 1973

Fruit and vegetables from East Africa

Debate on the report drawn up by Mr Maurice Dewulf (Belgian, Christian-Democratic Group) on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation on the proposals from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council

1. for a regulation amending Council Regulation (EEC) No. 859/72 on the treatment to be accorded to certain fruit and vegetables originating in the Associated African States and Madagascar or in the Overseas Countries and Territories
2. for a Regulation amending Council Regulation (EEC) No. 860/72 on the treatment to be accorded to certain fruit and vegetables originating in the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda or the Republic of Kenya.

The Commission's two proposals concerned duty-free imports of fruit and vegetables from the AASM and East Africa. The point at issue was that the Community decided, on 25 April 1972, to reimpose duties on these imports for certain periods of the year. The present proposals confirmed that decision.

The matter was referred to the Association bodies and the Parliamentary Conference asked for the regulation to be reconsidered. The tonnages involved were minimal (1,800 metric tons in 1970) while the Community marketed 21 million tons of similar products produced in the Community and imported from third countries more than twenty times the amount imported from the AASM.

Asked to intervene, Lord Reay had advised either that the Commission restore the duty-free system or extend the periods of the year when duties were suspended.

On 9 February 1973 the Council adopted the second alternative.

A motion tabled for Parliament's approval stressed the psychological and political damage to the Community's prestige resulting from this decision. The Community's policy could hardly consist in giving financial and technical aid to promote the production of fruit and vegetables on the one hand and curbing the marketing of these products on the other.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 20 September 1973

ANNOUNCEMENTS

It was with great regret that Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer, President of the European Parliament, informed the House of the death of Jean Fohrmann.

Mr Fohrmann was a Member of the Common Assembly from September 1952 to March 1958. He was a Member of the European Parliament from March 1958 to July 1965. During the whole of this period he took an active part in the activities of the European Parliament and became its first Vice-President. He left Parliament in 1965 to become a member of the High Authority of the ECSC, an office he held until the Executives were merged.

The House observed one minute's silence.

The President announced that Parliament had ratified the appointments of Mr Willem Scholten (Dutch, Christian Democratic Group), Mr Thomas Dunne (Irish, Christian Democratic Group), Mr James Gibbons (Irish, Group of Progressive European Democrats) and Mr Brian Lenihan (Irish, Group of Progressive European Democrats).

The President welcomed the new Members.

Parliament appointed Mr Charles McDonald to replace Sir Anthony Esmonde as Vice-President.

Parliament appointed Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté Vice-President.

Petition on emigrants

The President announced that a petition on an international Statute on the rights of emigrants had been referred to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and to the Legal Affairs Committee.

State of the Political Groups

Christian Democrats	52
Socialists	50
Liberals and Allies	24
European Conservatives	20
European Progressive Democrats	17
Non-attached Members	21
Seats open for British Labour Party	14

Non-attached Members

Italian Socialist Movement	3
British Independent Members	3
Belgian Independent Members	2
French Independent Members	1
Communists and Allies	13

Communists and Allies

Italian Communists	8
French Communists	3
Italian Independent Left Member	1
Danish People's Socialist Member	1

PART II

**The European Parliament met in extraordinary session
on 4 and 5 October 1973.**

Greater budgetary powers

Debate on report

by Mr Georges Spénale (French, Socialist)

At the Summit Conference in Paris in October 1972, the Heads of State or Government agreed the European Parliament must be made stronger and called for proposals to this effect.

These proposals were duly forthcoming, in June 1973, in the Cheysson Memorandum, Mr Cheysson being the Commissioner responsible. The Commissioner's main proposals were as follows:

1. Parliament would have sole power to give discharge to the Commission.
2. The Audit Board would be replaced by a Court of Auditors. Its task would be to audit Community accounts. Its members would be appointed by agreement between Governments.
3. New resources could be created by the Community itself. The Commission would introduce a proposal and the Council would act in agreement with Parliament. The Council would have to be unanimous and Parliament would have to act by a majority of its members and three-fifths of the votes cast.
4. The procedure for raising loans would be laid down. The decision would be a matter for the Council (acting by a qualified majority) and Parliament.
5. The Euratom and ECSC Treaties would be amended in the same way as the EEC Treaty(*). Setting the rate of the European Coal and Steel levy would in future involve a joint decision by Parliament and the Commission.

(*) At present there is an agreement between the Commission and the Parliament whereby the Commission does not deviate from the rate recommended by Parliament.

6. The 'inverted majority' rule applicable to Council decisions up to 31 December 1974 would continue to apply.
7. The present Treaty provisions for the final stage (after 31 December 1974) limit increases in expenditure over which Parliament has the last word. This is done by a system which fixes the maximum rate of increase in any expenditure of the same kind during the current year. The maximum rate may only be exceeded in exceptional cases. This 'exceptional cases' stipulation would not apply.
8. Financial regulations would in future require a joint decision by Council and Parliament.
9. Most budgetary expenditure is incurred pursuant to decisions of principle and other multi-year commitments. It is proposed there should be a 'second reading' procedure for rule-making decisions of general application. This would cover all decisions having considerable financial effects over a period covered by several budgets.

These proposals would become a 'Second Treaty amending certain budgetary provisions of the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community and the Treaty establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities'.

The EEC Treaty articles involved would be 201, 203, 204, 206, 207 and 209. There would be a new article 203b and Resolution No.2 annexed to the Treaty of 22 April 1970 would also be affected.

On receipt of this memorandum, the European Parliament set up a working party to analyse the proposals in detail. This working party met three times, in London, in Brussels and again in Luxembourg, before reporting back to the House. The report finally submitted on Thursday, 4 October was, in fact, drawn up by Mr Georges Spénale on behalf of the Committee on Budgets.

The opinion of the Political Affairs Committee, drawn up by Mr Peter Kirk (British, European Conservative), was submitted with it.

The motion

The motion tabled called on the Commission to review its proposals and requested the Council not to take any decision on them without first consulting Parliament.

The motion dealt with budgetary powers under four headings:

1. Creating revenue
2. Approving expenditure
3. Discussing and adopting the budget
4. Supervising the implementation of the budget.

1. Creating revenue

- (a) Parliament should not adopt decisions on creating new resources further to Commission proposals without the prior unanimous consent of the Council.
- (b) The number of points of VAT assigned to the Community could be fixed by Parliament between 1 and 2 on a Commission proposal and with the unanimous agreement of the Council.

2. Approving expenditure

- (a) Only Parliament should have the right to approve new expenditure.
- (b) The Commission's proposals for a second reading are restrictive and would not be effective enough.

(It was on the next section of the motion that the debate really focused.)

- (c) A coordination council should be set up to secure agreement between Parliament and Council.
- (d) Should this council fail to reach agreement, the decision should rest with Parliament:
 - (i) Acting by a majority of half its members plus one, unless the Council acts by a qualified majority;
 - (ii) if the Commission agrees with its opinion or if it acts by a majority of half its members plus one and two-thirds of the votes cast, unless the Council acts unanimously;
 - (iii) definitively, if it acts by a majority of half its members plus one and three-quarters of the votes cast.

3. Discussing and adopting the budget

- (a) There should be no distinction between expenditure arising from the Treaties or Acts pursuant to them and 'other expenditure'.
- (b) Meanwhile the category of expenditure over which Parliament has the final decision ought, as the Commission proposes, to be extended to all expenditure not arising automatically from earlier decisions.
- (c) The distinction between the two types of expenditure should be agreed with Parliament.
- (d) It must be acknowledge that Parliament's right to adopt the budget includes the right to refuse to adopt it and to reject it in whole or in part.
- (e) The Treaties should be amended accordingly.

4. Supervizing the implementation of the budget

- (a) The Commission's proposal to set up a European Court of Auditors is welcome.
- (b) Its members must be independent and appointed in agreement with Parliament.
- (c) The proposal that Parliament alone (on a Council recommendation) should give a discharge for the budget is welcome.

The opinion of the Political Affairs Committee

Mr Kirk broadly agreed with Mr Spénale on how the Commission's proposals might be modified. But he found the idea of Parliament's rejecting the budget outright was too far-reaching. He suggested that it would be more appropriate for Parliament to reject those parts of the budget over which it disagreed with the Council. He considered, in common with Mr Spénale, that Parliament should have the more nuanced right to reject individual headings of the budget as well as the more general right – to be used if necessary – of rejecting the whole budget.

Mr Kirk welcomed the proposal to set up a Court of Auditors (backed up by a Board of Auditors). He suggested Parliament's Committee on Budgets might interview prospective members of the Court and advise on their appointment. The Court should be responsible to Parliament, which should exercise parliamentary supervision over its work.

Mr Kirk pointed out that the concept of budgetary autonomy was a relative one.

The actual debate comprised three phases:

- (1) speeches on behalf of Political Groups,
- (2) speeches by private Members, and
- (3) the vote on the motion and the 19 amendments to it that were tabled.

The real debate, however, hinged on four basic options with respect to approving new expenditure:

- (1) the Commission's 'second reading' proposal,
- (2) Parliament's having 'the last word', as proposed by Mr Georges Spénale,
- (3) Parliament's having 'the theoretical last word' as proposed by Mr Heinrich Aigner (German, Christian-Democrat),
- (4) a procedure that would give no one the last word: this was the 'co-decision' procedure proposed by Mr Kirk which would involve Council and Parliament talking until they reached agreement and doing so in public.

Most Members agreed that the 'second reading' (amended to 'second consultation') procedure was inadequate. The debate therefore focused on the three remaining options.

Mr Spénale was at pains to show that when, in 1975, the Community becomes self-financing, there must be a new balance between the institutions. He regarded it as normal and reasonable for the European Parliament to claim the same rights as any other parliament. The Council was becoming an executive, a legislature, an inter-governmental conference and spokesman for the Nine Member States all rolled into one. The Council had to choose whether it was to be a legislature or a governmental body. Whatever its choice, the last word on the budget must rest with Parliament, acting by a majority of half plus one of its Members and three-quarters of the votes cast.

Mr Peter Kirk began by praising Mr Spénale's lucidity and his tenacity. His disagreements with Mr Spénale were, he said, tactical rather than strategic. On the general need to make Parliament stronger there was no disagreement.

Politics, he said, was the art of the possible. This was the thought underlying the compromise proposal he put forward on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee. The coordination committee to be set up to resolve disagreements should, in the last resort, simply talk until agreement was reached.

Speaking for his Group, Mr Heinrich Aigner said the last word should rest with the Council on two conditions:

- (1) it should take its decision publicly,
- (2) it should be unanimous.

Speaking for the Socialist Group, Mr Francis Vals (French) found the present imbalance between institutions intolerable. Looking ahead to political union, a more acceptable balance had to be found.

Mr Schelto Patijn (Dutch, Socialist) argued that the number of points of VAT to go to the Community should not yet be fixed.

Mr Horst Gerlach (German, Socialist) referred to the proposed Court of Auditors. This, he said, must be independent. It must also be able to operate efficiently.

Speaking for the European Progressive Democrats, Mr Yvon Bourges (French) found the Commission's proposals cumbersome. They would bring little real improvement. He also stressed the Court of Auditors must be independent.

Speaking for the Liberal and Allies Group, Mr André Rossi (French) thought one should not exaggerate the likelihood of Parliament's obtaining the required majority under Mr Spénale's 'last word' procedure. He felt that Mr Kirk's proposal would bring the Council's decisions out into the open. But the real power, his Group thought, was the legislative rather than the budgetary one.

Mr Rafton Pounder (European Conservative) agreed with the Socialists that the VAT rate going to the Community should not be decided yet. The Court of Auditors ought to be able to open enquiries when necessary.

Mr Brian Lenihan (European Progressive Democrat) felt that the 'last word' procedure was unrealistic. The snags would outweigh any gains it might yield.

Mr L. J. Brinkhorst (Dutch Foreign Minister) pledged his support for a stronger European Parliament. The only basis for European union, he said, was strong and democratic institutions.

Mr Maurice Dewulf (Belgian, Christian Democrat) wanted a clear distinction made between automatic and optional expenditure. Criteria should be agreed to this effect. He took exception to regulations laying down, once and for all, the financial consequences of decisions taken. He supported Mr Kirk's approach.

Mr Fazio Fabbrini (Italian, non-attached) found Mr Kirk's attitude to be one of resignation. The Communists would support Mr Spénale.

Mr Helmut Artzinger (German, Christian Democrat) said the present struggle was on Parliament's behalf but, he said, the next struggle would be to secure more powers for the Commission.

Sir Derek Walker-Smith (European Conservative) stressed that the support of national parliaments was needed. He objected to the suggestion that Parliament should fix the annual rate of VAT. It was irrelevant and would be an irritant to public opinion.

Mr Gérard Bordu (French, non-attached) felt that some of the clauses proposed would compromise the independence of the Member States.

Lord O'Hagan (British, non-attached) hoped that people in the Community would be able to look back at this as the time when this Parliament stopped being a mere cardboard show pretending to be a parliament, and began to move towards a true role as a genuine parliament. One ought, he felt, to tell the Council 'give us something decent because if you do not, it shows you don't really want us to do a job'.

Mr Per Dich (Danish, non-attached) was opposed to any increase in Parliament's powers. The only control the Danish electorate had over budgetary decisions lay in the Council's having the last word.

Mr Giovanni Bersani (Italian, Christian Democrat) trusted the present debate would begin the process of readjustment that political union called for.

Parliament spent some two hours debating the amendments tabled. The effect of the amendments agreed to was as follows:

1. the reference to VAT was deleted and replaced by a clause endorsing the Commission's proposal on loan-raising requiring the Council to have a qualified majority and the agreement of Parliament to do so;
2. the procedure to be followed to achieve agreement between Parliament and Council to approve expenditure was completely rewritten.

The new clauses in the motion read:

(Parliament) therefore proposes that

- (a) a coordination committee should be set up with equal representation of Parliament and the Council, to seek, in the presence of the Commission, an acceptable solution in the event of failure to reach an agreement;
- (b) the solution proposed by the coordination committee would enter into force after ratification (within a maximum period of 30 days from the date of its adoption by the coordination committee) by the Council by a qualified majority and by the Parliament by a majority of its members and a simple majority of the votes cast;
- (c) in the event of the solution proposed by the coordination committee being rejected by the Council and/or Parliament, the matter in dispute would – after an exchange of views between the Council and Parliament in the form of a debate in plenary session – be referred again to the coordination committee;
- (d) in the event of no agreement being reached at the second attempt, Parliament's opinion, established by a majority of half its members plus one and two-thirds of the votes cast, can only be modified by the Council acting unanimously. Unanimity cannot be achieved if even a single member of the Council abstains. The Council must meet in public on these occasions.

The other new clauses in the motion

1. endorsed the Commission's proposal that the Council should have a qualified majority to reject modifications put forward by Parliament where these do not increase the total expenditure (this simply continues after 1975 the practice that will apply until then),

2. stressed that where Parliament's modifications increased total expenditure, the Council should have a simple majority to reject them and not a qualified majority to accept them.

When the voting came to a close, Mr Spénale said he would abstain when the motion as a whole was put to the vote. The fact that Mr Aigner's 'theoretical last word' option had been adopted was a defeat for him.

This was a moving moment.

The motion as a whole was then put to the vote.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sittings of Thursday and Friday, 4 and 5 October 1973

Question Time

Questions to the Council of the European Communities

Space Conference of 31 July 1973

by Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté (European Progressive Democrat)

'Can the Council state whether the inter-governmental agreement with the United States authorities (NASA) following the Space Conference of 31 July 1973 was concluded in time, i.e. before 15 August?

Can the Council also indicate whether this agreement was signed by the EEC as such, and give its views on the European space programme as a whole, and in particular on the setting-up of the European Space Agency on 1 January 1974?'

Speaking for the Council, Mr Ivar Norgaard replied as follows:

'Although the problem raised by the Honourable Member of Parliament does not fall within the competence of the Council, I should like to point out that the cooperation agreement between NASA and ESRO concerning Europe's participation in the American Post-Apollo Space Programme was signed in Washington on Monday, 24 September 1973.

The EEC is not signatory to this agreement.

The Council is of the opinion that the European Space Agency to be set up next April and whose task it will be gradually to take over all European space ventures will facilitate the realization of space exploration projects which demand the widest possible cooperation by reason of the technological manpower they demand, the financial means they require and the possibilities they offer. The Council does not consider itself competent, however, to pass judgement on a programme adopted within the framework of an inter-governmental agreement entered into by certain Member States of the Community only.'

Migrant workers

by Lord O'Hagan (non-attached)

'The Council is asked whether they accept that the social strains associated with migrant workers demand urgent Community action?'

Replying for the Council, Mr Ivar Norgaard said:

'The problem of the situation of migrant workers employed within the Community has long been one of the main concerns of the Council and the Governments of the Member States.

At its meeting on 9 November 1972, the Council instructed the Commission to assemble the information which would enable the socio-economic position de jure and de facto of foreign Community and extra-Community workers and their families to be evaluated in relation to that of national workers. The Commission is at present engaged on that task.

With a view to preparing the social action programme, in particular, the Council will endeavour to adopt its decision as soon as possible on the proposals submitted to it in this matter by the Commission.'

Report on European Union

by Mr Lucien Radoux (French, Socialist)

'The last paragraph of the Declaration of Heads of State or Government of October 1972 asks the Community institutions to draw up a report on European Union before the end of 1975.

What arrangements has the Council made to implement the procedure to ensure that this request is complied with? ’

Mr Norgaard replied as follows:

‘The Council has yet to discuss the problem raised by the Honourable Member of Parliament, but it will not fail to do so in time for preparation of the Report on “European Union” within the time limit laid down in paragraph 16 of the Summit Conference Communiqué.

The matter has, however, been discussed informally by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. These discussions are continuing at the present time.’

Questions to the Commission of the European Communities

Accountancy and company practices and procedures
in the proposed European Company
by Sir Derek Walker-Smith (European Conservative)

‘The Commission is asked if they will report on the talks which they have had and are continuing to have with the working party of Chartered Accountants of the EEC on the subject of accountancy and company practices and procedures in the proposed European Company and in the context of the directives for the harmonization of national company law? ’

Replying for the Commission, Mr Finn Olav Gundelach said that Parliament would be kept informed. Bearing in mind the wide differences in practice between Member States, the Commission favoured a flexible approach.

Patents Office in Munich
by Mr John Brewis (European Conservative)

‘What progress is being made in the Patents Office in Munich particularly with regard to processing applications in the English language from outside the Community? ’

In reply, Mr Gundelach said this was a matter for the Member States. Consideration would be given to the suggestion that a branch office be set up in London.

Study of the Community economy
by Mr Silvio Leonardi (Italian, non-attached)

‘What use does the Commission intend to make of the “study of the effects of Community policy on the economies of the Member States and on that of the Community as a whole over the period 1958-72”?’

In reply, Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the Commission, said a synthesis of this study had been forwarded to the House. It would be made generally available. Much had been learned, particularly in the regional and social policy aspects of Community policy.

There followed three questions on aerosol glues:

Manufacture and marketing of aerosol glues
by Mr Willi Müller (German, Socialist)

‘Are “aerosol glues”(*) also manufactured and marketed in the Member States of the Community?’

Injurious effects of ‘aerosol glues’
by Mr Karl-Heinz Walkhoff (Socialist)

‘Can the Commission confirm that the effects of “aerosol glues” are injurious to health and will it, if necessary, have the products in question checked and tested by experts at the earliest possible date?’

Joint action to prevent the manufacture and
marketing of ‘aerosol glues’
by Mr Helmut Kater (German, Socialist)

‘Will the Commission take steps to prevent the recurrence of cases of deformity such as those caused by Thalidomide and urge all Member States

(*) Recent scientific research in the USA has shown that what are known as ‘aerosol glues’ may possibly damage chromosomes and cause deformities in new-born babies. When the research results were published, the Consumer Product Safety Commission had all ‘aerosol glues’ withdrawn from the US market.

to take joint action against the manufacture and marketing of "aerosol glues"?'

Replying for the Commission, Mr Gundelach said a basis for a Community regulation was being worked out. Until this was done, it would remain a matter for the Member States. The Commission had, however, begun an enquiry into the harmful effects of aerosols. A meeting with experts would be held at the end of October. Sales of glues believed to be harmful had been suspended and the Commission would envisage prohibiting them.

Sitting of Friday, 5 October 1973

Statement on Chile

The President expressed his own and the Political Groups' horror at the execution of political prisoners in Chile. He joined in the plea made by Mr K. Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the Chilean Government not to execute L. Corvalan, Secretary-General of the Chilean Communist Party and the decision to take similar steps in the event of any situation of this kind arising.

A motion on the EEC's attitude to Chile was tabled by Mr Giorgio Amendola (Italian, non-attached), Mr Gustave Ansart (French, non-attached) and Mr Per Dich (Danish, non-attached) This was referred to the Political Affairs Committee.

Sitting of Friday, 5 October 1973

Decision-taking in the Council

Speaking for the Socialist Group, Mr Jan Broeks (Dutch) tabled a motion expressing dissatisfaction at the measures so far taken by the Council to improve its decision-taking. The motion requested the Council to fix a date by which it would take effective measures.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Friday, 5 October 1973

Credit transfer

The Commission had submitted a proposal for a credit transfer. Mr Alain Terrenoire (French, European Progressive Democrat) moved that it be approved.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Friday, 5 October 1973