

European Parliament Information

The Sittings

August 1978



THE SITTINGS

LUXEMBOURG, 3rd - 7th JULY 1978

THE WEEK

With the European Council meeting taking place in Bremen on the Thursday and Friday of this week, there was some speculation as to what Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German Foreign Minister and new Council President, was going to say to Parliament here in Luxembourg on Tuesday. Would he give any hint as to the prospects for an agreement between the Nine on a joint strategy for economic recovery?

In the event, he concentrated on the EC's external relations: the need to resist protectionism at the GATT talks in Geneva, the importance of promoting direct investment in the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (with the Lomé Convention renewal talks starting soon, Mr Genscher saw investment as being more important than adding new features to the convention itself), and making progress towards enlargement.

He hoped that by the end of the year most of the negotiations with Greece would be completed, that negotiations with Portugal would be started and that the conditions would be right for a decision on opening negotiations with Spain.

Mr Genscher's first act as President, incidentally, had been to inform Parliament, by letter, that all Nine Member States have now enacted the necessary legislation for the first European elections to be held from 7th to 10th June 1979. He added, speaking personally, that he hoped the directly-elected European Parliament would have the powers to which the vote of the electorate entitled it.

Monday evening (5 p.m. to 9.10 p.m.)

Parliament took a first look at the Commission's budget proposals for 1979 this evening, and did not much like what it saw. Budgets Commissioner Christopher Tugendhat admitted that the 12.1 per cent increase in payments and 15.5 per cent increase in commitments might be seen as modest, but said it was carefully tailored to fit the Community's immediate needs. Parliament's reaction was one of disappointment bordering on hostility.

Tuesday morning (10 a.m. to 2.50 p.m.)

Hans-Dietrich Genscher: 'The Europe of Nine is in favour of a world based on partnership'

In his opening address to the European Parliament this morning, the new Council President Mr Genscher put the emphasis on what the Nine could do together both to promote economic recovery and to help the world at large. Specifically this meant resisting protectionism at the GATT negotiations, promoting investment in the ACP rather than introducing any new feature in the Lomé Convention renewal now pending, creating the conditions for successful enlargement, adopting a joint strategy on economic recovery and extending the scope of political cooperation.

Tuesday evening (3.10 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.)

The European Parliament is worried about Portugal and even more worried about Turkey. Its worry about Portugal is that a financial protocol which should bring immediate financial aid is being held up because of ratification procedures and its worry about Turkey is that its privileged relationship with the Community had been so undermined as to devalue its status as an associate and future member.

Wednesday morning (10 a.m. to 1.35 p.m.)

The Commission's paper on the reorganization of the crisis-torn shipbuilding industry provoked a number of critical comments in Parliament this morning. Was it really reasonable to talk of 60,000 workers being made redundant over

the next five years? In reply Commissioner Davignon said: 'We must first agree on our diagnosis. Our figures are based on the estimates of the industry itself.' He added that cutting back capacity was a prerequisite to asking competitor countries to do the same. The market might then begin to perform its proper function again. 'At the moment even the most competitive shipyards are selling below cost' he said.

Wednesday evening (3 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.)

Central theme of this afternoon's business was energy. Lord Bessborough asked the Commission about progress in establishing a Community uranium enrichment facility, pointing out that the EC obtained most of its enriched uranium abroad at present. Mr Brunner replied that, by 1985, some three-quarters of requirements would be enriched in Europe. On coal, there was guarded approval from the House on plans for subsidizing trade in EC coal for power stations.

Thursday morning (10 a.m. to 1.15 p.m.)

Human rights were the subject of this morning's debates. Lord Bethell summed up the view of the whole House in condemning the imprisonment of Yuri Orlov for attempting to monitor the application of the Helsinki Agreement in the Soviet Union. He found it regrettable that the Council had not sought to intervene on Mr Orlov's behalf. Turning to Argentina, Mr Prescott told the House of a hearing held into the appalling abuse of human rights in that country. His motion, urging the Nine Foreign Ministers to press for a restoration of human rights there, will be put to the vote this afternoon.

Thursday evening (3 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.)

The House returned this evening to the problems of arriving at a common fisheries policy: the EC has various outline agreements with third countries such as Sweden, Norway and the Faroes and Parliament was being asked to approve the details (i.e. catches allowed) within the outline agreements. Although most EMPs were prepared to go along with the quotas, they were quite unacceptable to a number of Irish Members.

Friday morning (9 a.m. to 1.10 p.m.)

Chief talking point this morning was the Council's failure to agree, in view of French reservations, on the Commission's 75 million pound programme for promoting youth employment. The proposals could lead to the creation of 150,000 jobs. Parliament was disturbed to hear Commissioner Vredeling hold out little hope of a Council decision, at least in the immediate future.

MONDAY, 3rd July 1978

Action taken by the Commission further to debates in Parliament

In June Parliament considered thirteen Commission proposals. The House called for two of them to be amended. The first concerned the bill for surveillance ships and aircraft patrolling fishing waters off the coasts of Ireland and Greenland. Mr Gundelach, for the Commission, said he would endeavour to secure an increased EC contribution to this bill but could not guarantee a figure anywhere near 100 per cent. Nor did he feel that the inspection vessels should be restricted exclusively to the surveillance of fishing zones.

The second concerned the seventh directive on group accounts. Mr Burke, for the Commission, said he could accept nearly all the amendments called for.

Christopher Tugendhat presents 'coat-cut-to-cloth' preliminary draft general budget for 1979: this is 15.5 per cent up in respect of commitments and 12.1 per cent up in respect of payments on the 1978 budget.

Presenting the Commission's preliminary draft budget to Parliament this evening, Mr Tugendhat suggested that it might be regarded as unduly modest. But the Commission had been bold where there was scope for boldness while bearing in mind the stringency of today's economic climate.

TUESDAY, 4th July 1978

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German Foreign Minister and new President of the Council, addresses Parliament

Mr Genscher, after being welcomed by President Colombo, said that he had been very pleased that his first act as President of the Council (an office that falls to Germany, by rotation, for the next six months) had been to inform Parliament, by letter, that all Member States are now ready to hold the first European elections in June next year.

The people of Europe, he said, would through these elections be able to exert a direct influence on the form the Community is to assume and the course it is to pursue.

The preliminary draft general budget for 1979
 (1 EUA for the budget = £0.629926)

Expenditure	Budget for 1978		Preliminary draft for 1979		% Increase	
	Commit £m	Pay £m	Commit £m	Pay £m	Commit	Pay
I. COMMISSION						
CAP	5,784	5,752	6,474	6,343	11.9	10.3
Social policy	374	352	556	471	48.7	33.8
Regional fund	366	331	391	246	6.8	-25.7
Research, energy, industry, transport cooperation and development	200	186	363	325	81.5	74.7
	352	240	444	356	26.1	48.3
	7,076	6,861	8,228	7,741	16.3	12.8
Staff	244	244	263	263	7.8	7.8
Administration	67	67	76	76	13.4	13.4
Information	8	8	8	8	-	-
Grants & subsidies	28	28	30	30	7.1	7.1
	347	347	377	377	8.6	8.6
Reserves	3	3	41	19	1,266.7	533.3
Costs of collection	434	434	434	434	-	-
Total	7,860	7,645	9,080	8,571	15.5	12.1
II. Other institutions	142	142	159	159	12.0	12.0
TOTAL	8,002	7,787	9,239	8,730	15.5	12.1

Turning to the course Europe is to pursue in the next six months, Mr Genscher put the accent on resisting protectionism at the current GATT negotiations, on creating the right climate for 'no-strings-attached' investment in the ACP countries as a corollary to the Lomé Convention renewal now pending, creating the right conditions for enlargement and on increasing cooperation between the Nine in foreign policy and in tackling the economic problems they share.

On enlargement, Mr Genscher said the Community must make significant progress in the next six months, the aims being: to conclude the bulk of the substantive accession negotiations with Greece; to open negotiations with Portugal; and to create the conditions for deciding to open negotiations with Spain before the end of the year.

Enlargement, he said, would require an effort on the part of the Community: 'We must have no illusions on that score'. But 'we should also be aware that this effort is an investment in the preservation of our own future'.

Turning to the institutional problems enlargement will bring, Mr Genscher asked 'what is to stop us from making use of the majority vote .. so as to guarantee and increase the decision-making ability of the Council? .. the future members do not want to belong to a watered-down Community but to a strong Community with the ability to act.'

While welcoming Mr Genscher's statement there was some disappointment in the European Parliament this morning that he had not said more about prospects for economic recovery in the Community itself.

Eleven months to go

Mr Patijn tabled a motion approving the Council's proposal that the first election to the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage should be held from 7th to 10th June 1079.

It fell to Schelto Patijn (Du, S), political committee rapporteur, to table a motion giving Parliament's formal approval to the date chosen for the first European elections in June next year.

Speaking personally at the close of a brief debate, Mr Genscher said: 'I hope the European Parliament gets the powers to which the votes of the electorate entitle it.'

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council

1. *Institute for Economic Analysis and Research (Lord Bruce of Donington)*

President of the Council Hans-Dietrich Genscher told Lord Bruce that the Council had not yet taken a decision on setting up the Institute because of the technical difficulties involved. This did not mean that the Council was not fully aware of the need for the Institute.

2. *Food aid and human rights (Mr Gerald L'Estrange)*

The Council has always taken the view that stopping food aid to certain countries would hurt the intended recipients more than the régimes concerned, Mr Genscher said. However, in certain cases a point had been made of channelling such aid through neutral organizations and not through government agencies.

Mrs Dunwoody, suggested the Council should examine the effect of the CAP on developing countries – subsidized EC sugar was undermining world prices, she said.

3. *European company (Mr Michele Cifarelli)*

The draft regulation on a European Company Statute was still under consideration in Council, Mr Genscher said.

4. *Energy objectives for 1985 (Mr John Osborn)*

Here too the Council had been unable to reach agreement, Mr Genscher told Mr Osborn (UK, EC). However, he did assure him that the Federal Republic had granted no permits in the last eighteen months for the construction of oil-fired power stations.

5. *Wool (Mr Thomas Nolan)*

The Commission's sheep meat proposals of 31st March this year made no reference to wool, said Mr Genscher. Mr Nolan (Ir, EPD) then asked if he would

call for Commission proposals to cover wool which was, in a sense, a by-product of sheepmeat. Mr Genscher replied that if the Commission were to make proposals the Council would take them up.

6. *Lomé Convention (Mr Bob Edwards)*

Mr Genscher said it should not be assumed that the misappropriation of aid funds was a general practice. Controls had to be effected but on the basis of a mutual respect for sovereignty. Sir Derek Walker-Smith (UK, EC) asked if the new convention would include a human rights clause. Mr Genscher said this was a point to be considered.

7. *Investment guarantees (Mr John Corrie)*

Mr Genscher said that the Commission had submitted a memorandum on investment in the developing countries and the Council was now considering this.

8. *Otto Hapsburg's standing for election to European Parliament (Mr Ludwig Fellermaier)*

Replying to Mr Fellermaier (Ge, S) who raised the question of Otto Hapsburg's intention, as an Austrian national who has also acquired German citizenship, to stand for the European Parliament to represent Austria, Mr Genscher said that any Community citizen could stand for election. As for Austria, he was confident that Austria could look after her own interests.

Vote

The House agreed to the motions in the reports by:

Mr Aigner on the deferred discharge for 1976 accounts (Doc. 204/78),

Lord Bruce on the non-automatic carry-overs (Doc. 210/78),

Mr Früh on the sixth financial report of the EAGGF (Doc. 202/78),

Mr Bangemann on the parliamentary control of the EDF (Doc. 203/78),

Mr Patijn on the date for the elections (Doc. 221/78).

Helping Portugal

Mr Fellermaier's question to the Council (Doc. 186/78)

Speaking for the Socialist Group, Mr Bob Mitchell (UK, S) asked the Council whether the additional and financial protocols of 20th September 1976 between the Community and Portugal had now been ratified by all Member States and, if not, what the reasons were for any delay.

Mr Klaus von Dohnanyi replied that all but four of the Member States had now ratified the relevant protocols (worth 200 million EUA over five years) and that the others were expected to do so in the near future – one by September.

As this was a national matter however he could not comment further. He took the point made by several speakers, including Mr Mitchell himself and Lord Reay about the political importance of a sustained Community interest in Portugal's application to join the Community. Mr von Dohnanyi stressed that political considerations weighed more heavily than economic ones both with the Community and with each of the applicant states.

EC relations with Turkey

Questions by Mr Hansen, for the political groups, and Mr Bertrand, for the political committee (Docs. 188/78, 189/78, 190/78, 191/78, 192/78).

The questions addressed to Commission, Council and Foreign Ministers of the Nine, expressed concern at the state of the Community's relations with Turkey. Mr Hansen and Mr Bertrand drew attention to Turkey's long-standing links with the Community and its rights under the Association Agreement. There had been an increasing level of strain in the recent past, exacerbated by the prospect of Greek accession.

Both speakers stressed the Community's obligation to help Turkey economically, to reassure it that Greek membership would not be prejudicial to its interests, and to maintain and intensify its political links with Turkey.

Replying for the Council, German Minister of State Klaus von Dohnanyi assured the House that the Community remained fully aware both of its commitments and of Turkey's importance to the stability of the Mediterranean. He pointed

out that the Council had stressed that Greek accession to the EC should not prejudice Turkey's special relationship to the Community.

On the financial side, a third protocol had been signed on 12 May 1977 to provide Turkey with 310m EUA (207 million pounds) in aid. Ratification was at present under way, though not yet completed.

Strengthening

For the Commission, Mr Natali said he regretted the recent strain in relations. The EC-Turkey Association would need strengthening in the light of the Greek application for EC membership, and discussions were now under way.

In reply, Mr Dohnanyi said he would endeavour to look into simultaneity regarding consultations. He welcomed the consensus in Parliament, hoping that it would lead on into a consensus in action, insofar as words could be turned into action in this sphere.

The customs union

Mr Nyborg's question to Council and Commission (Docs. 184/78, 185/78).

Mr Kai Nyborg (Da, EPD), for the economic and monetary committee, asked Council and Commission why there were still so many obstacles to free trade within the Community itself. Mr Dohnanyi replied that over a hundred directives had been issued by the Council with a view to removing trade barriers and trade between the Member States had increased.

The EC consignment procedure, in particular, whereby only one document had to be produced at frontier crossings had been very beneficial. There was still progress to be made but he viewed the state of the customs union less critically than Mr Nyborg.

Viscount Davignon, for the Commission, spoke of the various proposals put forward by the Commission over the last few years to remove trade barriers within the Community, many of which had still not been decided upon by the Council. Why could not the working groups concerned with these proposals meet more often; why could they not refer matters for a political decision where

they were unable to agree; and why could the Council not present a balance sheet on customs union progress once every six months? He agreed there were problems but it was irritating for the Community not to do what could be done without difficulty.

WEDNESDAY, 5th July 1978

Reorganizing the EC's shipbuilding industry

Mr Prescott's report (Doc. 182/78). The motion tabled welcomed the Commission's proposals but argued they needed to be costed more carefully.

The Commission believes it would cost 4,650m u.a. to reorganize the Community's shipbuilding industry over the next five years. It would cost some 900m u.a. to restructure the shipyards themselves, 3,000m u.a. to create alternative jobs for 60,000 redundant workers (the workforce being reduced to 90,000 over five years) and 750m u.a. to create alternative jobs for workers made redundant in allied industries.

This could be financed from a combination of sources: the Member States (at present supporting shipbuilding to the extent of some 600m u.a. per year), the firms themselves and the Community (through the EIB, by recourse to Community borrowing and through the Regional and Social Funds).

Demand for sea transport is now falling. With tankers, surplus tonnage is around 140m deadweight tons; and freight rates have fallen below the break-even point. Rates are also very low for dry bulk freight. Demand for ships is therefore falling and the market is not expected to recover until 1984.

World production in 1975 was 19.5m crgt (EC: 4.4). It is expected to fall to 11.8m crgt (EC: 2.4) by 1980 and may go up to between 16.2 and 20.2m crgt (EC: 3.1 to 3.9) by 1985.

Mr John Prescott (UK, S), economic committee rapporteur, described the Commission's proposals as an analysis of the effects of an EC cutback in shipbuilding, not a plan for dealing with it.

He questioned the Commission's estimates and then went on to argue that a Community preference was the only way to keep EC shipyards going. These two

points were repeated with various degrees of emphasis by several other speakers. There was also concern expressed about the social costs of the measures envisaged.

Mr Tom Normanton (UK, EC), on the other hand, had the gravest doubts about interventionism and suggested instead that the answer lay in an expansion in world trade coupled with some regulatory mechanism.

Mr Mark Hughes (UK, S) drew attention to what he described as the paradox in the EC's approach to agriculture and shipbuilding. Whilst the shipowner was assumed to have the right to buy ships on the world market at world prices, the consumer was forced to buy his food at CAP prices.

Let's agree on a diagnosis first

Replying to the debate, Viscount Davignon tried first to dispel misunderstanding, particularly as regards the Commission's figures: these were based on what the shipyards themselves were saying. And it was no use talking about building more ships when trade picked up: 35 per cent of EC ships were lying idle already. The first essential was to agree on a diagnosis. Once it was agreed, certain consequences followed, notably regarding capacity.

Viscount Davignon suggested that a reasonable level of EC capacity had to be agreed as a preliminary to international negotiations. It was no use asking competitors to cut capacity and expecting them not to retort that the EC should do the same. Once agreement could be reached about capacity the market could once again begin to perform its true function. Because no-one today was selling at cost, not even the most competitive countries.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

1. Alcohol as petrol additive (Mr Gerald L'Estrange)

Commissioner Gundelach told the House that it was technically possible to use alcohol distilled from potatoes, barley, sugar or wine as an additive in petrol, but that the cost of doing so was at present prohibitive.

2. Dumping (Mr John Osborn)

The Commission could institute anti-dumping measures if the industry concerned made an appropriate request supported by relevant evidence. No such request had been received from the flatware and cutlery industries, however, Viscount Davignon said. Mr Osborn (UK, EC) pointed out that the industry, meeting in Helsinki, had now agreed to lodge a request.

3. Farm structures policy (Mr James Scott-Hopkins)

Mr Gundelach agreed that a greater Community contribution to structural projects could improve the effectiveness of structural policy. More Community money for projects involving conversion to fodder production, for example, would certainly be justified.

4. Commission recruitment procedures (Mr Tam Dalyell)

Mr Tugendhat, pointing out that the Staff Regulations required candidates for Community jobs to undergo medical examinations, said the Commission was looking into the procedures used. Was there any call for asking candidates about their religious, social or sex habits, Mr Dalyell (UK, S) asked. Mr Tugendhat thought the form of the tests had to be left to the doctor's discretion.

5. Building societies (Mr Ruairi Brugha)

The Commission was studying the possibility of extending the activities of the building societies which existed in Ireland, the UK and Germany to other Community countries, Mr Tugendhat said.

6. Petrol in reserve containers (Mr Horst Seefeld)

At present reserve cannisters for petrol were considered as personal luggage, Viscount Davignon said. Care had to be taken in introducing new legislation not to make people think the Commission was anti-travel.

7. Vocational training for women (Mrs Karen Dahlerup)

The Commission had been considering the question of vocational training and retraining for women for some considerable time, and would be submitting proposals to the Council on the subject to the Council in the autumn of this year, Mr Natali said.

Vote

The European Parliament agreed to the motions tabled by:

Mr Hansen (EC relations with Turkey) Doc. 218/78,
Mr Schwörer (streamlining customs union) Doc. 223/78 and
Mr Prescott (on the shipbuilding industry) Doc. 182/78.

Amongst several amendments to the latter was one calling for the study of the possibility of a Community preference in shipbuilding.

Uranium fuel

Lord Bessborough's question to the Commission (Doc. 187/78) on enriched uranium.

Tabling his question, Lord Bessborough (UK, EC) pointed out that 99 per cent of the Community's enriched uranium for use in nuclear power stations was imported from the United States and the Soviet Union. The recent US moratorium on supplies showed that the Community could not afford to rely on third countries for its enriched fuels and should instead press ahead with its own facilities.

Mr Brunner, in reply, said Parliament and Commission were agreed on the need for secure supplies from a wider range of energy sources. Unfortunately, the target for 1985 – getting 160 gigawatts from nuclear energy – had been revised downwards to 80 gigawatts. This compared with 23-24 gigawatts in the EC today. The USA's capacity was already 45 gigawatts and the USA would remain ahead in the foreseeable future.

Mr Brunner said he expected that three-quarters of EC enriched uranium requirements would be produced in the Community by 1985.

Referring to enriched uranium from the United States, Mr Brunner said there was no reason to fear any disruption of supplies.

Ispira: a minor case of contamination. Mrs Walz asked the Commission for the facts

Mrs Hanna Walz (Ge, CD), chairwoman of Parliament's energy committee, asked the Commission about accidents at the Community's Joint Research Centre at Ispira in Northern Italy. (Doc. 194/78)

In reply, Commissioner Brunner said that in April one worker suffered slight contamination: the level reached being one tenth below the threshold. No plutonium had leaked; and there had been only a slight contamination of a sand and concrete filter; this had been dealt with: not because it was necessary but because it was psychologically useful. There had been no pollution of Lago Maggiore.

Waste is normally put into metal containers and these are checked by both Swiss and Italian authorities. There were contingency plans for coping with any emergency.

Answering a point raised by Mrs Walz, Mr Brunner added that it was the Commission itself that investigated mishaps and made the necessary checks, not an outside organization.

Aid for trade in power-station coal

Mr Ibrügger's report (Doc.199/78). Motion tabled endorsed Commission's objectives but called for more details on costs.

The Commission is proposing to subsidize coal for power-stations sent from one Community country to another.

Both the rapporteur, Mr Ibrügger, and the draftsman of the budgets committee's opinion, Lord Bessborough, agreed with the Commission's general aim of making EC coal more competitive and thus helping to reduce dependency on imported energy sources, but expressed concern at the lack of clarity on the financial implications involved.

Although most of the other speakers in the debate endorsed the proposals, both Mr Guillaume Schyns (Be, CD) and Mr Patrick Power (Ir, EPD) suggested it might be more sensible to buy imported coal as long as it was available and cheap, saving Community stocks for when they were really needed. Mr Power also raised the question of Irish turf and milled peat and their use in energy production.

In reply, Commissioner Brunner stressed the importance keeping Community mines open. 'Once closed, a coalmine cannot be reopened overnight when the need arises,' he said. The Commission's proposals – limited to three years – were designed simply to encourage consumption of and trade in domestic coal by reducing the gap between the world market price and EC prices.

Protecting birds

Mr Jahn's question (Doc. 195/78/rev.) to the Commission on the imminent prospect of the Commission's proposal for a directive on bird conservation not being adopted.

The Commission's proposed directive has twice failed to find agreement in Council because of French reservations concerning the hunting of the skylark and the corn bunting, and Mr Jahn asked the Commission for its views.

In reply, Commissioner Natali agreed that the directive would represent an important milestone for bird conservation in the Community. The Commission was aware of public opinion on the matter, and welcomed the help and support Parliament had given in its efforts to secure Council acceptance.

Two French speakers, Mr Pierre Lagorce (S) and Mr André Soury (CA), put the views of '2.5 million French huntsmen'. Both stressed the satisfaction that hunting brought to French workers and country people for whom, according to Mr Lagorce, it was 'one of the few pleasures in life'.

It was not hunting that threatened birdlife, they argued, but pollution of lakes and rivers, of feeding grounds and the air. Indeed, hunters' associations did much to repopulate large areas, since it was in the huntsmen's own interests to preserve the species and thus their sport.

Mr Tam Dalyell (UK, S) said he found it hard to understand how massacring larks or thrushes could bring pleasure to millions. But he agreed on the need to conserve birds' habitats, particularly marshes and wetlands.

Answering a point made by Mr Lagorce that hunters' associations had been ignored in drafting the directive, Mr Jahn said this was absolutely untrue: there had been a great deal of consultation. Moreover, the directive fully recognized the danger to birdlife from pollution and pesticides. But it was a chain reaction: the more birds were shot, the more pesticides would be needed to control insects, and the more birds would be poisoned.

THURSDAY, 6th July 1978

Yuri Orlov's conviction

Mr Bertrand's motion (Doc. 197/78) for the political committee.

Speakers from all Parliament's political groups this morning lent their support to a motion expressing solidarity with condemned Soviet physicist Yuri Orlov and deploring increasing Soviet violations of human rights.

Reacting to human rights violations in Argentina and elsewhere

Mr Prescott's report (Doc. 200/78). Mr Prescott tabled a motion calling on the Nine Foreign Ministers to press for a restoration of human rights in Argentina; the motion equally presses for the establishment of procedures for dealing with human rights issues in Parliament.

Presenting his report Mr John Prescott (UK, S) said that one could not be selective about human rights. And there seemed to be some hypocrisy here. Violations of human rights must be condemned wherever they occurred.

Referring to a hearing on Argentina, he said the evidence submitted showed an appalling disregard for human rights.

Mr Prescott then asked for procedures to be established for dealing with human rights issues in the European Parliament.

All the speakers in the subsequent debate fully supported the spirit of the motion, though spokesmen for the Christian Democrat, Conservative and European Progressive Democrat groups called for its referral back to committee so that the procedural proposals could be examined in more detail.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

1. *Women and work-sharing (Mr Michael Yeats)*

Mr Vredeling assured Mr Yeats (Ir, EPD) that care would be taken to see that any work-sharing scheme introduced would not be prejudicial to the interests of women workers.

2. *Absenteeism (Mr Patrick Power)*

Mr Vredeling said the Commission had made no special studies of absenteeism. EC statistical office studies showed that in 1975 the percentage was 2.5 per cent, 0.25 being due to strikes. There did seem to be a link between absenteeism and a lack of job satisfaction, as Mr Power's (Ir, EPD) question suggested.

3. *Controlling expenditure (Mr Piet Dankert)*

Mr Burke said that a reorganization of the Commission's services was taking place further to a consultants' report suggesting that its staff levels for monitoring expenditure were completely inadequate.

4. *Misleading pharmaceutical advertising (Mr Bob Edwards)*

Mr Vredeling said that the Commission would be making new proposals in the near future. Mr Edwards (UK, S) complained of old remedies in new guises being put on the market at higher prices.

5. *Sheepmeat market (Mr André Soury)*

Mr Burke said that the Commission's new sheepmeat market proposals would provide the means for protecting French farm incomes. Direct aid would be possible to offset the effects of going over from a national market to a common market in France.

9. Steel tubing (Mr Tom Normanton)

Mr Natali suggested that any problems arising in this sector were more a result of the activities of third country producers than of any action by Community manufacturers.

Vote

The House agreed to the motions in the reports by:

Mr Ibrügger (aid for trade in coal) Doc. 199/78

Mr Bertrand (conviction of Yuri Orlov) Doc. 197/78

Mr Prescott (human rights in Argentina) Doc. 200/78.

Commission statement on youth employment

Commission Vice-President Henk Vredeling informed the House of the circumstances surrounding the Council's rejection of the Commission's proposals on jobs for young people.

The proposals, which had had the full support of the European Parliament, were designed (a) to provide subsidies to enable employers to take on young workers and (b) to create jobs in the social sphere for young people.

The plans had been blocked by France, Mr Vredeling said, on the grounds that the jobs involved would not be productive, and that the funds needed would involve extra taxes or a budget deficit.

Mr Vredeling said the Commission could not agree with this view. "What is more productive," he asked, "a jobless youngster, or one working on a social project helping old people? "

Commission's fisheries proposals

Mr Hughes's reports and Mr Lemp's report.

Introducing his reports for Parliament's agriculture committee, Mr Mark Hughes (UK, S) asked the House to approve various Commission proposals subject to

certain reservations and observations. The proposals concern EC fishing rights in Norwegian and Faroese waters; catch quotas for herring; fishing rights for vessels flying the Canadian flag; agreements with Sweden and the Faroes; and herring fishing.

One of the reservations concerned the ban on herring fishing which was applicable to EC fishermen only: there was nothing to cover Norwegian or Faroese fishermen as Mr Hughes saw it.

Mr Hans-Jürgen Klinker (Ge, CD), for Mr Lemp, asked Parliament to approve the Commission's proposals for a fisheries agreement with Norway.

Mr Niels Anker Kofoed (Da, L), agriculture committee chairman, said the Community's dilemma was that it had to reach agreements with third countries while being unable to reach an agreement within the EC itself. The United Kingdom was the Member State most seriously affected by the current political wrangles.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (UK, EC) stressed how vital the herring ban was. As for an agreement with vessels flying the flag of Canada, he was glad to hear talks were being resumed next week. He was, however, disturbed to learn that vessels from Norway and the Faroe Islands were to be able to fish for herring off the coast of Scotland.

Mr Seán Brosnan (Ir, EPD) was concerned about the scientific evidence on which the Commission's proposals were based: if there were any doubt about the evidence, the herring fishermen would be suffering undue hardship. Should they not be compensated? To accept the proposals before the House would be asking for trouble from EC fishermen.

Mr Erik Andersen (Da, S) suggested that the best approach would be to try and strike a balance between types of fish on a political, economic and biological basis.

Mr Liam Kavanagh (Ir, S) and Mr Charles McDonald (Ir, CD) both considered the proposals unacceptable for the Irish fishing community. Would Italian wine-growers or French dairymen be willing to cut back their production, as Irish fishermen were being asked to do, Mr McDonald wondered?

What about enlargement?

Lord Kennet asked if the implications for Greece, Portugal and Spain of any agreement on fisheries could be carefully considered.

Replying, Mr Vredeling said that the scientific evidence on which the herring ban was based was the best available. He agreed the social consequences of the ban were a Community matter. He took Lord Kennet's point about the negotiations with the applicant states.

Airline ticket prices

Mr Kofoed raised the question of air fares (Doc. 193/78). Surely IATA's rate-fixing was inconsistent with EC competition rules?

Mr Vredeling replied that the Commission was drafting a regulation on the implementation of Treaty articles 85-86.

FRIDAY, 7th July 1978

Mediterranean forests

Mr Ligios' report (Doc. 201/78). Mr Ligios put down a motion asking the House to approve a 310 million pound forestry programme.

Classifying, packaging and labelling dangerous solvents

Mr Lamberts' report (Doc. 181/78). Mr Lamberts put down a motion asking Parliament to approve a Commission proposal designed to provide greater protection for anyone coming into contact with dangerous solvents, subject to an amendment to the proposal itself.

Council's failure to agree on the 75 million pound youth employment measures

Mr Willem Albers (Du), for the Socialists, put down a motion expressing concern at the Council's failure to reach a decision on the Commission's proposals for

promoting youth employment. Mr John Osborn (UK, EC) reminded the House that unemployment among the young was three times as high as among the population at large. (Of the 6m out of work, 2m are under 25).

The Council's failure to agree proposals which could lead to the creation of 150,000 jobs was therefore very disturbing. For the Commission, Mr Vredeling agreed that this was a setback. He undertook to continue to press the Council for a decision but he was not very hopeful.

Vote

The House agreed to motions in the reports by:

Mr Hughes on fisheries (Docs. 206/78, 227/78, 228/78, 232/78),
Mr Lemp on fisheries (Doc. 231/78),
Mr Liogier on wine (Doc. 229/78),
Mr Ligios on Mediterranean forests (Doc. 201/78),
Mr Howell on milk products (Doc. 225/78, 226/78),
Mr Cifarelli on fruit and vegetables (Doc. 208/78),
Mr Lamberts on dangerous solvents (Doc. 181/78),
Mr Albers on 1978 Tripartite Conference (Doc. 179/78),
Mr Albers on youth employment (Doc. 230/78),
Mr Porcu on iron and steel industry (Doc. 233/78) and
Mr Kofoed on air fares (Doc. 234/78).

SUMMARY

Monday, 3rd July – Friday 7th July 1978

Monday, 3rd July 1978

5 p.m. to 9.10 p.m.

- Session adjourned on 16th June is resumed.
- Lord Murray of Gravesend took the seat left vacant by Lord Brimelow.
- Petitions received from Mrs Rosenzweig (protecting environment) and Mr Perez (human rights in Argentina).
- Council requested Parliament's opinion on a series of Commission proposals.
- Mr Pisoni's report (wine) deferred.
- Action taken by Commission further to resolutions by Parliament. The President told the House that the Commission had submitted a written statement on the action it had taken further to Parliament's resolutions. This referred to the resolutions in the reports by Mr Corrie (fisheries policy) and Mr Schwörer (group accounts).
- Mr Tugendhat presented the preliminary draft general budget for 1979.
- Mr Bangemann's report. EP called for fifth EDF to be in budget (Doc. 203/78).
- Mr Früh's report (Doc. 202/78). EP called for mcas to be phased out.
- Lord Bruce's report (Doc. 210/78). EP approved carry forwards from 1977 to 1978.
- Mr Aigner's report (Doc. 204/78). EP deferred discharge for financial year 1976.

Tuesday, 4th July 1978

10 a.m. to 2.50 p.m. and 3.10 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.

- President welcomed Mr Vasco de Gama Fernandes, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal.
- Mr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, German Foreign Minister and new President of the Council addressed Parliament.
- Mr Patijn's report on date of European elections (Doc. 221/78).
- President welcomed a delegation from the Japanese Diet, led by Mr Kuranari.
- Question Time
- Vote: Parliament agreed to the motions in Mr Bangemann's report (parliamentary control of the EDF), Mr Früh's report (sixth financial report of the EAGGF), Lord Bruce's report (carry forward of appropriations from 1977 to 1978), Mr Aigner's report (discharge for the financial year 1976) and Mr Patijn's report (date of European elections).
- Mr Fellermaier's question to the Council on financial help for Portugal. (Doc. 186/78)
- Five questions to the Council, the Commission and Foreign Ministers of the Nine about EC relations with Turkey (Docs. 188/78, 189/78, 190/78, 191/78, 192/78).
- Mr Nyborg's question to the Council and the Commission on the customs union. (Docs. 184/78, 185/78)

Wednesday, 5th July 1978

10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

- Seven Commission proposals on fisheries policy to be taken as urgent. Debate on Thursday.
- Mr Prescott's report on shipbuilding (Doc. 182/78).

- Question Time
- Vote: Parliament agreed to Mr Hansen's motion (EC relations with Turkey), Mr Schwörer's motion (customs union) and the motion in Mr Prescott's report (shipbuilding).
- Mr Ansquer's report on the iron and steel crisis (Doc. 180/78) was referred back to the economic committee at the rapporteur's request.
- Lord Bessborough's question to the Commission about uranium. (Doc. 187/78)
- Mrs Walz's question about Ispra. (Doc. 194/78)
- Mr Ibrügger's report on the coal trade (Doc. 199/78).
- Mr Jahn's question to the Commission on the protection of birds. (Doc. 195/78/rev.)

Thursday, 6th July 1978

10 a.m. to 1.15 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 7.45 p.m.

- Mr Bertrand's report on Yuri Orlov's conviction (Doc. 197/78).
- Mr Prescott's report on human rights violations in Argentina (Doc. 200/78).
- Question Time
- Vote: the House agreed to the motions in the reports by Mr Ibrügger (aid for trade in coal), Mr Bertrand (conviction of Yuri Orlov) and Mr Prescott (human rights in Argentina).
- Mr Müller-Hermann's report on trade with China (Doc. 198/78) deferred to September.
- Commission statement on youth employment.
- Mr Hughes's report on Commission fisheries policy proposals: catch quotas within existing agreements with Sweden, Norway, the Faroes, vessels flying the Canadian flag, etc. (Docs. 206/78, 227/78, 228/78, 232/78). Mr Lemp's report (Doc. 231/78).

- Mr Liogier's report (wine) Doc. 229/78.
- Mr Kofoed asked Commission about air fares. Commission promises proposals (Doc. 193/78).

Friday, 7th July 1978

9 a.m. to 1.10 p.m.

- Mr Ligios' report of Mediterranean forests (Doc. 201/78).
- Mr Howell's reports on milk products (Docs. 225/78 and 226/78).
- Mr Cifarelli's report on fruit and vegetables (Doc. 208/78).
- Mr Lambert's report on dangerous solvents (Doc. 181/78).
- Mr Albers' interim report on the 1978 Tripartite Conference (Doc. 179/78).
- Motion by Mr Albers, Mrs Dunwoody and Mr Lezzi on youth employment (Doc. 230/78).
- Motion by Mr Porcu, Mr Eberhard and Mr Soury on the iron and steel crisis (Doc. 233/78).
- Vote: the House agreed to the motions in reports debated on Thursday evening and Friday morning.

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