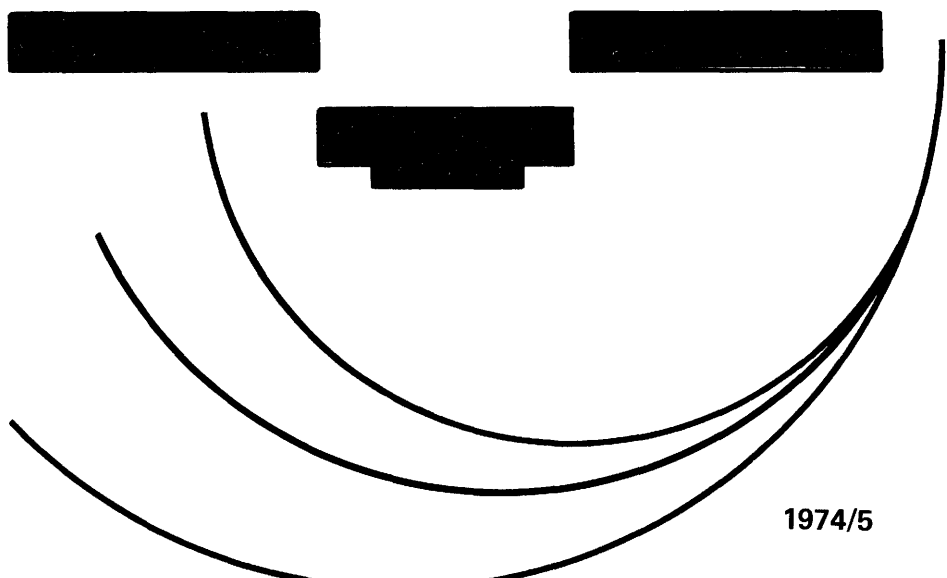


***European parliament***

# **information**

PARLIAMENT IN SESSION



1974/5



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**THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT  
MET IN PLENARY SESSION  
IN LUXEMBOURG**

**from Monday, 13 May to Wednesday 15 May 1974.**

The main debates were on the Commission's Seventh General Report, on the Italian Government's recent measures and on the economic situation.

These debates were part of Parliament's ongoing dialogue with the Commission on the state of the Community and the House was unanimous that if the Community were in a crisis the fault lay with the Council rather than the Commission. Indeed Parliament included a vote of confidence in the Commission in its motion on the Seventh General Report.

**The Commission's Seventh General Report**

Debate on the report (Doc. 73/74) by Mr André Rossi (Fr,LA) on the Commission's Seventh General Report on the activities of the Communities in 1973 (Doc. 368/73)

*Introduction*

The European Commission presented its Seventh General Report to Parliament on 12 February. On the same occasion Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President, outlined the Commission's action programme for 1974.

In view of this, Mr Peter Kirk (Br, EC) and Mr Peter van der Sanden (Du, CD) questioned the relevance of debating a report covering 1973 in May 1974. 'In fact, said Mr Kirk, we are not debating the Seventh Report at all .... we are talking about the paralysis which the activities of the Council have put upon the Community as a whole.'

Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the Commission, on the other hand argued that it was, on occasion, worth while looking back and he outlined the proposals put forward by the Commission which the Council had not accepted. What, he asked, would have been the results if the Council had acted on the Commission's proposals?

### *The motion before the House*

The motion in Mr Rossi's report argued that the crisis undermining the Community has its roots deeper than the disruption of the world's economic and monetary system. The Community's approach had become too technical. (This point was strongly contested). The Commission had become weaker and the Council was becoming paralysed. The motion referred to the summits of 1972 and 1973, to commitments made then and not carried out and to the effect this is having on public opinion.

The motion stressed the need for a stronger European Parliament and for closer political integration. There is, it states, no alternative to integration. It appreciated what the Commission has done but found it was handicapped by the paralysis of the Community machinery, particularly the Council.

### *The debate*

Introducing the report on behalf of Mr Rossi, Mr Jean Durieux stressed that the crisis could only be overcome if all the Member States acted together. The cause of the crisis was not only the upheaval caused by the energy situation. Its roots lay in the mistake of changing the Community into an amalgam of isolated sectors. 1973 had shown how vulnerable a Community based solely on economic cooperation could be.

The crisis had its roots too in the Member States. But this was not a time for pessimism. The successes of the past had shown that the Community could tackle the problems of the present. It could tackle the recession if it was realised that unilateral action could be prejudicial to everyone.

The approach to the Seventh General Report, he said, should be to assess it as a whole and the prospects that the results achieved held out. Here Mr Durieux said that there were three principles that Parliament should uphold (i) economic

integration had to run parallel to political integration, (ii) there was no real alternative for Europe, (iii) Europe must regain its role in international affairs and remember all that it could offer to other countries especially the developing ones as an alternative to the politics of egotism and as a force for economic liberalism in a changing world.

European union would be the result of 250 million people wanting it and being capable of achieving it. He proposed that this should be achieved in three stages: (i) by democratising the Community so that its institutions could deal with emergencies, (ii) in taking economic and monetary union a stage further through a real regional policy and by pooling energy resources and (iii) by asserting the solidarity of the Community. The European Parliament, he said, should call on all national Parliaments to hold simultaneous debates on this subject. This should produce a new impetus to unity in Europe. 'Our conviction, he said, cannot be without impact.'

Speaking for the Christian Democrat Group, Mr Pieter van der Sanden (Du) asked the Commission for an assurance that it would use all its powers to tackle the present crisis. His Group thought the only course was to appeal to the national Parliaments to press for a new impetus from their governments. It was, he thought, a good idea for them all to debate this on the same day.

Speaking for the Liberal and Allies Group, Lord Gladwyn said Mr Rossi's report was a valuable summary of the state of the union. He thought that the prevailing mentality was one of 'sauve qui peut'. It was no wonder that observers in the United States and United Kingdom felt that the Community hardly existed at all because all were taking to the boats. It would need tremendous leadership in the bigger Member States to get the Community moving again. This would only be possible if one kept to the rules. He did not know if it would be possible for all the national Parliaments to hold simultaneous debates but thought it was essential for them to do so before the summer recess.

Speaking for the European Conservative Group, Mr Peter Kirk (Br) made the point that technically the House was discussing the Seventh General Report and the Rossi report on it. In fact this was not the case and everyone knew it. As everyone knew too the condemnatory passages were addressed to the Council and the laudatory ones to the Commission.

The main criticism on the motion was of the paralysis of the Council. The only criticism of the Commission concerned its failure to press Parliament's case on

budgetary powers and he wished to make the point that the Conservative Group was highly satisfied with what the Commission had done within its terms of reference. It was quite wrong for the President of the Commission to be obliged to answer for a situation for which he was not responsible.

The Community's trouble, he said, was that it was shying away from the leap forward from cooperation to solidarity. Unless it took this step there was no real point in having debates like the present one. He thought that Mr Rossi was wrong in arguing that the crisis was rooted in the unduly technical emphasis of the Community. As far as his own constituents were concerned, the fact that large lorries from France could drive through their villages that was almost the only manifestation of the Community they had at the moment.

One could not escape the technical aspect to retreat from reality behind a cloud of political rhetoric. The technical aspects were the only effective basis for the Community and the technical step it had to take was to go on to economic and monetary union. There was no point in denying that no progress had been made on this since the Paris Summit. The choice now was 'are we ready to create a genuine economic community or do we want a fairly inefficient free trade area'. The Conservative Group would be looking into this but the Commission should study it too.

Speaking for the European Progressive Democrats, Mr Thomas Nolan (Ir) said that the stagnation of the Community had its roots in the domestic policies of the Member States. But the Council was to blame. The Summits had laid down guidelines and a commitment to regional policy for example. The Council had behaved like a group of mathematical students poring over figures and maps instead of bearing in mind the principles put forward by Mr George Thomson. It should have set up pilot areas which would have yielded very useful experience.

He asked if the Common Agricultural Policy was really common because there was still no sheep policy. Was this because they were only reared in the poor areas? He had asked the Commission for proposals and had been told that these would be forthcoming by December 1973. He still wanted to know when they were coming.

He appreciated the work done in the social policy especially regarding handicapped and migrant workers and thought that this would give the Community a more human face. But unless the Member States showed signs of a stronger political commitment it would come to a halt. It would only succeed if there were evidence of day-to-day economic advantage.



Speaking for the Communists and Allies, Mr Silvio Leonardi (It) agreed that one should rethink the approach to the report. He personally found it too detailed and lacking in any actual interpretation. When one saw, for example, the reasons for the failure of the Euratom policy or the causes of the oil situation there was no answer. The Community seemed to be waiting for the crisis to end in France, Germany and the United Kingdom etc., but as it waited a new crisis was emerging. The crisis was there because there was no Community solution to problems that could not be solved nationally.

The Communists agreed with Mr Kirk on the need for a great leap forward. He repeated the request made much earlier for a study into the effects of the Community on the Member States. Had the division of work made for a better use of resources he asked? Mr Leonardi concluded by saying that one should not expect solutions from institutions that were not adapted to deal with the present situation.

Mr Michele Cifarelli (It, S) asked for a return of the principles laid down at the Summit meetings. He also entered a plea for the Mezzogiorno which must, he said, be regarded as a part of the Community. Without great ideas, he said, there was no hope of progress.

Mr Tom Normanton (Br, EC) described 1973 as a sad story for many aspects of the Community's life. 1974 had produced evidence of an even greater deterioration. The external causes for this were the energy crisis and our dependence on foreign supplies of raw materials. The internal causes were inflation and growing trend among Member States to try to go it alone.

Replying to the debate, Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the Commission, took up the point about debating a report covering 1973 in May 1974. Surely, he argued, there was a time for looking back and surely this debate was part of the ongoing dialogue on the state of the Community. The Seventh General Report, he said, was a basis for reference which was to be seen in conjunction with the memorandum introducing it. 'My feeling, he said, is that we are getting closer together. You and we and even the Council are coming closer to the real problems of the Community. We have made progress.'

He then referred to the documents submitted in May of 1973 on greater operating efficiency in the European Parliament. 'Could we not have a debate on this subject as promised?' He also referred to the organization of general political debates with other institutions. 'Why not debate the degree of uniformity we need to make Europe?'

He asked about public hearings and whether the European had had any. He asked too why the European Parliament did not simply pass more reports without debate where the matters raised were minor ones. The Commission, he said, had suggested that following major debates a synthesis should be made and the matter referred to national parliaments.

President Ortoli did not wish to comment on the state of the Community. As for a great leap forward both Parliament and Commission had pressed for this. He reminded the House that in Strasbourg he had stressed that there must be no standstill, that we must press for stronger institutions and a closer involvement of the main political forces in our society in the work of the Community.

Taking up criticism that the Commission had been too accommodating, he said that the Commission might have missed opportunities and might have made mistakes but one could not scale down the problems of the Member States. One could not scale down the realities. Few of the Nine had really understood what had happened in the autumn of 1973. 'We still have the mentality of October 1973. We still believe that the Community will absorb the shock.'

Mr Ortoli then pointed out that the Commission was not the executive body. It had done its job and he drew attention to the proposals that it had made. If in March 1973 the Community had acted on the proposal that the 10,000m u.a. should be placed at the disposal of the Community it was fair to ask what the results would subsequently have been. Was this, he said, such a bad idea?

Turning to the regional fund, he said the Commission had proposed a sum of 2,250m u.a. The Commission had fought hard for this sum. President Ortoli had told each individual state what it should give. As for pooling reserves, the idea might be absurd but it was creative. If this had been done it would have created the economic conditions for solidarity. This did not happen. The same was true of the gold problem and of recycling capital.

The Commission, he said, was not wrong to make proposals. In January it had warned there would be a return to nationalism in politics. The Commission asked 'what do you, the governments want to do'? In a world which needed Europe to make its presence felt was there one Member State which had the weight of the Nine together? He pointed out that recently the Commission had asked for agreement that there should be no trade restrictions and now the Italian government had taken the measures referred to.

Referring to the Council, he had said the Commission had urged the Nine to meet on their own without reports and without experts. On the Common Agricultural Policy the Commission had proposed a lower price increase than the general rise.

Turning to the Italian affair, the Commission had tried to keep the matter within Community bounds. It was not simply a matter of going from Article 109 to 108. The conditions for success, he said, were to take the debate outside the rather stifling Community framework into the public arena. The Commission argued, he said, on the basis of hope, determination and need. The life of the politician, he said, was to create the future. 'Our only aim is to win.'

The House then put the motion to the vote. The resolution was agreed to with one significant amendment. This was introduced by the European Conservative Group and was almost unopposed. It read: the (European Parliament) 'expresses its confidence in the Commission and in the latter's capacity to play a decisive role in the future developments of the Communities'.

Another amendment, tabled by Mr Rafton Pounder, called for the Community's system for raising its own resources to be reappraised so as to ensure the Community has a more secure form of revenue, the make-up of which is more closely related to the financial resources of each Member States.

This was not accepted.

(Tuesday)

### *Economic situation in the Community*

Debate on the Report (Doc. 105/74) for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs by Mr Jean-Eric Bousch (Fr, EPD) on the economic situation in the Community

#### *Introduction*

The motion before the House was critical of the recommendations put forward by the Commission for dealing with the present economic crisis. It found these to be no more than a statement of what the Member States intend to do

anyway. On 13 March 1974 the European Parliament pressed the Commission for more definite action; it called for proposals to widen the scope of Community measures and the motion found it regrettable that no action has followed.

It was also critical of the Council for failing to act on its decision of 18 February 1974 which called for the economic policies of the Member States to be brought more closely into line with each other. That Council decision called on the Commission to present an account of the economic policy pursued in the previous year and to give five-year forecasts covering the main macro-economic variables. This the Commission has failed to do.

Finally the motion criticized the Commission for glossing over the real difficulties of the employment situation, the problems of restructuring production and the failure of the Member States to act together.

### *The debate*

Introducing his report Mr Bousch said that the Commission had made an accurate analysis of the realities of today. Inflation was growing worse in most Member States and becoming alarming in some. There had been a deterioration in balances of payments and terms of trade.

World trade was suffering and there were threats not only to economic growth rates but to employment as well. The situation, he said, was not very brilliant.

The Commission feared for a return to nationalism. These fears had now become a reality. After the French had left the snake there had been the Italian measures and now Denmark too was envisaging unilateral action.

Speaking for the Christian Democrat Group, Mr Harry Notenboom (Du) took up the point made by Mr Bousch in the motion before the House that it served little purpose to make recommendations to Member States to do what they were doing anyway. His Group felt Parliament must press for Community measures otherwise there was no basis on which to argue the case with the national governments.

He agreed with Mr Bousch that it was vital to return to the Community snake. When Member States left the snake it took the Community further from

economic and monetary union. To return to it should be the main priority. He concluded by saying that Mr Bousch's motion reflected reality and that one could not tolerate Member States acting unilaterally.

Speaking for the Socialist Group Mr Ivar Norgaard (Da) agreed that the Commission had made an accurate analysis of the problem but said it had failed to say where its roots lay. He doubted too whether the measures advocated would be sufficient. He doubted whether those Member States with credit balances were ready to help those having a deficit. How were Member States going to cope?

Turning to the Danish Government's measures he said that these were still at the planning stage and in any case only involved taxes on cars, wines, spirits etc. They were not customs duties and would not affect trade between the Member States.

Mr Norgaard found it surprising and unacceptable that financial Ministers should fail to meet at a time of financial crisis. It was for the Commission to resolve the problems of the 22,000m u.a. deficit due to the oil crisis.

It was, he thought, a great risk to leave it to Germany and the strong countries to organize the market. It might be hard for some Member States to remain in the snake. Referring to consultations on trade policy, he said these must take place before agreements with third countries were signed especially those with the oil exporting countries. Otherwise, there was no point in debating the common commercial policy.

The Socialist Group, he concluded, might have different long-term aims from other Groups but it fully agreed that it was time for action to stop the collapse of the Community.

Speaking for the Communists and Allies, Mr Silvio Leonardi (It) felt sure that the Member Governments did not believe it was possible to harmonize their policies. But the crisis was not due to the instability of governments. Their instability had its roots in their failure to find a Community solution to national problems.

The Treaty, he said, had spoken of a balanced expansion of trade with a view to helping the less developed countries. But the ratio of rich to poor as between the regions of the Community was 5:1.

Speaking for the European Conservative Group, Mr Tom Normanton (Br) said he had no doubt that the aim of the Member States must be some form of snake. This was, however, out of the question for the moment. The first need was for a monetary institution action for the Community to regulate credit internally and externally and having the final overriding say in the monetary policies pursued. The work of the Group Ten, the Group Twenty and the International Monetary Fund was valuable but these bodies could only be effective as part of the overall machinery of a monetary system.

Speaking for the Socialists, Mr Michele Cifarelli (It) said that the previous day's debate had really been on the report before the House today. His Group wanted the Commission to take the initiative. There should be consultations with the Member States to ensure there were no infringements of the Treaty. 'If we lack the courage of hope, he said, despair is our only option.'

Replying to the debate, Mr Haferkamp said the Community's economic situation and the conduct of the Member States had aroused feelings and provoked criticism. He could not, he said, accept the criticisms in Parliament's motion. It had not simply advised the Member States to do what they were going to do anyway. He quoted examples of where the Commission had made an analysis of the problems of a Member State prior to action being taken at the national level.

He rejected criticisms about the differences in the measures proposed. The Commission had the Community's interest in mind and had to deal with two basic groups of Member States in different ways. Those with plentiful resources did not have to face the same problems as those showing a deficit. But the real problem was not due to credit or monetary differences but to the outflow of Community resources.

The problem in years ahead would contain consumer expansion within the expansion of the gross national product. But here both sides of industry must be involved in a constructive dialogue and the policies worked out must be socially fair. It was untrue to suggest the Commission took a rosy view of the employment situation. The Commission had specifically stated it would get increasingly bad. If that were pink, he said what were grey and black? Mr Haferkamp said the limited scope of the present directive was intentional.

Referring to what the Commission had done in the past, he pointed out that in March 1973 it had proposed a European monetary model consisting of bloc floating or the snake. He asked what the result would have been if all the Member States had accepted the snake. The Commission's proposals for a pooling of reserves had likewise been rejected. Was this the fault of the Commission? He would be grateful to the House, he said, if someone could tell him how he could have got the Council to act at its meeting last December.

Turning to the present, he said the aim must be to stop the divergence of the Nine's economic policies and to develop a strategy for their convergence. Finally, he said that he had always warned against the illusion of a free trade area. It would be doomed if it had no political backing. Economic designs were to no purpose unless political will were mobilised to carry them through. The Commission, he said, would do everything it could. The motion was then put to the vote and the resolution was agreed to with a few abstentions.

(Wednesday)

### **Europe's cultural heritage**

Debate on the report (Doc. 54/74) for the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth by Lady Elles (Br, EC) on the motion tabled by the Liberal and Allies Group on safeguarding Europe's cultural heritage

Concern about Europe's cultural heritage is becoming general. The Council of Europe is launching a European architectural heritage year in 1975 and the European Commission has now set up a cultural division and an environment department to deal with these matters.

The motion before the House suggested that it would be useful to have an inventory of Europe's artistic treasures (its monuments, museums, sites and buildings) and that this could be part of a drive to make the public aware that Europe's past should have a future. It asked the Commission for a support fund to be set up for restoring monuments, for nuclear techniques to be used in preserving works of art and for backing to be given in training restorers of artistic treasures.

All spokesmen in the debate were agreed both in the concern they expressed about Europe's cultural heritage and in the support for measures to preserve it.

Presenting her report Lady Elles said that Europe's crisis was not only economic and material but cultural as well because many people today rejected traditional values and neither the Community nor Member States had filled the gap. For Lady Elles culture gave a 'deeper meaning and value to our daily life'.

Replying to the debate Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza who was deputizing for Mr Ralf Dahrendorf welcomed the report and said that the Commission would give the motion its immediate attention. He pointed out that although there was no specific reference to cultural matters in the Treaties, the statements issued at the three Summit Conferences had brought cultural matters within the scope of the Community, particularly in their emphasis on Europe's identity. 'We shall do our utmost to see that progress is made in this sphere' he said. He agreed that the Community could not act alone but be the initiator and promote action at the local and national levels.

It was important, he said, to think of young people as the inheritors of Europe's culture. The younger generation had a great love for and interest in this inheritance. The experience of the great floods in Venice and Florence in 1966 when thousands of young people had come to help save works of art had been a very encouraging experience. The Commission accepted the resolution as a whole and trusted that the House would agree to it.

The resolution was then agreed to.

(Monday)

### **Drinking water**

Debate on the report (Doc. 87/74) for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment by Mr Augusto Premoli (It, LA) on the Commission's proposal (Doc. 350/73) for a directive on the quality of drinking water

This directive is part of the action programme which the Council adopted on 19 July 1973 to protect the environment and improve the quality of life in the Community.

Europe's water needs have risen tremendously since 1900 from 10 litres per day per person to over 500 litres and consumption now exceeds production in some areas.



The purpose of the directive is to increase supplies available by reducing the bacteria content of surface waters. The motion before the House approved the directive subject to certain serious reservations:

- (i) nuclear power station effluents must be discharged at a safe distance from drinking water;
- (ii) radioactivity levels in water must be limited;
- (iii) water that is not up to standard should not be used at any time;
- (iv) the permissible levels of chloroforms, streptococci, pesticides and hydrocarbons must be strictly laid down.

The main point made in the debate was that the Commission's proposal only covered water at a given stage of its progress. The proposal did not cover underground water and it did not cover water after it had been abstracted for drinking purposes.

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza said in reply that this would be dealt with in due course. He referred in this instance to the legal basis for Commission proposals. It was, he said, a good time to invoke Article 235 of the Rome Treaty. This also allowed for the European Parliament to be consulted. He added that the programme for environmental action had been approved in July and the Commission had acted fairly swiftly in submitting a directive in January.

Among those who spoke in the debate Mr Edgar Jahn (Ge, CD) thought that it would be foolish to say there were more urgent priorities than drinking water and Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) argued that the water under discussion represented only a small part of the problem.

He suggested setting up transnational water boards analogous to the water boards in the United Kingdom. These, he said, could be responsible for extraction, purification and dealing with effluents. He hoped the Commission would act quickly. One could not afford to dilly dally.

Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD) agreed with Mr Premoli on the need for a comprehensive approach. A study of the Po Valley carried out in 1921 showed that the flow was 400 cubic metres per second. The corresponding figure today was 300 cubic metres. He too called for water authorities to be set up, each having its own experts to be responsible for supply, for dealing with floods and for quality. He disagreed with Mr Scott-Hopkins about the transfer of water from one area to

another. He did not think this would be possible until the necessary studies had been made.

The resolution was agreed to.

(Monday)

### **Consumer protection**

Debate on the report (Doc. 64/74) for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs by Mr Giovanni Bersani (It, CD) on a preliminary programme of the EEC on consumer information and protection

#### *Introduction*

The committee welcomed the Commission's proposal for a preliminary programme. It could strengthen the consumer's hand considerably. The committee would, however, like to take the Commission up on the following points:

- (i) hire purchase: a draft directive is needed laying down conditions of h.p. contracts (amount to be repaid, duration of loan, annual interest, penalties for arrears);
- (ii) complaints: a Community complaints service to deal free-of-charge and swiftly with complaints;
- (iii) misleading advertising: details of the product should be spelled out more clearly;
- (iv) unfair practices: should include guarantees on consumer durables;
- (v) health: foodstuffs legislation must be extended considerably over next three years;
- (vi) labelling and directions for use: must be in language of country of use;
- (vii) TV time for consumer information should be comparable with advertising time.

Opening the debate, Mr Bersani said consumer-protection was becoming increasingly important, particularly since the Paris Summit had brought this within the Community's terms of reference. The Paris Summit had laid down 30 January 1974 as the deadline for action. The House was now discussing a preliminary programme which would cover a three-year period.

Mr Bersani said he was sceptical of the chances of the aims being achieved. There were consumer associations, he said, but it was hard to educate the consumer and he found that the Commission's policy had been directed too much at informing people as opposed to educating them. The European Parliament should press for greater backing for consumer associations and even financial support. There were not enough of them and they were not strong enough. They were also very vulnerable. He felt that the Commission's proposals did not go far enough and that there needed to be firmer links between the consumer associations of the Member States at Community level. The consumer should also be urged to take a greater part in protecting himself.

Replying to the debate, Mr Scarascia Mugnozza agreed that it was indeed the Paris Summit that had brought consumer protection within the scope of the Community. The Commission had set up its own services to deal with the environment and consumer protection but it had only been in July 1973 that it had enlisted its own expert staff. The issues were, however, now becoming clearer and the Commission wanted consumer protection to be on a large scale.

He agreed that it was the right and even the duty of the consumer to be involved at every stage in the elaboration of consumer policy. He wanted the consumer to be able to fight back against the public services.

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza pointed out that although Member States had consumer associations there were others that had none. The Commission would do what it could to support these associations but Member States could give them backing too. He said that he accepted the resolution as a whole.

The resolution was agreed to.

(Monday)

### **Italy's trade measures**

On 7 May, the Italian government introduced an import deposit scheme with a view to redressing its economic difficulties. The scheme will be in force for 6 months and involves deposits equal to 50 per cent of the value of imports being paid to the Bank of Italy at customs. The deposit is to be refunded without interest after six months. The scheme was introduced on 7 May and was debated in the House a week later when four oral questions on this subject were taken together.

There was criticism of Italy by Mr Jean-Eric Bousch (Fr, EPD) who described the deposit scheme as a violation of the Treaty and of GATT and by Mr Eric Blumenfeld (Ge, CD) who thought the measures would not be effective anyway. Mr Blumenfeld also expressed concern for Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg for whom Italy was and is an export market.

It was pointed out in reply by Mr Giovanni Bersani (It, CD) and Mr Franco Conas (It, S) that Italy had not acted in violation of the Treaty. Indeed Article 108,C reads: 'If the mutual assistance recommended by the Commission is not granted by the Council or if the mutual assistance granted and the measures taken are insufficient, the Commission shall authorize the State which is in difficulties to take protective measures, the conditions and details of which the Commission shall determine.' They also referred to the considerable increase in French and German exports to Italy in recent months.

These were, however, the only direct criticisms of Italy from among the twenty Members who spoke in the debate. Most directed their criticism at the Community's inability to deal with economic difficulties and there was a general plea for progress towards Economic and Monetary Union. On this point Parliament and the Commission were in agreement. The Council, on the other hand, argued that the measures had been necessary because the Member States had failed to reach agreement on granting assistance to Italy.

On this point, Mr Hans Apel, President-in-Office, turned to Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission, and said that the Commission should have been glad that the Council had given it an opportunity to show what it could do. This remark was not well received. But Mr Apel's main point was that the root cause of the difficulties was the ever-increasing scale of the budgets passed by the national parliaments. This could only cause inflation.

The actual gist of the questions was as follows:

- (i) Mr James Scott-Hopkins asked the Commission what steps were being taken to ensure the free flow of trade between Italy and other Member States.
- (ii) Mr Isidor Früh asked the Commission if the measures taken were:
  - (a) in line with the Rome Treaty,
  - (b) could have been avoided,
  - (c) likely to be effective.

- (iii) and (iv) The Socialist Group asked the Commission and Council
- (a) if the measures were in line with the Treaty,
  - (b) if they were likely to be effective,
  - (c) if they would have serious repercussions on the future of the Common Market and
  - (d) if economic and monetary union was the only way to ensure unilateral decisions were not taken by Member States.

Replying for the Commission, Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President, had his doubts as to whether the measures taken would be effective. Italy, he said, was expected to have a deficit of 9 million 300,000 million lira in 1974 and prices were expected to go up by between 15 and 18 0/o. The only way to deal with such a situation was to curb demand.

He stressed the risk inherent in the imports deposit scheme both to the Common Agricultural Policy and to the Community's cardinal principle of free trade. He pointed out, however, that the scheme was only for six months and that the situation would in any case be reviewed before the end of July and again before the end of October.

As already stated, Mr Haferkamp was convinced that only Economic and Monetary Union could shelter Europe from a crisis of this kind. In the meantime, the Council must accept some share of responsibility for being so indecisive. He trusted that once the present governmental changes had run their course the Council would become more active.

(Tuesday)

### **Protection of wild birds**

Oral question by Lord Chelwood (Br, EC)

'In the light of the programme on the environment adopted by the Council on 19 July 1973, whom has the Commission now appointed as an eminent expert in the ornithological field to study and report on certain malpractices relating to the netting, shooting and trapping of wild birds other than game birds, in accordance with the undertaking given on 26 November in answer to Written Question No 321/73'(\*)

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(\*) Lord O'Hagan (Br, Ind) had asked the Commission what action it was taking to promote the protection of migratory birds

Speaking to his question, Lord Chelwood drew attention to the excellent work done by the Council of Europe. Those concerned, he said, had two main aims:

- (i) to protect rare birds which were in danger of becoming extinct and
- (ii) to enforce a common code against certain barbaric practices.

Lord Chelwood referred to his own work in piloting the Protection of Birds Act through the House of Commons and said his experience was that there were powerful common interests trying to evade legislation. He wanted now to discuss the nature and extent of the problem.

It was hard to estimate the scale of malpractices but some figures were available. In Cyprus, for example, 7 million birds were trapped each year on lime sticks. The species killed included nightingales and willow warblers. Some 5-10 million birds were trapped at 20,000 trapping stations in the South of France where they were processed for food. In Italy more than 100 million birds were killed each year. In the Federal Republic governmental measures of 1972 had been reversed at the Länder level. Nor was the situation perfect in the United Kingdom, especially as regards the netting of birds.

Lord Chelwood said that nothing less than Community legislation would suffice to deal with this situation. It was high time for the Community to set a better example. He then referred to the question put down by Lord O'Hagan and asked whether the enquiry promised would lead to directives and whether Parliament would be kept informed.

In reply Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission, thanked Lord Chelwood for the reminder that the world was not only economic and technical. He referred to the Commission's reply to Lord O'Hagan. The Commission had signed a contract for an enquiry into this whole matter and this would embrace national legislation. This was with the Zoological Society of Frankfurt, set up in 1858, and would be under the direction of Professor Grzimek. The Society would report in July of this year and the Commission would inform the House and the public of their results.

Under the action programme on the environment he pointed out that following the survey a national group of experts would be convened to draw up proposals.

(Wednesday)

**Statement by Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission on action taken on Parliament's advice**

Mr Scarascia Mugnozza gave the following details:

- (i) Mr Artzinger's report on excise duties on alcohol: the Commission had amended its proposal although it could not agree to tax exemption for alcohol used in foodstuffs. But Parliament's wishes to the taxation of small producers would be taken into consideration. The amended proposal would be submitted to Parliament.
- (ii) Mr Gerlach's report on excise duties on wine: the Commission would not accept Parliament's amendment. (This specifically rejected excise duties on wine.)
- (iii) Mr Rossi's report on beer: the Commission could not accept Parliament's amendment.
- (iv) Mr Schmidt's report on mixed beverages: the Commission agreed with Parliament's opinion and had withdrawn its proposal.
- (v) Mr Noè's report on uranium enrichment: the Commission could not accept Parliament's advice and maintained its proposal as it stood.
- (vi) Mr Hougardy's report on the mutual recognition of qualifications under Article 57 of the Treaty: Mr Dahrendorf had already commented on Parliament's opinion; an amended proposal was now in preparation; this broadly followed Parliament's advice.
- (vii) Mr Schuijt's report on education in the Community: the Commission would be amending its proposals to take various points raised by Parliament into account. Reference would be made to eliminating social inequalities as one of the aims of European education policy. The reports of the European Committee on Cooperation in Education would in future be included in the Commission's Annual General Report.
- (viii) The amendments proposed by Mr Memmel: the Commission accepted them; an amended proposal would shortly be submitted to Parliament.

(Monday)

## QUESTION TIME

### Question to the Council

#### *Meetings of heads of governments of the Community*

put by Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker (Br, EC)

'The Council is asked what proposals there are for calling an ad hoc meeting of heads of government of the Community in cases where foreign Ministers fail to reach agreement, and what political institution is available to forecast where and when such disagreements may arise?'

Mr Hans Apel, President of the Council, replied:

'Conferences of Heads of State or Government are usually called at the instigation of one or more Heads of State or Government with the agreement of all the Governments which are to take part and whenever the Heads of State or Government concerned deem appropriate.

These Conferences are not appeal bodies for decisions by the Community institutions, which are governed by the Treaties.'

Sir Douglas Dodds-Park asked President Apel if he realized how unsatisfactory this reply was.

Mr Apel found this reaction understandable. But it was the Community situation as a whole that was unsatisfactory so answers on this point were naturally unsatisfactory too.

### Questions to the Commission

#### *Relations between the European Community and Portugal*

put by Mr Schelto Patijn (Du, S)

'Was the question of the relations between the European Community and Portugal discussed during the recent meeting between certain members of the European Commission and the Portuguese socialist



Mario Soares, and if so, what information can the Commission give Parliament on the subject? ’

Sir Christopher Soames, Vice-President of the Commission replied:

‘Mr Soares talked with some of my colleagues on 3 May. He made clear his desire to see a closer relationship between Portugal and the Community, and my colleagues for their part welcome the decision of the new Portuguese administration to proceed as rapidly as possible with the establishment of a democratically elected government, which could not but exert a positive influence on the future of Portugal with the European Community.’

### *Law of the Sea*

put by Mr John Brewis (Br, EC)

‘Will the Commission report on the progress made towards the adoption by the Member States of a common policy on the Law of the Sea and related questions? ’

Sir Christopher Soames, Vice-President of the Commission replied:

‘The Conference on the Law of the Sea which is due to open in Caracas on 20 June will deal with important matters, including fisheries, the mineral resources of the seabed and marine pollution among others. These matters are of considerable importance to the Community’s economic future and the Commission regards it as vital for Member States to take common positions at the conference on many of these matters. The House will recall that on 20 March the Commission, with this end in view, sent a memorandum to the Council on this subject which was also sent at the same time to Parliament for its information. The Council is still considering this memorandum and the Commission hopes that it will adopt it as a basis for a common action.’

(Tuesday)

## **Medicinal products**

Debate on the Report (Doc. 31/74) for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment by Mr Libero Della Briotta (It, S) on the amendments to the Commission's proposals on medicinal products

The committee approved the Commission's proposals to amend the directives designed to approximate laws, (i) on analytical, pharmacotoxicological and clinical standards and protocols in testing proprietary medicinal products; (ii) on publicity for proprietary medicinal products and on package leaflets; (iii) on permitted colouring agents. The amendments reflect technical progress in this sphere.

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

(Wednesday)

### **Index of abbreviations used**

CD	Christian Democrat
S	Socialist
LA	Liberal and Allies
EC	European Conservative
EPD	European Progressive Democrat
CA	Communist and Allies
Ind	Non-attached, independent Members
Be	Belgian
Br	British
Da	Danish
Du	Dutch
Fr	French
Ge	German
Ir	Irish
It	Italian
Lu	Luxembourg

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