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REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee
on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions

on the Amendment to Rule 57(2) of the
Rules of Procedure

Rapporteur: Mr. Giuseppe AMADEI

PE 97.093/fin.

Or. EN

By letter of 7 December 1984 (PE 94.140) the President of the European Parliament requested the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions to give its interpretation of Rule 57(2).

At its meeting of 26-27 February 1985, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions decided, pursuant to Rule 111(2), to propose an amendment to the Rules of Procedure.

At the same meeting Mr AMADEI was appointed rapporteur.

The committee considered the proposed amendment at its meetings of 23/24 April 1985 and 22/23 May 1985. At the last meeting the committee adopted the amendment and the draft decision unanimously.

The following took part in the vote : Mr AMADEI, Chairman and rapporteur, Mrs DURY, Vice-Chairman, Mr SCHWALBA-HOTH, Vice-Chairman, Messrs. COTTRELL, HUCKFIELD, MacSHARRY, PROUT, STARITA, TOUSSAINT and Mrs VAYSSADE.

This report was tabled on 23 May 1985.

The deadline for the tabling of amendments to this report appears in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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A

The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions hereby submits to the European Parliament the following amendment to the Rules of Procedure and proposal for a decision, together with explanatory statement :

The present Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure

Amendment submitted by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions

1. A request that a debate on a proposal on which Parliament has been consulted pursuant to Rule 32(1) be treated as urgent may be made to Parliament by the President, by at least twenty-one Members, by a committee, by the Commission or by the Council. This request shall be made in writing and supported by reasons.

1. unchanged

2. As soon as the President has received a request for urgent debate, he shall inform Parliament thereof; the vote on that request shall be taken at the beginning of the sitting following that during which the text of the request was printed in the official languages and distributed to all Members. Where there are several requests for urgent debate on the same subject, the approval or rejection of the request for urgent debate shall apply to all the requests on the same subject.

2. As soon as the President has received a request for urgent debate, he shall inform Parliament thereof; the vote on that request shall be taken at the beginning of the sitting following that during which notification was given of the request, provided that the proposal to which the request relates has been distributed in the official languages. Where there are several requests for urgent debate on the same subject, the approval or rejection of the request for urgent debate shall apply to all the requests on the same subject.

3. Before the vote, only the person making the request, one speaker in favour, one speaker against, and the chairman and/or rapporteur of the committee responsible may be heard, in each case for a maximum of three minutes.

3. unchanged

4. Questions to be dealt with by urgent procedure shall be given priority over other items on the agenda. The President shall determine the time of the debate and vote.

4. unchanged

5. An urgent debate may be held without report pursuant to Rule 99(1) or, exceptionally, on the basis of an oral report by the committee responsible.

5. unchanged

PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION

on an amendment to Rule 57(2) of the Rules of Procedure concerning requests for urgent debate.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the request for an interpretation addressed by the President of the European Parliament to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions on 7 December 1984,
 - notes the decision taken by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions at its meeting of 26-27 February 1985 to propose an amendment to Rule 57(2),
 - having regard to the report by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions (Doc. A 2-40/85),
1. Decides to incorporate the above amendment in its Rules of Procedure;
 2. Instructs its Secretary-General to ensure that the text thus amended corresponds exactly in the seven official languages ;
 3. Instructs its President to forward this decision, for information, to the Council and the Commission of the European Communities.

B

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. At its meeting of 18 December 1984, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions decided not to submit amendments to Rule 57(2) and to draw up an interpretation confirming the procedure followed by the President of the European Parliament at the sitting of 13 November 1984.
2. At its meeting of 26 and 27 February 1985, the committee decided to propose an amendment to Rule 57(2), since an interpretation of this Rule would have been in conflict with the wording of the Rule itself. This fact led the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions to draw up an amendment to the Rule in question.
3. Rule 57 concerns urgent debates in plenary but in practice the application of paragraph 2 gives rise to problems. There have been occasions when the correct application of Rule 57(2) has been put into question, since the request for urgent debate was not published in the official languages and distributed to all Members, as laid down in this paragraph.
4. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions considered the contents of this Rule and proposed an amendment which, in its opinion, is in conformity with the spirit of this Rule. The amendment would make it possible to reach a decision on an urgent matter at the beginning of the sitting following the one during which the President informs Parliament that he has just received a request for urgent debate.
5. The amendment to Rule 57(2) therefore means that an urgent matter can be voted on at the beginning of the sitting following the one during which the request for urgent debate was notified, without the text of the request being printed in the official languages and distributed to all Members as was previously specified in Rule 57(2).

6. This amendment conforms more closely to the spirit of this Rule since it obviates the difficulties involved in printing and distributing the request for urgent debate and, by establishing a smoother procedure, makes it easier to vote on the urgent item in a shorter space of time, the only condition being that 'the proposal to which the request relates has been distributed'.