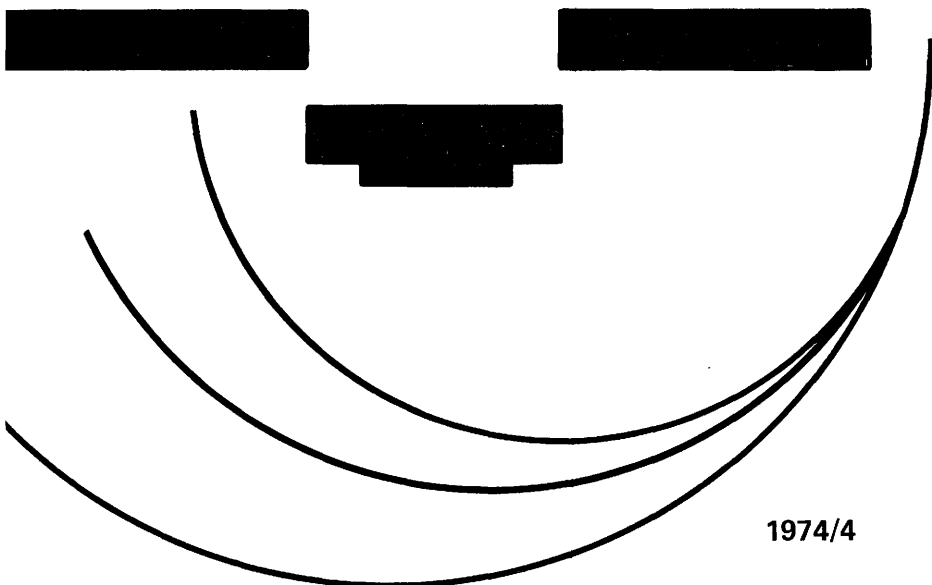


European parliament

information

PARLIAMENT IN SESSION



1974/4

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PART I

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MET IN PLENARY SESSION IN LUXEMBOURG from Wednesday, 3 April to Friday 5 April 1974

The sittings began with tributes to President Georges Pompidou by President Berkhouwer, then by Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the European Commission and finally by Mr Burin des Roxiers, Permanent Representative in the Council of the European Communities, who spoke on behalf of the French Foreign Minister.

The House then rose as a mark of respect.

The main debate during Parliament's three days in Luxembourg was on sugar and here there was fundamental disagreement as to where the main emphasis of the Community's policy should lie.

There was a further debate on Greece, reflecting Parliament's increasing concern about the political situation in that country and a further motion was tabled on conditions in the Sahel.

Finally there was a statement by President Berkhouwer in which he referred to the meeting of the Council of Ministers which had just taken place. President Berkhouwer pointed out that it was unacceptable that a Member State should be able to demand changes to the Treaties merely because it had had a change of government.

Death of President Georges Pompidou

Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer, President of the European Parliament, made the following statement when Parliament resumed its session on Wednesday, 3 April 1974:

'A man has died, a Head of State has died, a great Frenchman has died, and also a European. The news came with brutal suddenness at the beginning of the night.

Destiny has struck. Georges Pompidou is dead.

He will remain for us the man of The Hague and Paris Summits; a man whom I met recently and with whom I spent a long moment alone. His understanding friendship helped to inspire me with a desire to promote the European Union.

This is a great time of grief for me as it is for you. This eminent man of letters, steeped in classical culture, this great humanist is no longer with us. In the name of our Parliament I salute the memory of this man, who carried out the duties of his high office to the very limit of his strength.

Ladies and gentlemen, honourable Members, France, that great European country, has been struck a cruel blow by fate. President Georges Pompidou died suddenly. Let us sadly pay our respects, together with all those who, like myself, were close to him and came to know his deepest thoughts; and, because of that, let us keep our faith in the destiny of Europe, in this very difficult moment.

Europe will not be made in a day. President Georges Pompidou warned us against possible errors. May we remember his advice and construct together, as he would so have wished, something which, alas, he will never now see, a Europe that is master of its own destiny.'

Sitting of Monday, 3 April 1974

Statement by the President on the state of the Community

'In the last few days serious difficulties have arisen in connection with the measures to be taken to strengthen the Community pursuant to the principles laid down in the Treaties and guidelines issued at the last three Summit Conferences of the Heads of State or Government.

Consequently, the President of the European Parliament wishes once again to draw the attention of the Member States to the major dangers facing the Community in view of the understandable concern about the short-term economic situation and in connection with sectoral interests. Certain attitudes represent a threat to Community solidarity and any chance of further development towards European Union.

The President of the European Parliament has noted the statement made by Mr Callaghan on behalf of the British government. He does not wish to go into the matter in any greater detail for the present and feels that we should sympathize to some extent with the British government's demands for certain changes in the operation of the Community within the framework of existing procedures. In the continuous process of Community development, however, it is unacceptable that a Member State should be able to demand changes to the Treaties merely because its government has been replaced by another.

As the representative body of the European peoples, Parliament is fully convinced that, while maintaining everything that has already been achieved, the Community must intensify its efforts to make up for lost time and to find a solution to the serious irregularities and discrepancies, most of which are the result of the lack of progress.

The President of the European Parliament also feels that by creating a European identity, the Community will be able to promote peace and progress throughout the world, thanks to the close cooperation between the Member States in the field of external policy and within the framework of large-scale cooperation with the major powers. In this way, we shall be able to strengthen our alliance with the United States of America on a basis of equality and give an impulse to fruitful cooperation with, in particular, the countries of the Mediterranean area.

Today's sitting takes place very soon after the latest meeting of the Council in Luxembourg. It is therefore obvious that the European Parliament, the forum of the peoples of the European Community, would like to have had a debate on this subject. The chairmen of the political groups had in fact made the necessary contacts to this end. As a result of the sudden death of President Pompidou it will not, however, be possible to do what we had originally planned. I am sure that when we meet in Strasbourg we will have an opportunity to have a full political debate on the serious situation in which the Community now finds itself.

Sitting of Friday, 5 April 1974

MAIN DEBATES

Sugar

Report (Doc. 32/74) for the Committee on Development and Cooperation by Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker (British, European Conservative) on the future sugar policy of the Community with particular reference to imports of sugar from the developing countries and in the light of the Commission's Memorandum of 12 July 1973.

The committee's report

The committee noted the Community's commitment to countries dependent on sugar exports. It believed the Community should guarantee access for imports of 1.4m tons of cane sugar. It argued that timing was important here because the present Commonwealth Sugar Agreement expires on 31 December 1974 and the Second Yaoundé Convention on 31 January 1975.

The debate

There were two points of concern raised in the debate (1) that the Community should fulfill its obligations to the sugar-exporting developing countries and (2) that the legitimate interests of the Community sugar producers should not be disregarded.

There was also considerable divergence in Members' appreciation of how the situation would develop on the world sugar market with its present buoyant trend and with demand firm at between 80m and 100m tons per annum.

Introducing his report Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker pointed out that the text of the motion before the House had been agreed between the three committees concerned: the Committee on Agriculture, the Committee on External Economic Relations and the Committee on Development and Cooperation. The question on imports of cane sugar from the developing countries was covered by Protocol 22, Article 118 and a Declaration of Intent. At the same time the European Parliament had itself agreed to a resolution reaffirming the Community's responsibility to the Third World for trade and cooperation. There was thus no doubt about the Community's commitment. He pointed out that the virtue of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement now due to expire on

31 December 1974 was that it guaranteed supplies and guaranteed prices. With the expiry of the Second Yaoundé Convention on 1 January 1975 there would not be much time left to make adequate alternative arrangements for developing countries which were highly dependent on sugar for their economic future. The best way of helping them was to provide them with access to the Community market. It was time, he thought, for the Community to show it had constructive long-term proposals for helping the developing world.

Mr Martin Bangemann (German Liberal) agreed with Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker. There were a whole series of producing countries that were far more dependent on sugar than, for example, the European Community. It was pointed out that the developing countries needed help to diversify their production. He agreed that the Community had made a series of declarations and that it should meet its commitment. He did not think that one should be influenced by the current market situation.

Speaking for the Committee on Agriculture, Mr Lucien Martens said that importing 1.4m tons of sugar was a political act to help the developing countries. It should be properly priced to help them and should be higher than levels recently quoted. But, he asked, should the Community be a net importer? And why, he asked, should the net import figure be 600,000 tons? No one seemed to know, he said.

Mr Martens opposed the motion before the House because he said he wanted to help the Community's own producers and the developing countries which did not produce sugar. If the Community agreed to cut back its output by 600,000 tons what guarantee was there that other countries would not simply step in? Was the Community so sure, he asked, that the 1.4m tons would in fact be delivered? He also expressed reservations about the Community's subscribing to the International Sugar Agreement.

Mr Martens concluded by saying that this was not the right time to decide whether the Community should be a net importer or exporter but to determine its responsibilities with regard to world sugar supplies.

Mr Cornelis Laban (Dutch Socialist) agreed with the Commissions's proposals but drew attention to the anomaly that sugar-exporting developing countries were getting a lower price for their sugar than sugar-importing developing countries were having to pay. The Socialist Group agreed that the Community must meet its commitment but developing countries had to help too. They had

to make sure that they delivered their supplies and the United Kingdom in turn must pay a good price.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins, speaking for the European Conservative Group, pointed out that the British prices were settled under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. He conceded that they were lower than the world prices and that they should be adjusted. He understood the anxieties expressed by Mr Martens and those of the sugar beet growers. The Community, however, had a commitment to the developing countries which wanted a secure future. He stressed that the world market was constantly changing and referred to the question asked by Mr Martens as to what would happen if there were to be surpluses on the world market. He asked whether the Community would suffer from being a net importer. He thought this unlikely because consumption was going up.

Mr Albert Liogier (French), speaking for the European Progressive Democrats, said that the Community producers could not be regarded as a secondary consideration. The motion before the House turned its back on the common agricultural policy. His Group accepted the Community's very heavy commitments but no more. He rejected the idea that the Community should be a net importer and pointed out that the example of petroleum product and protein cereals had shown the folly of being dependent on imports. The Commonwealth producers had not been able to meet their supply commitments and they were unable to expand. The real beneficiaries, therefore, would be Australia and South Africa. The present proposals, he concluded, could only discourage Community producers and perpetuate the world's shortage.

Mr James Gibbons (Irish, European Progressive Democrat) could not accept the motion because it ran counter to the interests of Community sugar workers and farmers generally.

Mr John Hill (British, European Conservative) argued that net importing was a logical consequence of the enlargement of the Communities. The 1.4m tons should be regarded as part of the domestic supplies. Prices had risen so much that all previous arrangements seemed out of date but there could still be a surplus in the future.

Replying to the debate, Mr Claude Cheysson said that many of the conflicts arising were purely imaginary. Sugar consumption after all was between 80 and 100m tons. The Commission, however, did not intend to change its principles

and there was not much time for the Commission to formulate its proposals. He noted Mr Liogier's regret that the principle of importing 1.4m tons was a political act. He also noted that Mr Laban was glad about this. The Commission was glad too. If the Community was to have a development policy then a guarantee as to tonnage must be part of it.

Mr Cheysson said that he had discussed sugar with all the Prime Ministers of the developing countries except those in the Pacific. He did not hesitate to say that efforts should be directed to helping them develop their refining capacity.

He pointed out, however, that sugar travelled badly in the tropics especially in the rainy areas and some developing countries would need time to switch over to other crops. He stressed that the countries concerned were among the poorest in the world and he asked critics of the Community's policy to go to those developing countries where sugar cane is grown. They must be given a chance.

Mr Cheysson referred to the principles on which a future agreement for sugar should be based. In addition to a commitment to import 1.4m tons of cane sugar there should be a guaranteed purchase price near that of the Community's internal rate. There should also be a commitment by the Community to avoid any steps which might undermine the world market or curtail the export revenue of the cane-producing countries.

Amendments to the motion were then discussed and all but one were rejected. A resolution approving the proposals in the Commission's sugar memorandum was then agreed to.

Sitting of Friday, 5 April 1974

Sahel

Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Georges Spénale (French Socialist) for the Committee on Development and Cooperation on new emergency measures for the Sahel countries

Introduction

The Sahel countries will again need considerable help this year if widespread famine is to be avoided. The difficulty is that although food is now beginning to arrive at the various ports feeding the Sahel, the local transport's capacity to

speed the food on its way is inadequate, a situation further aggravated by the high costs of petrol for the last lap of the food's journey and the fact that there are now only a few months to go before the rainy season begins in late July.

The following resolution was agreed to:

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the news that the food supply situation in the Sahel countries and Ethiopia is even more critical than it was in 1973;
 - recalling the considerable special funds made available from the budget of the Communities to cope with any recurrence of such a situation;
 - deploring the fact that large quantities of foodstuffs which could help considerably to alleviate the present catastrophe are being held up in certain African ports;
1. Draws the attention of the Commission, the Council and the Governments of the Member States to the imperative need to take all the necessary measures, without delay and regardless of cost, to mitigate the effects of the present famine in these countries from considerations of human solidarity alone.
 2. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission of the European Communities and to the Council of the EEC/AASM Association for its information.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Road transport

Report (Doc. 19/74)

for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport by Mr Wolfgang Schwabe (German Socialist) on

- I. a report from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on the work done in connection with the difficulties encountered in the operation of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1174/68 of 30 July 1968 on the introduction of a system of bracket tariffs for the carriage of goods by road between Member States

- II. the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 1174/68 on the introduction of a system of bracket tariffs for the carriage of goods by road between Member States
(Doc. 301/73)

Introduction

The Community's policy on freight rates is to establish agreed maxima. The point at issue is that there are maximum and minimum freight rates for the carriage of goods by road. The purpose underlying these agreed rates is to ensure that competition is not undermined by price cutting or other unfair trade practices. However, it is one thing to agree on maximum and minimum rates (called 'Bracket Tariffs') and quite another to see to it that they are enforced.

The original method of enforcement called for rates of transport contracts to be forwarded to the Commission at set intervals. The time allowed for this proved too short and the whole process was indeed unduly cumbersome.

The difficulty arose with special contracts i.e. contracts for the carriage of goods at rates outside the bracket tariffs. The purpose of amending the original regulation about the publication of contracts is to give the Commission the option of soliciting information where it thinks fit without placing a corresponding burden on haulage contractors. This is to cover such cases where the circumstances are unusual e.g. the carriage of live animals etc.

The overall aim of Community policy is to secure fair competition and a transparent road transport market.

The committee's motion

The Committee noted the Commission's opinion that it is still too early to draw any final conclusions about the bracket tariff system for road haulage. The committee asked the Commission to submit proposals for a definitive system as soon as possible. The committee agreed that the amendment is desirable for the reasons stated.

A resolution to this effect was put to the House. It was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Excise duties

The six reports on excise duties were taken together. The point was raised early on as to why one should have excise duties and value added tax at the same time. It was pointed out that excise duties would be phased out with two exceptions: (1) alcoholic drinks on the ground of public health and (2) petroleum products because of their high revenue yield.

In the debate on the Commission's proposals there was broad general agreement with the Commission, with one exception. Parliament refused to accept the Commission's proposal for a directive on excise duty on wine. The reasons for this were that wine is an agricultural product providing for the main source of income for many of the Community's less prosperous farmers. It was pointed out that few Member States actually have excise duties on wine and where they exist they yield little revenue. Parliament called on the Commission to submit fresh proposals designed to phase out the excise duty on wine.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Statement by Mr Claude Cheysson on action taken on Parliament's advice

Mr Claude Cheysson, speaking on behalf of Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, said that the Commission had accepted most of the 25 amendments to its VAT proposals that Parliament had put forward in March. The Commission would be presenting a suitably modified proposal to the Council in May.

As regards merger control, discussed by Parliament in February, the Commission was again preparing a modified proposal which would be submitted to Parliament and Council as soon as possible.

The Commission, on the other hand, could not accept the amendments Parliament requested concerning the dangers of ionising radiations in the form proposed. It would, however, endeavour to devise a new text taking the concern expressed by Parliament into account.

Referring to safety at work, the Commission accepted the amendments to its proposal put forward by Parliament. Similarly, the Commission agreed that the Standing Committee on Safety in Mines should now have terms of reference extending to all extractive industries. A suitably amended proposal would be submitted to the Council.

As regards sugar, he pointed out that the Council had decided on 23 March not to set the quality guaranteed for 1974-1975 until arrangements for imports from the developing countries as of 1 January 1975 had been made.

Referring to aid for hops producers, Mr Lardinois had put forward a proposal including all the varieties of hops Parliament referred to. This had now been accepted in the form of a Council Regulation.

Mr Cheysson then referred to the work of Mr Armengaud whose recent death had been deeply regretted by the Commission. He had played a leading role in Parliament and had had a keen insight into a range of problems. As regards his report on guarantees for investments in third countries, the Commission had decided to make a distinction between private investment guarantees for all the industrialised states and investment guarantees relating to the developing countries.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

Statement by Mr Ralf Dahrendorf on the participation in elections by Italian migrant workers

The President announced that he had received a letter from Mr Dahrendorf, Member of the European Commission, correcting figures he had quoted at Question Time on 13 March and which were challenged at the time by Mrs Tullia Caretoni Romagnoli (Italian Communist) and Mr Luigi Girardin (Italian Christian Democrat).

The correct figures were as follows:

Ballot papers issued to Italian migrant workers	810,275
Ballot papers used by Italian workers	180,431

(broken down by country)

Switzerland	105,479
Belgium	4,853
Germany	44,610
France	17,227

United Kingdom	2,314
Luxembourg	1,356
Netherlands	428

Mr Dahrendorf regretted Parliament had been misinformed.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

QUESTION TIME
Question to the Council

Consultation between the European Communities and the United States of America

Question No 2/74 by Sir Tufton Beamish (British, European Conservative)

'How could the consultation which has been called for between the European Communities and the United States of America be most satisfactorily organized and conducted and should this consultation be applied not only to questions of foreign policy and political cooperation, but also to matters covered by the Treaties establishing the Communities.'

Mr Thorn, President of the Council of Ministers, replied:

'Consultations between the Europe of the Nine and the United States of America do indeed involve both questions of foreign policy and consequently political cooperation, and matters covered by the Treaties establishing the Communities.

As far as the Community is concerned, our Institutions have always attached the greatest importance to maintaining a constructive dialogue with the United States (as indeed with the other industrialized trading partners) and, as you know, this was reaffirmed during the Conferences in Paris and Copenhagen. This dialogue, moreover, has been in existence almost since the Community started. Close and steady relations have been established between the Commission and the American authorities, making possible comprehensive and often fruitful interchanges of views concerning all matters of mutual interest falling within the competence of the Community.

Moreover, the problem of the dialogue with the United States also forms the focal point of the current discussions to prepare a declaration of principles to cover the whole field of relations between the European Community and its Member States and the United States of America.

I am convinced that, in the end, we shall reach a solution which is equally satisfactory to our American friends and to the Community itself.

It is therefore not possible at this stage to give a precise reply to the question put by the Honourable Member. However, the European Parliament will of course receive full details on the matter when the time comes.'

Question to the Commission

Lack of harmony between Member States in the area of family law

Question No 3/74 by Mrs Tullia Caretoni Romagnoli (Italian Communist)

'The anti-divorce referendum in Italy has further highlighted the lack of harmony between Member States in the area of family law. Since a serious effort to achieve real harmonization seems indispensable, could the Commission not promote a legal and sociological enquiry and study in this field?'

Mr Claude Cheysson, replying on behalf of Mr Patrick Hillery, Vice-President of the Commission, said that divorce came under family law and was solely a matter for the Member States. The Treaties gave the Community no powers in this sphere.

All the Commission could do was refer to developments in Member States' legislation, as it did each year in its report on the social situation in the Community.

The Commission was not indifferent to the approximation of laws on family matters, especially where employment or living or working conditions were concerned and had submitted recommendations in these fields. It could not, however, conduct any enquiry of the type requested. This lay right outside the Commission's terms of reference.

Oral question with debate

Greece

Oral question put down by Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German Socialist)

1. Does the Commission maintain its point of view that it is enough that it confine itself to the 'routine administration' of the Association until democratic institutions have been restored in Greece?
2. Does the Commission share the opinion that the existence of a democratic regime in Greece was considered by the contracting parties as the very basis of this Agreement; that, with the establishment of the military dictatorship, that basis has disappeared and that, consequently, termination of the Association Agreement is justified?
3. What steps does the Commission intend to take in order to have the Association Agreement terminated?

Introduction

There can be no doubt that the political situation in Greece is causing considerable concern in the European Community. On 28 March the Commission issued the following statement:

'The Commission of the European Communities has learned with indignation that a new series of arrests and deportations are taking place at this moment in Greece.

Mr Georges Mavros, a politician whose attachment to democracy and to the European ideal have won for him a high reputation from the time when he was as a Minister leading the Greek delegations in European and international organisations, is among the victims of the deportations measures.

The Commission regrets having to repeat its acknowledgement of 10 May 1972, that the present situation in Greece remains very far removed from the democratic principles on which the European Community is based and that the

Association agreement with Greece must continue to be strictly confined to routine business.'

It is worth noting that since the military coup of April 1967 the Association Agreement, signed in Athens in 1963, has been 'frozen'. Financial aid from the European Investment Bank to promote agricultural and industrial development has been suspended. The fact remains that the enlargement of the Community raised the question of extending the Greek agreement to the three new Member States by means of an additional protocol. Negotiations to this effect are still in progress.

The main point at issue is Greek wine exports. Under the current agreement the arrangements vary from Member State to Member State. Greek wines attract neither duties nor quotas in the Benelux countries and enjoy a duty-free quota in Germany. The Community wished to take advantage of the current negotiations to adapt these arrangements to the needs of the common wine market under the Common Agricultural Policy. The Commission is now awaiting the Greek government's answer to its latest proposals on this point.

The debate

The European Parliament, however, wondered whether the time had not come to rescind this agreement completely. Speaking to the question on behalf of Mr Fellermaier, Mr Horst Seefeld argued that the United States was reappraising its attitude to Greece and he quoted one American spokesman Mr Donald Fraser as saying that the unity of NATO would be threatened if it supported dictatorship in Greece; the same spokesman had expressed concern about the effect on the image of the United States. Mr Seefeld argued that there now seemed little prospect of an early return to democracy in Greece. He agreed with the comments made by Mr Willem Schuijt (Dutch, Christian Democrat) in Florence to the effect that Community pressures had so far been without effect. The Treaty, he said, was a matter of law but it could be suspended on the grounds that membership of the Community – which the Association was intended to lead up to – was only open to democracies. Mr Seefeld also argued that the present contacts involved more than routine business.

Mr Claude Cheysson, replying for Sir Christopher Soames, said that the Commission had given a great deal of thought to this matter and had not adopted its present position lightheartedly. A Community based on international

law had to respect it. The Commission had always done this and would continue to do so. The Commission thought it preferable to base the emphasis on the prospects that will open up for Greece when human rights and democratic freedoms are restored. The Community, he said, would be ready to act swiftly and effectively in developing its relations with that country.

In the debate that followed there was general agreement condemning the present political regime in Greece but considerable divergencies of view on the best way of dealing with it. The Socialists wanted immediate action whereas the European Conservatives and certain Liberal and Christian Democrat spokesmen came out in support of the Commission view that treaties could not be violated and that the best approach was to make it clear to Greece what the Community can and will do once human rights and democratic freedoms are restored.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

Other matters

Pre-packaged products

Report (Doc. 382/73) for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment by Mr Donal Creed (Irish Christian Democrat) on the Commission's proposal

(Doc. 241/73) for a directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the making-up by weight or by volume of certain pre-packaged products

The Commission's proposal

This was designed to remove technical obstacles to trade between the Member States.

The committee's opinion

The committee welcomed the proposal but considered the directive should replace national legislation. It called on the Commission to amend its proposal.

A resolution approving the Commission's proposal was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

Carp and trout

Report (Doc. 16/74) for the Committee on Agriculture by Mr Roger Houdet (French, Liberal) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 375/73) for a regulation supplementing Regulation (EEC) No. 2142/70 as regards the import system for carp and trout

The Commission's proposal

This follows from a Council statement that trout and carp imports should be regulated. Denmark was and is the largest supplier of trout so this aspect of the problem was dealt with in Enlargement. Free importation is now possible.

The import price of carp from Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia is much lower than the production price within the Community. Reference prices are therefore proposed and a compensatory tax will be collected where these prices are not observed.

A resolution approving the Commission's proposal was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

PART II

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MET IN PLENARY SESSION IN STRASBOURG from Monday, 22 April to Thursday 25 April 1974.

As President Berkhouwer indicated on 5 April, the European Parliament was anxious to have a full-scale debate on the state of the Community. This was held on Wednesday and was the main focal point of the week.

The social situation was also the subject of a major debate.

ORAL QUESTIONS WITH DEBATE

Questions (i), (ii) and (iii)

The questions on the state of the Community, improper procedure in Council deliberations and on the Commission's role as guardian of the EEC Treaty were taken together.

The question on the state of the Community was put down by the Political Affairs Committee and read:

- (i) 'How does the Commission assess the state of the Community and what measures does it envisage proposing to the Council to overcome the serious difficulties that have arisen in recent months?' The other two questions were put down by the Liberal and Allies Group. These read:
- (ii) 'Does the Council not believe that it is its duty to adopt in the form of binding instruments the proposals submitted to it by the Commission, rather than to express in vague resolutions the political will to adopt them?'

(iii) 'In view of the large number of Commission proposals which meet with no response from the Council of Ministers, does the Commission not think that it is its duty – under Articles 155 and 175 of the EEC Treaty – to request the Council to act and, if it persists in failing to act, to refer the matter to the Court of Justice?'

Mr Giovanni Giraudo (Italian Christian Democrat) spoke to the first question in his capacity as Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee and Mr Jean Durieux (French) spoke to the other two as Chairman of the Liberal and Allies Group.

Mr Hans Apel replied on behalf of the Council and Mr François-Xavier Ortoli on behalf of the Commission.

This was followed by a general debate and concluded with speeches in reply by Mr Apel and Mr Ortoli. Finally Mr Giraudo thanked all those who had taken part.

The debate gave many Members the opportunity to express their concern about the state of the Community, a concern that was perhaps crystallised by Mr Hans Apel, President-in-Office of the Council, who said it was for the Nine now to decide what sort of a Europe they wanted.

Turning to the substance of the question on procedure, Mr Apel said that when it came to taking decisions it was often better for the Council to adopt a resolution than to do nothing. A technically correct legal act, for example, might never be accepted by the Nine as a whole. It would only be possible to improve the way the Council worked if there were a minimum consensus among the Nine about the kind of Europe they wanted.

Replying on behalf of the Commission, President François-Xavier Ortoli said the Commission rejected any idea of a standstill. The arguments that might be advanced in support of a pause for reflection were fallacious and if the Community came to a halt this could lead to complete stagnation. As to the action the Commission envisaged proposing to the Council, he argued that it would be more profitable to focus attention on strengthening the institutions and on the prospect for European union.

He dealt in some detail with the way in which the Council could be made to operate more efficiently. He thought, for example, that greater use could be made of abstentions on the Council. Then again there were many minor matters

which ought not, he said, to come before the Council at all but could well be dealt with at the level of the Permanent Representatives.

Mr Ortoli agreed with Mr Apel that the question now was what the Member States wished to do together, and to what extent they wished Europe to assume certain responsibilities. There was also the question of who was to assume them. But, he added, the Communities were the basis of Europe.

As for the Commission itself, his feeling was the Commission had carried out its task firmly and courageously. It had proposed solutions to the problems on monetary policy and on regional policy. With regard to the United Kingdom, he asked that its problems should not be allowed to bring the Community to a standstill.

The true characteristic of the Community, said Mr Ortoli, was its dynamism and this made it outwardlooking. It should now make a clear statement of its aims and of its interests before going on to deal with the problems of individual Member States. 'We are not negotiating with each other but building a Community edifice together'. This was Mr Ortoli's reply to a number of very pointed questions.

Mr Giovanni Giraudo (Italian, Christian Democrat) who spoke as chairman of the Political Affairs Committee said that the Europe of the Treaties was now confronted with the Europe of the governments. Was the Commission ready, he had asked, to get the Community moving again.

Mr Jean Durieux who spoke for the Liberal and Allies Group criticised the Commission for not referring to the Court of Justice when the Council failed to act on its proposals. Mr Durieux said 'our very existence as a Community is at stake'.

Two other speakers, Mr Peter Kirk (British, for the European Conservative Group) and Mr Alfred Bertrand (Belgian, for the Christian Democrat Group), raised the question of inflation which both regarded as the Community's main problem. Referring to the position of the United Kingdom, Mr Kirk said the Community crisis had begun before the elections in Britain and added 'one can safely say that the position of the present government is to remain in the European Economic Community'.

Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German, for the Socialist Group) took up another point made by Mr Bertrand that the crucial issue was to change the method by which

the Council took its decisions. He was critical too of the Commission. This, he said, must not simply be a secretariat of the Council. It must be ready to enter into confrontation with the Council and here its best ally was the European Parliament.

Another point raised in the debate was the budgetary powers of the European Parliament and Mr Fellermaier was among those who pointed out that Parliament's patience was coming to an end. Mr Kirk found it paradoxical that on this and other points, Parliament's only way of bringing its dissatisfaction home to the Council was by attacking the Commission.

Mr Luigi Marras (Italian, for the Communist and Allies Group) said that the debate had demonstrated the impotence of the European Parliament. It was simply a voice crying in the wilderness. As far as he was concerned Europe would either be the Europe of the working man or there would be no Europe at all.

Finally Lord Gladwyn (British, for the Liberal and Allies Group) said that if fear was a spur to unification then the fear of inflation, of the economic and monetary consequences of a new flare-up in the Middle East and the fear that the United States might simply leave Europe to fend for itself ought to prod Europe towards unity.

Lord Gladwyn said that the only basis for Europe was a gradual acceptance of certain supranational disciplines. He firmly believed that the famous 'grand design' of President Kennedy would still be accomplished although it was certainly true that a great collective effort would have to be made to get Europe back on to the rails again.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Question (iv) Recycling and reutilization of waste put down by Mr Pierre Lagorce on behalf of the Socialist Group

'The energy crisis will at least have had one beneficial effect – the revival of a concept which had gradually become obsolete, the husbanding of resources.'

But, though it is important to combat the waste of energy, it is equally necessary to conserve raw materials, most of which are not inexhaustible.

In this connection, the experts claim that the recovery, and the recycling or reutilization after processing, of the various kinds of waste which pollute our environment, can provide considerable resources for agriculture and industry.

1. Can the Commission inform Parliament of the results of the research carried out under the multi-annual programme on the recycling of raw materials?
2. Could the Commission also indicate the progress achieved and the scale of research in this field in the various Member States? Have coordination measures already been undertaken at Community level?
3. When reviewing the multi-annual research programme does the Commission intend to propose more intensive measures to recycle raw materials?
4. Does the Commission intend to go beyond the research stage and propose measures to conserve raw materials and improve environmental protection?

Speaking to the question, Mr Lagorce said that the consumer society had become one of waste makers. He asked whether the human race was going to end up buried in its own waste products. There was a twofold need both to economise energy and to save raw materials. Recycling waste could be of great benefit to agriculture and yield considerable fresh resources for the use of industry.

In reply, Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission, said that in 1973 the Joint Research Centre had been asked to look into the reutilization of waste. The first results were already coming in. The Committee on Scientific and Technological Research that the Council had set up had been instructed to gather all the information available on this subject and the Commission would be putting forward practical proposals as part of its policy on the environment on the basis of pilot studies already carried out. The Commission agreed on the need for immediate effective action in recycling and reutilizing waste and it would direct its endeavours to this end.

Question (v) EAGGF Guidance Fund put down by Mr Martin Gibbons, Mr Michael Herbert, Mr Brian Lenihan (Irish, European Progressive Democrats), Mr Albert Liogier and Mr Joseph Rivierez (French, European Progressive Democrats)

‘Considering that the purpose of the Guidance Fund is to develop the production potential of agriculture within the Community in a manner

that best meets the Community's requirements especially with regard to red meat, could the Commission state what are the criteria by which the EAGGF Guidance Fund is divided among applicants from Member States?'

Speaking to the question, Mr Gibbons was concerned about the possibility of increased appropriations for some Member States and reduced appropriations for others. He wanted an assurance that fair criteria would be applied here.

In reply Mr Petrus Lardinois said that under the Guidance Section of the EAGGF, 170m u.a. out of a total of 1325m u.a. were allocated for individual projects and the rest for Community policy. The 170m u.a. earmarked for individual projects had been broken down into 150m u.a. for the six original Member States and 20m u.a. for the new Member States. Whether or not appropriations were granted depended on the suitability of projects submitted.

Mr Gibbons said he was glad that no final decision had yet been taken. Mr Lardinois then pointed out that there might be a proportionate reduction in the funds allocated to the six original Member States in favour of the new Member States.

Question (vi) Price increases in agriculture put down by Mr Erhard Jakobsen (Danish, European Conservative), Mr John Brewis, Mr John Hill, Lord St. Oswald and Mr James Scott-Hopkins (British, European Conservatives).

'The Commission is asked if it is satisfied that the Farm Price increases announced on Saturday 23rd March 1974 are sufficient to increase the levels of efficient production within the EEC and to restrain the increase in Consumer Prices without distorting the market by use of EAGGF Guidance Sector Funds and National Subsidies.'

Speaking to the question, Mr Scott-Hopkins asked the Commissioner whether he thought that the Council's decision would achieve the aim of raising efficient production up to the level of demand within the Community so that the balance of payments of the Community did not suffer. He said that he had grave doubts on this point. Secondly, he wanted to know whether the consumer would gain any benefit from the Council's decision.

Mr Petrus Lardinois said he could give a very short reply to the question: 'yes'. Naturally, he added, a number of concessions had been made and these were welcome. In the future too exemptions would have to be granted to some Member States but this was perfectly consistent with the Treaty.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council

Application of article 113 of the EEC-Treaty

No 1/74 by Lord O'Hagan (British Independent)

'Does article 113 of the Treaty of Rome cover all commercial agreements contracted by Member States?'

Mr Hans Apel, President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers replied:

'Article 113, paragraph 1 of the Treaty of Rome reads, inter alia: "After the transitional period has ended the common commercial policy shall be based on uniform principles particularly in regard to the conclusion of tariff and trade agreements". The implementation of this principle, paragraph 3 of this article, together with article 114, sets out a procedure for negotiation and conclusion of trade agreements by the Community with third countries.

In view of the fact that Community trade agreements cannot in practice be substituted for bilateral agreements in all cases without a transition period, the Council, by its decisions of 16 December 1969 and 19 December 1972, based on article 113, has authorized the prorogation, conclusion or modification of bilateral trade agreements within given time limits and according to certain procedures in order to ensure that these agreements do not constitute obstacles to the implementation of the common commercial policy.

In the light of the aforesaid, the question of the Honorable Member can be answered in the affirmative.'

Caracas Conference on maritime law

No 2/74 by Mr John Brewis (British European Conservative)

‘The Council is asked what will be the Community’s position at the Caracas Conference regarding the exploitation of marine resources on the continental shelf beyond the limits of territorial waters?’

Mr Apel replied:

‘The problem referred to by the Honourable Member, which is one of the many to be discussed at the next meeting of the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea, has not yet been examined in detail by the Council. Proceedings on this item will begin at the end of April within an ad hoc Working Party.

The Council cannot therefore reply to Mr Brewis’s question at the present stage of its proceedings in the matter.’

Questions to the Commission

Aid to be given to Palestinian refugees

No 3/74 by Sir Tufton Beamish (British European Conservative)

‘In view of the common Community policy towards the Arab/Israel dispute and the undertaking at the Copenhagen Summit meeting to guarantee a peace settlement, what steps are being taken to coordinate and increase the aid given in money and kind to Palestinian refugees?’

In reply Mr Claude Cheysson said that the Commission was fully aware of the importance of the problem of the Palestinian refugees. The Commission was trying to make the most of the means at its disposal. In December 1972, the Council approved a Commission proposal for a three year food aid programme through the UNRWA. The Community was providing cereals, milk powder, butter, oil and sugar. This amounted in 1972-1973 to some 7m u.a. and for 1973-1974 it would amount to 10m u.a. The action of the Member States and the Community was being coordinated. For example, 7000 tons of cereals were supplied by Member States in 1973-1974 and the Community gave 1.6m u.a. per

annum in cash to cover the operating costs of the UNRWA distributing centres. This represented 8.6m u.a. in 1973 or 120/o of the UNRWA budget and 11.6m u.a. or 16-170/o of UNRWA's budget in 1974.

Safeguard clause adopted by Italy in the beef sector

No 4/74 by Mr Luigi Noè (Italian Christian Democrat)

'Does the Commission agree that the safeguard clause adopted by Italy in the beef sector has not been as effective as was hoped and has failed to check imports, with the result that trade has been distorted and, in particular, that meat and livestock from outside the EEC are arriving in Italy via Member States of the Community? '

In reply Mr Petrus Lardinois said that the question was whether the measures had served their purpose. He thought they had. As to whether more could have been expected from these measures, this was another question. The measures had been taken to deal with the situation between the end of February and the end of March. They had been relatively effective and had, therefore, served their purpose.

Financial effects of the energy crisis

No 5/74 by Mr Eric Bousch (French European Progressive Democrat)

'Having regard to the energy crisis and its foreseeable harmful effects on the balance of payments of almost all the Member States, how does the Community intend to participate in the new finance system at world level? '

In reply Mr Ralf Dahrendorf said that rising oil prices had seriously worsened the deterioration in the balance of payments of the Community. It would raise considerable problems because Member States were unable to make good the deficit by exports to the oil-producing countries. The countries most seriously affected would have to resort to international credits. He added that the International Monetary Fund was looking into new instruments of credit.

Sharp rise in energy prices in the horticultural and fisheries sectors

No 6/74 by Mr Cornelis Laban (Dutch Socialist)

'What action has the Commission already taken or does it intend to take shortly to put an end to the situation in which individual Member States are introducing uncoordinated subsidy measures in the horticultural and fisheries sectors to counteract the effects of the sharp rise in energy prices, and what action has it already taken or does it intend to take shortly to introduce a Community bridging arrangement to solve this problem?'

In reply, Mr Petrus Lardinois said that some months ago the Commission had proposed re-establishing a free market in energy. The Council had so far taken no decision and this was causing difficulties in horticulture and in fisheries. There had been informal cooperation between Member States with a view to interim measures. The Commission would be submitting a report to the Council by the end of June and it would make proposals for a return to free markets. Structural measures would be suggested as would action regarding investments. There would also be studies into keeping up the levels of horticultural production while using less energy.

EMERGENCY DEBATE ON MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

At the request of the Socialist Group an emergency debate was allowed on a point arising out of Question Time, to wit multinational companies. This also enabled Mr Albert Borschette, the Commissioner responsible, to deal in detail with three questions originally put down for Question Time. These were by Mr Horst Seefeld, Mr Ludwig Fellermaier and Mr Gerhard Flämig (German, Socialists) respectively and read as follows:

- (i) 'Have the Commission's enquiries into the behaviour of multinational concerns shown any evidence of cartel agreements?'
- (ii) 'Has the Commission any material evidence that multinational concerns are deflecting profits by setting excessive prices for the delivery of crude and refined oil products, thereby artificially reducing the profits of their European subsidiaries?'

(iii) 'Does the Commission intend to submit proposals making it possible to tax profits deflected by multinational concerns?'

Mr Erwin Lange pointed out that the conduct of some multinational companies – particularly in the oil and petro-chemical sectors – was causing considerable concern. He spoke of the irresponsible action of companies which made competition impossible. This, he said, provided extremists with arguments against the market economy. Bearing oil profits in mind, how long could this situation be tolerated? What could be done to keep these companies in check?

Mr Gerhard Flämig referred to profit levels of over 100 0/o, and asked if the Commission was ready to see that these profits were taxed in the Member States where they were made? Would the Commission reconsider the question of double taxation?

Mr Friedrich Burgbacher (German Christian Democrat) took issue with this attack on profits and size. The oil companies, for example, had served the Federal Republic well, especially in mitigating the effects of the recent oil crisis.

Replying to the debate, Mr Albert Borschette said that in December 1973 the Commission had begun an enquiry into this whole area on the basis of Treaty Articles 85 and 86. He did not think it would be helpful to release findings before the enquiry was completed. It would be long, difficult and delicate.

Mr Borschette added that the enquiry would hinge on whether (i) there was market-sharing (ii) there was price-fixing (iii) unfair advantage was taken of a dominant position on the market either to impose prices or eliminate independant companies.

A report would be submitted to the House in due course.

Mr Borschette referred to the group of experts of the Twenty set up by the UN, pointing out that it might be necessary to operate in a larger frame-work; the Community would have to take measures – particularly on profit transfers and prices – but the real issues could only be resolved through a code of conduct accepted by all industrialised countries.

There was, he added, close cooperation with the Member States.

Mr Altiero Spinelli, Commissioner, added that two draft directives on double taxation were submitted to the Council in 1969.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Commission's report on the social situation

Report (Doc. 51/74) for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment by Lady Elles (British, European Conservative) on the Commission's report on the development of the social situation in 1973 (Doc. 2/74)

Introduction

The debate gave the House an opportunity to discuss the whole range of social policy, from unemployment to the implications of a falling birth rate, from co-management to the effects of the energy crisis on purchasing power and from criticisms about the Social Fund and the lack of any regional fund to approval for the Council's undertaking to take decisions on social policy proposals within specific time-limits (within five months, given Parliament's opinion or within nine months otherwise).

The debate

Lade Elles introduced her report on a note of approval. The Commission's report was 'one of the most significant documents in the history of Europe'. It set out a social policy designed to meet the needs of the day in furtherance of the Paris Summit. The aims were: full and better employment, an improvement of working and living conditions and greater participation of the social partners in the economic and social decisions of the Community. The policy had been accepted by the Council.

Lady Elles was less happy about the Community's failure to ratify Parliament's recommendations on the size of a regional fund which would help remove imbalances in the employment and social fields.

Lady Elles referred to the 12 to 15 million handicapped people in the Community and welcomed the extension of the Social Fund to provide for their needs. The emphasis in the Community's Social Action Programme on retraining the handicapped was also to be welcomed.

Lady Elles was concerned about the Community's falling birth rate: live births per thousand were 17.5 in 1958 and only 14.9 in 1972.

The spokesman for the Christian Democrats, Mr Frans van der Gun (Dutch) was more critical. He drew attention to the difficulty of finding jobs for older workers and asked for information about what the Social Fund could do. Referring to inflation, he said this could only be tackled as part of a general redistribution of income.

Speaking for the Socialist Group, Mr Egbert Wieldraaijer (Dutch) took issue with the tone of Lady Elles's report. His group felt that the main emphasis should be on a real employment policy, on co-management and on tackling inflation. He disagreed with Lady Elles about the birth rate. He concluded that where problems had a Community dimension a Community policy was needed to resolve them.

Speaking for the Liberals, Mr Augusto Premoli (Italian) was disturbed by the optimism of the report regarding health and safety at work and the environment.

Speaking for the Communists and Allies, Mr Luigi Marras (Italian) said that 1973 had been one of Europe's worst years for the people and for the workers. He too drew attention to the rate of inflation and he quoted a figure of 20%/o. He contrasted the effect this had on the operations of multinational companies with the impact it had on the worker.

Replying to the debate Mr Patrick Hillery, Vice-President of the Commission, welcomed Parliament's report. He referred first to the institute of vocational training. The only real security for a worker, he said, was to be so trained as to be adaptable. He emphasized Europe's dependence on its workers. He said there was now a hope of a tripartite conference to discuss the implementation of the social action programme and the effects of the energy crisis.

Referring to employment, he said that the total number employed fell in 1973 so that the employment situation was not now expected to be so bad as the first shock of the energy crisis led us to believe. He spoke of incentives to employ elder workers by making it expensive to sack them.

He also spoke of protecting migrant workers against loss of employment. He stressed that when migrants left the home country it was a gain to the country they went to and not a necessary evil. He agreed with Lady Elles that there could be serious social problems in a generation's time because of the fall in the birth rate. He told Mr Marras that there had been an increase in real earnings. Four Member States already had tied earnings to the cost of living and four others had accepted the principle of cost-of-living rises.

Mr Hillery concluded by saying "I look forward to substantial progress annually in the implementation of the Community social policy".

The motion tabled congratulated the Commission on its first full year of work under the Social Action Programme and approved its choice of priorities. The motion disapproved of the reduction in resources available to the Social Fund and the lack of any comprehensive regional fund. It urged the Commission to look into assistance to the elderly and low-paid. It trusted that the Commission would continue to try and safeguard purchasing power and that raw material shortages would not be used as a means of making excessive profits. It noted with disappointment the increase in the number of unemployed.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

Equal pay

Report (Doc. 21/74/rev.) for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment by Mr Kurt Härzschel (German Christian Democrat) on the Commission's proposal to approximate the laws of the Member States on applying the principle of equal pay for men and women under Article 113 of the Treaty of Rome

Speaking for Mr Härzschel, Mr van der Gun said the time had come for a bold attack on the problem of equal pay. He welcomed the proposed directive because it would help end discrimination.

The motion before the House viewed with growing impatience the fact that although Article 119 had been legally binding for 16 years this had not made much difference in practice. It accused the national authorities of practising

discrimination and urged that education should be emancipatory to satisfy the democratic demand of men and women to be equally free to shape their lives as they chose.

A resolution approving the Commission's proposal was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

New social fund

Report (Doc. 18/74) for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment by Miss Astrid Lulling (Luxembourg Socialist) on the first report on the activities of the new European Social Fund for 1972.

The motion before the House was, *inter alia*, critical of the new Fund's operations. There had been too little financing of projects designed to adjust manpower supply and demand to technical progress and the imbalance between funds available and applications received had obliged the Commission to make choices which involved the risk of injustice.

The motion insisted that budgetary estimates should in future provide a more realistic reflection of the need for sufficient funds to meet applications for aid in order to render the new European Social Fund, intended by the Community to promote its policy of full and better employment, capable of intervening flexibly, rapidly and effectively, not only to remedy the problems arising from the Common Market and adapt manpower requirements to the changing situation, but also to assist the implementation of the Social Action Programme.

This resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

40 hour week and 4 weeks holidays with pay

Report (Doc. 47/74) for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment by Mr Hervé Laudrin (French, European Progressive Democrat) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 302/73) for a

recommendation to the Member States for a 40 hour week and 4 weeks holiday with pay

The motion before the House trusted the Member States would implement the principle of the 40 hour week by 31 December 1975 and that of four weeks holiday with pay by 31 December 1976.

This resolution, approving the Commission's proposal, was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974

Mutual recognition of qualifications

Report (Doc. 43/74) for the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth by Mr Norbert Hougardy (Belgian Liberal) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 23/74) for a resolution on guidelines for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications by virtue of Article 57 of the EEC Treaty

Progress towards a mutual recognition of qualifications has been slow. There is, however, complete agreement between the European Commission and the European Parliament on the desirability of making progress. The Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth therefore welcomed the Commission's proposal for a resolution on guidelines for the mutual recognition of diplomas and other qualifications under Article 57 of the EEC Treaty, the purpose of which is, of course, to promote free movement.

The motion before the House deplored the Council's delay in adopting numerous Commission proposals and welcomed the present Commission proposal as a new approach. This is designed to lay down the broad principles for future agreements. The only amendments to the Commission's proposal moved by the committee were that self-employed persons should be free to do so in group practices. It called on the Commission to make detailed proposals to give effect to this principle. The other amendment (moved by the committee) concerned the Advisory Committees to be set up on matters relating to individual professions. The committee wanted to make sure that representatives of the practitioners and teachers of the profession concerned should participate as full members on these advisory committees.

This resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Tuesday, 2 April 1974

Cooperation in education

Report (Doc. 52/74) for the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth by Mr Klaus-Peter Schulz (German Christian Democrat) on the Commission's Memorandum on education (Doc. 23/74-Annex) in the European Community

The motion before the House welcomed the Commission's intention of promoting cooperation in education and believed this would greatly help Europe make up its leeway in the scientific field. Education had a special role in European education and the motion recommended that fostering an awareness of Europe's heritage should be among the measures planned. Subject to certain amendments, the motion approved the Commission's proposal for a Council decision setting up a European Committee for Education Cooperation. The main amendment was moved by Mr Cornelis Laban (Dutch Socialist) and its effect was to stress the importance of education in removing social inequality.

This resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Tuesday, 2 April 1974

ENERGY

Uranium enrichment capacities

Second Report (Doc. 38/74) for the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology by Mr Luigi Noè (Italian Christian Democrat) on the Commission's proposal for a Council Resolution on the creation of uranium enrichment capacities.

The European Parliament has frequently expressed its concern at the Community's dependence on outside energy sources, a view to which the present oil situation had added point: even now nearly all Member States depend for over half their energy needs on extra-Community sources.

One way of filling the gap is to generate electricity by nuclear means. This in turn raises the problem of enriching uranium for use in the nuclear reactors, a problem that is currently being tackled by two groups: Eurodif, on which France, Belgium, Spain and Italy are represented, and Urenco, a company formed by Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

One point of concern is that too much uranium may be enriched.

The European Commission's proposal for dealing with this situation was that the companies concerned should coordinate the construction of the uranium plants and their operation and that the Community should finance the stockpiling of any surplus enriched uranium up to a cost not exceeding 200 million u.a.

All groups in the European Parliament were agreed in wishing to amend the Commission text to speak of 'maintaining competition' between the two groups and in wishing to delete any reference to Community finance for stockpiling surpluses.

The House noted Mr Dahrendorf's reply to criticism that Parliament had not been officially consulted, to wit that the Commission had been obliged to take a quick decision on the whole energy situation.

The motion before the House therefore incorporated these points. It also (i) agreed with the Commission that the market demanded the creation of a European uranium enrichment capacity; (ii) trusted the risk of overproduction would be limited as far as possible and (iii) considered that circumstances justified the principle of users giving preference to European uranium enrichment industries.

This resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Tuesday, 2 April 1974

Guidelines for a common energy policy

Report (Doc. 42/74) for the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology by Mr Gerd Springorum (German Christian Democrat) on the Commission's Communication to the Council (Doc. 386/73) on the implementation of the 'Guidelines and priority measures for a Community energy policy'.

These measures were first proposed to the Council in mid-1973. Parliament was not consulted until February 1974. The measures laid special emphasis on sustained efforts in (i) the protection of public health and of the environment (ii) the industrial, scientific and technological base (iii) fuel supply.

A resolution approving the Commission's Communication was agreed to without debate.

Sitting of Tuesday, 2 April 1974

TRANSPORT

Driving licenses

Report (Doc. 45/74) for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport by Mr Michael Herbert (Irish European Progressive Democrat) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 161/72-I) for a directive concerning the harmonization of the laws relating to vehicle driving licenses

The Commission's proposal for a Council directive to approximate the laws of the Member States on vehicle driving licenses comprised 13 articles and 2 annexes. This would introduce a standard driving licence based on the model proposed by the International Road Traffic Convention. Its aim was to allow drivers, and especially lorry drivers, to circulate freely throughout the Community. The Committee on Regional Policy and Transport, however, was not happy with the Commission's proposal and in a report submitted by Mr Michael Herbert the committee proposed the deletion of one and the amendment of 11 of the articles and the deletion of one of the annexes.

The main points at issue between the Commission and the committee were:

(1) date of effect of proposed directive: the Commission proposed 1 January 1974. The committee suggested no later than one year after the directive has been adopted. The committee wanted it specified that Member States should issue European Community driving licences.

(2) Minimum age for licence-holders: the Commission proposed that the minimum age for motor cycle and car licenses should be 18. The committee wanted to create a special category in respect of motor cycles to give a category A1 for those with a design speed of less than 40 km.p.h. (25 m.p.h.) and a category A2 for motor cycles with a design speed above that. The committee also wanted to introduce a 5 year waiver for Member States (United Kingdom and Ireland) issuing licenses at 17. There would then be a survey of variations in accidents rates as between those driving at 17 and those driving at 18.

(3) Qualifications: the Commission wanted licence issue to be dependent on practical, theoretical, medical and psychological examinations. It gave details. The committee wanted to omit these details and to delete any reference to psychological examinations.

(4) Novice drivers: the Commission wanted novice drivers to be speed limited for their first year at the wheel and denied access to motorways. The committee wanted this to be deleted from the directive.

(5) Medical examinations: the Commission proposed medical examinations every five years for drivers up to 50 and every 2 years for persons up to 65. Those over 65 would have annual medicals. The committee would like stay of execution on this: it asked for a decision within two years following consultations with the appropriate organisations.

(6) Languages: the Commission proposed the use of the French 'permis de conduire' (as well as the usual sign) on the front of the licence. The committee wanted 'driving licence' to be added (in English).

(7) Motoring offences leading to loss of licence: the Commission proposed that each Member State should have the right to suspend a licence issued by another, the suspension applying only in the State where the offence occurred. The committee wanted suspension to be by a national's own Member State at the request of the State where the offence occurred; it also wanted to leave it for the national's own State to decide if the suspension were to apply elsewhere.

Presenting his report, Mr Michael Herbert said that the motion before the House was compromise and had the broad agreement of the entire committee. Mr Mursch (German) speaking for the Christian Democrat Group and Mr Eisma (Dutch) for the Socialist Group agreed with Mr Herbert. Mr Mursch stressed the psychological effects for over 100 million Europeans of having a European licence. This would give them a feeling of belonging to Europe. Lord Mansfield (British), on the other hand, was not happy with the compromise reached and said that the motion glossed over the difficulties.

Replying to the various speakers Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission, welcomed all the amendments tabled except for two of them. He could not accept the idea of licences being required for those driving motor cycles with a design speed of less than 45 km.p.h. Most such drivers were students or workers and the licence requirement would delay their entitlement

to use this form of transport. He also found it unacceptable for one Member State in which a motoring offence had occurred to have to wait until the national's Member State gave permission for the offender's licence to be withdrawn. This, he said, was absurd.

The resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Monday, 1 April 1974

Motor vehicle accessories

Report (Doc. 44/74) for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport by Mr Michael Herbert (Irish, European Progressive Democrat) on the Commission's proposals for four Council directives on

1. the installation of lighting and light signalling devices on motor vehicles and trailers (Doc. 332/73)
2. for lights for motor vehicles (Doc. 333/73)
3. the external projections of motor vehicles (Doc. 341/73)
4. reflex reflecting devices for motor vehicles and their trailers (Doc. 348/73)

The main point at issue between Parliament and Commission was the view taken in most parts of the House that there should be a common law throughout the Community. The Commission, in its proposals, makes the adoption of the directives optional. The motion before the House wanted to amend the proposals by calling 'for the adoption of a single Community system for all the Member States'.

This resolution was agreed to.

Sitting of Monday, 1 April 1974

AGRICULTURE

Sugar quotas

Report (Doc. 55/74) for the Committee on Agriculture by Mr Lucien Martens (Belgian Christian Democrat) on an amendment to the Commission's proposal (Doc. 30/74) on the common organisation of the sugar market. (Regulation supplementing Regulation No. 1009/67/EEC).

To deal with the sugar shortage the Commission proposes that it should in principle be possible to place a check on exports. The European Parliament's motion agreed but would like the incomes of the Community's sugar producers to be secured.

A resolution to this effect was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Aids to sea fishing

Report (Doc. 33/74) for the Committee on Agriculture by Mr John Hill (British, European Conservative) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 242/73) for a Council regulation on national aid under the common structural policy for sea-fishing

The purpose of the Commission's proposals is to check any undermining of competition caused by differences in the scale of aid granted by national governments. The European Parliament approved these proposals subject to a ceiling being set on the permitted aids for processing and marketing and on aids to compensate for losses incurred in the search for fishing grounds.

A resolution to this effect was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

Fishery products from Norway

Report (Doc. 61/74) for the Committee on External Economic Relations by Mr Thomas Dunne (Irish Christian Democrat) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 29/74) amending Council regulation No 3609/73 on certain fishery products from Norway

The purpose of the Commission's proposal is to cover the customs arrangements for shipments transported through territory other than of Norway or of the Community. The European Parliament approved this proposal.

A resolution to this effect was agreed to.

Sitting of Wednesday, 3 April 1974

OTHER MATTERS

Contacts with the Canadian Federal Parliament

Motion for a resolution submitted by Mr Hans Lücker (German Christian Democrat), Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (German Socialist), Mr Jean Durieux (French Liberal), Mr Peter Kirk (British, European Conservative), Mr Yvon Bourges (French, European Progressive Democrat), Mr Giorgio Amendola (Italian Communist) Mr Walter Behrendt (German Socialist), Mr Giovanni Giraudo (Italian Christian Democrat), Mr Christian de la Malène (French, European Progressive Democrat) and Mr Renato Sandri (Italian Communist)
on the strengthening of relations between the European Parliament and the Canadian Federal Parliament

The following resolution was agreed to:

The European Parliament,

- having noted the wish expressed in their joint Communiqué of 1 November 1973 by the Delegations of the European Parliament and the Canadian Federal Parliament to organize periodic meetings and regular contacts between the two Parliaments,
 - convinced that these parliamentary contacts help to strengthen the political and economic links between Canada and the European Community,
 - having regard to the approval in principle of these relations by the enlarged Bureau at its meeting of 2 April 1974,
1. Advocates annual meetings between Delegations of the European Parliament and the two Chambers of the Canadian Federal Parliament to discuss matters of mutual interest;
 2. Considers that these meetings should be held alternately in a country of the Community and in Canada;
 3. Notes that a delegation of the European Parliament will accordingly visit Canada every two years and wishes, for practical reasons, the dates of these visits to be coordinated with those of the visits to Washington, while at the

same time emphasizing the specific character of Canadian questions and of the discussions to which they give rise – a fact which would make the delegation prefer to begin its work alternately in the United States and in Canada;

4. Instructs its President to propose to the Presidents of the two Chambers of the Canadian Federal Parliament that such regular contacts be arranged;
5. Invites as from this moment a Canadian delegation to pay it a working visit during its October or November 1974 part-session.

Codifying European law

Report (Doc. 46/74) for the Legal Affairs Committee by Mr Linus Memmel (German Christian Democrat) on the Commission's proposal for a Council regulation establishing a procedure of consolidation

Mr Memmel pointed out that every year the mountain of documents on legal acts increased by about 1 metre. Some of them covered a limited time period but they still needed to be codified. The Commission was proposing to improve the situation to ensure a maximum degree of certainty in the law. The Commission's proposal served this purpose. The European Parliament approved this proposal.

A resolution to this effect was agreed to.

Sitting of Tuesday, 2 April 1974

Draft annual accounts of the European Parliament for 1973

Interim report (Doc. 66/74) for the Committee on Budgets by Mr Heinrich Aigner (German, Christian Democrat) on the draft annual accounts of the European Parliament for the financial year 1973 (1 January – 31 December 1973)

Speaking for Mr Aigner, Mr Harry Notenboom (Dutch Christian Democrat), rapporteur for the Committee on Budgets, said the report contained all the

figures which would enable the European Parliament to officially close the accounts.

A resolution to this effect was agreed to.

Sitting of Thursday, 4 April 1974