



european parliament

information series

the sittings

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The Sittings

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A complete record of the proceedings of the House is given in the 'Debates of the European Parliament' which is published as an Annex to the Official Journal of the European Communities.

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Session of the European Parliament

1975 – 1976

Sittings held in Luxembourg

from

Monday, 10th November to Friday 14th November 1975

Introduction

Parliament's main business this week was discussing and voting on amendments to the Community's draft budget for 1976. There were a great many amendments but only those endorsed by the Committee on Budgets got the one hundred votes necessary for acceptance. (A full list of accepted amendments is given in the Postscript). The effect of these amendments is to add 441 m u.a. back into the budget to give a new total figure of 7,920 m u.a. The amendments will be discussed between Parliament and Council on 3rd December. The Council is not bound to accept them because the extent to which Parliament can amend the budget is subject to a limit and 441 m u.a. is well above this limit. But Parliament argues that of the 321 m u.a. amendments (the remaining 120 m u.a. consist of proposals for modifications which the Council can set aside anyway) only 84.5 m u.a. would be immediately available for disposal, the rest still being subject to a Council decision. Parliament's case is that to include these sums now would mean there would be no need for supplementary budgets later. It remains to be seen how the Council will react. But certainly Mr Francesco Fabbri, Italian Under-Secretary of State at the Treasury and President of the Council, was conciliatory in the debate this week.

The issue of supplementary budgets came up again in the form of the third supplementary budget for 1975. Parliament objects to these supplementaries, unless they are to cover new policies or unexpected expenditure. Council and Commission said the third supplementary for 1975 covered unexpected

expenditure and Parliament said it did not. Mr James Hopkins' comments on this subject were particularly forceful. So although Commissioner Claude Cheysson warned that if the extra budget were not adopted this week the Community might have difficulty meeting its commitments, Parliament declined to pass it. Instead, on a motion from Mr Heinrich Aigner, Parliament introduced an amendment, the effect of which will be to delay the adoption of this supplementary budget until December.

Parliament's action (supported by 105 votes in favour, one against and seven abstentions) can be seen as a protest: both about supplementary budgets in general and about the Council's failure to agree on a common base of assessment for VAT in particular. Parliament argues that because a proportion of VAT receipts would be made over automatically to the Community, the whole question of liquidities would resolve itself anyway. This did not go down very well with Commission and Council.

Apart from which, the whole atmosphere for dealing with the budget has been described as excellent on all sides. And the presence at the budget debate of Mr Christian Poncelet, French Secretary of State for the budget, was particularly appreciated.

Budget

Parliament's bid to restore budget to something like its original shape

After Parliament's October debate when hardly any one had a word to say in favour of the draft budget for 1976 (cut back by the Council by over 600 m u.a. from 8 bn u.a. to 7.4 bn u.a.) it was perhaps not surprising that all sections of opinion in the House should now try to do everything possible to restore the budget to something like its original shape. Over one hundred amendments were tabled and the discussion of these was the essence of Tuesday's debate.

First, however, there were introductory speeches in which there was a great deal of general criticism but in which one or two specific points were made. Mr Michel Cointat, (Fr, EPD), for example, told the House that the Council had made no final comment on the vexed questions of how expenditure should be classified or the maximum rate. This he thought was hopeful. He found the excellent atmosphere for the 'concertation' (talks) between Parliament and Council another positive feature. He also praised improvements in the way the



Mr Michel Cointat: 'It is intended that the European Parliament should be directly elected in 1978; its powers over the budget must add up to something more than this before then.'

budget was presented. But he stressed the need to bring in VAT as a source of EC income; he criticised the practice of supplementary budgets; he called for a better nomenclature and he suggested that more recourse should be had to loans within the budget. Finally, he called for a better definition of 'commitment appropriations'. On a rather minor but perhaps a significant point he said that one third of EC's operating expenses (5 per cent of total) consisted in the salaries of linguistic staff and referred to the danger of a tower of Babel.

For the political groups, Socialist spokesman Mr Erwin Lange (Ge, S) called for a tougher line by the European Parliament. Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD), for the Christian Democrats, even hinted at the possibility of Parliament's total rejection of the budget. Mr Aigner's main complaint was the way the draft budget was cobbled together in the national capitals instead of being agreed in the Council. This practice made a nonsense of the idea of cooperation between institutions. Mr Martin Bangemann (Ge, L), for the Liberals, took a similar line. No intergovernmental arrangement could take the place of the EC's institutions.

Mr Michael Yeats takes issue with regional fund cuts

Mr Michael Yeats (Ir, EPD), for the European Progressive Democrats, made three major points: (1) he suggested that a consensus was emerging about abolishing

the somewhat arbitrary distinction between different types of EC expenditure; (2) he said his Group would oppose the CAP spending cuts aimed at by Mr Lange. The Socialist bid is to transfer a substantial proportion of CAP expenditure to Chapter 98; (3) he had this to say about the cuts in the regional fund: 'We must always remember that these regional imbalances which exist to such an extent in our Community have a double effect. In the first place, they result in a continuing and sometimes increasing impoverishment of the poorer areas such as the south of Italy, the west of Ireland, parts of Britain and of many other member countries; indeed, all the member countries have areas which to one extent or another have failed to benefit as richer areas have from our policies. Over quite extensive areas, we have pockets of unemployment of 10, 15, 20 per cent, not just in this year, when we are all suffering from an economic crisis, but always, year after year after year, generation after generation, you have problems such as this. You have very low living standards. And you have above all enormous levels of emigration. It seems altogether extraordinary that in our Community today there should be millions of workers who have had to leave their families and friends, the place where they were born and were brought up, in order to find work in crowded cities.

This brings me to the second problem caused by regional imbalance — that of excessive concentration in cities in the richer areas of the Community. It is not merely that these imbalances cause poverty in certain areas and a continuing drain on manpower; in the industrial areas you have overcrowding, excessive traffic, pollution of all kinds and a general lack of space and amenities. Now these are the kind of problems which from the inception of the Community it has been hoped to deal with by regional policy, and that is why it is so tragic to have, year after year and particularly again in this budget, disappointed hopes, because the Regional Fund, which from the very first was far too small to make more than a marginal difference in these areas, has now in this budget been cut still further. One wonders whether we are serious at all. One wonders whether there is any real intention in the Community, any real intention in the minds of the Council, to do anything practical to remedy the regional deficiencies in our midst, to remedy these enormous levels of unemployment, to bring work to people in their own regions rather than have millions of migrants living in poor housing conditions with no proper education for their children, with all kinds of language problems, living among strangers in overcrowded cities. Is there any real intention to deal with these matters? Or is this budget before us a sign that we do not really care?'

Lord Bessborough (Br, EC), for the European Conservatives, spoke highly of the atmosphere prevailing in Parliament's discussions with the Council. He suggested

the principle of Parliament attending Council meetings could be taken further. He and other speakers spoke very favourably about the idea of multinational budgeting. These would show up the long-term damage done by short-term cuts. But Lord Bessborough was much exercised by the entirely artificial distinction between classes of expenditure. It had to be abolished otherwise he doubted whether he could be able to advise his friends to vote in favour of the budget next year.

Mr Michael Shaw (Br, EC) was unhappy about the budgetary year, beginning as it does before the farm price review and nine months before harvest. Commissioner Claude Cheysson said he would like the time allocated to the budget to be increased by 45 days.

Mr Fazio Fabbrini (It, CA), for the Communists, said it was the same old dirge. The Commission prepared a budget, the Council cut it down – and this year the cuts were far more substantial – and then Parliament tried to restore what it could. Mr Fabbrini felt the main emphasis of the budget should be on tackling unemployment. His Group, he said, would vote against the budget.

Commissioner Claude Cheysson expressed a general criticism that the budget lacked any real design. He criticised the fact that four supplementary budgets were already planned.

Two interesting developments: the Lange modifications and the Council's attitude. Mr Christian Poncelet attends the debate

Mr Erwin Lange, chairman of the Budgets Committee, tried to get modifications accepted in committee that would cut CAP spending by 1.8 billion units of account. The money was to go to other uses. This was defeated. But the proposals for modifications reappeared under the signatures of fifteen Socialists, including Lord Bruce, Mr Tam Dalyell, Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody and Mr Guy Barnett.

Mr Michael Shaw objects

Mr Michael Shaw, in common with Mr Michael Yeats and spokesmen for other groups, objected that this would put this 1 bn u.a. outside Parliament's control. When the Commission wishes to use funds from Chapter 98 it has to consult

Council which then consults Parliament. But this is not quite the same thing. It seemed unlikely, however, that there would be the straight majority needed for the proposed modifications to go through.

President Georges Spénale welcomes Mr Christian Poncelet

One of the most interesting conclusions to be drawn from this debate is how far cooperation between Council and Parliament has now come. Article 203 (the budget article) of the Rome Treaty is (even after the Treaty changes agreed in Council in August) already, to some extent, out of date. So the attitude of the Council in the debate has, from Parliament's standpoint, been very encouraging. The presence of Mr Christian Poncelet, French Secretary of State for the Budget, was particularly appreciated. Mr Poncelet made it clear that his government's attitude was that the Treaty should not be interpreted in an abnormally restrictive manner with respect to Parliament's powers. Mr Francesco Fabbrini, Italian President of the Council, was equally committed.

Parliament's offer to the Council

Parliament's offer to the Council, spelled out by Mr Michel Cointat at the close of the debate, would call for 313 m u.a. to be added back in to the budget (or 30.6 per cent more, in terms of non-obligatory expenditure, than last year). But, as Mr Cointat pointed out, most of this would be blocked either in Chapter 98 or by the fact that the Council had still to take the relevant decisions. Only 84.5 m u.a. would actually be immediately available for disposal. 10 m would go to prospecting for hydrocarbons and the rest to the Social Fund. This would represent an increase of only 8.27 per cent. The Council would still have the last word in respect of most of this 313 m u.a. increase and it would avoid a supplementary budget. It would also cut the amount spent on the CAP from 74 per cent to 70 per cent.

Vote on draft budget for 1976: Parliament backs its Budgets Committee Socialist bid to cut CAP spending by 1.8 bn u.a. defeated

The vote on the draft budget of the European Communities on Thursday was predictable to the point of being almost a formality. Parliament voted for everything the Committee on Budgets recommended and against everything else.

The only addition to the 313 m u.a. of amendments originally recommended by the Commission concerned research. The Committee had asked for 40 m u.a. to be added back into the budget but had asked for 8 m u.a. to be kept in the 'locked drawer' of chapter 98. Commissioner Guido Brunner, on the other hand, told the House that the Commission needed the full amount. The House, accordingly, complied and asked for the full 40 m u.a. (for the full table of amendments adopted please see Postscript). The proposed modifications put forward by Mr Erwin Lange and supported, when it came to the vote, by most of the Socialist Group were defeated on a straight majority vote. Similarly, Socialist amendments to cut back appropriations connected with the EC's Information Bureau in Santiago di Chile were defeated.

The draft general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1976 was adopted by 112 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.

EC's third supplementary budget for 1975

Mr Heinrich Aigner (Ge, CD) gave the House the details of draft supplementary budget no. 3 for 1975. The amount involved here is 204,167,354 u.a. of 'obligatory' expenditure which will bring the 6,061,591,053 total for the 1975 budget up to 6,265,758,407. The main reasons for this supplementary budget are the increases in the guarantee prices for beef and veal (+400 m u.a.), sugar (+90 m u.a.), wine (+105 m u.a.), tobacco (+50 m u.a.), the 230 m u.a. expenditure due to the monetary situation and 100 m u.a. of accession compensation amounts although these are, to some extent, offset by decreases in other guaranteed prices: milk (-400 m u.a.), oil and fats (-270 m u.a.), pigmeat (-75 m u.a.), cereals (-30 m u.a.), rice (-25 m u.a.) and eggs and poultry (-10 m u.a.). The result of the various sums is 260 m u.a. still to be found of which 200 m u.a. will come from a contribution from the Member States and 60 m u.a. from food aid. Mr Aigner pointed out that the need for the supplementary budget would not have arisen had the relevant amount not been cut out of last year's draft budget. He suggested that the supplementary budget was not the Commission's fault.

Commissioner Claude Cheysson, on the other hand, argued that the expenditure involved was totally unpredictable. Mr Francesco Fabbri, President of the Council, said that as the Commission had answered for him there was no need for him to comment.

The amended supplementary budget was voted on on Thursday and referred back to the Council. The amendment tabled by Mr Aigner called for 2.5 m u.a. to be set aside for aid to the Community's beekeepers.

Discharge to Commission for 1971 budget

Mr Horst Gerlach (Ge, S), for the Committee on Budgets, asked the House to give the Commission a final discharge for the 1971 budget. Total expenditure in that year was 2,289,438,550 u.a. The motion was agreed to.

Political affairs

Protectionist pressures in the USA

Speaking in reply to Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté (Fr, EPD), Commissioner Finn Gundelach expressed guarded optimism about the prospects for resisting protectionist pressures on the international economic community. After all these have been successfully resisted so far.

Mr Gundelach agreed that there was tremendous pressure on the American administration to introduce protection but so far it had not done so except in the case of certain cheeses. Why it had done so in this case was a mystery. Even so 3 billions worth of EC exports to the US were still potentially at risk. So 'it is our duty to exert as much influence as we possibly can, in the name of political interest and in the name of economic interest, to sustain the will of the American administration to withstand these pressures, just as it is our duty to withstand, as we have been withstanding, pressures from inside our own Community'.

Looking further ahead Mr Gundelach saw little hope of progress to freer world trade without closer cooperation in the broad spectrum of economic policies.

Mr Gundelach said he would be having talks with US officials in Washington next week.

USSR condemned over Sakharov visa refusal

Spokesmen for five of Parliament's political groups agreed to a motion condemning the refusal of the Soviet authorities to grant Mr Andrei Sakharov a



Andrej Sakharov

visa enabling him to go to Oslo to receive the Nobel Peace prize in person. They consider 'this refusal is manifestly at variance with the undertakings resulting from the final act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe'.

The grounds for the refusal – that Mr Sakharov had access to secret information – were described by Mr Alfred Bertrand (Be, CD) and Mr Willy Hamilton (Br, S) as 'specious'. Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) told the House that his friend Lord Bethell (Br, EC) had spoken to Mrs Sakharov on the telephone on that day (Thursday) and that she had told him: 'My husband has had no access to secret information since 1968'.

Mr Gérard Bordu (Fr, CA) found the motion inconsistent with Parliament's attitude on other issues. The Communists voted against it.

UN resolution on Zionism condemned

Five of the European Parliament's political groups agreed to a motion supporting the Nine Governments of the Community who unanimously voted against the

resolution on Zionism adopted by the General Assembly of the UN on 10 November 1975. The motion condemns 'in the name of the peoples of the European Community the incomprehensible and absurd equation of Zionism with racism, as well as the moral and political consequences which are not conducive to the achievement of a peaceful co-existence for the people or, in particular, the creation of peace in the Middle East'. The Communist and Allies Group abstained.

General approval for Greece's accession

There were two reports before the House on Greece this week. One, by Mr Peter Corterier (Ge, S) on the recommendations of the EC-Greece Joint Parliamentary Committee and the other, by Mr Alain Terrenoire (Fr, EPD) on a protocol to the EC-Greece Association Agreement: this will extend the association to Ireland, Denmark and the United Kingdom. There was general agreement that Greece's accession to the Community as a full member was very much to be desired. European Conservatives added the hope that Turkey would soon have the same status. But they felt some concern as to how Greece would shape up to competition from the rest of the Community.

Mr Finn Gundelach said the Commission would be reporting on Greece's application for membership early in the New Year. Mr John Corrie (Br, EC) suggested Parliament should first wait for this report before finalising its assessment of a credible time scale. The motions before the House were agreed to after slight amendments. The amendments expressed Parliament's continuing concern over the Cyprus question and at the lack of progress in the September negotiations. It called on the Council and Commission to step up their efforts to promote a negotiated solution to these problems.

A world food policy

Commending the efforts made by the US, Canada, Australia and Sweden, Mr Ernest Glinne (Be, S), rapporteur for the Committee on Development and Cooperation, urged the Community too to increase its food aid to at least the level proposed by the Commission. This would mean 356,500 tonnes of cereals to bring total aid in the form of cereals to 1,643,500 tonnes; 75,000 tonnes



Members of the Portuguese Constituent Assembly talking to President Georges Spenale and Vice-President Michael Yeats of the European Parliament

more aid in the dairy products bringing the total to 130,000 tonnes and 3,900 tonnes more sugar bringing the EC total to 10,000 tonnes. This would cost an additional 20 m u.a. Moving his motion, Mr Glinne said 'it is important for the Community to support the international fund for agricultural development as soon as possible'. He added that it was not enough for the Community to grant food aid. It also had to help developing countries improve the quality and the quantity of their own food production. Mr Glinne also condemned the Soviet Union and China for not supplying details of their own food production to international organisations. This hampered the effective operation of the world-wide food and agricultural information and early warning system. He also called for the Community to be represented on the World Food Council.

Replying to the debate Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission, endorsed the motion: 'we must do all we can to help countries which are short of food. I hope this motion will help to make it clear to Member States what our food policy aims should be'. The motion was agreed to.

Economic situation

Parliament agrees with Commission's assessment

Mr Helmut Artzinger (Ge, CD) agreed with the Commission's assessment of the economic situation. The Community is experiencing the worst recession since 1945. The only positive points being signs that the economic downswing is coming to an end. His motion on the Commission's report criticised the Council for its failure to take the necessary decisions to deal with the unemployment, inflation and balance of payments problems which threatened to undermine the Community. He was also particularly struck by the fact that although all Member States had emphasised that they could not tackle the economic situation on their own, this was precisely what they had each tried to do. Among the many speakers in this debate, Mr Silvio Leonardi (It, CA), for the Communists, said that there was absolutely nothing new being proposed to tackle the problems of unemployment and inflation.

Replying to the debate, Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp stressed the importance of confidence. The lack of confidence was, for example, causing a build-up of savings and he gave figures of the level of savings in all Member States. He did



Mr Helmut Artzinger: 'We should support IMF Director Witteveen's efforts to control the growth of international liquidities.'

not agree that such funds should be directed to consumer spending but if they went to investment this could make a considerable difference. The motion before the House was agreed to.

Social affairs

Directive on mass dismissals may come into force before 1977

Mr Willem Albers (Du, S) asked the Council whether the directive on mass dismissals could come into force earlier, particularly in view of the massive redundancies threatened at Akzo and Philips. Mr Adolfo Battaglia, President of the Council, said the Council would consider Commission proposals to speed up the application of the directive as soon as it received them. But he doubted whether the resources of the Social Fund were great enough at present to cope with a wave of mass dismissals. He added that the Social Fund could only be used to back up national measures. On the other hand, he hoped the forthcoming tripartite conference would be a useful contribution to resolving these problems.

Discussion then focussed on what the Community could or could not do. Mr James Gibbons (Ir, EPD) reminded Member States that 'there is nothing to prevent them from bringing forward the implementation of legislation that is necessary' (i.e. earlier than the scheduled date of February 1977). And he added that the operation of multinational companies must be subject to control.

Mr Adolfo Battaglia agreed there were many people being made redundant and that if the economy did not pick up there would be even more than the present five million out of work. But what, he asked, was Parliament's reaction? 'A few motions, a few questions to the Council, a deploring of the unacceptable and inadequate replies that the Council is able to give on issues ranging far outside its terms of reference. Frankly, this way of tackling problems does not strike me as being very constructive.'

The Council's failure to act was not due to its failure to appreciate the importance of the issues at stake. It was due to the fact that 'the divergencies between the interests of the Member States are greater than the Community interests ... Do you want to hold Commission and Council responsible for the fact that national interests over-ride Community interests in every one of our Member States?'

Free movement of workers: this to include the right to hold office in trade union movement

Several years after the Commission proposals on the free movement of workers, this consolidating proposal is being put forward to cover worker's rights to take part in trade union management. Mr Willy Dondelinger (Lu, S) rapporteur for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, found it regrettable that the Commission has taken so long. He asked that the proposed regulation be brought in line with the action programme for migrant workers so that those from outside the EC are covered as well. Mr Jacques Santer (Lu, CD), for the Christian Democrats, agreed with him. Mr Albert Liogier (Fr, DEP) had reservations about the right of migrants to hold office in the management of bodies governed by public law. Mr Tom Normanton (Br, EC) welcomed the proposal but felt it contained an inconsistency: the non-inclusion of migrants from third countries. He agreed with Mr Dondelinger and Mr Santer on this point.

In reply, Mr Guido Brunner said that the Commission had the same aim as the European Parliament but that he did not think it acceptable to press for the inclusion of migrants from third countries within the scope of this bill at this time. To do so could involve delays. But the Commission would come back to this later. On this tactical note he asked Parliament to accept the Commission's proposal. The motion before the House was agreed to.

Directive on educating the children of migrant workers

Mrs Tullia Caretoni-Romagnoli (It, CA), rapporteur for the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Youth, asked Parliament to approve a Commission proposal for a directive on educating migrant's children, of whom there are around 1,300,000 in the Community. The directive will require Member States to provide reception classes for migrants' children with crash courses in the local language. They will also be required to provide tuition in the mother tongue and culture of the country of origin.

Mr Thomas Nolan (Ir, EPD) welcomed the directive but regretted it was taking so long to get action on this vital issue. He reminded the House that the Council's resolution of 21 January 1974 had stated 'the education of migrant workers' children should have priority in its action programme to promote the free movement of workers'.



Mrs Tullia Caretoni Romagnoli: 'But when it comes to educating the children of immigrants from third countries, we are in an extremely difficult position.'

Mr Nolan added: 'The children of migrant workers are at a disadvantage when compared with the children of citizens of the host country, mainly because of their families' social and economic situation. Surely this needs no explanation to this House, so far as Italians or Spaniards are concerned, if only because of the language difficulty. In the case, for example, of Irish people who emigrate to England, there is no language barrier but there is a cultural barrier, and therefore the Community must do everything in its power to ensure that something is done so that these children will preserve their cultural background. In time, this would mean sending teachers from the country of origin and — to go even further — during holiday-time when some parents may not be in financial position to offer their children holidays in the country of origin, providing them with the means to do so. This would enable them to give their children a cultural education by arranging visits to their country of origin as well as employing teachers from the country of origin. Because whilst we are a Community, and we want to develop as a Community, I know that every nation of the Nine wants to preserve its own culture. We even may go as far as to say that we want a common defence policy when we have the Europe that we desire, but above all, we want to preserve our own culture. And we can only do that if our children, even though they have to emigrate, are educated in the culture of their own country.'

Lady Fisher of Rednal, on the other hand, drew attention to the difficulties involved: 'I fail to understand how you would compile a school timetable that must have a bicultural educational basis founded on Community principles many of the immigrants coming into Great Britain come from Asian countries, from the India sub-continent, where there is not one language that is involved but a number of languages, as many as seven or eight. We have Pakistanis, Chinese, Greeks, Cypriots, Spaniards. How on earth is the organiser of the school going to fit in all those different language facilities?' Lady Fisher welcomed the aim of the directive, to wit to establish equality of educational opportunity. And she spoke of what was being done to achieve this aim in the United Kingdom. But, she concluded, 'I think Member States should be allowed flexibility when interpreting this aim'.

The motion before the House was agreed to.

Further step to social security harmonisation

Parliament agreed, without debate, to a motion approving a Commission proposal on the application of social security schemes to employed persons and their families changing their place of work in the Community. The proposal is highly technical but its aim is to harmonise conditions of entitlement to social security benefits. The motion also asked the Commission, 'in the light of the motion tabled by Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, to provide the information necessary to enable Parliament to take initiatives to speed up further the harmonisation of the social system of the Member States referred to in Article 117 of the Treaty'.

Social Fund help for people changing jobs

Parliament approved a Commission proposal on Social Fund help for people changing jobs. Schemes to help workers from sectors with above-average lay-offs and regions with an above-average increase in unemployment will be eligible for Social Fund Assistance.

Social Fund help for people in the clothing and textile industries

Parliament approved a Commission proposal whereby textile and clothing industry workers will be eligible for assistance under Article 4 of the Social

Fund. The numbers employed in the textile industry fell from 2,209,000 in 1970 to 1,887,000 in 1974 while those in the clothing industry fell from 1,292,000 in 1970 to 1,167,000 in 1974. Mr Alfred Bertrand (Be, CD) welcomed the help towards retraining that would now be available. He told the House that 16,500 people in the textile industry would be affected in 1975 and from 17-20,000 in 1976. Retraining would cost some 670 u.a. per person. In the clothing industry 14,000 people would be affected in 1976. Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody (Br, S) spoke of the 'personal misery to workers in an industry undergoing as dramatic, as intensive and as worrying a change as the textile industries of the EC countries today'. Mrs Dunwoody added: 'the explosion of imports from the low-salary countries like Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong has posed a very real problem the Gatt multifibre agreement is expected to make a very considerable difference but there is still a great deal of pressure on traditional suppliers in the Common market'.

Environment and consumer affairs

Council questioned about inaction on consumer protection

Miss Betty Boothroyd (Br, S) wanted to know why the Council had taken no decision on a series of Commission proposals to protect the consumer. These concern pesticides, wines, fruit juices, fertilisers and cosmetics. Why had the Council not accepted a Commission proposal on motor vehicle safety glass?

Mr Adolfo Battaglia, President of the Council, replied that the Council had already adopted eleven directives on protecting the consumer. The proposal on cosmetics would be considered on 15th November. The one on wines was being considered now and those on fruit juices and fertilisers would be dealt with in the near future. As for vehicle safety glass, the optimum degree of safety was still under discussion. Miss Boothroyd pointed out that the safety glass proposal had been submitted in 1972.

Miss Boothroyd questioned the Council about the proportion of consumer prices that goes in packing and about the margins between producer and consumer prices.

Mr Battaglia replied that consumer prices were rising faster than production prices and, of course, producer incomes. He hoped this would be looked into as part of the general review of the common agricultural policy.

Miss Betty Boothroyd: 'I ask the Commission not to drag its feet any longer but to give consumers the opportunity to take part in the decisionmaking process at every level.'



Commission Vice-President Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza spoke of what the Consumers' Consultative Committee, established at his suggestion eighteen months ago, would be doing. He reminded the House there had been no treaty requirement or summit injunction to set this committee up. It was, of course, still in its early days but it had already been consulted, for example, about the farm price review.

Reducing the lead content of petrol

Mr James Spicer (Br, EC), European Conservative spokesman, took issue with his colleagues over a Commission proposal that the lead content of petrol should be limited to a maximum of 0.04 grammes per litre as from 1 January 1976. He argued that there was not sufficient evidence of a hazard to health. He pointed out that the current limit of 0.55 g/l in the United Kingdom was at present much lower than permitted levels in other countries (Netherlands 0.64, Belgium 0.84, Denmark 0.84, France 0.64, Italy 0.64 and Germany 0.40). He disagreed with Mr Willi Müller's claim that reducing the lead content of petrol would not involve much additional expense.

In reply, Commissioner Finn Gundelach said there was no incontrovertible evidence of damage to health from lead but there was a very strong probability. Lead was, after all, a poisonous substance. He conceded the cost of reducing the lead content of petrol would be high. Mr Gundelach said he noted that Germany was going to impose a 0.4 g/l limit for a two-year transitional period but said he was disturbed by the possibility of Member States seeking national rather than European solutions. This was, after all, a European problem. The Commission's proposal was then put to the vote and a motion agreed to, approving it subject to certain reservations. The most important of these concerned the proposal to reduce the lead content of regular petrol to 0.15 g/l from 1 January 1978.

Promoting varieties of colza with low erucic acid content

Parliament approved the Commission's proposal that the permitted maximum level of erucic acid in fats and oils and margarine for food should be reduced to 15 per cent from 1 July 1976 and 10 per cent from 1 July 1977. Moving this, Mr Lucien Martens (Be, CD) called on the Commission to look into the effects on health of oils and fats containing long-chain fatty acids. He added that the House faced the same dilemma here as in the previous debate i.e. not enough was known on this subject. Mr James Spicer (Br, EC) said that the tests had shown that the use of rape seed with high erucic acid content (1) slowed down growth and (2) caused lesions in the heart muscles. But he pointed out they increased the longevity of the animals tested. At the same time, he asked the Commission if a financial inducement could not be given to producers to switch from the high erucic acid colza varieties to ones with a lower content. Mr Gundelach agreed that this was possible.

Environmental research programmes

Multiannual environmental research programme

The Commission is proposing that 18,500,000 u.a. be spent on environmental research between 1976 and 1981. 6,300,000 u.a. is being spent between 1973 and 1976. The specific aim is to promote research into establishing criteria i.e. exposure-effect relationships for pollutants and environmental chemicals; into environmental information management; the reduction of pollution and the protection of the environment. Mr Hans-Edgar Jahn (Ge, CD), rapporteur for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment, asked Parliament to approve

the proposal and to press Council to approve the programme without any cuts. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

1976-1980 health protection programme

The EC programme will focus on the effects of ionizing radiation and the application of nuclear research to agriculture (improving crop species, yield and quality; plant cell culture, combating pests, efficient beef production and food preservation). Mr Carlo Meintz (Lu, LA), rapporteur for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment, asked Parliament to approve the programme and to press Council to allocate the full amount of money – 66,320 u.a. – needed for this purpose. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

Multiannual reference materials research programme

Mr John Osborn (Br, EC), rapporteur for the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, asked Parliament to approve a Commission proposal for 3.9 m u.a. multiannual research and development programme for reference materials and methods. (To get uniform measurement, one needs reference materials against which instruments can be calibrated). Mr Osborn would like to see a Community Bureau of Standards in the US. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

Cocoa and chocolate

Mr Kristian Albertsen (Da, S), rapporteur for the Committee on Public Health and the Environment, welcomed the Commission's proposal which lays down the individual weights (100 g, 200 g, 250 g, 400 g, 500 g, 700 g and 1kg) for marketing cocoa products as provided for in directive 73(24). This is bringing the laws of the Member States into line with one another. A motion approving the proposal was agreed to.

Agriculture, external relations, internal market

Premiums for cattle rearers

Mr Pierre Bourdellès (Fr, LA), rapporteur for the Committee on Agriculture, asked Parliament to reject the Commission's proposal for a system of premiums

for rearers of bovine animals. He did so on the grounds that the Commission wanted to transfer 50 per cent of the cost (65.2 m u.a.) from the EAGGF Guarantee Section to the Guidance Section. He pointed out that 842 applications for premiums had already been received for 1975 and would cost 368 m u.a. The total for the year was expected to be 1067 applications costing 454 millions. But as there were only 145 m u.a. available for individual projects this was hardly the time to cut back on resources. The Commission's proposal was rejected.

Change in CCT classification of sorbitol

Sorbitol is a chemical product made from sugar or maize. Its Common Customs Tariff classification is now to depend on whether it contains 20 per cent or more impurities. Mr Alessandro Bermani (It, S) moved approval of a Commission proposal to this effect. The motion was agreed to.

Malta's exports

CCT duties are to be waived or cut on some of Malta's exports to the EC: meat products, honey, fruit juices and yeasts. Mr John Corrie (Br, EC) moved approval of a Commission proposal to this effect. The motion was agreed to.

Customs Cooperation Council

Mr Hugh Dykes (Br, EC) asked Parliament to approve a Commission proposal for a decision to accept the Customs Cooperation Council's recommendation of 1 January 1976. This is that the Member countries should incorporate in their customs tariffs or in their statistical nomenclatures subheadings which will allow a correlation between the Brussels nomenclature and the Standard International Trade Classification of which a second revision was recently produced. Mr Dykes's motion approving the Commission's proposal was agreed to.

Simplifying customs procedure

Mr Hugh Dykes (Br, EC) asked Parliament to approve a recommendation from the Commission that the EC accept several annexes to the international

conference on the simplification and harmonisation of customs procedure. The annexes concern rules of origin; documentary evidence of origin; control of documentary evidence of origin; temporary admission for inward processing; duty-free replacement of goods and repayment of duties and taxes at importation. Mr Dykes's motion approving the Commission proposal was agreed to.

CCT waivers on agricultural products

Mr James Scott-Hopkins (Br, EC) asked Parliament to approve a Commission proposal temporarily suspending CCT duties on some agricultural products. The products in question are mushrooms and dried onions and the duty cuts will be from 12 per cent to 4 per cent for mushrooms and 18 per cent to 14 per cent for dried onions. Mr Scott-Hopkins reminded the Commission that 'it had been asked by the European Parliament on a number of occasions to submit a report on reasons for the inadequate supplies of agricultural products which have been the subject of proposals from the Commission for the suspension of autonomous duties and to abolish tariffs, at a suitable time, for those products where there is no significant Community production'.

Energy

Notification of energy investment projects

Mr Pierre Bourdellès (Fr, LA), for the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, asked Parliament to approve a proposal which will require Member States to provide the Commission with more information about investment projects in hydrocarbons, nuclear electricity or electric power transmission. Mr Bourdellès added that investment for desulphurisation plants and refineries ought to come within the scope of the proposal. A motion approving the Commission proposal was agreed to.

Travel and transport

Little prospect of joint action on air safety

Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD), for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport, asked the Council what action it intended to take on Commission proposals to

integrate air traffic in the common transport policy. Mr Adolfo Battaglia, President of the Council, replied that the Council had discussed the proposal on 15 October. It considered great prudence was called for although it did hope common guidelines could be worked out. As for air traffic safety, another point raised by Mr Noè, the Council could not discuss this because it came within the terms of reference of other international organisations.

Bracket tariffs for road haulage

There is a bracket between maximum and minimum tariffs that may be charged in international transport. This system, which came in on 30 July 1968, will be renewed again until 31 December 1976. It will ultimately be replaced by a system of reference tariffs. Mr Wolfgang Schwabe (Ge, S) asked Parliament to approve the proposal. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

EC road haulage quotas

In 1976, there will be 4,726 EC authorisations entitling holders to carry goods over all the transport links between the Member States. The United Kingdom's quota will be 441 and Ireland's 79. Mr Pierre Giraud (Fr, S), rapporteur for the Committee on Regional Policy and Transport, was glad to note that this quota is double that for 1975. Mr Kai Nyborg (Da, EPD), for the European Conservatives, objected to the way in which the Community quota had been increased and moved an amendment on this point. This was, however, defeated, and Parliament agreed to a motion approving the Commission proposal as it stood.

Reciprocal recognition of navigation licences

Mr Horst Bruno Gerlach (Ge, S) asked Parliament to approve a Community proposal for a directive on the reciprocal recognition of navigation licences for inland waterway vessels. A motion to this effect was agreed to.

Question Time

Questions to the Council

Mr Adolfo Battaglia, Under-Secretary of State in the Italian Foreign Ministry, replied on behalf of the Council.

This was considerable applause in the European Parliament when, in reply to a question from Lord Gladwyn (Br, LA), Mr Battaglia told the House that he hoped the European Council to be held in Rome on 1 and 2 December would take all the necessary decisions to ensure the direct election of the European Parliament as soon as possible. He said it was his hope and also that of the Italian presidency. Mr Battaglia said he had heard that Mr Roy Hattersley was not optimistic about the time-scale for direct elections but he himself thought that it was quite possible to hold them in 1978. Mr Battaglia was, in fact, answering a question from Mr Hugh Dykes as to when the Council expected Mr Leo Tindemans, Belgian Prime Minister, to present his report on European Union. Somewhat evasively, he said that he expected it to be presented within the time limit laid down in the Paris Summit ('They agreed to invite Mr Tindemans, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium, to submit a comprehensive report to the Heads of Government before the end of 1975, on the basis of the reports received from the Institutions and of consultations which he is to have with the Governments and with a wide range of public opinion in the Community').

Mr Battaglia refused to be drawn on a question from Mr Gérard Bordu (Fr, CA) about access to employment in the German Federal Republic. He said that this was a matter for the Member States. Indeed, his question provoked Mr Robert Ellis (Br, S) to ask the Chair whether the question was in itself an abuse of the European Parliament. This remark was loudly applauded.

The only other question to the Council concerned the reorganisation of the Leyland-Innocenti Multinational. This was a matter for the Member States although this did not mean that the Council was not concerned. There were shouts of 'too long' when Mr Silvio Leonardi (It, CA) put a supplementary question, in reply to which Mr Battaglia said the Council would welcome a report on this subject. He did, however, point out that he thought concentrations were desirable in the high technology industries.

Mr Tom Normanton (Br, EC) asked whether Mr Battaglia would urge the Council to adopt a Community policy on aids. Mr Battaglia replied that a proposal on this subject was to be considered soon.

Questions to the Commission

Progress towards including the Swiss franc in the 'snake' system

In reply to Mr Francis Leenhardt (Fr, S) who had asked him what was the delay in including the Swiss franc in the 'snake' system, Mr François-Xavier Ortoli, President of the Commission, said that there had been an agreement in principle reached by the Council on this matter on the 22nd September. The actual machinery for putting it into practice was now being studied and the Council would come back to the matter in December.

Mr Christian de la Malène (Fr, EPD) asked him whether the 'snake' would still be a Community one and Mr Ortoli replied that it would be an EC body working with others. In reply to Mr Pierre-Bernard Cousté (Fr, EPD), Mr Ortoli added that, obviously, a rate of exchange for the Swiss franc would have to be set.

Alleviating unemployment among young people in the EC

Dr Patrick Hillery, Vice-President of the Commission, told the House that unemployment among young people had been rising since 1969. There had been a further increase this autumn and the situation was now worse than at any time in the history of the Community. Two working parties had been set up to consider proposals for action and he reminded the House of the Council's decision in July to widen the scope of Article 4 of the Social Fund to provide help for young people. 51 m u.a. would be spent on specific projects to help them in 1975. He thought that the expanded use of the Social Fund would make a significant difference in 1976. Dr Hillery added, however, that demands on the Social Fund exceeded resources available.

In reply to a question from Mrs Mary Kellett-Bowman (Br, EC) who had pointed out that there were 40 candidates for every job in some places, Dr Hillery said he had noted with appreciation that the European Parliament was trying to re-instate appropriations for the Social Fund that the Council had taken out of the draft budget.

Mr Friedrich Burgbacher (Ge, CD) asked whether statistics would be made available showing how degrees of training and levels of skills related to obtaining employment. Dr Hillery said he would try to provide the details he asked for. On this point, Mr Luigi Noè (It, CD) said that if such information were available, it

would be possible to plan ahead more satisfactorily and he drew attention to the impressive work in this field done in the United States.

The last point made by Dr Hillery in what had almost amounted to a debate – there were 15 supplementary questions – was that there were even now half a million unfilled vacancies in the Community. In conclusion President Georges Spénale said he would ask for a debate with the Commission on this subject. Dr Hillery had indicated the Commission's willingness to participate.

Data processing

Mr Dalyell (Br, S) asked about progress towards a European Data Bank Computer Industry which would be competitive with IBM. The question was slightly rhetorical. Mr Altiero Spinelli told the House of the Commission's proposals (particularly on blood group records) with which the House was already familiar and Mr Dalyell asked what the Commission hoped to achieve with 27 m u.a. when IBM was already spending a vastly greater amount on research. Would not it be better for the money to go to the Social Fund than to such fanciful schemes as this?

Trade with Malaysia

Mr James Soctt-Hopkins (Br, EC) asked the Commission what was being done to restore the level of trade in pineapples from Malaysia. Mr Finn Gundelach replied that in 1972 the EC imported 12,000 tonnes for a value of 3.4 m u.a. This went up to 24,000 tonnes in 1974, the value being 11.1 m u.a. The figures were not available for 1975 but it was not unreasonable to expect the recession would affect these imports but any fall-off in imports would be due to a decline in economic activity in the industrial states rather than tariffs. There had, in any case, been improvements in the Community's offer to Malaysia in respect of quotas under the generalised preferences scheme for other products as well.

Woollen manufacturing industry

In reply to a question from Lord Gladwyn (Br, L), Mr Altiero Spinelli said that a comparative study had shown that there were no unfair marketing practices on the part of the woollen manufacturing industry of Prato in Tuscany and that the

complaint of the Woollen and Worsted Trades Federation of Bradford was, therefore, unjustified. There were, for example, many operators in this field and they received no state aid in Italy. He pointed out, however, that a second enquiry into this matter was in progress and the result should be available by the year end. Mr Spinelli agreed with Mr Tom Normanton (Br, C) that competition from outside the Community was far more serious.

Milk powder stocks

Dr Patrick Hillery said that one of the main reasons why the amount of milk powder in storage was so great was because of the fall in the price of soya beans which were, as a result, being used in cattle feed instead. The world market had also changed. The amount of milk powder carried over from one year to the next would actually go down this year. Lord Walston (Br, S) asked when it became cheaper to give the milk powder away and Dr Hillery replied that it always cost more to do so. Asked about store life of milk powder, Dr Hillery said that the oldest stocks dated from the beginning of 1974 and their store life was two years.

Setting up a European high speed railway network

Mr Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission, was not very hopeful about the prospects for speeding up work to provide Europe with a high speed railway network.

Nuclear fuel reprocessing

This question brought out two specific lines of concern among Members of the European Parliament: Lord Bessborough (Br, C) was concerned that the general public should know that the reprocessing of nuclear fuels involved no risk at all and that reprocessing had been going on for a number of years and then there was concern expressed by such Members as Mr Willy Hamilton (Br, S) that the general public was not sufficiently well informed for its anxiety about the risks to have been allayed. Mr Altiero Spinelli pointed out that the Community had not the capacity for retreating nuclear fuels but he agreed that the number of reprocessing plants should be kept to a minimum. He agreed with Mr John Evans (Br, S) that setting up reprocessing plants carried the risk that they could be used in the production of nuclear weapons.

NOTES

Welcome to a Portuguese delegation

The President welcomed on behalf of Parliament a delegation from the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Portugal.



Petitions received

The President announced that he had received the following petitions: from Mr Virgile Barel on the protection of the Mediterranean; from Mr Kowal, Mr Auverdin and 27 other signatories on the liberation of female Ukrainian political prisoners in the USSR; from Miss Unagh Harnett, Miss Bowder and 11 other signatories on the need to amend the directive on equal pay for men and women, and from Mr Grussendorf, Mr Borodkine, Mr Schmidt, Mrs Richter, and 26 other signatories on the violation of basic rights.

Summing up

At its sittings of 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 November, Members put down 6 questions for debate with the Council and 1 question for debate with the Commission. At Question Time, 3 questions were addressed to the Council and 9 to the Commission. 29 reports were considered and the European Parliament considered 34 opinions. The House sat for 2 hours on Monday, 9.15 hours on Tuesday, 7.40 hours on Wednesday, 8.35 hours on Thursday, and 2.30 hours on Friday, making a total of 30.0 hours.

References

Subject	Eur. Parl. Doc. No.	Comm. Doc. No.	Date of Debate
EC's draft budget for 1976	361/75	306/75	11/11
EC's third supplementary budget for 1975 . .	364/75	279/75	11/11
Discharge for 1971 budget	365/75	—	11/11
	378/75	—	14/11
Economic situation in the Community	362/75	334/75	13/11
Mass dismissals by two multinationals	345/75	—	12/11
Free movement of workers	354/75	273/75	13/11
Education of migrants' children	375/75	224/75	13/11
Social Fund help for people changing jobs . .	357/75	331/75	14/11
Further step to social security harmonisation	356/75	275/75	14/11
Social Fund help for people in clothing and textile industries	358/75	332/75	14/11
Consumer protection	344/75	—	12/11
Reducing lead content of petrol	339/75	303/75	10/11
Erucic acids in fats	327/75	185/75	10/11
Environmental research programme	328/75	209/75	14/11
1976-1980 health protection programme . . .	336/75	223/75	14/11
Multiannual reference materials research programme	363/75	203/75	14/11
Cocoa and chocolate	322/75	219/75	14/11
Protectionist measures in the USA	348/75	—	12/11
USSR condemned over Sakharov visa refusal	377/75	—	13/11
US resolution on Zionism condemned	376/75	—	13/11
General approval for Greece's accession	351/75	180/75	12/11
	337/75	87/75	12/11

A world food policy	326/75	—	14/11
Premiums for cattle rearers	340/75	292/75	14/11
Change in CCT classification of sorbitol	341/75	296/75	14/11
Malta's exports	342/75	295/75	14/11
Customs Cooperation Council	372/75	207/75	14/11
Simplifying customs procedure	373/75	252/75	14/11
CCT waivers on agricultural products	370/75	352/75	14/11
Notification of energy investment projects . .	338/75	232/75	14/11
Joint action on air traffic safety	346/75	—	12/11
	347/75	—	12/11
Bracket tariffs for road haulage	349/75	324/75	13/11
EC road haulage quotas	350/75	324/75	13/11
Reciprocal of navigation licences	359/75	355/75	14/11

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this text to denote nationality and political allegiance: CD Christian Democrat, S Socialist, LA Liberal and Allies, EC European Conservative, EPD European Progressive Democrat, CA Communist and Allies, Ind Non-attached Independent Members, Be Belgian, Br British, Da Danish, Du Dutch, Fr French, Ge German, Ir Irish, It Italian, Lu Luxembourg, EC European Community.

POSTSCRIPT

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT BUDGET ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

(NB: The budget is broken down according to the duodecimal system, e.g. item 3112 is item 2 in Article 1 of Chapter 1 in Title 3)

Amendment no.	Refer- ence	Amendment	Commission's preliminary draft budget	Council's draft budget	Effect on EP's amendments
-	-	Establishment	249,767,016	- 8,059,116	-
64	-	Establishment (Lomé Convention)	-	-	+ 50,000
65	-	Establishment (EAGGF Regional Fund)	-	-	+ 110,000
51	-	Establishment (staff representation)	-	-	+ 33,300
66	145	Building loans	2,000,000	- 2,000,000	+ 2,000,000
26	254	Campaign on behalf of young people	190,000	- 90,000	+ 90,000
52	256	Expenditure on preconsultation meetings of trade unions	200,000	- 200,000	+ 100,000
19	304	Measures in support of, and with the participation of, movements which could increase the effectiveness of the social policy	340,000	- 200,000	+ 95,000
41	3112	Veterinary inspection in non-member countries	80,000	- 7,000	+ 7,000
47	3220	EC technological developments in the hydrocarbons sector	40,000,000	- 15,000,000	+ 10,000,000

Amendment no.	Reference	Amendment	Commission's preliminary draft budget'	Council's draft budget	Effect on EP's amendments
44	3221	Joint projects in prospecting for hydrocarbons	10,000,000	- 10,000,000	+ 1,000,000
46	323	Prospecting for uranium deposits	5,000,000	- 5,000,000	+ 1,000,000
84	330	Expenditure on research and investment	79,820,287	- 50,019,748	+ 40,000,000
48	330	Expenditure on research and investment	74,052,584	- 3,671,597	+ 1,300,000
55	356	Organization and 'humanizing' of work	150,000	- 150,000	+ 1
56	392	Expenditure on educational measures	1,500,000	- 1,500,000	+ 800,000
58	402	Aid to beekeepers	-	-	+ 2,500,000
62	500	Social Fund (Article 4)	220,000,000	- 70,000,000	+ 40,000,000
72, 73	510	Social Fund (Article 5)	280,000,000	- 30,000,000	+ 30,000,000
74	550	Regional Fund	450,000,000	- 150,000,000	+ 150,000,000
22	900	Economic and technical cooperation with non-associated developing countries	100,000,000	- 100,000,000	+ 40,000,000
24	938	Aid for cooperation projects with the developing countries carried out by non-governmental organizations	5,000,000	- 5,000,000	+ 2,500,000
Total of amendments:					321,585,301

All these amendments were passed by an absolute majority, i.e. more than 100 Members voted in favour.

PROPOSALS FOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE DRAFT BUDGET PASSED BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

No.	Reference	Amendment	Commission's preliminary draft budget	Council's draft budget	Effect on EP's amendments
6	920	Food aid (wheat)	146,020,000	- 48,050,000	+ 48,050,000
10	9211	Food aid (skimmed milk powder)	53,560,000	- 17,210,000	+ 50,000,000
8	9221	Food aid (sugar)	3,820,000	- 1,490,000	+ 1,490,000
9	920	Food aid (other commodities)	20,000,000	- 20,000,000	+ 20,000,000
Total of modifications:					119,540,000
Total of amendments and modifications:					441,125,301
The draft budget now stands at:					7,920,000,000

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