

European Parliament

Information

The Sittings

February 1979



THE SITTINGS

LUXEMBOURG 12th – 16th FEBRUARY 1979

THE WEEK

One thing that has been bothering Parliament in Luxembourg this week – where there was a full complement of Members despite the weather – has been what Member States do with Community money. Only Italy, it seems, advertises the fact when development projects have regional fund backing. Which prompted several EMPs to ask whether Member States do use regional fund money in addition to their own cash, as they are supposed to, or whether they use it instead of national money.

Winnie Ewing told the House of a Scottish firm actually moved to appeal to the Court because, the firm felt, the UK Government had appropriated money it should have received itself. And if uncertainties about the regional fund were not enough, Ralph Howell raised the case of emergency aid granted to Norfolk to help repair flood damage: the damage was done in January 1978 but Norfolk had still not seen anything of the Community's 'emergency' flood relief money thirteen months after the event.

The other thing bothering Members has been the Council's decision rate. Commission President Roy Jenkins told the House that the Council had adopted 645 out of 747 proposals in 1977 and 592 out of 746 in 1978. But Senator Yeats pointed out that there were still 278 decisions pending before the Council, some going back to 1968.

Monday evening (5.15pm to 8.10pm)

The European Parliament was today petitioned to back regional fund finance for a natural gas pipeline between Scotland and Northern Ireland. The request, from the Shop Stewards Committee for Natural Gas for Northern Ireland, will be considered in committee.

Regional fund aid was Parliament's main talking point tonight and all speakers agreed the fund had failed in its main task of helping restore the balance between the different regions of the Community. Indeed the gap between rich and poor regions had grown wider and, if this were not enough, the value of the RF resources, in real terms, had grown smaller.

Tuesday morning (10am to 1.30pm)

Addressing the European Parliament this morning, Commission President Roy Jenkins stressed the need for the Nine to act together if they were to exploit their strength and not be at the mercy of events at present beyond their control:

'We have seen, he said, that major economic upheavals outside the Community can profoundly affect our lives and plans. Equally, our own freedom of manoeuvre to influence events is circumscribed by our economic and social weakness.' He expressed optimism about the prospects for setting up the European Monetary System, the key to the Commission's strategy, but he was clearly still a bit worried about its chances.

Tuesday evening (3pm to 7.50pm)

Main item of business this afternoon was a debate on Lord Bruce's report on accidents at sea and the pollution which often results. There was unanimous support in the House for the motion, which called for enforcement of international maritime conventions as the key to eliminating the risks caused by sub-standard shipping. Other debates this afternoon: opinion polls, the Adams case and fisheries policy.

Wednesday morning (10.15am to 1pm)

Parliament discussed EC relations with the ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand) this morning and found itself facing a familiar dilemma: how far should one group of developing countries be given preference over another?

And on a related topic – textile imports from the developing countries – the question of protectionism inevitably arose. While calling for some regulation of imports, most EMPs agreed that protectionism was self-defeating. 'We must help the poorer areas of the world to help themselves', Tom Normanton said, and that meant keeping our markets open to their goods.

Wednesday evening (3pm to 6.25pm)

Parliament got little satisfaction out of the Council this evening on the question of the seat, Mr Pierre Bernard-Reymond being unwilling to be drawn about a French newspaper report of secret talks between the governments of France and Luxembourg over the seat of the European Parliament. He did not anticipate the issue being resolved before direct elections but added 'who shall live, shall see'.

Two other points: fears that the German statute of limitations may mean Nazi war criminals escaping prosecution and the threat to EC raw materials supplies through the backing the USSR is giving to terrorist movements.

Thursday morning (10am to 1.15pm)

In this morning's resumed debate on Mr Jenkins's annual state-of-the-Community report, there was a good deal of criticism about what the Community was failing to do to solve its problems. But most of the criticism was directed at the Council, particularly over energy.

In a brief debate on steel, Mr Laurain argued the case for such measures as the 35-hour week to offset the social impact of the Davignon Plan for steel. The 35-hour week, he said, would save 8,000 jobs in Lorraine alone. But such measures would only be effective and fair if all Nine introduced them together.

Thursday evening (3pm to 8pm, 9pm to 11.45pm)

In January of last year, floods caused considerable damage in East and South East England, in Scotland and on the French coast. An appeal for help was addressed to the Commission and aid of £680,000 was granted to East and South East England, £340,000 to Scotland and £270,000 to France. But, said Mr Howell this evening, no actual money has yet been received in one of the worst affected areas: his own constituency of Norfolk. And this was 13 months after the disaster had occurred. He said this made a nonsense of the concept of 'emergency' aid and urged the Commission to enlist the help of the Court of Auditors to investigate what had happened to the money in question.

Friday morning (9am to 11.15am)

Commissioner Richard Burke said he supported Parliament's initiative in proposing an appeal to Pakistan for clemency in the case of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, under sentence of death. The Commission was meeting this morning to consider action.

MONDAY, 12th February 1979

Regional Fund 1977

Mr Delmôtte's report (Doc. 558/78)

The European Community's first regional fund ran for three years, from 1975 to 1977. It was endowed with resources of 1,300 million EUA (£879m) of which 1,289m EUA (£872m) was actually used up. Its purpose was to help redress the balance between the Community's richer and poorer regions, one of the guiding principles of the Treaty of Rome.

However, as regional committee rapporteur Fernand Delmotte (Be, S) pointed out in his review of the fund's record in 1977, the gap between rich and poor was growing not narrowing. As Socialist spokesman Lord Bruce of Donington (UK) noted, the gap in 1974 was 5:1; today it was 6:1. Comparing Ireland with Germany, as Christian Democrat spokesman Richie Ryan (Ir) did, the relative imbalance had grown from 53.8 : 124.4 in 1970 to a ratio of 50.5 to 140.5 in 1978.

Lord Bruce added that the resources available to the fund to help in closing this gap were declining, in real terms, rather than growing. It was hardly a formula for peace and harmony, European Conservative spokesman Elaine Kellett-Bowman pointed out, to have fat cats and thin cats together in the same yard.

Other criticisms

The lack of publicity given to the use of EC regional fund money, except in Italy, was criticised as was the way some Member States appeared to use RF money as a substitute for national funds rather than in addition to them.

Winnie Ewing drew attention too, to the inconsistencies of RF operations. Why had only seven out of fifty applications for aid from Scotland met with success? And Russell Johnston asked what the actual success rate was with applications throughout the Community.

Several speakers, including Charles McDonald (Ir, CD), stressed the need for the fund to widen its operations to include backing for tourist operations, in the midlands and on the East coast of Ireland for example. And for the fund to include a non-quota section of some significance to enable the Community to intervene more widely.

But if the regional disparity problem was the Community's greatest challenge – and Commission President Jenkins's comment that disparities could undermine the Community was quoted by several speakers – Tom Ellis (UK, S) took the view that this intractable problem was also the Community's greatest opportunity even if, so far, the history of regional policies

has so far been 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.'

In reply: on additionality, Mr Giolitti admitted for the Commission that 'We haven't succeeded in overcoming this difficulty.' Calling this the main issue to emerge in the debate, he said the Commission was trying to broaden its direct contacts with regional authorities. Denying that the Commission had been 'timid' or 'terrified' in the face of the Council's attitude, he said the latter reflected a balance of forces between the Member States, and this was a problem which went beyond the regional fund and the regional policy.

He warned against thinking of the fund as the only instrument of regional policy, citing the regional dimension of the common agricultural policy. On the MacDougall report (which argued that the EC's budget would need resources equal to 2 – 2,5 % of the EC's gdp to restore the balance between regions) which gave 'constant food for thought', he stressed the way it showed that the inadequacy of the regional fund only reflected a general inadequacy in Community finance available to fight regional imbalances.

Mr Delmotte tabled a motion regretting that the size of the fund is 'totally inadequate'; calling for respect for the 'additionality' principle, under which fund money should be used to supplement, not replace national aids; deploring the lack of proper publicity given to regional fund projects; stressing the need for the fund to operate within coherent regional development programmes and recommending tighter Commission controls over the use of RF resources are put to.

Subject to which, Mr Delmotte's last words in the debate were that Members of Parliament should support the Commission by criticising their own governments where necessary.

The House agreed to the motion.

TUESDAY, 13th February 1979

Mr Jenkins reports

Under Article 143 of the Rome Treaty the European Parliament is required to discuss 'in open session the annual general report submitted to it by the Commission'. The present report is the twelfth in the series (ie since the executives merged) and the third to be submitted by Roy Jenkins.

The main theme of Mr Jenkins's 42 minute address to Parliament this morning was the need for the Nine to act together if they were to solve their own problems, particularly unemployment, and bring a positive influence to bear on the development of world trade.

Loss of momentum

What worried Mr Jenkins was that the Community had suddenly lost momentum and he was clearly thinking here of the European Monetary System, still to be launched, and of the common agricultural policy, still bedevilled by the problem of monetary compensatory amounts.

World trade

The Community had a developing role in world trade and Mr Jenkins saw negotiations now in progress as vital to our future, especially the GATT talks and discussions for a new Lomé Convention to come into force in 1980.

Looking at the Community's responsibilities in world trade, Mr Jenkins argued that economic summits were helpful, if only because they made world leaders think internationally. He also praised the work done by the Community's own summits in the European Council. Their impetus was badly needed.

Paperwork at frontiers

The Community still had many problems to solve. The internal market had still to yield its full benefits. The Commission would be presenting a new five-year programme to promote a far freer flow of goods over the Community's internal frontiers – where there was still too much paperwork at present.

The Community also had to reduce its dependence on imports of energy from its present level of 56 % by 1985.

Farm surpluses greater

Mr Jenkins reminded the House that agriculture absorbed only 8 % of the EC's workforce and contributed only 4 % to the EC's total gross domestic product. And he wondered whether it was wise for the Community to be so preoccupied with one particular sector.

The Commission's ideas on price policy were gaining acceptance, thanks in no small measure to the influence of Parliament, but even so the situation and prospects on the agricultural markets were worse today rather than better than a year ago. Efforts to restore a proper balance had to succeed, as had efforts to phase out mcas.

Stronger democratic base

Looking at these problems, Mr Jenkins welcomed the prospect of the direct election of the European Parliament in June. It could, he said, significantly strengthen the democratic base of the Community's institutions.

Unity vital

Looking ahead, Mr Jenkins concluded with the words 'As we approach what I believe will be the difficult, certainly challenging, and possibly dangerous Eighties for the Community and the world, internal unity will be of increasing importance ...'

Too little about jobs

In the ensuing debate, Socialist leader Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge) expressed disappointment that Mr Jenkins had said so little about jobs. Equally, he asked why the Commission could not concentrate its efforts on a few areas where it had the capacity to make an impact. He was also disturbed by the lack of any reference to the human rights aspect of the Lomé II negotiations.

Secretariat of Council

Christian Democrat spokesman Harry Notenboom (Du) took Mr Jenkins to task for another reason: its failure to stand up to the Council. It seemed at times more like a Council secretariat than an executive answerable to Parliament. Mr Notenboom also warned the Commission about the consequences of trying to combine price freezes and co-responsibility levies, if mcas were to be phased out in the immediate future. This would not result in reasonable incomes for farmers.

Liberal spokesman Colette Flesch (Lu) shared the Commission's concern about the Nine's failure to act together. It was surely surprising that the lessons of the Community's energy dependence had still not been learned.

European Conservative leader Geoffrey Rippon was encouraged by what Mr Jenkins had said about the prospects for overhauling the CAP and he welcomed his emphasis on rural development. This could remove one strain.

European identity

But the real need was to develop among the European public at large a sense of belonging to the Community, a European identity. And here he had some sharp comments about the Nine's failure even to agree on a common passport. However, there was some hope, to the extent that the Council listened to the wise words Mr Jenkins had spoken today.

Communist spokesman Altiero Spinelli was concerned with the whole problem of the transfer of resources, particularly through the regional fund. And here he defended the well-known position of the European Parliament on this aspect of the Community's budget. What were the Commission's intentions now?

European Progressive Democrat spokesman Kai Nyborg (Da) said he would welcome the stability that the European Monetary System could bring; it would be a spur to investment and expansion.

Replying to the debate, Mr Jenkins turned first to Mr Fellermaier, whose remarks had been the most critical. Mr Jenkins insisted on the importance the Commission did attach to social policy, while stressing this could not, on its own, solve the problem of unemployment. A new impetus to demand 'on a historic scale' was needed. The search for such a stimulus dominated the Commission's thinking.

Mr Jenkins hoped there would be a reference to human rights in the new Lomé Convention. Turning to the institutional points raised by Miss Flesch, Mr Notenboom and Mr Rippon, Mr Jenkins conceded there was a problem of balance. And he felt there should be some formal link between the European Council and the European Parliament. As for EMS and mcas, this was, he said, 'an essentially solvable problem'.

Letter to three countries

On the budget, the Commission had written to the three Member States which had not paid in their full contributions.

Help for Calabria

Communist and Christian Democrat questions to the Commission (Docs 532 and 601/78).

Calabria is the Community's poorest region. It has the lowest per capita incomes and the highest migrant outflow. To help the area, the Italian Government planned port facilities and a steel complex at Gioia Tauro (midway between Reggio Calabria and Cosenza) which would have created thousands of jobs. The Commission said 'no' to more steel-making and the Italian Government gave up the idea. This morning both Christian Democrat and Communist EMPs asked: 'What is the Community going to do for Calabria?'

In reply Mr Giolitti said the Commission was aware of the problems facing Calabria. The Community had extended aid, particularly to projects to develop infrastructures, the main weakness of the area. Mr Giolitti then spoke in detail about the ways in which the Community was helping, quoting projects and figures.

Aid worth 35.9m EUA (£24.3m) had been extended to the area, including 33.8m EUA (£22.9m) for investments in infrastructure and 2.1m EUA (£1.4m) for industrial development. 199 out of the 221 investment projects which had received Community backing involved infrastructures in mountain areas.

And, he added, in the four years of the Regional Fund's operation Calabria had received 6.8 % of the aid going to Southern Italy.

The emphasis of these investments had been on improving the road links, especially in the least-favoured mountain areas, hydraulic engineering and the building of an international airport at Lamezia Terme.

Aid had also been extended to Calabria under the Guidance Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and had been worth 15.9m EUA (£10.7m) over the years 1964 to 1977. This represented some 7 % of total aid from this fund to the Mezzogiorno.

Similarly, social fund aid had been granted as follows: 5,726m lira in 1975, 860m in 1977 and 6,158m in 1978.

European Investment Bank loans between 1975 and 1978 had been worth 122m EUA (£82.7m).

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

Pensions of EC officials (Gwyneth Dunwoody)

Mr Tugendhat said that the plans to pay pensions in EUA were being postponed, but exchange-rates were being updated and the effect would be to reduce the amounts received (in national currencies) by pensioners in the UK, Ireland or Italy. He rejected claims that this was unfair – the 'currency loophole' had brought unfair profits to certain people, and these were now being eliminated.

Telephoning the Commission (Tom Normanton)

Mr Tugendhat agreed that it was sometimes difficult to contact the Commission by telephone. The Belgian authorities had undertaken to provide a new switchboard, but this would take three years to install. There could be no justification, however, for employing additional switchboard staff. In a supplementary, Mr Normanton made a plea for improved communications overall between the Parliament's three places of work.

Coordinating EC aid funds (Willem Albers)

Mr Giolitti said he had been asked to look into possibilities of closer coordination of the EC's various funds two years ago, and some progress had been made since then.

Pharmaceuticals commission (Bob Edwards)

Mr Vouel said the Commission intended to set up a new committee to deal with price discrepancies for pharmaceutical drugs that existed in different member states.

Land ownership (James Scott-Hopkins)

There were some restrictions on land purchases by foreigners in Ireland and Italy, Mr Giolitti said. Mr Scott-Hopkins suggested that such restrictions might in fact be more widespread than the Commissioner had indicated. Mrs Ewing felt there might be a need to introduce restrictions in the EC to prevent land speculation by non-EC nationals.

Malta information office (James Spicer)

The Commission was not at present in a position – for staff and financial reasons – to set up an EC information office in Malta, Mr Haferkamp said.

Wrecks and spills

Lord Bruce's report (Doc. 555/78)

The Amoco Cadiz disaster prompted Parliament's regional committee to hold a hearing in Paris in June 1978 into ways of preventing accidents at sea. Committee chairman Lord Bruce of Donington introduced a report summing up the conclusions reached. The report was designed, he said, to focus Parliament's attention on the problem afresh.

The motion in the report insisted that effective enforcement of international conventions remains the key to eliminating the risks caused by sub-standard shipping. Other points: study should be given to setting up a system of 'ship traffic control' in appropriate EC waters, minimum standards for insurance purposes should be laid down, 'ports of refuge' should be established where disabled vessels could be taken, and research done into more effective ways of dealing with oil spills.

On this point, Lord Bruce pointed out that oil slicks often disappeared and people thought the danger was over. But unless spills were mechanically collected, we should find ourselves 'slowly poisoning the oceans'.

Mr Prescott (UK), for the Socialist group, agreed that the problems of safety at sea and pollution were better dealt with at international rather than national level. The issue was not merely an environmental one, but had a human dimension also – too many lives were lost at sea.

Effective solutions

Christian Democrat spokesman Karl Fuchs (Ge) stressed the urgency of finding effective solutions. 'We must not, through inaction, mortgage the well-being of future generations', he said.

For the European Conservatives, John Osborn (UK) drew attention to the fact that the states which supplied 'flags of convenience' were usually inca-

pable of enforcing international standards. So the Community should prohibit passage to ships not in compliance with such standards – particularly in the Channel and in the North Sea.

Protegene Veronesi (It), for the Communist group, said his group endorsed the Bruce report. 'We cannot control the wind and waves, he said, but we have a duty to do all humanly possible to prevent accidents'.

Other speakers in the debate were unanimous about the need for firm and immediate action. Winnie Ewing (UK, Ind) thought insurance companies should bear greater responsibility for the maintenance of minimum standards. Lord Kennet (UK, S) felt that wider application of port-state jurisdiction could improve the situation. Luigi Noé (It, CD) called for improved mechanical and technical measures to prevent accidents.

Jim Spicer (UK, EC) condemned the 'cowboy operators' who cleaned their tanks at sea and polluted coastlines. And Ruairi Brugha (Ir, EPD) felt that EC states should impose minimum standards on all ships docking in their ports.

Community action

Replying for the Commission, Mr Giolitti said the Community had an important role to play internationally in ensuring observance of standards, and the Commission would press EC member states to ratify IMCO conventions quickly.

The House agreed to Lord Bruce's motion.

Opinion polls

Mr Pintat's question to the Commission (Doc. 598/78)

Further to the Commission's recent 'Eurobarometer' poll on voting intentions in the European elections, Jean-François Pintat (Fr), for the Liberals, asked the Commission whether it should not put the findings in such polls to Parliament before publishing them.

In reply, Roy Jenkins said that findings of 'Eurobarometer' surveys on whatever subject were always forwarded to the Parliament in advance of publication, but in the case of the poll on voting intentions there had been a leak to the press. Subsequently, the Commission had not been satisfied with the reliability of the poll, then already five months old, and had never officially 'put its imprint on it'.

Mr Jenkins regretted the leak and said there would be no new Commission poll on voting intentions before June. On future polls – and he was inclined to question their advisability – Parliament would be consulted in advance with a view to agreeing a code.

The Adam case

Mr Prescott's question to the Commission (Doc. 612/78)

Acting for the Socialist Group, John Prescott (UK) put a series of further questions to the Commission about the case of a Mr Adams, a former employee of Hoffman-La-Roche who was convicted of a breach of Swiss security for divulging information about the firm's activities to the European Commission.

Mr Prescott reminded the House that the European Court of Justice had just endorsed the Commission's action against Hoffman-La-Roche.

In reply, Vice-President Haferkamp said that the Commission could not comment on the validity or otherwise of the Swiss judgment. Nor had the Swiss authorities given any assurances that Community citizens would not be tried on similar charges in future. The Commission had no intention of terminating the EC-Switzerland trade agreement in the light of the Adams case.

Mr Adams had chosen his own lawyers, Mr Haferkamp said, and the Commission had contributed SFr 100,000 towards the court costs. He added that Mr Adams had expressed no wish to refer his case to the European Court of Human Rights.

The House agreed to Mr Prescott's motion on this question (Doc. 622/78).

Fisheries policy

Mr Hughes' report (Doc. 608/78)

Mark Hughes (UK, S) has put down a motion summing up the views of the agriculture committee on fisheries policy. This was discussed at the January session and was reintroduced this evening after further consideration in committee.

Although John Corrie (UK, EC), who introduced the report in Mr Hughes' absence, said that the entire document had been accepted by the agriculture committee, Mr Nyborg (Da, EPD) felt it was biased against continental interests. 'It's a very British document' he said. He thought the motion should be rejected. And Mr Müller-Hermann (Ge, CD) objected to point 12 of the motion calling for a ban on factory ships.

But Winnie Ewing (UK, Ind) welcomed the report: it took a realistic view of the problems affecting the UK, and Scotland in particular. If a fisheries policy agreement were not reached soon, she said, the UK would take unilateral conservation action. Mrs Kellett-Bowman (UK, EC) thought the Community should finance exploration of new fishing grounds.

The House agreed to Mr Hughes's motion after amendment.

WEDNESDAY, 14th February 1979

EC-Asean links

CD questions to Commission and Council (Docs 587 and 588/78)

In a question to Commission and Council a number of Christian Democrat members asked for details of how the Community intended to help the ASEAN states (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand), both as regards trade and in contributing to the political stability of the area.

Council President Pierre Bernard-Reymond said that the EC-ASEAN ministerial meeting in November 1978 had agreed to expand political, economic and cultural contacts. He declined to spell out the aims of a cooperation agreement with ASEAN, but said a first round of exploratory talks on such a pact had already been held by the Commission, and the Council would consider the question of objectives when it received the Commission's proposals. He hoped that the Djakarta conference on industrial cooperation later this year would help in the promotion of closer economic contacts.

For the Commission, Vice-President Haferkamp said the first round of exploratory talks was held in December 1979. They would continue in early March, and it was hoped to get a proposal on negotiating guidelines to the Council before the summer recess. It was desirable that a new cooperation agreement should be signed by the end of 1979.

Recalling that the Commission was due to set up an office in Bangkok, Mr Haferkamp called for the establishment of contacts between the two sides of industry in the EC and ASEAN.

Speakers in the debate welcomed the Community's initiative in seeking closer ties with ASEAN. However, this ought not to be at the expense of other areas of the third world, or of the Lomé countries in particular, said Mr Giovanni Bersani (It, CD). On the same point, Michele Cifarelli (It, L) thought that the EC's relations with the ACP states should not be exclusive.

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (UK, EC) called for special treatment for the 'old Commonwealth' countries of the area, and for Indonesia, a former Dutch colony. Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (UK, S) described the Community's attitude as 'ambivalent' – we wanted raw materials from the third world, but were unprepared to allow free access to their manufactured products.

Textile import curbs

Mr Cunningham's question to the Council (Doc. 595/78).

George Cunningham (UK, S), for the development committee, asked the Council how the EC's bilateral agreements to limit textile imports were working out.

Replying, Mr Bernard-Reymond said the agreements, which dated back only to 1977, had not been operating long enough to permit a detailed analysis of their effects. First statistics would be in during March 1979 and a full answer would have to wait until then.

Speakers drew attention to the difficulties posed to the EC's textile industry by cheap imports, but recognised the need to avert recourse to protectionism. 'Regulation of trade', as Tom Normanton (UK, EC) put it, was a different matter, and could help promote growth and trade for all concerned.

Ruairi Brugha (Ir, EPD) pointed to the 11,500 unemployed textile workers in Ireland. And Alan Fitch (UK, S), against protectionism in principle, said some help had to be given to the EC's domestic industry. What would happen once China entered the textiles market? What was needed was a long-term strategy to deal with the problem.

EC driving licence

Mr Seefeld's question to Council and Commission (Docs 593 and 594/78).

Why the delay in agreeing on a uniform Community driving licence, Horst Seefeld (Ge, S), for the transport committee, asked Commission and Council. The principle had been agreed to back in January 1977, but there had been scant progress since then. At present, many EC citizens taking up residence in another EC state had to obtain a new licence – this was surely against the spirit, if not the letter, of the Rome Treaty.

Replying, Council President Mr Bernard-Reymond and Commissioner Burke pointed to the difficulties involved, especially as regards the need for common provisions on driving tests, age limits, traffic rules, etc. But the Council would be discussing the matter again at its meeting in March.

EC road haulage quota

Mr Seefeld's question (Doc. 591/78)

Several delegations had been unable to agree to Parliament's recommendation that road haulage quotas be increased by 100 %, Mr Bernard-Reymond said.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Council

Cost of EC and USSR farm policies (Ralph Howell)

Mr Bernard-Reymond, Council President, said it was not for the Council to comment on the USSR's farm policy. Whereupon several EMPs including Mr Howell himself, Mrs Kellett-Bowman, Mr L'Estrange and Mr Scott-Hopkins took advantage of the opportunity to stress the merits of the CAP.

Discussions about the seat (Messrs. Fellermaier, Dankert and Seefeld)

Mr Bernard-Reymond said he had no knowledge of any talks in progress between the governments of France and Luxembourg on the seat of the European Parliament. Pressed on this point he said he thought it unlikely this issue would be resolved before June 7th but added 'who shall live, shall see'.

Polyurethane foam (Ron Brown)

Mr Bernard-Reymond said the Council would look at proposals from the Commission for dealing with the fire risk attendant on the use of this foam. Mr Jim Spicer urged him to look into standard rules for hotel fire risk precautions too. He had had no success in pressing the Commission to act, he said.

Influence of multinationals (Bob Edwards)

Mr Edwards was unhappy to hear Mr Bernard-Reymond say the Council did not comment on statements, articles or works. Mr Edwards was very concerned at a booklet reporting attempts by multinationals to exercise improper influence over decision-taking in the Communities.

Regional fund grants (Mrs Winnie Ewing)

Mr Bernard-Reymond said this was a matter for the Member States. Mrs Ewing was very concerned at the way regional fund grants are being handled in the United Kingdom

Butter subsidies for pensioners (Thomas Nolan)

Mr Nolan urged that pensioners be brought within the scope of the cheap butter scheme. Mr Bernard-Reymond said this was for Member States. Mrs Dunwoody suggested halve the price for everyone. Mr Bernard-Reymond said the Council had to keep to the rules.

Backing for South Africa

Communist Members asked the Council to say where they stood on the EC's de facto support for the racist régime in South Africa, particularly as regards the setting up of a French Chamber of Commerce in Johannesburg on 28th November 1978.

In reply, Mr Bernard-Reymond said that relations between Member States and South Africa were not a matter for the Council. Mr Bordu had drawn attention to what he called the exploitation of the black peoples in South Africa by European firms taking advantage of low labour costs there. Mr Jim Spicer (UK, EC) protested at this and suggested it was unhelpful to raise this issue here at this time. But Bob Edwards (UK, S), Mark Hughes (UK, S) and Pierre Lagorce (Fr, S) all came out strongly against any countenancing of South Africa's régime, which they regard as frankly racist.

Slave labour

It was time for those who believed in human freedom to 'get up and be counted', Bob Edwards (UK, S) told Parliament. Denouncing slave labour in the South African coal-mines, he cited gaol deaths and the deportation of strikers to the bush, away from their families, as evidence of the inhumanity of apartheid. Studying the register of South African apprentices not long ago, he found not a single young black person on it.

Mark Hughes (UK, S) referred to the work of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on which he served, which examined pay and working conditions of black employees of British firms in South Africa. Saying the committee had been 'scandalized' by the evidence it heard, he called for a code of conduct with 'teeth'. The Commission and Council had 'connived' at the inactivity of companies in this sphere.

Closing the debate, Mr Bernard-Reymond said the Nine had actively criticised racism in South Africa. Putting on a French Government hat, he said the French Chamber of Commerce was still only at the project stage and was in any case a private initiative for which his government could not be held responsible.

Anti-Semitism

French Communist Members asked the Council to take a stand against racism, anti-semitism and neo-Nazism.(Doc. 585/78).

Gérard Bordu (Fr. CA) attacked the 'nostalgia for Nazism' which was erupting in different parts of Europe. Contrary to post-war agreements and some national laws, SS-units and other groups had formed to revive the militaristic spirit of the Hitler era. While not wishing to 'pillory' any single

people or state, he urged that the Bundestag be petitioned to cancel the statute of limitations which would make war criminals immune from prosecution in West Germany after the end of 1979.

Mr Bernard-Reymond, for the Council, said the Nine governments followed activities in this area with close interest, especially where anti-semitism and other forms of racism were involved. They would always speak out against any such tendencies.

Pierre Krieg (Fr), for the European Progressive Democrats, asked if the Council reply had not been 'a little too diplomatic'. Regretting that forty years after the outbreak of the Second World War, problems which had existed then were still not resolved, he called for a tougher attitude and supported Mr Bordu's view on the statute of limitations.

Holocaust

Piet Dankert (DU, S) disagreed there had been a mushrooming of neo-Nazi manifestations. Thanks to films like 'Holocaust', people in Europe were now much more aware of the dangers of racism.

Gustave Ansard (Fr, CA), who greeted former Resistance leaders listening to the debate in the Visitors Gallery, said it would be intolerable if the German statute of limitations made it impossible to prosecute Nazi criminals after 31st December 1979.

Jean-Marie Caro (Fr, CD) shared Mr Dankert's view about how valuable it was for people to know the facts. But there could be no mercy for the Nazi criminals. And he spoke here of all the people in Alsace, Luxembourg and Belgium who had been drafted against their will to fight in the German army during the war.

War veteran Pierre Lagorce (Fr, S) said that he did sense a recrudescence of nazism and urged the EC not to tolerate racism of any kind.

Hellmut Sieglerschmidt (Ge, S) agreed that it would be intolerable if the statute of limitations meant Nazi criminals still at large were to escape prosecution.

Sir Geoffrey de Freitas (UK, S) and Socialist colleagues put down a motion urging the Member States to sign the 1974 European convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitation to crimes against humanity and war crimes and to take all political and legal precautions against the entry into force of a statute of limitation in those cases.

The House agreed to Sir Geoffrey's motion

Threat to EC's raw materials supplies

Mr Jahn's question (Doc. 602/78).

Hans-Edgar Jahn (Ge, CD) voiced a widely-felt anxiety about the backing the USSR is giving to régimes whose existence could be seen as a threat to the West. He referred to the three million people killed by the Soviet-backed forces that had overrun Cambodia, the plight of the boat people, the troubles in the Persian Gulf, and the civil war in Ethiopia. Could not the Nine act together to defend their interests?

Mr Bernard-Reymond said unfortunately time had not permitted him to ascertain the views of his colleagues, though it was true to say they were aware of the seriousness of the issues raised.

Lord Bessborough (UK, EC) underlined the points made by Mr Jahn, drawing attention, in particular, to the way the USSR was backing such organisations as SWAPO and the terrorists in Zimbabwe. He reminded the House that underlying this Soviet activity lay a threat to the raw materials supplies of the West. And he quoted Leonid Brezhnev's comment (quoted in *Le Figaro*) that he intended to bring Europe to its bended knees for raw materials supplies.

THURSDAY, 15th February 1979

The EC and its prospects

In the resumed debate on the Commission's Twelfth General report, Antoine Porcu (Fr, CA) said the workers seemed to come last in the policies the Community was pursuing. He spoke of how hard small farms were being hit by the CAP and warned that the enlargement of the Community should not be taken for granted.

Mrs Winnie Ewing (UK, Ind) said she thought there was a gut reaction in favour of EC institutions despite the anger felt, in Scotland for example, over fisheries policy, oil and the lot of hill farmers. This reaction, she argued, must be turned to advantage: it was not inspiring to hear of nothing but a 'Common Market'; to hear it suggested the Nine should become a power bloc; to be confronted with food surpluses; to have no acceptable arrangements for fisheries.

William Albers (Du, S) said the Commission gave the impression of having a foot on the brake, of being disconcerted by the delays over EMS. He assured Mr Jenkins of his support in its bid for greater monetary efforts in social policy.

Mrs Hanna Walz thought the energy problem was the biggest challenge facing the Community in 1979. It was disturbing to see oil use rise and coal use fall, she said.

Good news for small firms

Charles Fletcher-Cooke (UK, EC) welcomed Mr Jenkins's comments on the internal market, particularly the promise to make proposals for improving the flow of goods. This was good news for small business people, especially as the strength of the customs services was now greater than ten years ago. Could Mr Jenkins say more about these proposals?

Ruairi Brughha (Ir, EPD) blamed the Council, especially the big four or big two, for the EC's loss of momentum. Both he and Ron Brown (UK, S) agreed with Mrs Walz in urging action on energy policy. On the CAP Mr Brughha said it had to amount to more than selling cheap butter to Russia. But his main criticism was of the way the regional fund was being handled and the lack of information about the regional implications of enlargement.

Mr Brown described the Council's performance on energy as appalling. He quoted the list of energy policy decisions the Council still had to make, many of which had been pending for a long time.

No shortage of platitudes

There had been no shortage of platitudes, but too few decisions. Could Mr Jenkins not have argued this case more forcefully?

Luigi Noè (It, CD) was equally unenthusiastic about the energy policy sections of Mr Jenkins's report.

Schelto Patijn (Du, S) spoke of the Community's responsibility towards the developing countries: for increasing their purchasing power, for making sure the GATT negotiations came out well for them, for the countries outside the Lomé Convention.

Maurice Dewulf (Be, CD) reacted violently to what Mr Jenkins had said about the CAP: it had sounded too like a British Labour view. And he accused him of 'ambiguity' over agriculture. There had to be balance in the CAP but the ideas being advanced by the Commission looked unlikely to produce it.

Parochial outlook

Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD) said his aim was not to criticise the Commission: Europe's loss of momentum was due to the parochial outlook of the national governments. But why had Mr Jenkins said so little about food aid – how could it be given to Cuba, for example, or Vietnam?

Ralph Howell (UK, EC) told Mr Jenkins he was heading for failure over the CAP. Mr Gundelach had no worthwhile idea how to contain milk production. Co-responsibility would fail because it could not be policed. The answer was production quotas.

In reply Mr Jenkins was surprised at Mr Porcu's arguments against enlargement. He agreed with Mrs Ewing that 'Community' was a better term than Common Market.

Turning to Mr Albers, he apologised for saying so little in his 42 minute speech about unemployment. The Commission's aim was greater growth through a series of measures, including EMS, new loan facilities and so to increase employment. And he mentioned other measures planned.

On energy, he shared Mr Brown's dismay at the Council's failure to take decisions. He agreed with Mr Noè that there was no future without nuclear energy. But a big effort was needed to win public acceptance.

Commenting on the Council's decision rate, Mr Jenkins said it had adopted 645 out of 747 proposals in 1977 and 592 out of 746 in 1978.

On the internal market, Mr Jenkins described proposals for streamlining trade flows. He agreed with Mr Patijn's comments on developing the purchasing power of the third world – it was in the interest of the EC too. He agreed too that one should not forget the non-associates but the aid to the Lomé countries must be big enough to have a worthwhile impact.

On agriculture, Mr Jenkins said something had to be done about surpluses. In reply to Mr Brugha he agreed the EC had lost momentum at the end of 1978 through the delays with EMS – which had called for very difficult decisions by Ireland and Italy. But great progress had been made over the last twelve months.

Steel policy

Mr Laurain's report (Doc. 603/78)

Social committee rapporteur Jean Laurain (Fr, S) argued the case for a 35-hour week, the introduction of a fifth shift, retirement at 55 and the abolition of overtime as ways of offsetting the social impact of steel policy measures.

He also urged that no one should be made redundant in the steel industry until alternative jobs had been found. But to be both fair and effective all the Nine had to introduce these measures together.

35-hour week

The 35-hour week alone would save 8,000 jobs in Lorraine where 30,000 steel jobs had already been lost.

For the Council, Mr Bernard-Reymond said he sympathised. He would acquaint his colleagues with Mr Laurain's comments.

Mr Laurain tabled a motion calling for: immediate action to protect employees and their families and special arrangements to ensure no steel workers are made redundant colleagues with Mr Laurain's comments.

Mr Laurain tabled a motion calling for: immediate action to protect employees and their families and special arrangements to ensure no steel workers are made redundant until they have alternative jobs to go to.

The motion described the anti-crisis plan approved by the Council as inadequate because it was not coupled with a policy of industrial diversification to create more jobs or by a social policy to maintain employment and alleviate the material and human tragedy caused by unemployment. Several speakers expressed their concern at the current situation and were critical of the effects on employment of the Davignon plan.

For the Commission, Vice-President Vredeling insisted that the 'Davignon Plan' was in fact a Commission plan: criticism, where valid, should be directed at the Commission as a whole. The same applied to social measures, for which the Commission had a responsibility under the ECSC Treaty.

The steel industry was undergoing restructuring in all Community steel-producing countries, and not just in Lorraine, Mr Vredeling said. The debate had overemphasized the problems faced by this region, he felt.

New social provisions should be flexible, and designed to take account of national needs. The Commission, however, should aim to persuade individual governments to move closer to one another as regards their social legislation. Harmonization would be the next stage.

On the question of retirement, Mr Vredeling thought that an element of flexibility should be retained – workers should have the right to decide when they wanted to retire. 55 was possibly too early for many steelworkers.

Introduction of an extra shift or a shorter working week were both measures which would serve a useful purpose: better to work less than to be unemployed. Abolition of systematic overtime should also be considered.

100 – 140,000 jobs were at stake. It was vital to save as many of them as possible. The House agreed to the motion, after amendment.

QUESTION TIME

Questions to the Commission

Commission internal audit (John Prescott)

Commission President Roy Jenkins took the opportunity presented by Mr Prescott's (UK, S) question to make a statement on the recent criticisms of Vice-President Haferkamp.

'I have full confidence in Vice-President Haferkamp as the Commission member responsible for external affairs', Mr Jenkins said. 'My confidence is shared by my colleagues and by the Council of Ministers'.

The Court of Auditors would now be looking into the matter, and as soon as their findings were known the Commission would further discuss the matter with Parliament's control sub-committee.

The Commission, Mr Jenkins said, laid down the representation expenses for each Commissioner annually. These expenses had not been exceeded in either 1977 or 1978. As regards travel and hotel expenses, it was up to each Commissioner to decide what was necessary and appropriate.

All members of the Commission were obliged to travel extensively, Mr Jenkins went on. Total representation expenses had amounted in 1977 to Bfrs 11.7m and had increased by less than 20% over the past five years, compared to a cost-of-living increase of 52% in the same period. The Commission's representation expenses compared favourably to those incurred by national government ministers, he thought.

Mr Jenkins said he particularly regretted the national overtones inherent in the criticisms of Mr Haferkamp. Any suggestion which cast doubt on the unity of the Community was to be deplored.

Seizure of books (Altiero Spinelli)

German customs authorities had seized a number of books on 19 October 1978 because of a false declaration made by the importer and his subsequent refusal to pay a fine, and not for political reasons, Mr Vredeling said.

In several supplementaries, speakers expressed their concern that books need to be declared at all. But President Colombo ruled against a request by Mr Spinelli to hold an emergency debate on the subject.

Trade with Australia

Mr Martinelli's report (Doc. 546/78)

Mario Martinelli (It, CD), rapporteur for the external economic relations committee, asked the Commission for an up-date on the negotiations with

the Australians, warning that links with that country must not be put in a state of crisis and pointing out that although Australia was a highly industrialized country, agriculture accounted for a large proportion of its exports. He also asked about cooperation in the nuclear sphere, stressing the problem of uncertainty of uranium supplies from some other sources.

Lord Kennet (UK, S), for the Socialists, said Australia's visible trade deficit with the EC was now at an annual \$A 1.1 billion. Including invisibles, the figure was \$A 2.2 billion.

For the Liberals, Werner Zywiets (Ge) called for an accommodating attitude towards the Australians in view of their reliability as suppliers of raw materials.

Wilhelm Haferkamp replied that the Commission was prepared to endorse the Martinelli conclusions and welcomed the motion for a resolution. There was great potential in EC-Australian relations.

The House agreed to the motion.

EC and China

Lord Bessborough's question (Doc. 599/78)

Lord Bessborough said he felt Commission and Council were not showing sufficient enthusiasm for developing relations with China. The Chinese had expressed great interest in purchasing Western technology and had made public a long shopping-list of major items which the Community could supply. Indeed, the Chinese had made it clear that they desired a relationship with the Community that went beyond mere trade contacts.

If the EC did not take the initiative in meeting its trade – and cultural – needs, China would turn in increasing measure to the USA or Japan.

In reply, Vice-President Haferkamp said that his official visit to China, on which he had been accompanied by a vice-president of the Economic and Social Committee and a vice-president of the European Trade Union Federation, had been designed to show the Chinese just how keen Europe's interest in close relations was.

The joint committee, established under the EC-China trade agreement, would play a key role in developing the scale and scope of trade relations. The Committee would be meeting for the first time in April/May this year. As regards cultural exchanges, scholarships, etc, the Commission's financial resources were limited.

Mr Van Aerssen (Ge, CD) then moved a motion on behalf of the Christian-Democrat, Conservative and Liberal groups calling for the establishment of long-term cooperation and making a number of specific proposals for achieving it.

These were too detailed, said Lord Kennet (UK) for the Socialists, and he moved a number of amendments. Like Mr Pistillo (It, CA), Lord Kennet felt that the EC's relations with China had no bearing on its relations with East Europe and the USSR.

Promoting coal

Mr Müller's report (Doc. 582/78).

There was general support this evening for a Commission proposal to grant a £6.8 per tonne subsidy for power station coal sold in intra-EC trade. Communist spokesman Protogene Veronesi objected, arguing the effect of the proposal would be to create coal surpluses.

But Lord Bessborough (UK, EC), while not in favour of unlimited subsidies, said the proposal would give the industry a breathing space. It was an investment in the future.

The debate prompted Socialist spokesman Lothar Ibrügger (Ge) and CD spokesman Marcel Vandewiele (Be) to draw attention to the awful conditions under which coal is mined in South Africa and the USA.

Radiation risk to Kent

Mr Vandewiele also asked Mr Brunner what was being done about the radiation emanating from power stations at Dunkirk and putting people in South East England and Flanders at risk.

On this last point Mr Guido Brunner said that the Commission had proposed that a strict procedure be followed when power stations were put up. The Council, however, had accepted only a rather loose arrangement. But the Commission was ready to go back to its original proposals should experience show that consultations in depth were indicated.

Oil at \$25 per barrel in 1985

He then went on to remind the House of Sheikh Yammani's forecast that the price of oil would double by 1985. This underlined the need for a whole series of Community measures, including the present one for making the Community less dependent on imported energy. And he attacked the Council for its failure to take decisions.

The House agreed to the motion.

Uranium from South Africa

Mr Dankert's question (Doc. 592/78).

Acting for the Socialist Group, Piet Dankert (Du) asked the Commission what proportion of the EC's uranium imports came from South Africa (and Namibia in particular).

He also raised the question of whether arguments of 'commercial secrecy' were not a way of keeping the facts from the citizens of the Community.

Replying for the Commission, Guido Brunner denied that he was a fervent champion of nuclear energy. As regards reactor safety, he had consistently spoken out for the better management of nuclear waste. On supplies, he said South Africa accounted for some 1/3 of Community needs. The exact figure for Namibia was difficult to assess, but it was a 'very considerable' percentage.

On the prospects for reducing dependence, he mentioned the efforts which had gone into securing the resumption of US and Canadian supplies, the Commission's desire to get a mandate from the meeting of Foreign Ministers in March to negotiate with Australia, and the funds voted by Parliament to boost prospecting within the Member States.

Lord Bessborough (UK, EC) described uranium as the fuel which produced the cheapest electricity known to society. What was unusual about supplies from South Africa and Namibia was that there were no political strings attached.

UK floods

Mr Howell's question (Doc. 597/78).

European Conservative spokesman Ralph Howell asked the Commission what use had been made of 1m EUA granted to the UK in respect of floods in East Anglia and South East England on 11th – 12th January 1978.

Mr Brunner replied that a team of 3 officials was being sent to the United Kingdom to look into this matter. He thought it only fair to add, however, that the British Government, being responsible for managing the relief money, had a certain discretion as to the use to which it was put.

Mr Howell protested that it was quite wrong for aid granted for a specific purpose not to be used for that precise need. And the fact that no money had yet reached the affected areas over a year after the disasters made a nonsense of the whole concept of 'emergency' aid. He urged the Commissioner not to let the matter rest.

Equipment use risk

Mrs Krouwel-Vlam's question (Doc. 534/78).

Mr Vredeling said the Commission could look into standardizing the control of medical apparatus and equipment used in EC hospitals and medical practices but he saw little point in studies unless the Council made it clear that decisions could follow.

FRIDAY, 16th February 1979

UK wine

Mr Pisoni's report (Doc. 606/78)

The Commission is proposing aid for grape musts used in fruit juices and wines made in the UK and Ireland. The grants would be available as from 31st August and would cost 5.15m EUA (£3.5m).

Agriculture committee rapporteur Pisoni asked the House to accept the proposal, subject to three amendments.

The House agreed to the motion.

Drinking water

Lord Kennet's report (Doc. 580/78)

Environment committee rapporteur Lord Kennet asked Parliament to approve Commission proposals introducing standard methods of measuring the parameters for water quality control and stipulating the frequency of sampling and analysis for each parameter.

The House agreed to the motion.

Road haulage

Mr Albers' report (Doc. 604/78)

Regional and transport committee rapporteur Willem Albers asked the House to approve a Commission proposal to bring the present system of bilateral transport quota authorisations within the scope of an EC system.

The House agreed to the motion.

Road haulage quotas

Mr Albers' report (Doc. 605/78)

The Commission is proposing to amend Regulation (EEC) No 3164 on inter-EEC road haulage quotas to make it possible for short-term (i.e. ten days) road haulage authorisations to be issued. At present Community authorisations are valid for 12 months and thus tend to be issued only to firms making intensive use of them. The new short-term authorisations are designed to facilitate the gradual entry of more transport firms into inter-Community road haulage.

Willem Albers asked the House to approve the proposal.

The House agreed to the motion.

Red mud

Mrs Squarcialupi's question (Doc. 596/78)

Mrs Vera Squarcialupi (It, CA) asked the Commission to look into using red mud (titanium dioxide) to make clay soil suitable for cultivation and into less-polluting ways of making the stuff in the first place.

In reply, Commissioner Richard Burke said that on 20th February 1978 the Council had adopted a directive designed to stop pollution by titanium dioxide.

Up in smoke

Lord Kennet's question (Doc. 422/78)

Lord Kennet asked the Commission to estimate how much money each Member State gets in revenue from tobacco taxes and how much each could save if people stopped smoking.

In reply, Mr Burke reminded the House that statistics of revenue from tobacco taxes had been given. As for the economic cost, he said he would examine Lord Kennet's request for a study sympathetically.

Virginity tests

Mrs Dahlerup's question (Doc. 600/78)

Karen Dahlerup (Da, S) asked the Commission to make an immediate protest to the UK Government over the virginity tests reportedly being given to women immigrants to determine their marital status and thus their right to entry. She said this was discrimination against women. Moreover, the evidence of the tests did not even provide conclusive proof of whether the women were married or not. The procedure was at variance with the basic attitudes of the British Labour Party, and officials must not be allowed to arrogate to themselves powers that conflicted with policy.

For the Commission, Richard Burke said the Commission had always stressed its attachment to fundamental rights everywhere, but it had no legal power to intervene in cases, such as the present one, not covered by EC law. The Commission deplored such tests, and if there were any evidence of them being applied to citizens of Member States it would consider action in the light of the laws on the free movement of persons. As far as the Commission was aware, the tests had been stopped.

Clemency for Mr Bhutto

Mr Dankert's motion (Doc. 621/78)

On behalf of Mr Dankert, Mr Albers asked the EC institutions to appeal to the leader of the Pakistan Government, General Zia-ul-Haq to spare the life of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who has been sentenced to death. Mr Albers said the European Parliament must not remain silent. It must help to save Mr Bhutto's life.

For the Commission, Mr Burke said 'I would support the initiative of the House in this matter.' The Commission was holding a special meeting this morning in Brussels to consider possible courses of action.

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
IN FEBRUARY 1979**

In February Parliament delivered 6 opinions on Commission proposals, of which

3 gave unqualified approval (A)

0 gave qualified approval (B)

3 called on the Commission to adopt amendments (C);

Parliament agreed to 8 other motions (D).

An analysis of resolutions is attached.

A. Opinions giving unqualified approval

Pure-bred breeding animals of the bovine species

Doc. 564/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Rule 27A

Committee on Agriculture

Market in wine (British and Irish wine)

Doc. 606/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Pisoni

Committee on Agriculture

Community quota for the carriage of goods by road – short-term authorizations

Doc. 605/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Albers

Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport

B. Opinions giving qualified approval

None

C. Opinions calling on the Commission to adopt amendments (Art. 149, second paragraph)

Intra-Community trade in power station coal

Doc. 582/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr H.W. Müller

Committee: Energy and Research

The EP proposed that the Commission should prepare long-term contracts with coal-exporting third countries, but warned against

jeopardizing the Community's own coal-mining industry by increasing imports. It called on the Commission to amplify its proposed subsidy system by the addition of specific proposals for maintaining Community production capacity, and put forward an amendment ensuring that the EP is informed about adjustments of the amount of aid (Art. 9).

Drinking water

Doc. 580/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Lord Kennet

Committee: Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

The EP proposed an amendment ensuring that Member States are furnished only with an advisory list of 'standard methods' for reaching the mandatory limits of accuracy in measurement.

Adjustment of capacity for the carriage of goods by road

Doc. 604/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Albers

Committee: Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport

The EP considered the proposal a step in the right direction, but regretted that arbitration would not be the responsibility of the Commission alone, and proposed an amendment stressing that Community social provisions and safety requirements must be observed when fixing the common standards for the issue of transport authorizations.

D. Other resolutions

Third Annual Report on the European Regional Development Fund

Doc. 558/78 (13.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Delmotte

Committee: Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport

The EP called for respect for the principle of additionality, under which Community aid should supplement, not replace, national aids; it deplored the lack of proper publicity given to Regional Fund projects and insisted on the need for coherent regional development programmes.

Shipping and pollution

Doc. 555/78 (14.2.79)

Rapporteur: Lord Bruce of Donington

Committee: Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport

The EP requested the Commission to undertake studies and draft proposals for

- instituting a system of ship traffic control in appropriate Community waters
- establishing an advanced coastal radar system to escort large tankers
- introducing a marine equivalent of the aviation 'black box'
- assisting research into better means of recovering and dispersing spilled oil
- establishing common standards to be complied with by ship-owners in order to have their vessels insured
- establishing ports of refuge for disabled vessels
- setting up emergency command posts once incidents have occurred.

Common fisheries policy

Doc. 608/78 (14.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Hughes

Committee: Agriculture

The EP considered that not only quotas, but also fishing plans, reserved zones and seasonally closed zones for particular species were necessary; quotas should not be based exclusively on past performance; it requested the Commission to draw up a report on national conservation measures in force and called for an effective system for fishery inspection.

Mr Adams and Hoffmann-La-Roche

Doc. 622/78 (14.2.79)

Rapporteurs: Mr Adams and others

The EP instructed its Legal Affairs Committee to investigate the implications for the 1972 EEC-Swiss Trade Agreement of the judgment of the Swiss Federal Court in the case between Mr Adams and Hoffmann-La-Roche.

Anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism

Doc. 625/78 (15.2.79)

Rapporteurs: Sir Geoffrey de Freitas and others

The EP considered it intolerable that war crimes should remain unpunished on the entry into force of the Statute of Limitation; it called on the Member States to sign the 1974 European Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitation to Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes, and to take all precautions against the entry into force of a Statute of Limitation in those cases.

Social aspects of the iron and steel policy

Doc. 603/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Laurain

Committee: Social Affairs, Employment and Education

The EP considered the anti-crisis plan approved by the Council to be unacceptable inasmuch as it is not backed up by sufficient social measures and a policy for industrial diversification to create more jobs; it called for

- introduction of a flexible retirement age, beginning at 55,
- reorganization of shift work through the introduction of an additional shift, and
- gradual reduction of the working week to 35 hours, combined with adequate measures to eliminate overtime

Finally, the EP urged the Commission to put forward clear and comprehensive proposals for the appropriations required to finance the coherent policy needed to face up to the economic and social problems in the steel sector.

Economic and trade relations between the EEC and Australia

Doc. 546/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteur: Mr Martinelli

Committee: External Economic Relations

The EP believed that the Community should consider Australian requests with the greatest sympathy, taking account, however, of the needs of the Community's farming areas following enlargement. It called for regular parliamentary contacts to be set up in the near future.

Appeal for clemency for the life of Mr Bhutto

Doc. 621/78 (16.2.79)

Rapporteurs: Mr Dankert – Socialist Group

The EP called on its President, the President of the Commission and the President of the Foreign Ministers to issue an appeal to the leader of the Pakistan Government for clemency in sparing the life of Mr Bhutto.

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