



European Parliament Information

The Sittings

October 1978



9/10

THE SITTINGS

STRASBOURG, 9th – 13th OCTOBER 1978

THE WEEK

With 237 days to go until polling starts, on 9 June 1979, in the first European elections, one of the focal points of the present Parliament's attention continues to be the possible scope and limits of Community action.

There was general agreement this week on the need for this nine-nation Community to make some headway towards an energy policy. And there was a measure of agreement on the need for state aids to the steel industry to be brought within a Community framework. Where there was concern was about state aids in other sectors and about having, at the same time, a variety of state aids and a single nine-nation policy for competition under treaty rules. And there was, again, uncertainty expressed by several Members as to whether areas like armaments can properly be considered to come within the EC's terms of reference.

This uncertainty about competence was coupled with uncertainty about methods. To what extent should the laws of the Nine be brought into line with each other to achieve the aims of the Common Market and how detailed should directives, drawn up for this purpose, actually be? Commission President Roy Jenkins explained his approach to such legislation: 'We are not', he said, 'in the business of harmonization for harmonization's sake ... the principle which should guide us should be not to try to do too much but not to be afraid of doing something when there is a sensible case for doing it and where it can and will lead to practical results to make a better Common Market'.

Monday evening (5.10.p.m. to 8 p.m.)

The European Parliament welcomed Mr Burke's statement this evening that the Commission would in future inform Parliament in writing of the action it had taken further to Parliament's advice. Mr Burke added that this statement would be submitted in writing in the various languages either on the Friday before the session or on the Monday morning.

Mr Burke told the House that the Commission was giving 700,000 EUA in aid to flood victims in northern Italy and 200,000 EUA to those affected by recent earth tremors in Baden-Württemberg. This evening's other business: debates on the 6th VAT directive, spending money in the budget and changes to the Financial Regulation.

Tuesday morning (10.05 a.m. to 12.50 p.m.)

The European Parliament this morning discussed revised Commission proposals for dealing with illegal migration and illegal employment. While most speakers welcomed the revised draft, Mrs Kellett-Bowman pointed out that the whole concept of 'illegal' employment had an alien ring in British ears. It would do little for racial harmony, she felt, or for the Community's image especially if it were likely to involve the introduction of identity cards.

Tuesday evening (3.05 p.m. to 11.15 p.m.)

Among the items debated in Parliament this evening were the Commission's report on the state of the dairy market and the UK Government's decision to allow the culling of some 5,000 grey seals in the Orkney Islands. On dairy produce Mr Gundelach said the Commission's aim was to safeguard the family farm but attempts to achieve this aim were being undermined by dairy produce surpluses. On seals, he said the Commission would initiate an investigation into the question of the seal population, Mr Dalyell having expressed concern about the scientific evidence on which the UK Government's decision was based.

Wednesday morning (10.05 to 10.15 a.m. and 11.10 a.m. to 1.40 p.m.)

The European Parliament this morning discussed arms supplies, summer time and the results of the Camp David Summit. One point recurring in all three

debates was the desire expressed by several Members to see the Nine acting together: to have a common policy on the export of arms; to arrive at a common basis for summer time; and adopt a common approach on the Middle East, so as to make a successful contribution to peace.

Wednesday evening (3.10 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.)

In Bremen this summer the European Council pledged to intensify efforts to resolve long-term energy problems, and Parliament this evening discussed a motion calling for implementation of this pledge and the establishment of a common energy policy. The debate gave options for the future, particularly coal and nuclear power. The House also turned its attention to two of the world's trouble spots, Lebanon and Nicaragua, raising the question of Community help for the refugees and homeless there. Commissioner Brunner said aid to Lebanon was in hand, and requests in respect of Nicaraguan refugees had been received from the Costa Rican Red Cross.

Thursday morning (10.15 a.m. to 1.05 p.m.)

The European Parliament spent this morning discussing a Commission proposal to bring state aids for steel within an EC framework. The plan was given a wide measure of approval by several EMPs who were quick to point out that agreeing on the desirability of restructuring the steel industry was one thing. To spell out which steel plants were going to be affected was quite another.

Thursday evening (3.05 p.m. to 6.40 p.m.)

Every year the Commission submits a report to Parliament about how the EC's competition policy is working out. In the debate on this report today, the focal point was state aids. The question being asked was: what sort of relationship was possible between state aids and a nine-nation competition policy? Parliament also discussed air traffic control. A motion was tabled calling on Commission and Council to take appropriate action to resolve the problems facing the organisations involved here.

Friday morning (9 a.m. to 11.20 a.m.)

Safety at sea and the Regional Fund dominated this morning's proceedings. The House began by looking at a report by Mr Ibrügger which called for all Community countries to become party to the 'Memorandum of understanding' of 2 March 1978 on safety standards at sea. Ireland and Italy have not yet signed the memorandum. And in a question on the Regional Fund, the Commission was asked to ensure that RF money was used for the purposes intended, and not to top up national budgets.

MONDAY, 9 October 1978

The House paid tribute to Pope John-Paul I.

Action taken on Parliament's advice

Mr Burke reminded the House that Parliament had considered eight Commission proposals at its September session, approving five and amending the other three. The Commission had been unable to accept Mr Herbert's recommendations on its sheepmeat proposals, but had accepted some of the recommendations made by Mr De Keersmaecker and Mr Vitale in their reports.

EC's VAT directive

Mr Deschamp's question to the Commission (Doc. 340/78)

Mr Burke, for the Commission, told Parliament that Belgium, Denmark and the United Kingdom had given effect to the Sixth Directive on VAT adopted by the Council on 17 May 1977. Legislation in the other six Member States was still pending.

Mr Burke noted that Germany would not be able to meet the 1 January 1979 deadline and that one or more other Member States might well be in a similar position. The Commission would initiate proceedings under Article 169 against any Member State failing to take the necessary measures by 1 January 1979.

Implementing the 1978 budget

Five group question to the Commission (Doc. 342/78)

Introducing the question, Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge,CD) asked the Commission specifically whether it considered that the budget, as adopted, constituted a legal basis for using and spending appropriations. Many items in the 1978 budget had not been implemented, and there was now a real concern that the same thing may happen in 1979.

In reply, Commissioner Christopher Tugendhat first dealt in detail with the thirty specific items referred to in the question. In only one case was the

Commission at fault, he said — in the bulk of cases it was inaction by the Council that had blocked implementation.

The Commission did regard the budget as the legal basis for Community spending, Mr Tugendhat went on, but it was not always a sufficient basis; without the relevant Council decisions, the Commission was powerless to act.

Amending the Financial Regulation

Mr Shaw's report (Doc. 353/78)

The Financial Regulation concerns the preparation of the budget, its presentation, its implementation and its control. On 10 March 1977 the Commission submitted a revised regulation which took account of Parliament's report on the subject. Mr Michael Shaw (UK, EC), for the budgets committee, gave his broad approval to the Commission's revision.

Mr Tugendhat thanked Parliament for its support.

Floods in northern Italy

Motion by Mr Albertini and others (Doc. 311/78)

Mr Francesco Albertini (It,S) expressed appreciation at the Commission's prompt response to the sudden floods which struck Ossola in northern Italy on 7 August 1978. 700,000 EUA in emergency aid was being provided to help the victims. He hoped the Commission would now help in financing repairs to the damaged infrastructure of the region.

Mr Tam Dalyell (UK,S) wondered about the criteria used in awarding emergency aid: the EC could not be expected to help on every occasion disaster struck.

In reply, Mr Tugendhat said further help to the area would have to be considered. He told Mr Dalyell that a number of criteria were already used in granting aid, but agreed that the question deserved further study.

TUESDAY, 10 October 1978

Illegal immigrants and illegal employment

Mr Pisoni's report on the Commission's proposals (Doc. 238/78)

Mr Ferruccio Pisoni (It,CD), for the social committee, today welcomed the Commission's amended proposal concerning illegal immigration and employment. The original Commission proposal, submitted in November 1976, included no provision for protecting migrant workers' rights. The revised proposal contains specific provisions to this effect: employers and the public authorities are to treat illegal migrant workers as having legal status for the purposes of remuneration, annual leave, redundancy payments, tax rebates and social security benefits. Otherwise, the proposal remains largely similar to the original one and provides for greater cooperation between Member States in dealing with illegal immigration and employment and sanctions where appropriate.

Socialist spokesman Willem Albers (Du) welcomed the motion, subject to amendment, particularly because at present, the legal immigrant's position was being undermined by the inflow of illegal immigrants.

Supporting the motion, Christian Democrat spokesman Hans-Edgar Jahn (Ge) wanted to see the proposed directive implemented within twelve months of a Council decision. The inflow of migrants via East Germany, with all their disruptive effect on the market, showed how necessary controls were.

Mr Michele Cifarelli (It), for the Liberals, welcoming the Commission's proposal said a change of public attitudes was needed. The migrant should not be regarded as qualified only to take on dirty or difficult jobs.

Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (UK), for the European Conservatives, was unimpressed by the draft directive. It would not, she felt, do much for racial harmony in the UK. The concept of 'illegal employment' was wholly alien there. And checks at the place of work could create tensions; the draft directive, furthermore, would seem to call for some form of identity card. On the eve of the first European elections this would do little for the EC's popularity.

Mr Michele Pistillo (It), Communist spokesman and Mr Kai Nyborg (Da), for the European Progressive Democrats, welcomed the Commission's proposal.

Mr Pietro Lezzi (It,S) reminded the House of the depressing effect on wages of the use of black labour, particularly in certain trades.

Mr George Cunningham (UK,S) questioned the wisdom of EC legislation at present. He shared Mrs Kellett-Bowman's reservations about the onus the draft directive would place on employers. The main blame for illegal migration lay, he felt, with the migrant himself. The draft should be dropped, he said. Work towards voluntary harmonisation would be more helpful.

In reply, Commissioner Henk Vredeling took up the point made by several speakers that sanctions against illegal migrants should be the same in all Member States. This was not possible: penal codes were outside the EC's competence. Mr Vredeling told Mrs Kellett-Bowman and Mr Cunningham that the Nine had themselves asked for proposals on illegal immigration and that it had been the Parliament which rejected the Commission's first proposals here for 'not going far enough'. The Community had a legal obligation to promote the free movement of workers and to improve their working and living conditions. Illegal immigration clearly threatened these objectives. He was also disturbed at suggestions about identity cards. Nothing could be further from the Commission's mind, he said.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

UK fishing restrictions (Mr Kai Nyborg and Mr Ib Stetter)

In answer to two questions from Danish members about the Commission's intended response to unilateral fishing restrictions in the North Sea by the UK, Vice-President Gundelach pointed out that the Commission had the right, under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty, to bring before the Court of Justice any Member State 'which had failed to fulfil an obligation under this Treaty'.

Although the UK had sought Commission approval for the measures it had introduced, some of them were unacceptable — such as the ban on herring fishing off western Scotland — and the Commission had now to decide what action to take. There was indeed a possibility that the UK would be taken to court.

In the course of his answers to several supplementaries, Mr Gundelach pointed out that the differences between the UK and the other Member States over fishing were far fewer than the areas of agreement.

Income maintenance scheme (Mr Liam Kavanagh)

Mr Vredeling pointed out that the scheme for maintaining workers' incomes during retraining had been discontinued because the money set aside for the purpose had not been taken up. However, provision remained in the 1979 budget for Community action in this field.

'Three wise men' (Mr Egon Klepsch and Mr Jean-François Pintat)

President Giscard d'Estaing's letter proposing the setting up of a Council of 'three wise men' to look at the institutional repercussions of enlargement 'constitutes an interesting initiative which merits careful consideration within the Community', Mr Jenkins said. However, he did not think that this would in any way affect the present timetable for enlargement: by the end of this year all the main points in the negotiations with Greece would be finalized, talks with Portugal would have begun and the Commission's opinion on Spanish membership would be published.

Equal opportunities

Mrs Dahlerup's question to the Commission (Doc. 336/78)

Mrs Karen Dahlerup (Da,S) asked the Commission what progress had been made, in each of the Member States, in the implementation of Directive 76/207 (EEC) on equal opportunities for men and women in job training, access to employment, eligibility for promotion and working conditions. Mrs Dahlerup particularly wanted to know why the Commission itself appointed so few women to senior positions.

In reply, Commissioner Henk Vredeling informed the House that legislation had been introduced in Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy and the UK. A letter would be addressed to Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Federal

Republic as of this week, reminding them of their commitment to implement this directive.

Mr Vredeling conceded that the European Commission was short of women in high positions. And it was rare for women to appear at Council meetings.

Vote

See summary.

Agricultural research

Mrs Dunwoody's report on a Commission proposal for a five-year research programme (Doc. 247/78)

The Commission is proposing a five-year (1979 – 1983) programme of research into: land use and rural development, Mediterranean agriculture, agricultural waste and effluents from intensive stockrearing, animal pathology, improving the productivity of European beef herds, biological and integrated pest control, methods of improving plant resistance to disease and environmental pressures, agro-food research, elm disease (a pilot scheme for co-ordinating research into tree diseases) and improvements in the production of plant proteins.

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (UK, S), for the agriculture committee, welcomed the proposal with some enthusiasm.

It would be putting CAP funds to very good use and was likely to be of general benefit, not least to farmers in less prosperous areas. Mrs Dunwoody urged that results achieved be widely disseminated, particularly among associated countries. The motion approving the proposal was widely supported.

In reply, Commissioner Finn Gundelach thanked the House for its support.

Harmonising national legislation

Mr Rippon's question to the Commission (Doc. 345/78)

Sir Derek Walker-Smith (UK), for the European Conservative Group, asked the Commission to state its policy on the harmonisation of national laws.

In reply, Commission President Roy Jenkins endorsed a view expressed earlier by Mr Gundelach that the Commission was not in the business of harmonisation for harmonisation's sake. Each case had, however, to be judged on its merits.

Dairy produce price freeze fear

Mr Soury's question to the Commission (Doc. 368/78)

Mr André Soury (Fr), for the Communists, expressed concern at reports to the effect that dairy product prices might be frozen. The main problem, the milk powder surplus, was, he said, confined to particular Member States (600,000 metric tons out of 900,000 were in the Federal Republic and only 32,000 tons in France where production was falling). Surely, he suggested, the answer lay in boosting consumption and in eliminating unfair competition?

In reply, Commissioner Finn Gundelach challenged the assumptions underlying the question. There had been no talk of a price freeze and no proposals had been made. But there was a problem: it had been possible over the last year to hold consumption level but production was still rising. The Council had asked the Commission to analyse the problem and it had done so. It had submitted a report in September and he looked forward to discussing this with the agriculture committee and the House as a whole in due course.

The culling of seals

Mr Dalyell's motion (Doc. 369/78)

Mr Tam Dalyell (UK, S) drew attention to the UK Government's decision to allow the culling of some 5,000 grey seals in the Orkney Islands. His concern was not with the cull as such but with the scientific evidence on which the decision was based. Would the Commission initiate an impartial investigation into the whole question of the seal population? Commissioner Finn Gundelach replied that he would.

WEDNESDAY, 11 October 1978

EC arms supplies

Socialist Group question (Doc. 337/78)

Introducing the question, Mr Hellmut Sieglerschmidt (Ge, S) called for a more selective approach to exporting arms – particularly to areas of tension or countries where human rights were being violated.

In reply, Council President Klaus von Dohnanyi said the Community was concerned at the whole question of arms proliferation, but he held out little hope of a genuinely concerted EC policy on arms exports. That did not mean, however, that the Nine were not determined to press for peace and would not support any initiative aimed at general disarmament.

Speakers in the debate were split in their views. In a warmly applauded speech, Mr Bob Edwards (UK, S) said the issue was a moral one for Europe: our governments were now acting as 'merchants of war'. Europe's armaments workers would prefer to be making socially useful products to weapons.

Mr Gerald L'Estrange (Ir, CD) called for international progress towards disarmament.

Mr Tom Normanton (UK, EC) and Bob Mitchell (UK, S) both pointed out that limiting European arms exports would have little effect beyond making buyers turn elsewhere – and notably to the USA or the Soviet Union – for their supplies.

Summer time

Mr Müller-Hermann's question to Commission and Council (Docs 281/78 and 282/78)

Replying to a question from Mr Müller-Hermann (Ge) and Christian Democrat colleagues, Mr von Dohnanyi, for the Council, said the Community was endeavouring to achieve a common basis for summer time.

Camp David

Motion by CD, Socialist, Liberal and Conservative groups (Doc. 372/78/rev.)

There was broad support in the House this morning for the motion on the outcome of the Camp David meeting put down by four of Parliament's political groups. In addition to welcoming the successful outcome of the meeting, the motion called on the Council and Commission to make practical proposals for the Community to help Egypt and Israel in 'speeding up the economic, technical and social development of the region'.

On this point, Mr Alfred Bertrand (Be, CD) stressed that the definition of peace had to be extended beyond being merely a cease-fire and include the establishment of fully normal relations between the former enemies. Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer (Du, L) called for a type of Marshall Plan for the area financed by the Nine and the other major industrial powers. And Mr Jochen van Aerssen (Ge, CD) suggested Community help for an Israel-Egypt rail link.

Other speakers referred to the political aspects of Community involvement. Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge, S) saw a possibility of a Community contribution towards securing agreement on the Palestinian question. Lord Bethell (UK, EC), who called the Camp David agreement 'only a step towards peace', saw no alternative to the eventual establishment of a fully independent Palestine. Mr Renato Sandri (It, CA) agreed. However, the Communists would be abstaining on the vote because the motion 'does not face the real problems' of the situation.

In reply, Mr von Dohnanyi said the Council would be considering the Community's role. Mr Brunner, for the Commission, felt that any practical Community help should be in response to specific requests from the countries involved.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council

Proposal by the President of the French Republic regarding the functioning of the Community institutions (Ludwig Fellermaier and Alfred Bertrand)

Mr Klaus von Dohnanyi, Council President, said that the European Council would probably discuss the proposal of the President of the French Republic

regarding the functioning of the Community institutions in an enlarged Community (the setting up of a Council of 'three wise men') at its meeting in December.

Commodity imports (Bob Edwards)

Mr von Dohnanyi said that the Council played an active part in all international discussions and negotiations on raw materials aimed at achieving greater market stability through the introduction of instruments and measures suited to the peculiarities of individual commodities.

Air traffic control (Sir Geoffrey de Freitas)

Mr von Dohnanyi said that on 3 October 1975 the Commission had submitted to the Council a communication on an action programme for the European aeronautical sector, together with – among other items – a proposal for a Decision introducing a joint policy in the civil aircraft and aviation sector. That proposal had been amended by the Commission on 28 January 1977 and was the only proposal on the subject now before the Council.

EC-US trade in agricultural products (James Scott-Hopkins)

Mr von Dohnanyi said that the Council was aware of the fact that America's trade balance had always been positive vis-à-vis the Community and that this surplus was mainly due to an imbalance in the agricultural sector.

Trade relations with this important partner were obviously the subject of regular discussions within the Council. In the course of its regular consultations with the US Administration, the Commission endeavoured to find solutions to the specific difficulties arising.

ACP-EEC Assembly (John Osborn)

Article 80 of the Lomé Convention laid down that each member country could choose freely how its representation in the Consultative Assembly was selected, Mr von Dohnanyi said. He saw no reason to propose any change to this arrangement.

Shipbuilding (Mrs Winnie Ewing)

Two Commission proposals on re-organization of the Community's shipbuilding industry had been adopted by the Council in the form of a resolution (September 1978) and a directive (April 1978). The Council did not believe these would entail any disadvantages for the UK or Scottish industries. Answering a supplementary from Mrs Ewing (UK, Ind), Mr von Dohnanyi felt it was misleading to see Japanese shipbuilding successes as the result of political rather than industrial actions.

Questions to the Foreign Ministers of the Nine

Sanctions against Rhodesia (Willie Hamilton)

The Bingham report was now in the hands of the UK Director of Public Prosecutions and the Foreign Ministers Conference could not therefore comment on it.

Nazi crimes (Mrs Winnie Ewing)

The expiry of the time limit for prosecuting Nazi war criminals was not in the competence of the Foreign Ministers. However, the Federal Republic would be grateful for any information which could lead to arrests or the issuing of warrants before expiry of the deadline.

Berufsverbot (Gérard Bordu)

Although again not a matter for the Foreign Ministers, Mr von Dohnanyi agreed that application of the 'Berufsverbot' (the practice of debarment from civil service posts on political grounds) in Germany had given rise to some concern. However, he suggested that other Member States might have their own procedures for excluding extremists from public office.

Vote

See summary.

The situation in Lebanon

All-group motion (Doc. 378/78).

Mr Georges Spénale (Fr), for the Socialists, expressed concern at the way a religious community was being destroyed in Lebanon. He put down a motion calling on Council and Commission 'to take all possible measures ... to further a return to peace ... in Lebanon and ... to grant immediate humanitarian aid.'

Mr Jean-Marie Caro (Fr), for the Christian Democrats, put down a motion calling on Commission, Council and Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation to take, immediately, all possible measures 'to maintain the cease-fire ... to guarantee a return to peace ... and provide humanitarian aid ... and economic and technical resources to allow Lebanon to democratically rebuild a sovereign state within its frontiers.'

Mr Jean-François Pintat (Fr), for the Liberals, said the time had come for the Nine to act. Mr Gérard Bordu (Fr), for the Communists, pledged the support of his group for the motion tabled.

Mr Brunner, for the Commission, and Mr von Dohnanyi, for the Council, shared the feelings of concern expressed regarding the situation in Lebanon. Mr Brunner said considerable food aid was in hand, that financial aid of 100,000 u.a. had been made available to the Red Cross and that the Commission was ready to give more.

Nicaragua and Iran

Socialist and CD motion (Doc. 361/78/rev.) on Nicaragua, Mr Forni's question (Doc. 343/78) on Iran.

Budget funds to help Nicaraguan refugees were running short, Mr Brunner said. The motion had called for immediate EC aid and condemned the Somoza régime. On Iran, Mr Brunner said talks were making little progress, but the Commission would keep the human rights situation there under review.

Energy policy

Motions by Mrs Walz (Doc. 315/78) and Mr Flämig (Doc. 316/78).

Introducing her motion, which called for an updating of EC energy policy objectives, Mrs Hanna Walz (Ge, CD), referred to recent changes in the situation:

these included the CIA study showing up to 80 years oil reserves, OPEC calls for oil price increases, falling coal production and uncertainty in the nuclear power sector.

Mr Gerhard Flämig (Ge, S), whose motion called for progress towards a common energy policy, underlined the need for action in the wake of the Bremen summit commitments to intensify energy efforts.

Speakers in the debate were unanimous that the energy situation remained critical and that a common policy was vital to prevent a future energy shortfall and a consequent social crisis. There were repeated calls for intensified exploitation of coal and nuclear power, but stress was placed also on the need for conservation and research into alternative energy sources.

In reply, Commissioner Brunner said there was agreement as to the end: long term energy security. But how to achieve it? The Commission had made proposals on coal, conservation, alternative energy research – a start would be made if the Council adopted what was already on their table.

For the Council, Mr von Dohnanyi explained that agreement on energy policy – like on fishing policy, say – required a measure of compromise that would take time to find.

THURSDAY, 12 October 1978

Rules for aids to the steel industry

Mr Ansquer's report on a Commission proposal for state aids to the steel industry to be brought within a Community framework (Doc. 180/78) and Mr Glinne's question (Doc. 347/78).

Mr Vincent Ansquer (Fr, EPD), rapporteur for the economic and monetary committee, put down a motion approving this proposal. He argued that the lack of a Community framework could seriously hamper the steel industry's bid to make EC steel competitive again.

In reply, Commissioner Davignon said there could be no overall Community policy on iron and steel without a fundamental restructuring of the sector. The

Commission could not, of course, take all the necessary decisions alone, and that was why there was intensive consultation at all levels: with governments, trade unions and the undertakings themselves.

This prompted Mr Tom Ellis (UK, S) to ask about what he saw as the local consequences of the 'restructuring' proposed: which actual steel plants would be affected. He wondered if the gravity of the steel crisis were appreciated and he asked Mr Vouel if he thought the Commission had sufficient authority to be able to deal with it.

But Mr Ellis, Mr Herman Schwörer (Ge, CD), Mr Jörgen Nielsen (Da, L) and Mr Seán Brosnan (Ir, EPD) agreed on the need for a plan and were ready to endorse the motion before the House approving the Commission's proposal. Mr Silvio Leonardi (It, CA), on the other hand, could not.

The situation in the steel industry was far more complex than the Commission seemed to suppose. The problem was primarily a political one: not mainly one of how to apply EC competition rules, Mr Leonardi said.

Mr Brosnan expressed concern about the retrospective clause in the Commission's proposal. He trusted Irish steel would not be affected and asked for an assurance on this point.

Mrs Winifred Ewing (UK, Ind) repeated Mr Ellis's question: which towns would be affected, which were Europe's new ghost towns to be? Mrs Ewing drew attention to the high output and competitiveness of Scottish steel plants.

Mr Hans-Joachim Hoffmann (Ge), Socialist spokesman, said there was no disagreement across the House over the need for a plan: but what sort of plan? And how for would workers be involved in its implementation?

Mr Antoine Porcu, French Communist member from the Lorraine region, thought Parliament might consider setting up a committee of enquiry to look into the whole question of restructuring. As things stood, the Community's steel industry was being destroyed, and it was the workers who were paying the price.

Replying for the Commission, Mr Vouel stressed the need for drawing up plans for the steel industry at Community level. If measures were taken independently by Member States, there was a real danger that they would be mutually incompatible and would result in national difficulties in one country being

exported to another. That said, however, the Commission was pursuing its policy in the closest cooperation with all Member States.

It was not, he added in reply to Mr Ellis's point, the aim of the Commission to impose a plan for steel but to ensure a measure of coherence between Member States and Community.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

Defence (Mrs Karen Dahlerup and Mr Willi Dondelinger)

Mr Natali told Parliament that Commissioner Vredeling had been speaking personally in a recent speech in the USA when he advocated cooperation between the Nine in defence. This was, of course, outside the competence of the Community. Nonetheless, the armaments industry was a significant factor in the EC's overall industrial complex and impinged, because of this, on areas within the EC's competence. This indeed had been why Parliament had asked the Commission for a report on European armaments procurement cooperation. Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (UK, S) protested and Mr Bob Mitchell (UK, S) asked how many people were involved in drafting the report and at what cost to public funds? Mr Natali replied that Parliament had asked for the report to be produced.

Overpayment of staff salaries (Mr Willie Hamilton)

Mr Vouel assured Mr Hamilton (UK, S) that the method of computing staff remuneration in the Community institutions had now been changed further to a Council decision of last January and that, as a result, the overpayments he referred to would not recur.

Research into nuclear fusion (Mr Luigi Noè)

Mr Natali said the Commission would include proposals for research into nuclear fusion in its next five-year programme, the fifth in the series, which is due to begin next year.

Vote

See summary.

Competition policy

Mr Damseaux's report (Doc. 334/78)

Introducing his report on the Commission's seventh annual report on competition policy, Mr André Damseaux (Be, L) told the House that his motion drew attention to a number of problems at present being faced in the application of competition policy. These included the way state aids are dispensed, possibilities for tax evasion resulting from the variety of tax laws in the Member States and the technical and administrative barriers to trade which were a particular handicap to small and medium-sized companies.

The theme running through the entire debate was state aids: did they distort competition or were they a necessary evil for preserving the competitiveness of Community industry in the world market. What was vital, Mr Erwin Lange (Ge, S) pointed out, was that such aids should be harmonised within the Community to prevent a distortion of competition on our home ground. Mr Mario Martinelli (It, CD), too, favoured a pragmatic approach to state aids, and Mr Altiero Spinelli (It, CA) felt they could not be taken in isolation but had to be considered in the light of the Community's general economic objectives.

Mr Vouel replied to the debate for the Commission.

Air traffic control

Mr Noè's motion (Doc. 319/78).

Mr Luigi Noè (It), for the Christian Democrats, put down a motion calling on Commission and Council 'to take ... appropriate action to improve ground and on-board equipment and to resolve the problems of the organisations responsible for air traffic control.'

FRIDAY, 13 October 1978

Pollution of the sea

Mr Ibrügger's report (Doc. 348/78).

On 2nd March 1978, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Norway and Sweden agreed on a 'Memorandum of understanding' on the maintenance of standards on merchant ships. The training and working conditions of crews and accident prevention were among the points covered. The Commission is proposing that the two Community maritime states which have not yet signed the understanding – Ireland and Italy – now do so.

Speakers in the debate stressed the importance of the understanding as a step towards preventing recurrences of disasters such as that following the wreck of the Amoco Cadiz.

Mr Natali, for the Commission, thanked Parliament for its support.

Regional policy

Question by Mr Fuchs and others (Doc. 344/78).

There is some concern that money from the Community's Regional Fund is not always used as a supplementary and complementary contribution to national regional economic policy, but is sometimes used simply to top up national budgets. The Commission was asked to make proposals to ensure that RF money was in future used for the purposes intended.

In reply, Mr Natali said that Article 19 of the draft regulation amending the basic regulation on the Regional Fund went some way to resolving the problem.

Health and safety in the coal and steel industry

Mr Ellis's report (Doc. 327/78).

Mr Tom Ellis's motion expresses concern at the limitations imposed on the bodies responsible for health and safety in the coal and steel industries by the financial, staffing and technical difficulties they are experiencing.

Mr Natali said the Commission would do what it could to ensure that the relevant safety and health commissions could carry out their tasks properly.

Road haulage quota

Mr Albers's report (Doc. 321/78).

Mr Horst Seefeld (Ge, S), for Mr Albers, explained the transport committee's concern that the EC's haulage quota for 1979 had not been increased. Mr Natali replied.

Tunisian trade unionists

Socialist, CD and Communist motion (Doc. 379/78).

The three-group motion expressed concern at the heavy sentences recently imposed on several Tunisian trade unionists and called on the Foreign Ministers of the Nine to approach the Tunisian authorities with a view to securing the release of the prisoners.

In reply, Mr Natali said that Commissioner Cheysson had recently raised the issue with the Tunisian Prime Minister.

Vote

See Summary.

The European Parliament agreed this week to 29 resolutions, including 16 expressing its opinion of Commission proposals. Twelve gave unqualified approval to Commission proposals and four called for amendments.

SUMMARY

Monday, 9th October – Friday, 13th October 1978

(Document numbers in brackets)

Monday, 9th October 1978

5.10 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The House paid tribute to Pope John-Paul I.

Action taken on Parliament's advice.

EC's VAT directive

Mr Deschamp's question to the Commission (Doc. 340/78).

Implementing the 1978 budget

Five group question to the Commission (Doc. 342/78).

Amending the Financial Regulation

Mr Shaw's report (Doc. 353/78).

Floods in northern Italy

Motion by Mr Albertini and others (Doc. 311/78).

Tuesday, 10th October 1978

10.05 a.m. to 12.50 p.m. and 3.05 p.m. to 11.15 p.m.

Illegal immigrants and illegal employment

Mr Pisoni's report (Doc. 238/78).

Question Time

Questions to the Commission (Doc. 351/78).

Vote

The House agreed to the motions in the reports by Mr Shaw (Financial Regulation) (Doc. 353/78) and Mr Pisoni (illegal immigrants and illegal employment) (Doc. 238/78) and the motion tabled by Mr Albertini (floods in northern Italy) (Doc. 311/78).

Equal opportunities

Mrs Dahlerup's question to the Commission (Doc. 336/78).

Tripartite Conference

Mr Albers's report (Doc. 326/78).

Agricultural research

Mrs Dunwoody's report on a Commission proposal for a five-year research programme (Doc. 247/78).

Harmonising national legislation

Mr Rippon's question to the Commission (Doc. 345/78).

Dairy produce price freeze fear

Mr Soury's question to the Commission (Doc. 368/78).

The culling of seals

Mr Dalyell's motion (Doc. 369/78).

Wednesday, 11th October 1978

10.05 a.m. to 10.15 a.m., 11.10 a.m. to 1.40 p.m. and 3.10 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.

EC arms supplies

Socialist Group question (Doc. 337/78).

Summer time

Mr Müller-Hermann's question to Commission and Council (Docs. 281/78 and 282/78).

Camp David

Motion by CD, Socialist, Liberal and Conservative groups (Doc. 372/78/rev.)

Question Time

Questions to the Council and to the Foreign Ministers of the Nine.

Vote

The House agreed: after amendment, to the motion in the report by Mr Albers (Tripartite Conference) (Doc. 326/78); to the motion in the report by Mrs Dunwoody (agricultural research) (Doc. 318/78); to the motion tabled by Mr Dalyell (culling of seals) (Doc. 369/78); and to the motion tabled by group representatives (Camp David) (Doc. 372/78/rev.)

The situation in Lebanon

All-group motion (Doc. 378/78).

The situation in Nicaragua

Socialist and CD motion (Doc. 361/78/rev.)

Energy policy

Motions by Mrs Walz (Doc. 315/78) and Mr Flämig (Doc. 316/78).*

Situation in Iran

Mr Forni's question (Doc. 343/78).

Thursday, 12th October 1978

10.15 a.m. to 1.05 p.m. and 3.05 p.m. to 6.40 p.m.

Rules for aids to the steel industry

Mr Ansquer's report on a Commission proposal for state aids to the steel industry to be brought within a Community framework (Doc. 180/78) and Mr Glinne's question (Doc. 347/78).

Food aid

Mr Lezzi's report (Doc. 320/78) referred back to Committee.

Question Time

Questions to the Commission.

Vote

The House agreed to an all-group motion (Lebanon) (Doc. 378/78), a joint CD-Socialist motion (Nicaragua) (Doc. 361/78/rev.), a motion by Mr Müller-Hermann (summer time) (Doc. 375/78), two motions (energy) by Mrs Walz and Mr Flämig (Docs 315/78 and 316/78) and the motion in Mr Ansquer's report (aid in the steel industry) (Doc. 335/78).

Competition policy

Mr Damseaux's report (Doc. 334/78).

Air traffic control

Mr Noè's motion (Doc. 319/78).

Friday, 13th October 1978

9 a.m. to 11.20 a.m.

Pollution of the sea

Mr Ibrügger's report (Doc. 348/78).

Regional policy

Question by Mr Fuchs and others (Doc. 344/78).

Health and safety in the coal and steel industry

Mr Ellis's report (Doc. 327/78).

Road haulage quota

Mr Albers's report (Doc. 321/78).

Public service in transport

Mr Albers's report (Doc. 322/78).

Tunisian trade unionists

Socialist, CD and Communist motion (Doc. 379/78).

Stateless money

Mr van Aerssen's question (Doc. 341/78).

Vote

The House agreed, after amendment, to the motion in Mr Damseaux's report (competition policy) (Doc. 334/78), Mr Blumenfeld's motion (air traffic control) (Doc. 319/78), to motions in the reports by Mr Ibrügger (safety at sea) (Doc. 348/78), Mr Ellis (safety in mines and the steel industry) (Doc. 327/78) and Mr Albers (road haulage quotas and public service in transport) (Docs 321/78 and 322/78), and to a motion on Tunisian trade unionists (Doc. 379/78).

THE SITTINGS

LUXEMBOURG 23rd – 25th OCTOBER 1978

THE WEEK

The making of a budget 1979

Mr Martin Bangemann (Ge, L), rapporteur on the Community's budget for 1979, summed up Parliament's views on this subject when he said: 'The budget must be made to the measure of the Community and not constrict it in the manner of a straitjacket'. For this reason, he found the Commission's preliminary draft budget calling for 8,730 million pounds to finance the Community's policies in 1979 to be more or less acceptable.

What he found 'absolutely unsatisfactory' was that the Council, in deciding on planned expenditure, had chosen to cut this preliminary draft by 654 million pounds to give a new total of 8,202 million pounds.

Accordingly, on Mr Bangemann's recommendation, the European Parliament concluded a three-day debate on the budget here in Luxembourg this week by calling for it to be restored more or less to its original shape.

The majority of the Members of the European Parliament (over 100 EMP's in each case) voted in support of amendments totalling 535 million pounds. If these amendments were to be accepted by Council, this would give a new total for 1979 of 8,737 million pounds.

In detail, Parliament is calling for more substantial appropriations for the regional fund, social policy, cooperation and development and research, energy, industry and transport.

It now remains for the Council to consider these amendments in the light of this week's debate.

MAIN AMENDMENTS AGREED TO

| <i>Amd. No</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>EUA</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|------------|
| COMMISSION – SECTION III | | |
| 255 | Establishment plan | 1,765,000 |
| 256 | Establishment plan | 1,167,000 |
| 258 | Establishment plan | 1,632,000 |
| 36 | Art.241: Lomé Convention expenditure | 1,100,000 |
| 127 | Chap. 100: Provisional appropriations | 3,050,000 |
| 81 | Item 3141: Research programmes | 4,000,000 |
| 232 | Item 3200: Community technological development projects | 4,000,000 |
| 1 | Item 3210: Prospecting for uranium in Community territory | 6,000,000 |
| 239 | Item 3333: JRC establishments | 2,000,000 |
| 122 | Item 3334: Infrastructure of the JRC | 3,000,000 |
| 241 | Item 3335: Collaboration with industry universities and others | 2,000,000 |
| 7 | Chap. 100: Provisional appropriations: Energy | 1,644,800 |
| 211 | Item 3750: Industrial sectors crises | 8,000,000 |
| 213 | Item 3780: Studies preliminary to the financial measures | 1,000,000 |
| 283 | Item 3781: Financial support – Channel tunnel | 10,000,000 |
| 279 | Item 3853: Surveillance operations | 1,000,000 |
| 278 | Item 3852: Standardization of surveillance craft | 1,000,000 |
| 89 | Art. 383: Community coastguard svce. | 20,000,000 |

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| 280 | Art. 386: | Surveillance of maritime navigation routes | 5,000,000 |
| 281 | Art. 387: | Prevention of pollution of maritime environment | 3,000,000 |
| 243 | Item 3923: | Promotion of language teaching | 1,000,000 |
| 244 | Item 3924: | Pupil exchanges | 2,000,000 |
| 245 | Item 3925: | Exchange of teaching staff | 2,000,000 |
| 44 | Art. 500: | Aid to agricultural and textiles sectors | 21,000,000 |
| 265 & | Item 5010: | Measures in the field of vocational training | 56,000,000 |
| 266 | Item 5011: | Measures to promote employment | 6,000,000 |
| 46 | Art. 502: | Measures for handicapped | 1,400,000 |
| 272 | Art. 505: | Measures to help women | 7,000,000 |
| 267 | Item 5100: | Measures in the field of vocational training | 102,000,000 |
| 268 | Item 5101: | Measures to promote employment of young people | 6,000,000 |
| 269 | Item 5110: | Measures in the field of vocational training | 10,500,000 |
| 72 | Chap. 100: | Provisional appropriations: Industrial conversion | 15,000,000 |
| 12 | Art. 550: | Community measures in support of national regional policies | 198,000,000 |
| 217 | Art. 560: | Specific Community measures | 35,000,000 |
| 218 | Art. 590: | Aid to disaster victims in the Community | 5,000,000 |

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| 219 | Art. 800: | Agricultural structures improvement | 40,000,000 |
| 220 | Item 8210: | Marketing and processing of agricultural products | 20,000,000 |
| 221 | Art. 841: | Public svcs. improvement | 15,000,000 |
| 48/rev | Art. 843: | Forestry measures – Mediterranean regions | 16,000,000 |
| 252 | Item 9201: | Food aid in cereals: 1979 | 48,488,000 |
| 259 | Item 9211: | 1979 skimmed milk powder programme | 29,260,000 |
| 261 | Item 9213: | 1979 butteroil programme | 13,786,000 |
| 100/rev | Item 9250: | Community food aid refunds for current financial year | 31,300,000 |
| | Item 9251: | Community food aid refunds under previous programmes | |
| 102/rev | Item 9270: | Skim milk powder refunds for current financial year | 25,400,000 |
| | Item 9271: | Butteroil refunds for current financial year | |
| | Item 9272: | Skim milk powder refunds under previous programmes | |
| | Item 9273: | Butteroil refunds under previous programmes | |
| 103/rev | Item 9280: | Community food aid refunds (sugar) current financial year | 1,200,000 |
| 222 | Art. 930: | Financial cooperation with non-associated developing countries | 10,620,000 |
| 224 | Art. 945: | Schemes redeveloping countries carried out by NGO's | 3,000,000 |

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| 263 | Art. 946a: | Energy cooperation with non-oil-producing developing countries | 3,000,000 |
| 226 | Art. 950: | Aid to disaster victims in developing & non-member countries | 2,000,000 |
| 229 | Chap. 100: | Provisional appropriations | 10,000,000 |

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