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THE SITTINGS

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THE WEEK

Among the European Parliament's main talking points in Strasbourg this week have been the threats to democracy from terrorism and from having nearly six million people out of work; and ways of promoting democracy by granting Community citizens special rights and by giving them the chance to vote in the first European elections. Here some interpreted the Council President's comments as expressing optimism that the Brussels Summit of December 5th and 6th will see the elections date set once and for all.

Then there were the quarrels: over butter sold cheap to East European countries finding its way back into the Community; over the Commission giving the press details of its Economic and Monetary Union plans the day after an economic debate in the House when, presumably, these details could have been revealed; and over a second amending budget for 1977 which did not accurately reflect the budgetary reality following the decision on JET.

More positively, this week saw the first practical steps towards the launching of Radio Europe, a multilingual station due to start broadcasting on Community affairs next November. Parliament provided the venue for production of a pilot programme (see Notes page 31).

MONDAY 14th November 1977

Action taken on Parliament's advice

The president advised the House that the Commission had submitted a written statement on the actions it had taken on Parliament's advice : this further to a request from Parliament in October.

Mr Jan Broeks (Du,S) asked that the statement be included in the 'rainbow' record of Parliament's proceedings. The President agreed.

Equal treatment for men and women

Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti's report on Commission's proposals (Doc. 522/76). Motion tabled welcomed proposals subject to amendment. Mr Vredeling replied. (Doc. 355/77)

The Commission has submitted to the Council a proposal for a directive which is designed to bring equality between men and women a stage nearer as regards social security benefits.

Mr Frans van der Gun (Du,CD) (for Mrs Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago Cerretti, rapporteur for the Committee on Social Affairs, Employment and Education) welcomed 'this important initial step towards equality of treatment in matters of social security'. But, he argued, it should be seen as no more than a step. Complete equality must remain the aim. There were still discrepancies as regards eligibility for pensions (determination of pensionable age) for example. Mr Van der Gun accordingly called for further action and for amendments to the present proposal, particularly as regards redress by those who may consider themselves wronged by any failure to apply the directive proposed.

All groups welcomed the Commission's proposals, but several speakers felt they did not go far enough. Mr Marcel Vandewiele (Be,CD) regretted the exclusion of persons, both male and female, who were not in active employment because of family responsibilities. Mr Willem Albers (Du,S) said it was necessary to bring about structural changes in social security provisions so that everyone could be evaluated as an individual person. He also pointed to the need to ensure that domestic staff, low-paid and for the most part women, should be included in social security systems. Mr Michael Yeats (Ir,EPD) was sympathetic to the proposals and spoke of areas of discrimination which existed in Ireland. He felt,

however, that it was unrealistic to establish deadlines for its abolition because of the cost and the complexity of implementation.

Commissioner Henk Vredeling replied by telling the House that the Commission had taken the lead among international organizations in the promotion of equal treatment between men and women. He explained to the House that provisions had not been made for widows in the proposals because discrimination in fact worked in favour of women : widowers did not generally receive allowances. The reason for excluding the question of pensionable age had been the complexity of the employment situation at present when early retirement is already a difficult issue. He agreed that provision had not been made to cover the situation of the housewife. Developments in the concept of family roles in Sweden were interesting, as was the notion of housewives receiving a salary, but it would be unrealistic to hold up Community action in order to study possibilities in this area.

Illegal migration and illegal employment

Mr Pisoni's report on Commission's proposals (Doc. 426/76). Motion tabled welcomed proposals subject to amendment. Mr Vredeling replied (Doc. 352/77).

The Commission has submitted to the Council a proposal for a directive to bring the Nine's laws into line on illegal migration and illegal employment. It is estimated that there are some 600,000 illegal immigrant workers in the Community. The threat of discovery and deportation to which they are exposed leads to abuse which must be stamped out if the social situation of the rest of the immigrant population is to be improved. The Commissioner referred particularly to 'manpower traffickers'.

The proposed directive would harmonize laws for dealing with illegal migration and illegal employment and for mitigating wrongs suffered by migrant workers. Information services for migrants would be stepped up with an eye to countering misleading information and effective controls would be organized at places of work.

Mr Ferruccio Pisoni (It,CD), Social Affairs Committee rapporteur, pointed out that illegal immigrants in the Community numbered over 600,000, plus their dependents. They lived a hand-to-mouth existence, in the worst jobs and in the worst houses, subjected to exploitation by those who 'trafficked in human

beings', and often to blackmail. The Council of Ministers, Mr Pisoni noted, had asked in its resolution of 6th February 1976 that illegal immigrants' social and legal rights should somehow be protected; but the Commission's proposals did nothing in this field. He regretted, in particular, that there was nothing that would guarantee social benefits.

Points raised by speakers in the debate :

- Many migrant workers entered the Community legally, then later remained behind illegally, rather than return to poverty and unemployment in their own countries.
- Should controls be on illegal entry or illegal employment? Lord Reay (Br,EC) said British practice considered only the former to be an offence.
- Mr Pietro Lezzi (It,S) thought the Community should bear in mind the massive contribution migrant workers, illegal as well as legal, had made to its economic growth over the years. We should consider carefully before introducing legal sanctions against those who had helped us.

Trade with Yugoslavia

Mr Bettiza's question to the Commission. Mr Vredeling, for Mr Haferkamp, replied. (Doc. 370/77)

Mr Vincenzo Bettiza (It,L), speaking for several of his colleagues, asked the Commission what measures it proposed to take to redress the balance of trade between the Community and Yugoslavia, especially in view of the impending expiry (on September 30th 1978) of the present trade agreement.

In reply, Mr Vredeling said that on Wednesday, November 16th, the Commission would be taking a decision on a brief for negotiations with Yugoslavia. The proposals to be agreed on Wednesday – which would be submitted to the Council – would extend the scope of the Community's relations with Yugoslavia, the importance of which the Commission fully appreciated.

TUESDAY, 15th November 1977

Political cooperation

Statement by Council President Mr Henri Simonet

Mr Henri Simonet, Belgian Foreign Minister and current President of the Council, expressed optimism at the Nine's general progress in the field of political cooperation. The salient points of his speech were as follows:

Belgrade CSCE follow-up: The Nine were cooperating closely both with one another and with their NATO partners. The aim was to give full consideration to the results so far achieved by the three baskets of the Helsinki Agreement.

United Nations: Here political cooperation had now become almost a tradition, Mr Simonet said. The Community had worked together closely in preparing for the 32nd session of the General Assembly. However, this had not led to the Nine being seen as a monolith in the UN, but rather as an entity able to make itself heard.

Africa: The African continent was of particular importance to the Community, Mr Simonet reminded the House, because it was close geographically and historically to Europe, and had close institutional links with it.

Rhodesia: The Nine had expressed support for majority rule at the Maputo conference in May 1977, and had given consistent support to the British and Anglo-American efforts to reach a Rhodesia settlement. The Community was already considering granting aid to an independent Zimbabwe.

Namibia: Here the Community had expressed its support for independence based on the participation of all democratic groups, including SWAPO.

South Africa: Apartheid, said Mr Simonet, was 'an insult to the dignity of man', and was incompatible with the values of western civilization. The Community, which had always made its abhorrence of this system abundantly clear, had joined the recent UN arms embargo, and on September 20th had published a code of conduct for Community businesses operating in South Africa. It did not recognize the independence of Transkei, nor would it recognize Bophutatswana, which was due to become 'independent' next month.

Uganda: The Nine were agreed that any aid to Uganda should not be used to support political suppression.

Cyprus: The Community, which supported the continuation of negotiations between the island's two communities, had shown its concern by extending, at the end of June 1977, the EEC-Cyprus agreement.

Middle East: At the European Council meeting in June the Community had called for a peace settlement on the basis of resolutions 242 and 338 of the UN security council, and named four conditions: (1) inadmissibility of acquiring territory by force; (2) Israel should vacate occupied territory; (3) mutual respect of frontiers; (4) account to be taken of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people – and this, by implication, included the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Community was firmly opposed to Israeli settlements on occupied territory.

Euro-Arab dialogue: After a shaky start, real progress had been made at the third session of the dialogue held in Brussels in October.

Political cooperation, established seven years ago by the Luxembourg resolution, had been consolidated and extended at the Copenhagen summit, Mr Simonet said. The commitment entered into by the Nine to consult one another on important issues had now become accepted practice; not only was a common policy sought, it was usually found. This was one area where it could be said that the practice was better than the theory on which it was based. But while there was both internal and external pressure on the Community, 'to speak with one voice in the world means first recognizing the identity of our interests, and that is not yet always the case'.

South Africa : measures taken by South African Government against opponents of 'apartheid'

Mr Ludwig Fellermaier's question on behalf of the Socialist Group (Doc. 371/77). Mr Simonet replied.

On October 19th, the South African Government banned eighteen organizations opposed to apartheid, stopped the publication of one minor and two major newspapers and banished or arrested several prominent opponents of apartheid. Then, on November 11th 1977, the South African Government promulgated the

National Supplies Procurement Act, a wartime-type measure giving the government control over various aspects of strategic production. It did so invoking the right to decide for itself what constitutes a threat to the peace and security of a majority of the population and how it should be dealt with.

Mr Ludwig Fellermaier (Ge,S) asked Mr Simonet what action the Nine had taken to protest against these measures, what further action they envisaged along the lines of the code of conduct for European firms in South Africa and how they intended to ensure it was respected. He welcomed the clear condemnation of apartheid made by Mr Simonet in his opening address. The present oppression of a black majority by a white minority could make for an explosive situation in Southern Africa. 'We owe it to our friends in the ACP States to stand up and be counted here', he said and rejected any charge that speaking out was interfering with the affairs of South Africa. 'Silence would make us an accomplice', he said.

In reply, Mr Simonet said that the policy of the Nine should be to exercise firm but careful pressure on South Africa to bring about a gradual but fundamental change in the South African Government's policies. This pressure must be firm enough to be clear but not such as to justify the present hardening line now being pursued in South Africa.

There were none, he said, so blind as those who did not want to see and he had the impression that there were some, in South Africa, who believed they could stand out against the rest of the world. As to specific measures, the ban on arms sales could be effective given the political will. But only moral pressure could be brought to bear on Community firms disregarding the recently agreed code of conduct for EC companies operating in South Africa. (Mr Fellermaier pointed out that 60 per cent of foreign firms in South Africa had their de jure registered offices in the Community). The Council would make an annual report on the observance of this code of conduct and would keep up pressure to secure observance of the terms laid down regarding wages and working conditions. Ultimately, however – and this was Mr Simonet's whole argument – the Nine's policy must be one of firm but careful pressure to achieve equality between the races in South Africa and so avoid a conflagration that could become more general.

Speakers in the debate welcomed Mr Simonet's statement on political cooperation amongst the Nine. On South Africa, there was agreement that the Community should continue to exercise pressure on the Pretoria government, but views differed on the subject of extending such pressure to include an all-out trade embargo.

QUESTION TIME

QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Financing wide inland waterways (Pierre-Bernard Cousté)

President of the Council, Henri Simonet, told Pierre-Bernard Cousté (Fr,EPD) that the financing, whether by loan or direct grant, of a major network of Community waterways was included in a Commission proposal on traffic infrastructure. He hoped to receive this from the Commission in the near future.

Gibraltarians and the EEC (Willie Hamilton)

Mr Simonet told Gwyneth Dunwoody (Br,S), in reply to a question put by Willie Hamilton (Br,S), that the Council could not adopt a position on Spain's treatment of the Gibraltarians. In any case the Council was awaiting an opinion from the Commission before opening accession negotiations with Spain.

EEC relations with China (Lord Bessborough)

Mr Simonet told Lord Bessborough (Br,EC) that at its meeting on 21 November 1977 the Council will make a decision on the Commission's recommendation that trade negotiations be opened with China.

Imports of potatoes from Cyprus (Christopher Price)

Mr Simonet assured Lord Brimelow (Br,S), in answer to a question from Christopher Price (Br,S), that every effort would be made to ensure that imports of potatoes and other agricultural products from Cyprus continue after 31 December 1977.

EEC loans (Henri Caillavet)

Mr Simonet told Jean-François Pintat (Fr,L) that he hoped the Council of Ministers for Economic Affairs and Finance would be ready to act upon Commission proposals concerning loans for investment purposes at its meeting on 21 November 1977. He agreed with John Prescott that the Community now had an abundance of liquidity but lacked investment projects.

QUESTIONS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE NINE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEETING IN POLITICAL COOPERATION

Consular facilities for the Nine at Chieng-Mai (Charles Fletcher-Cooke)

Mr Simonet told Mr Fletcher-Cooke (Br,EC) that one Member State had vetoed the suggestion that the Community establish, for an experimental period, joint consular facilities at Chieng-Mai (Thailand) in the British Consular building which the British Government now found too expensive to maintain.

Terrorism

Parliament called on Member States to cooperate in every way possible to protect Community citizens from acts of terrorism (Docs. 327/77, 328/77, 372/77).

The House was unanimous in its condemnation of acts of terrorism. Rapporteur Charles Fletcher-Cooke (Br,EC), explained that the Political Affairs Committee had been concerned with presenting a motion that would be acceptable to all Members and was proposing no novel mechanisms for dealing with terrorism.

The terrorists, he said – and he was echoed by many subsequent speakers – were out to replace democracy with tyranny. Their motives were neither logical nor intelligible. He was not calling for further conventions, however. What was necessary was to use those in existence already. Speakers in the debate were unanimous in regarding terrorism as a threat to democracy, and in calling for solidarity in combatting it.

In reply, Council President Henri Simonet said the issue was far too serious and far-reaching to allow a quick reply to the points raised. But he had taken note of the points raised and would bring them to the attention of his colleagues.

Viscount Davignon, for the Commission, spoke briefly to leave no doubt as to its position. He looked to all Member States to ratify the relevant conventions so that there should be no distinction between their legal positions on such an important matter.

Second amending budget for 1977

Lord Bruce's report (Doc. 387/77). Mr Tugendhat, for the Commission, welcomed the amendments tabled. Mr Simonet, for the Council, reserved his position (Doc. 333/77).

For reasons of sound budgetary procedure, Lord Bruce of Donington (Br,S), rapporteur for Parliament's Committee on Budgets, asked the House to vote in favour of two amendments to the second amending budget for 1977. The effect of the first amendment would be to reduce commitment appropriations by 17.527m ua (7.3m pounds) and payment appropriations by 20.551m ua (8.56m pounds); the second would reduce payment appropriations by 20.55 mua and commitment appropriations by 17.527 mua.

Mr Simonet, in reply, said that the decision on JET did not itself imply any decision on the financial aspect.

The matter will be raised again between Parliament and Council under the conciliation procedure on November 22nd.

Lord Bruce, expressing disappointment at the Council's reply, reminded the House that the votes of 100 Members are necessary for the amendments to be adopted.

Direct elections

Joint debate on Mr Berkhouwer's question to the Council on the date of direct elections to the European Parliament (Doc. 294/77) and a motion tabled by four political groups on the same subject (Doc. 386/77).

Council President Henri Simonet told the House this evening that a decision had already been taken to fix a final date for direct elections at the December European Council meeting. What that date would be, Mr Simonet was unwilling to predict. If it was not in 1978, that would be a serious blow. But, he said, 'the British Parliament is stronger on this matter than eight Community governments, and arguably stronger even than its own'. But the date now seemed to hinge on whether Westminster opted for proportional representation (PR) or a first-past-the-post system — in the latter event, there was little chance of meeting the May/June 1978 deadline.

The key point to emerge from the debate was the conviction of many speakers that any date would be better than none : a vague promise to hold the elections 'as soon as possible' could lead to their indefinite postponement. As to when elections would be held, all depended on the British Parliament – to whose sense of democratic responsibility Georges Spénale (Fr,S), former European Parliament President, appealed. British Conservative James Spicer said his party could not take responsibility for delaying the election if they voted against the 'miserable' PR system being proposed by the Labour Government. The Conservatives' European commitment was not in doubt. Mr Schelto Patijn (Du,S), however, thought otherwise : it fell to the Conservatives in Westminster to consider what they would be jeopardizing by voting against PR.

Aid to non-associated developing countries

Colette Flesch's question to the Council (Doc. 366/77).

Henri Simonet assured Colette Flesch that there were no Machiavellian motives behind the Council's failure to implement a Commission proposal to grant 45m ua from the 1977 budget for financial and technical aid to non-associated developing countries. The silence on the subject which Miss Flesch (Lu,L) had deplored was merely a result of inability to reach a joint position. He hoped an agreement could be reached at a third meeting of the Council of Cooperation and Development Ministers in November.

Commissioner Tugendhat spoke of the Commission's disappointment at the situation. He stated however that if Council action was not forthcoming by the end of the year the Commission would unilaterally commit the funds, as Miss Flesch had proposed.

WEDNESDAY, 16th November 1977

Special rights (Community citizenship)

Mr Scelba's report (Doc. 346/77). Motion tabled asks Commission for proposals for granting special rights to Community citizens.

Mr Mario Scelba (It,CD), rapporteur for Parliament's Political Affairs Committee, today called on the Commission to draw up proposals for granting

special rights to Community citizens. This would include the right of residence in other Member States ; the right to stand for and vote on elections for public office and the right to belong to a trade union. Helping to create the climate for such proposals have been the 1974 summit communiqué, the Commission's 'Towards a citizen's Europe', Parliament's resolution on European union (July 10th 1975) and, of course, the Tindemans Report.

Drawing attention to Parliament's role in furthering European integration Mr Scelba, moving his motion, said : 'If this is adopted it will bring honour and dignity to this Assembly, for this is an act of faith for a free and democratic Europe'.

Mr Scelba had the full support of spokesmen from all political groups and from Viscount Davignon who spoke for the European Commission.

Viscount Davignon emphasised that this was not the beginning of a supranational Europe, it was simply providing an extra guarantee for the citizen's fundamental rights. And, if the Treaty were to be considered as evolving in its application, the granting of the right to vote in local elections, for example, would be a useful step.

Several spokesmen stressed the need to spell out what the Community stood for, especially with direct elections in the offing (Mr Simonet said last night that the timing of the first European elections was coming up for decision at the Brussels summit on the 5th and 6th December).

Mr Aldo Masullo (It), the Communist spokesman, said there was no such thing as a 'European citizen' at present : this was an aim not a fact — a point taken up by Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer (Du), Liberal spokesman, who was the prime mover of the European passport idea. Today he suggested a European postage stamp — possibly on the occasion of the first European elections.

QUESTION TIME

QUESTIONS TO THE COMMISSION

Worker participation (Pierre-Bernard Cousté)

Commissioner Etienne Davignon told Mr Cousté (Fr,EPD) that the new proposal for a Fifth Directive (worker participation in business management) may be a few weeks late in appearing, but would certainly be ready during January 1978.

Data processing and electronics components industry (Lord Bessborough)

The Commission, Mr Davignon told Lord Bessborough (Br,EC) was in the process of consulting the industry on up-dating the multi-annual research and development programme, and would take action as soon as possible.

Open tenders (Paul de Clercq)

Mr Davignon promised Mr de Clercq (Be,L) that he would supply him with statistical details regarding tenders and public contracts awarded.

Devaluation of the green franc (Michel Cointat)

The Commission had proposed devaluing the green currencies over a seven year period, Mr Gundelach told Mr Cointat (Fr,EPD), but this did not mean that the green franc could not be devalued rather more rapidly than that : he expected that the question of mcas would be discussed annually during the farm price review.

Sales of butter to the USSR (Lord Bruce of Donington)

Mr Gundelach told Lord Bruce of Donington (Br,S) that the Commission was indeed aware of a newspaper article which had reported that Community sales of butter to Russia had found their way back into the Community at cut rate prices, and he confirmed that this had in fact occurred. However, a lack of cooperation on the part of the Italian authorities had so far prevented the

Commission from ascertaining the exact amount involved and, consequently, the loss of revenue to the Community. The Commissioner assured Lord Bruce, who described the incident as reflecting the stupidity of a system which enabled food to be sold into intervention rather than to the consumer, that the Commission would take all possible steps to prevent such a situation recurring.

Criticism of 'Le Monde' in 'EG-Magazin' (Horst Seefeld and André Guerlin)

Replying to questions from Mr Seefeld and Mr Guerlin, Mr Jenkins said he thought that there had been an error of judgement in the case referred to. But disciplinary action was not called for, he said. The magazine was lively and tended to promote an understanding of the Community and its ends. And this was the criterion by which Commission publications should be judged. He noted Mr Seefeld's comment that 'EG-Magazin' is widely read and appreciated in Germany. He also took Mr Guerlin's point that there should be no repetition of criticism of 'Le Monde', a newspaper noted for its reliability.

Community aid for managerial staff (André Damseaux)

In reply to Mr Damseaux (Be,L) Mr Vredeling said the criteria for giving Social Fund backing to a pilot scheme designed to help unemployed managerial staff were the extent to which those affected had been found suitable jobs and the extent to which new methods were used in other centres.

Voting

The House agreed to the motions tabled by Mr Cornelis Berkhouwer (Du,L) (timing of direct elections), Mr Charles Fletcher-Cooke (Br,EC) after amendment of the original text (dealing with terrorism) and Mr Mario Scelba (It,CD) after amendment of the original text (special rights for Community citizens).

The economy

- Commission's annual report on the Community's economic situation and economic policy guidelines for 1978 (Doc. 377/77), Lord Ardwick's report. Motion tabled broadly endorsed Commission's proposals.
- Mr Durieux's question on unemployment and inflation in the EEC (Doc. 368/77).
- Mr Santer's report on the Tripartite Conference of 27th June 1977. Motion tabled expressed disappointment that no dialogue developed among parties at the conference. (Doc. 345/77).

Joint debate. Vice-President Ortoli and Mr Henk Vredeling replied for the Commission.

The Commission's report (which goes to the Council for adoption after Parliament has given its opinion) analyses the economic situation in 1977 and lays down guidelines for 1978. It is dated October 18th 1977 and includes a country-by-country forward analysis as well as an assessment for the EC as a whole.

The Commission expects the GDP could go up from two and a half per cent to three and a half per cent in 1978 and believes the inflation rate could improve, provided the rise in wage costs can be curbed. But the number of wholly unemployed, put at nearly six million in 1977, is expected to go on increasing because of the persistent weakness of demand. The aims, in the Commission's view, should be :

- (i) a real GDP growth rate for the Community taken as a whole of four per cent to four and a half per cent;
- (ii) a halt to the spreading of unemployment and an improvement in the situation on the labour market;
- (iii) narrower disparities between the payments balance positions of the various Member States, and an overall Community payments position either in balance or even in deficit;
- (iv) a rate of inflation down to 7 to 8 per cent for the Community average (compared with about nine and a half per cent in 1977) and a narrower spread between the extremes, down to a range of under 4 per cent to 10 per cent (4 – 18 per cent in 1977).

Lord Ardwick (Br,S), who opened the debate before lunch, said the economic situation had not changed much since the House last discussed it. And it did not really look as though the Commission's guidelines for 1978 would make very much difference : if inflation and trade deficits were slowly coming down, unemployment had not stopped rising. The situation here might be helped by economic growth, but other factors could stop that happening. He pointed to the need for closer coordination of Member States' economic policies, the need for a loans instrument, and the new moves towards economic and monetary union recently proposed by the Commission. But was this practicable, he asked President Jenkins, or just an 'act of faith'?

In his question to the Commission, Mr Jean Durieux (Fr,L) wanted to know whether research into unemployment and inflation in the EEC had led to the

likelihood of new solutions in this area. Although inflation had slowed somewhat, unemployment continued to rise with young people being particularly hard hit.

On the subject of the Tripartite Conference, Mr Jacques Santer (Lu,CD) expressed his disappointment that it had in fact achieved so little. Its failure, he said, was a demonstration of the apparent inability of the European institutions to contribute towards an improvement of the overall economic situation in the Community.

This was a point with which Mr Ortoli, for the Commission, did not agree. The Commission had looked at the problems and proposed solutions, but if it had not been entirely successful it was largely due to a lack of adequate resources — and these the Commission hoped to have in future. Looking at the economic situation as it stood, Mr Ortoli noted progress in some areas and stagnation or even decline in others : while the Community's deficit had stood at 8,000 million units of account in 1976, this figure had dropped back to 2,000 million units of account in 1977. Inflation this year was averaging 9.5 per cent against 10 per cent last year, and the trend here was towards further improvement. There was also, he said, greater awareness of the need for prices and wages restraint.

What we had to aim at now was a four — four and a half per cent rate of economic growth in 1978, without, at the same time, giving new fuel to the inflationary process. The level of investment had to be increased considerably, and there was a need for more coherence between economic and monetary action. None of this was new, Mr Ortoli admitted, but he did not think there were any novel solutions to our difficulties. The key to growth remained investment, and here a major effort had to be made to convince the private sector that if it did not invest today, it would be out of the market tomorrow. And in the somewhat longer term, Mr Ortoli said, we had to accept the need for economic and monetary union if we did not want to go on being enmeshed in day to day economic problems.

In the ensuing debate, the concern about the state of Europe's economy was general, the focal points being whether the policy guidelines proposed by the Commission would suffice or whether alternative ways of getting Europe back to work could be devised. The most critical speakers were Mrs Marie Thérèse Goutmann (Fr,CA) and Lord Bruce of Donington (Br,S). Their particular target was European firms investing in developing countries and phasing out jobs at

home. Lord Bruce suggested that producers now dominated the market instead of the consumer, which upset the whole balance of classical economic theory. He suggested the Commission should think again : why, for example, had it still to publish its final conclusions on the Maldague Report on the causes of inflation?

In reply, Mr Ortoli agreed competition was a factor to be considered but doubted if there were any simple answer. Deep seated structural changes were taking place and the Commission was endeavouring to cope with their effects on the economy. Put more simply, the Commission did not like the way things were going and believed something could be done about it. Let us therefore attack the problem together.

Competition policy : Commission's sixth report

Mr Coustés report. Motion tabled commended what the Commission had done further to Parliament's suggestions of last year but regretted that no effort had been made to apply competition policy to some Community activities. Mr Vouel replied.

The Commission's 200 page report on competition policy in the Community in 1976 reviews (a) the main developments in Community policy and in national policies; (b) the main decisions taken by the Commission; (c) state aids and (d) the development of concentrations in the Community.

Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté (Fr,EPD), rapporteur for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, argued that competition policy in 1976 had to be seen against a background of persisting inflation, unemployment and balance-of-payments disequilibria with which was coupled the need for the Community to face up to fierce international competition and unavoidable structural changes. This, he said, showed both the importance of competition policy in the implementation of the economic policies of the Community and the Member States and the difficulties inherent in its application.

In reply, Mr Vouel reminded the House that competition policy was not simply a matter of applying rules automatically. Sectors like textiles and shipbuilding, for example, called for crisis measures. But competition must remain the guiding principle, he said.

THURSDAY, 17th November 1977

Research

Reports by Mr Holst, Mr Veronesi and Mr Edwards (Doc. 361/77, 348/77, 349/77). Motions tabled asked Parliament to approve Commission's proposals, subject to amendment in the case of the raw materials programme.

Parliament's first business this morning was a joint debate on a series of related Commission proposals on research even though, as Lord Bessborough (Br,EC) pointed out, the relationship between them was somewhat tenuous.

The first item, on which Mr Erik Holst (Da,S) reported, was the Commission's guidelines for a science and technology policy over the next 3 years. It will be remembered that the terms of reference for this policy were laid down in four Council resolutions on January 14th 1974. Further to this, the present priorities are to ensure the long term supply of resources, to promote competitive economic developments, improve living and working conditions and protect the environment. Mr Holst, for the Committee on Energy and Research, welcomed the Commission's proposals.

Mr Protogene Veronesi (It,CA) then reported to Parliament on the Commission's proposals for a raw materials research and development programme covering the years 1977-1981. He asked Parliament to approve the Commission's proposals, which involve finance for action not carried out directly by the Community, subject to certain reservations. He questioned whether the sum of 23m EUA (15 million pounds) for example, was really enough for the Commission's programme.

Mr Bob Edwards's (Br,S) report concerned the Commission's first programme of medical research. This is to be concentrated on

- (a) the registration of congenital abnormalities;
- (b) the cellular ageing and decreased functional capacity of organs;
- (c) extracorporeal oxygenation.

The amount of money allocated for this purpose is 8.95m over 4 years. Mr Edwards's motion called upon Parliament to approve the Commission's proposal which is designed to help prevent human handicaps.

Among the points made in the debate were Lord Bessborough's suggestion that the Community should look to its relations with the ACP countries and China in mapping out the future of its mining and extractive industries.

For the Commission, Mr Guido Brunner thanked the House for the support it had voiced. The guidelines defined the Community's research priorities, and progress would be reviewed regularly. On the question of progress, Mr Brunner told the House that the JRC had last year doubled the number of patents registered compared to the previous year.

Saving energy and exploiting alternative energy sources

Commission proposals on giving financial support to energy projects (Doc. 158/77). Mr Brown's report (Doc. 362/77). Motion tabled welcomes proposals. Mr Brunner replied for the Commission.

The Commission's proposal on energy saving is designed to give financial support to demonstrating energy-saving techniques with a view to convincing manufacturers and consumers of their economic and practical value. The specific projects which the Commission proposes supporting are :

- (a) heat pumps
- (b) heat recovery
- (c) the combined production of heat and power
- (d) energy storage
- (e) projects for reducing waste in industry
- (f) low-energy houses

The aid to be granted amounts to 144m EUA (94 million pounds) over a five-year period.

Its proposal on alternative energy sources concentrates on helping to make better use of the Community's indigenous energy sources to help cut down imports. The two areas for which aid is to be granted are:

- exploitation of geothermal fields and
- gasification and liquefaction of coal.

The House welcomed the proposals. Replying, Mr Brunner took up a point made by Lord St. Oswald, who was anxious that there should be no duplication of efforts in this field : the Commission was, he said, taking steps to ensure that cooperation in research with third countries took place wherever possible.

QUESTION TIME

QUESTIONS TO THE COMMISSION

Community-Japan trade (Willie Hamilton)

Commissioner Richard Burke told the House that President Jenkins had visited Japan from 11th-14th October 1977 and had had talks with senior Japanese Government ministers. He had emphasized the need for voluntary restraint on the Japanese side in order to reduce the serious trade imbalance between it and the Community. In particular, the Japanese had accepted his proposal for a joint study group to monitor bilateral trade agreements and to report at six-monthly intervals.

Competition from COMECON in the iron and steel sector (Willy Dondelinger)

Mr Burke pointed out that no agreement had been reached with Japan on restricting steel exports, and so far the only way to keep a check on steel imports from the COMECON countries was through the quota system. This was applied with more vigour by some countries than by others.

Enlargement of the Community (Jean Durieux)

Since there had been no disagreement within the Commission on the implications of enlargement, Mr Gundelach told Mr Jean Durieux (Fr, L), there could be no link between that and the Commission's decision not to forward to the Council the interim report on enlargement and the problems facing Mediterranean agriculture. He did agree, however, that major structural reform of Mediterranean agriculture would be necessary following enlargement.

European motor industry (Tom Normanton)

The Commission made no distinction between European motor manufacturers, whether they were partly owned by American firms or not. Regular meetings were being held on problems affecting the motor industry in general, and the automobile manufacturers association could contact the Commission directly or through a liaison committee to discuss specific issues.

Cut-back in third countries' fishing quotas (Kai Nyborg)

Mr Gundelach said that the catch quotas for third countries were being cut back in every case where the countries concerned had nothing to offer in exchange, or where third countries cut back on catch quotas for Community countries in their own waters. The Commission's action in banning Russian fishing vessels following the Russian ban on fishing in the Barent Sea was a case in point. What was causing the Commission great concern, however, was that there were Russian mother ships in Community waters. Were they being supplied by fishing vessels flying the British flag?

In reply to a further question from Mr Kai Nyborg (Da, EPD) about fishing in Greenland waters, Mr Gundelach said, that the Commission's aim was to cut back on industrial fishing there especially by Norwegian vessels. Shrimp fishing by Norway, however, was a rather different case.

Mr James Spicer (Br, EC) then raised the question of vessels from Scotland and the North-East fishing for mackerel off the Cornish coast: this could be a disaster. Mr Gundelach agreed, although there was room for increasing the mackerel catch.

In reply to a further question from Uwe Jensen (Da, EPD), Mr Gundelach said the essence of the negotiations with Norway was to strike a balance, the problem being the common fish stock in the middle waters. Mrs Winifred Ewing (Br, Ind) then reminded the House that 62-65 per cent of the Community pond consisted of British waters and argued that to talk of giving the United Kingdom a 22 per cent share in catch quotas was unreasonable. Mrs Ewing asked whether the whole debate did not smack of a certain unreality.

On a different tack, Mr Hans-Edgar Jahn (Ge, CD) asked whether some advantage could not be gained from the fact that the mackerel were enemies of the herring.

Voting

There were 57 Members present and voting when the Second Amending Budget for 1977 came up, a number somewhat short of the 100 figure needed for amendments to be accepted. The amendments to the Second Amending Budget moved earlier this week were therefore not adopted.

The House then agreed to the motions contained in the reports by: Lord Ardwick (after amendment) (Doc. 377/77); Mr Santer (Doc. 345/77); Mr Cousté (Doc. 347/77); Mr Müller (Doc. 343/77); Mr Holst (after amendment) (Doc. 361/77); Mr Veronesi (Doc. 348/77); Mr Edwards (after amendment) (Doc. 349/77) and Mr Brown (Doc. 362/77).

The House then agreed to an amendment text of the motion on the Second Amending Budget, originally tabled by Lord Bruce of Donington (Br, S).

Protest

Mr Egon Klepsch (Ge), leader of the Christian Democratic Group then rose to protest about a press conference which had just been given in Brussels by – he believed – François-Xavier Ortoli. It was, he said, disregarding the European Parliament and he voiced his protest in sharply critical terms.

Yesterday, during the debate on economic policy, Lord Bruce of Donington had asked Mr Ortoli if it was true that he intended giving a press conference today, Thursday, outlining the Commission's new plans for Economic and Monetary Union. Mr Ortoli had replied that he was unsure of his schedule for this day.

Replying on behalf of the Commission on this point, Mr Richard Burke expressed his 'profound regret' and assured the House he would convey their sentiments to his colleagues.

Food aid

- Commission's proposal on financing food aid. Mr Aigner's report. Motion tabled approves Commission proposal to include food aid under Title 9 of the budget. (Doc. 382/77)
- Commission's proposal on financing the Food Aid Convention of 1971. Mr Aigner's report.

Mr Gundelach replying to the debate, agreed with rapporteur Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD) that there was much to be gained from the increased budgetary transparency that would result from placing food aid under Title 9 of the budget. Reacting to an intervention by Lord Bruce of Donington (Br, S), Mr Gundelach stressed that the Commission's policy had always been to grant food

aid in whatever quantities were needed – and certainly not as a means of reducing Community food surpluses.

Urban concentrations

Commission's proposal for research into growth of conurbations. Mr Evans' report. Motion tabled approved Commission's proposal. Mr Gundelach replied. (Doc. 351/77).

Community road transport quotas

Mr Giraud's report. Motion tabled asks Parliament to approve the Commission's bid to double the Community road transport quotas. (Doc. 380/77).

Every year the Commission makes proposals for road transport quotas to be granted on a Community basis. These represent only a small proportion of freight operations but are an important part of Community policy. Mr Pierre Giraud (Fr, S), for Parliament's Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport deplored the Council's attitude to increasing quotas.

Mr Richard Burke thanked the House for its support of the Commission's proposals, which were aimed at doubling the number of Community road transport authorizations from 2363 to 4726. He agreed that the Commission would continue to keep a careful check on the use of Community authorizations and on the general trend in supply and demand on the goods transport market.

Unfreezing appropriations

Commission's request for unfreezing of appropriations entered in Article 930 of the 1977 budget. Lord Bruce of Donington's report. Motion tabled approves Commission's initiative in seeking unfreezing of these funds. Mr Burke replied.

At issue was the release of 45m u.a. which had been entered under Article 930 of the 1977 budget for financing Community financial and technical aid to non-associated developing countries. Commissioner Tugendhat, Lord Bruce told the House, had informed Parliament last October that it had not spent this money because it was awaiting the adoption of the necessary regulation by the

Council, but, Lord Bruce stressed, appropriations entered under Article 930 counted as non-compulsory expenditure over which Parliament had the final say. There was no reason, therefore, for the Commission to await a Council decision in the matter, and he recalled that Commissioner Tugendhat had already stated that he would recommend that the Commission should proceed with expenditure of these funds even in the absence of Council legislation. He asked Commissioner Burke to confirm the Commission's attitude on this point, which was of fundamental constitutional importance.

In reply, Mr Burke told Lord Bruce that the Commission would concentrate its efforts on persuading the Council to adopt the necessary legislation before the end of the year. He was not, however, able to anticipate Commissioner Tugendhat's recommendation to the Commission on spending the money regardless.

Additional protocol to agreement with Malta.

Mr Bersani's report (spoken to by Mr Martinelli). Motion tabled approves the Commission's recommendation for a regulation concluding the protocol. In reply, Mr Burke thanked the House for its support.

FRIDAY, 18th November 1977

Abuse of psychiatric medicine

Mr Russell Johnston's report (Doc. 373/77). Motion tabled condemns psychiatric treatment of political prisoners and calls on governments of Nine to take this up at Belgrade.

The European Parliament began today's business with a report by Russell Johnston (Br, L) on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee. Mr Johnston said the evidence was that dissenters in the Soviet Union were regarded as mental defectives and treated accordingly. And it was not only political dissent that was punished. He quoted the case of a man converted to Christianity who was told that mental illness lay at the root of his conversion. He urged the House to agree to his motion condemning the abuse of psychiatry everywhere and calling on the Nine governments to take this matter up at Belgrade.

Jan Broeksz (Du), for the Socialists, did not dissent but asked whether Belgrade, not Strasbourg, were not the best place for dealing with this issue.

Mr Hans-Werner Müller (Ge), Christian Democrat spokesman, gave the motion his group's unequivocal backing. He quoted Kruscher's dictum 'We have no opponents in the Soviet Union only madmen' in evidence of the Russian view of opposition to the Kremlin.

Lord Bethell, for the European Conservatives, gave the motion his group's unequivocal backing. It was beyond doubt that dissenters in the Soviet Union were being infected with haloperidol – a drug never administered on its own in western psychiatric practice – to the point where the symptoms of insanity appeared. Administered on its own, the drug induced symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease: muscular rigidity, a desire to change the bodily position all the time, difficulty in thinking and walking ... a state of anxiety and fear. One dissenter had said: 'I felt I was being turned into an idiot'. Such torture by injection was a flagrant violation of the Hippocratic oath and must be condemned.

Mr Tam Dalyell (Br, S), speaking in his own name, doubted the wisdom of lecturing Mother Russia on the way it treated its nationals. He felt the European Parliament should be more concerned with its own nationals, with what happened in Northern Ireland or seeking where Community funds went in Calabria, for example. Mr Dalyell also asked that evidence be brought for the whole case before the House.

Both Mr James Spicer (Br, EC) and Lord St Oswald (Br, EC) expressed surprise at this. Lord St Oswald argued it was wrong to identify the evil and vicious group who were victimising the people of the Soviet Union with Mother Russia. To this Mr Dalyell replied that in his own dealings, for constituents, with Russia he had found the Russian Embassy in London helpful. Lord Bethell expressed disbelief.

Mr Horst Seefeld (Ge, S) also disagreed with his Socialist colleague, reminding the House that the motion before the House had been endorsed by all the Socialists in the Political Affairs Committee. The European Parliament must raise its voice, he said.

Mrs Winnie Ewing (Br, Ind) agreed, 'I am asking the governments of the Nine to listen to the voice of this parliament' she said, pointing out that it was a good

time to raise the issue of the abuse of psychiatric treatment because the Soviets were sensitive to pressure from abroad.

Replying for the Commission, Wilhelm Haferkamp shared the sentiments expressed in the motion. Any violation of the Final Act of Helsinki would, he added, be considered as a threat to détente.

Mr Johnston, summing-up, argued that it was the business of the European Parliament to lecture any who disregarded human rights anywhere.

Commission's proposals for quotas on sardines imported from Morocco and Tunisia.

Mr Pucci's report (Doc. 358/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposals (Doc. 306/77), Mr Haferkamp replied.

Commission's proposal on imports from Turkey.

Mr Spicer's report (Doc. 353/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposals (Doc. 271/77) Mr Haferkamp replied.

Commission proposals on tractor seats

Mr Herbert's report (Doc. 356/77). Motion tabled considers that the optional approach to introducing legislation on tractor safety (in this case, as regards seats) should be for a limited period only and that 'unified Community legislation for all the Member States should be enacted at a later stage'. The motion called for an amendment to the Commission's proposal (Doc. 234/77). Mr Haferkamp replied.

Commission's proposal on tax and social security arrangements for staff of the Centre for Industrial Development.

Mr Würtz's report (Doc. 321/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposal subject to amendment. Mr Haferkamp replied.

Voting

At the close of business Parliament agreed, without amendment, to the motions contained in the reports by: Mr Aigner (Doc. 382/77); Mr Giraud (Doc. 380/77); Lord Bruce of Donington (Doc. 388/77); Mr Bersani (Doc. 378/77); Mr Johnston (Doc. 373/77); Mr Pucci (Doc. 358/77); Mr Spicer (Doc. 363/77); Mr Herbert (Doc. 356/77); Mr Würtz (Doc. 321/77); and Mr Nyborg (Doc. 376/77).

Next sittings

In Strasbourg, from December 12th – 16th 1977.

SUMMARY OF THE WEEK

Monday's business

The House sat from 5.10 p.m. to 9.45 p.m.

- Equal treatment for men and women: Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti's report on Commission's proposals. Motion tabled welcomed proposals subject to amendment. Mr Vredeling replied. (Doc. 355/77).
- Illegal migration and illegal employment. Mr Pisoni's report on Commission's proposals. Motion tabled welcomed proposals subject to amendment. Mr Vredeling replied. (Doc. 352/77).
- Trade with Yugoslavia. Mr Bettiza's question to the Commission. Mr Vredeling, for Mr Haferkamp, replied. (Doc. 370/77).

Tuesday's business

The House sat from 9.05 a.m. to 1.10 p.m. and from 3.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

- Political cooperation: statement by Council President Henri Simonet. (Doc. 371/77).
- South Africa: measures taken by South African Government against opponents of 'apartheid'. Mr Ludwig Fellermaier's question on behalf of the Socialist Group. Mr Simonet replied. (Doc. 371/77).
- Question Time. (Doc. 374/77).
- Mr Fletcher-Cooke's report on terrorism. Motion called on Member States to cooperate to protect Community citizens from acts of terrorism. (Doc. 372/77).
- Voting. Parliament agreed to the motions in the reports by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti and Mr Pisoni.
- Second amending budget for 1977. Lord Bruce's report. Mr Tugendhat, for the Commission, welcomed the amendments tabled. Mr Simonet, for the Council, reserved his position. (Doc. 387/77).

- Direct elections. Joint debate on Mr Berkhouwer's question to the Council on the timing of the first direct elections to the European Parliament and on a motion tabled by four political groups on this subject. Mr Simonet replied. (Doc. 386/77).
- Aid to non-associated developing countries. Miss Flesch's question to the Council. Mr Simonet replied. (Doc. 366/77).

Wednesday's business

The House sat from 10.05 a.m. to 1.05 p.m. and from 3.05 p.m. to 10.05 p.m.

- Special rights (Community citizenship): Mr Scelba's report. Motion tabled asked Commission for proposals for granting special rights to Community citizens. (Doc. 346/77).
- Question Time: 7 questions to the Commission.
- Voting: The House agreed to the motions tabled by Mr Berkhouwer (timing of direct elections) (Doc. 386/77), Mr Fletcher-Cooke, after amendment of the original text (dealing with terrorism) (Doc. 372/77) and Mr Scelba, after amendment of the original text (special rights for Community citizens) (Doc. 346/77).
- The economy: joint debate on annual report on Community's economic situation and economic policy guidelines for 1978 (Lord Ardwick's report, Doc. 377/77), Mr Durieux's question on unemployment and inflation in the EEC (Doc. 368/77) and Mr Santer's report on the Tripartite Conference of 27th June 1977 (Doc. 345/77). Vice-President Ortoli and Mr Henk Vredeling replied for the Commission.
- Competition policy: Commission's sixth report. Mr Cousté's report. Motion tabled commended what the Commission had done but regretted that no effort had been made to apply competition policy to all Community activities. Mr Vouel replied. (Doc. 347/77).

Thursday's business

The House sat from 10.00 a.m. to 1.05 p.m. and from 3.05 p.m. to 6.40 p.m.

- **Research:** Reports by Mr Holst, Mr Veronesi and Mr Edwards. Motions tabled asked Parliament to approve Commission's proposals, subject to amendment in the case of the raw materials programme. (Docs. 361/77, 348/77, 349/77).
- **Saving energy and exploiting alternative energy sources:** Commission proposals on giving financial support to energy projects. Mr Brown's report. Motion tabled welcomes proposals. Mr Brunner replied for the Commission. (Doc. 362/77).
- **Question Time:** 5 questions to the Commission.
- **Voting.** Parliament agreed to the motions in the reports by Lord Ardwick (after amendment) (Doc. 377/77); Mr Santer (Doc. 345/77); Mr Cousté (Doc. 347/77); Mr Müller (Doc. 343/77); Mr Holst (after amendment) (Doc. 361/77); Mr Veronesi (Doc. 348/77); Mr Edwards (after amendment) (Doc. 349/77) and Mr Brown (Doc. 362/77).
- **Food aid:** Commission's proposal on financing food aid. Mr Aigner's report. Motion tabled approves Commission proposal to include food aid under Title 9 of the budget. (Doc. 382/77). Commission's proposal on financing the Food Aid Convention of 1971. Mr Aigner's report.
- **Urban concentrations.**
- **Community road transport quotas.** Mr Giraud's report. Motion tabled asks Parliament to approve the Commission's bid to double the Community road transport quotas. (Doc. 380/77).
- **Unfreezing appropriations.**
- **Additional protocol to agreement with Malta.** Mr Bersani's report (spoken to by Mr Martinelli). Motion tabled approves the Commission's recommendation for a regulation concluding the protocol. In reply, Mr Burke thanked the House for its support.

Friday's business

The House sat from 9.00 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.

- Abuse of psychiatric medicine. Mr Russell Johnston's report (Doc. 373/77). Motion tabled condemns psychiatric treatment of political prisoners and calls on governments of Nine to take this up at Belgrade.
- Commission's proposals for quotas on sardines imported from Morocco and Tunisia. Mr Pucci's report (Doc. 358/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposals (Doc. 306/77) Mr Haferkamp replied.
- Commission's proposal on imports from Turkey. Mr Spicer's report (Doc. 353/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposals (Doc. 271/77). Mr Haferkamp replied.
- Commission proposals on tractor seats. Mr Herbert's report (Doc. 356/77). Motion tabled considers that the optional approach to introducing legislation on tractor safety (in this case, as regards seats) should be for a limited period only and that 'unified Community legislation for all the Member States should be enacted at a later stage'. The motion called for an amendment to the Commission's proposal (Doc. 234/77). Mr Haferkamp replied.
- Commission's proposal on tax and social security arrangements for staff of the Centre for Industrial Development. Mr Würtz's report (Doc. 321/77). Motion tabled approves Commission's proposal subject to amendment. Mr Haferkamp replied.
- Voting
At the close
- Next sittings
In Strasbourg, from December 12th – 16th 1977.

NOTES

Radio Europe

Parliament's audio-visual information service this week played host in Strasbourg to Radio Europe, a unique joint venture in broadcasting which plans to take to the air in November 1978.

Radio Europe is the brainchild of Gerry Mansell, Managing Director of the BBC's external service. The idea is to provide Europe with its first multilingual news and current affairs station, under joint editorial control.

On the air mornings, middays and evenings and using existing transmitters and wavelengths, the new service will pool the technical and editorial resources of the BBC and a number of European radio stations to provide a large part of Europe with comprehensive coverage of European Community affairs.

If all goes well, Radio Europe will begin test transmissions in spring next year – if possible to coincide with direct elections to the European Parliament. Broadcasts initially will probably be in English, German and French.

During the session in Strasbourg this week, BBC journalists, helped by Parliament's audio-visual information service, recorded in entirety the first 3 days of session. They selected and sent back over three and a half hours of debates, reports and interviews. These will be used in compiling dummy programmes as a prelude to final decisions on programme content and style.

President's visit to London

On 18 November 1977 the President of the European Parliament, Mr Emilio Colombo, will make an official visit to London, when he will be received in audience by Her Majesty the Queen.

In London Mr Colombo will have talks with Prime Minister James Callaghan, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Dr David Owen, and Mr Frank Judd, Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He will also be received by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Elwyn-Jones, and the Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr George Thomas, MP.

Mr Colombo will also have talks with the leader of the Opposition, Mrs Margaret Thatcher and Mr Jeremy Thorpe, representing the Liberal Party.

During his visit to London the President of the European Parliament will be accompanied by the Director of his Private Office, Mr Francesco Pasetti Bombardella, Director-General, and by Mr John Taylor, Director-General for Research and Documentation.

THE POWERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Introduction

The European Community is the only international body able to enact legislation directly binding not only on the countries that belong to it but in some cases, on the citizenry too. The Community Treaties spell out certain aims and the Community institutions are required to see to it that they are achieved.

The European Community institutions responsible for enacting legislation to achieve Community objectives are the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission. The Economic and Social Committee, a body representing labour and management, is also involved in the legislative process in a consultative capacity.

In this legislative process the responsibility for drafting bills rests with the European Commission. In some cases the Commission is also empowered by the Treaty to take the actual decisions. But in most cases the power of decision in the European Community is vested in a Council made up of Ministers from member country governments.

The European Parliament's role in this legislative process is advisory and supervisory. The Treaties require that it be consulted by the Council on most Commission proposals and, taking advantage of Article 149 of the Rome Treaty, it may call for these proposals to be amended or even completely reconsidered before they go for final decision back to the Council. Parliament's supervisory function — its power of control — is most widely invoked in the right to address questions to Commission and Council about Community legislation and indeed about all aspects of Community business and thereafter to criticise these bodies if necessary and even to censure the Commission. In recent years, and particularly since the Community became self-financing, it has acquired a far greater power of control over the Community's budget.

To get these powers in perspective it may be helpful to consider them under three main headings: Parliament's right to be consulted, Parliament's powers of control and Parliament's budgetary powers.

Parliament's right to be consulted

One important point to underline about the European Parliament's powers is that they tend to evolve as the Community itself evolves. In particular there is now a tendency on the part of the Council to consult the European Parliament about virtually all Commission proposals even where there is no explicit provision in the Treaty to this effect. And the European Parliament itself has evolved its own highly systematic way of considering Commission proposals, the essence of which is its committee system.

The European Parliament has 12 specialist committees and it is in these committees, usually meeting in Brussels, that a detailed analysis of Commission proposals is made. The Commission is always represented at these committee meetings and is able to answer questions about the proposals on the table and indeed about any other related proposals that may still be in the drafting stage with the Commission. These meetings are part of an ongoing, frank but friendly dialogue between the Commission and Parliament and are the essence of the first stage in Parliament's consideration of Commission proposals. The second stage, of course, is the plenary session which is attended by all 198 members of the European Parliament and which is open to the press, television and public. It is in preparation for the plenary session that the committees draw up the reports on Commission proposals, submitting their conclusions in the form of a motion to be voted on by the whole House. Reports are actually presented to the House by the committee member in whose name they stand, he or she being known in the terminology of the European Parliament as 'rapporteur'.

The committee summing up Parliament's conclusion may, as has already been suggested, call for changes in the Commission proposal. The Commissioner present in the House may indeed indicate his willingness to make the changes called for. On the other hand he may not. He may simply send the Commission's proposals on to the Council unamended.

The extent to which the Commission takes account of amendments called for is of vital concern to the European Parliament. And keeping a check on the action the Commission takes on Parliament's advice is of the essence of Parliament's control function. Parliament's task is made easier here by undertaking given to Parliament by Commission and Council to keep it informed of action taken further to Parliament's resolutions.

Parliament's powers of control

In July 1973 the Commission began making statements to Parliament, usually at the beginning of sessions, on the action it had taken on Parliament's advice. And Parliament will usually express concern if a session week does not begin with some statement of this kind. Parliament will usually question the Commission on this point as indeed it does on a great many points.

Parliament's right to ask questions is its second most important power. Here again Parliament's powers have evolved as the Community itself has evolved. To begin with Members used to put down questions for written reply and table oral questions to the Commission for debate in the House. Then in April 1973 a Question Time was introduced at which a great many questions could be asked together with follow-up or supplementary questions where further elucidation was sought. Very gradually Question Time has grown until today it has become one of the main features of Parliament's business. The Council answers questions at Question Time now as does the representative of the Foreign Ministers of the Nine Member States of the European Community meeting in political cooperation. Speaking in January 1973 when the idea of question time was first mooted, Sir Derek Walker-Smith, current Chairman of Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee, had this to say, 'It is right to remember that the value of question time is not restricted to particular answers to specific questions. It is a case where the whole is much more than the sum of the individual parts.'

The real value of a regular question time is that it imposes on the executive the knowledge that all their actions are subject to parliamentary scrutiny and interrogation and will be examined closely and conscientiously in the interests of those millions whom we here seek to represent. That knowledge has a tonic effect on executive bodies. It is a spur where speed is needed and a brake where administrative considerations are in danger of out-running popular will.

The attitude of Parliament to the executive should be one of criticism and inquiry, tempered by the realisation that action, administration and the effective practice of government is inherently and inescapably more difficult than the task of comment and criticism without the function of government, which is all that rests with us here in this Chamber. The relationship should therefore be one of continual confrontation stopping short of conflict.'

What is true of Question Time in particular is also true of the right to ask questions in general. And coupled with this right is the power vested in

Parliament under Article 144 of the Rome Treaty to oust the Commission should Parliament feel it is failing to discharge its responsibilities. The Parliament has, of course, no such power with respect to the Council in the matter of ordinary legislation. It can put questions to the Council and can even bring a certain amount of pressure to bear on the Council in a number of ways. But it is only in respect of the budget that the European Parliament has really begun to share power with the Council.

Parliament's budgetary powers

The procedure by which a budget comes to be established in December each year for the year following is somewhat complex. It involves both Commission, Parliament and Council in the same way as other legislation but the emphasis is different. The Commission draws up preliminary estimates for the year following and the Council then establishes a draft budget. But the final budget is determined by consultation between Council and Parliament. It is actually the signature of the President of the European Parliament on the budget which makes it final. It may also be worth adding that the European Parliament has the power to amend the budget by increasing or decreasing certain categories of expenditure and it has the power to reject the budget as a whole but this may well be less important than the right Parliament has to vet every item of income and expenditure and to make its views known.

Summary

The European Parliament has five main powers:

- (1) the right to be consulted and informed about Community legislation and to influence the shape it takes, particularly in the drafting stage,
- (2) the right to question Commission and Council and thereby prompt the disclosure of information,
- (3) the power to oust the European Commission by passing a motion of censure,
- (4) the power to amend and pass or reject the Community's budget, and
- (5) the right to criticise Council and Commission for the action they are taking or failing to take in pursuing Community policies.

The future

The Paris Summit of 1974, the one which called for proposals for electing the European Parliament directly, had this to say about the future Parliament's powers: 'The competence of the European Assembly will be extended, in particular by granting it certain powers in the Community's legislative process.' But there has not yet been any indication as to what form such an extension of its competence might take. Similarly, President Roy Jenkins, in his opening address to Parliament in January 1977, suggested that once the European Parliament is directly elected it will have 'greater moral authority'. But again it is not clear what this will amount to in practice. Will the Commission or – more important – the Council attach greater weight to Parliament's opinions on such matters as the annual farm price review once the Parliament is directly elected? All one can say is that Council and Commission **may** attach greater weight to Parliament's opinions but neither will be under any legal obligation to do so.

THE SEAT

The main legal text concerning the seat of the European Parliament is the 'decision of the representatives of the governments of the Member States on the provisional location of certain institutions and departments of the Communities' (April 8th 1965). The relevant articles of this decision are as follows:

Article 1

Luxembourg, Brussels and Strasbourg shall remain the provisional places of work of the institutions of the Communities.

Article 2

During the months of April, June and October, the Council shall hold its sessions in Luxembourg.

Article 3

The Court of Justice shall remain in Luxembourg ...

Article 4

The General Secretariat of the Assembly and its departments shall remain in Luxembourg ...'

In practice what happens is that the European Parliament has its sittings either in Strasbourg (one provisional place of work) or Luxembourg (another provisional place of work) and holds most of its committee meetings in Brussels (another provisional place of work).

There is no reason to anticipate any change in this provisional arrangement for the time being.

Members of the European Parliament have expressed concern about this arrangement from time to time but, as has been frequently stated in reply to questions in the House, this is not an issue for the Commission or even the Council. It is a matter for the Member States.

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