

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE
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176th PLENARY SESSION

The 176th Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was held at Committee headquarters, Brussels, on 27 and 28 February 1980 under the chairmanship of the Committee Chairman, Mr VANNI.

Adoption of Opinions

1. STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF GROWTH

"Report on some structural aspects of growth".

Gist of the Commission's Report

The Report on Some Structural Aspects of Growth looks at the ways in which industry could best contribute to achieving growth, subject, of course, to the job-creation possibilities which exist given the current high level of unemployment and the need to give a fresh stimulus to economic and monetary union. The main aim of the Report is to try to find out how industry in the Community may solve certain structural shortcomings and cope with cyclical difficulties.

Its purpose is to provide a framework for resolving the difficulties in certain sectors and promoting the expansion of certain industries.

It is true that the Report also deals with certain other aspects of growth which are bound up with regional development and the promotion of research and training. But it is the chapter on the sectoral elements of growth strategy which is particularly worthy of attention. In this chapter it is stated that the competitiveness of European industry will depend on its ability to mobilize new technologies, to improve productivity and to continue to supply capital equipment to the world.



General view of the Plenary Session

For certain key industries such as electronics, data processing and the aircraft industry the Commission states quite clearly what contribution the Community could make towards the strategy of growth. In the aircraft industry, for example, the Community could contribute by:

- providing a framework in which industries from other Community countries can contribute to national programmes;
- creating, if necessary, a special legal framework for industrial cooperation - for example, "ad hoc" joint undertaking status;
- supplementing any shortfall in launching aid with Community finance;
- helping to finance technological research, particularly through support for industrial cooperation, and the development of a major research infrastructure;
- supporting the world-wide marketing of European aircraft through the common commercial policy and through use of the Community's financial means; and
- encouraging contact between airlines throughout the Community and the industry.

Gist of the Opinion(1)

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion by a large majority (87 votes in favour, 3 against and 22 abstentions).

It tackles the recent downward trend in EEC income and productivity growth rates. After making a causal analysis, it endeavours to put forward proposals designed to tackle this problem.

(1) No. of Committee's Opinion CES 228/80

It would be appropriate to redefine the traditional definition of growth, that is to say the process of increasing GNP: There is no denying that where growth has occurred, it has generally significantly improved the living standards of substantial sectors of the public.. However, in recent years it has been suggested in many quarters that when measuring the prosperity of people living in a given country, the criterion of GNP - which is still fundamental - should be coupled with indices which take account of the "quality of life".

The question of the "quality" of growth can no longer be looked on as simply collateral and supplementary to the level of growth. There is no basic conflict between the objective of economic growth and the need for respecting environmental and social constraints. Yet it is true to say that an economic policy which pays more heed to respecting the new environmental restraints and the new social requirements is necessary in order to preserve for future generations an uncontaminated potential of natural and human resources, which is needed to achieve further growth.

The Committee stresses that a growth strategy which is based on satisfying ever new needs (often artificially created) is going to be less and less viable as time goes on. There are two reasons for this: first, the growing scarcity of resources making the waste which is often inherent in this type of innovation intolerable, and, secondly, the ever more critical attitude of consumers and consumer organizations. If product innovation is to have a beneficent effect on industrial growth it must be increasingly geared to the introduction of products made using technologies that economise on scarce resources and rely more on relatively abundant factors.

The new products will have to meet new quality-of-life requirements (preventive medicine, community cultural activities, low-cost housing, leisure activities, protection of water resources and the environment, bio-medical technologies, substitutes for products considered to be a threat to health).

As far as the sectoral aspects of growth strategy are concerned, the Committee lists the following criteria which should be taken into account when determining sectoral objectives:

- Growth strategy must provide a creative response to the quantitative and qualitative changes in factors of production, including labour - the various skills and trades - and energy;
- It must guarantee a high degree of self-sufficiency and scientific and technological independence since this enables the keys to growth to be controlled;
- It must cut back production costs so as to improve the ability of Community industry to compete on world markets and bring about a better international division of labour;
- It must respond to changing trends in domestic and international demand with particular reference to the expectations of the most under-privileged social groups, regions and countries.

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers. The Rapporteur was Mr. QUERINI - Italy - Various Interests.

2. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

“Communication from the Commission to the Council on Changes in the Common Agricultural Policy to help Balance the Markets and Streamline Expenditure.”

Gist of the Commission proposal

a) Sugar sector

The Commission presents to the Council a new sugar regime to apply from 1980/81, initially for a period of five years. The proposal is again based on the principle that the cost of the disposal of surpluses - after allowing for a reasonable estimate of Community consumption and exports - would be the responsibility of producers themselves. In this case the Community continues to take responsibility for the cost of the export of white sugar corresponding to the Community's imports under preferential arrangements of about 1.3 million tonnes of sugar from ACP countries.

It would have been better to abandon the quota system. Since this is not realistic, however, the Commission proposes to modify the maximum quotas by basing them on production under the existing quotas in the best two of the four last completed campaigns and applying a coefficient so that the Community total corresponds to the new production objective of about 10.3 million tonnes (9.5 million tonnes of Community consumption and 0.8 million tonnes of exports). The maximum quota of each enterprise is then allocated 80 % to A quota and 20 % to B quota. The A quota is levy free and the maximum levy in the B quota may not exceed 40 % of the intervention price. A further condition is that the A quota of any enterprise may not fall to less than 90 % of its existing level. The effect of these arrangements is that the total maximum quotas are close to 10.4 million tonnes.

The net cost of the new proposed regime to the Community budget will be substantially less than the present arrangements. In normal circumstances, the cost of all exports will be borne by the industry itself, either because the cost will be matched by the B quota levy or because C sugar will be exported outside the financial responsibility of the Community. The only charge to the budget will be the disposal of the sugar equivalent to the sugar imports from ACP countries; at current prices this might cost about 300 million EUA in export refunds.

On the basis of current world market prices, this proposal will reduce expenditure in the sugar sector by 132 million EUA over 12 months or by 14 million EUA in the 1980 budget period. It should, however, be noted that if world market prices were lower the savings should be correspondingly higher.

b) Milk sector

The Commission notes that the normal co-responsibility levy foreseen for 1980/81 under Regulation (EEC) No. 1271/79 would apply to all milk producers, subject only to the existing exemptions for mountain areas etc.; on current estimates of milk deliveries the rate applicable in 1980/81 will be 1.5% of the target price. In addition, the Commission now proposes that the cost of the disposal of the milk product surplus equivalent to the additional annual production of milk should be chargeable to a supplementary co-responsibility levy to be paid for the first time in 1980/81. This supplementary levy, which would be at a rate in 1980/81 of 3% of the target price (based on an increase of 2.1% in milk deliveries in 1980), would be paid by dairies which have a higher level of milk supply by comparison with the reference level (1979 deliveries less 1%). It would be paid on the volume of milk delivered to the dairy but the dairy would be free to recover the cost as it wished from its producers. This system will provide a double incentive to the dairy and to the producer himself not to increase the volume of milk. The estimated additional revenue for the Community budget from the basic co-responsibility levy in 1980/81 will be 191 million EUA. The supplementary levy is expected to provide in the same period a further 346 million EUA. The new proposals for 1980/81 would therefore increase the Community's revenue, in addition to the income from the existing levy of 0.5% by about 537 million EUA.

In the 1980 budget period this would represent an additional revenue of 342 million EUA.

The levy system should be introduced for a period of 3 years. In order to provide an alternative for milk producers, the scheme of grants for conversion to beef and non-marketing premiums will remain in force until the end of the 1980/81 campaign with the possibility of continuing the conversion premium thereafter.

The Commission is conscious that some of the difficulties in the milk sector result from a lack of coherence in the policies for animal and vegetable fats. It is of the opinion that, at least in the context of enlargement, it will be necessary to look again at this issue. Similarly the Commission is conscious of the lack of coherence in the policies in the animal and vegetable protein sector and intends to initiate discussions with soya bean suppliers, in particular, similar to those already undertaken with manioc suppliers in view of a better balance between imported fodder and the Community milk production.

c) Beef and veal sector

Although there are no structural surpluses in this sector, the Commission has been disturbed to note that beef is regularly being offered for intervention even when the state of the market apparently does not justify this. The resulting expenditure is unnecessary and the Commission believes that completely satisfactory aid could be provided for beef and veal producers in the Community at lower cost.

The Commission is proposing the introduction, from the next marketing year onwards, of a Community grading of carcasses enabling genuinely common standards for intervention to be adopted. In this way, the level of support can be made uniform in all the regions of the Community and the national coefficients, the effect of which at the present time is to fix buying-in prices at varying levels for the different Member States, can be phased out. On the basis of the Community grading scheme, the Community will be in a position to fix guide prices by slaughter weight and not, as

now, by live weight. The Commission is also proposing that the possibility be allowed of suspending intervention during the seasonal increase in market prices in the period from 1 April to 15 August and that, where necessary, private storage should be used during this period.

d) Cereals sector

The Commission is proposing that the intervention price for rye should be gradually aligned over three years on the lower intervention price of the other fodder cereals. A quantity premium will be paid for rye of breadmaking quality. During the transitional period, intervention stocks can be resold in the Community for livestock feed, if necessary below the intervention price - a procedure which could well prove less expensive than to export them on the world market.

e) Fruit and vegetable sector

The cost of this sector has risen substantially. The annual rate of increase between 1985 and 1980 is estimated at over 33 %. A very large increase is expected in 1979 and 1980 as a result of the introduction of the aids for processed fruit and vegetables, particularly tomatoes. The Commission will propose if necessary to limit the amount of production eligible for aid in this sector. Meanwhile, the Commission proposes to introduce stricter criteria after 1980/81 for calculating aid, which should cover 90 % rather than 100 % of the difference in cost between Community production and imports. This aid would be adjusted if the price of the domestic product on the Community market, after payment of the aid, should be less than that of imported products.

f) Starch sector

The Commission is proposing that the starch production refunds be phased out over three annual stages (one-third

each). These aids were justified because of competition from petrochemicals, but the Commission takes the view that this is no longer the case now that petroleum prices have risen to such a high level. Before the third and last reduction, the situation of the starch industry may, however, be reviewed by the Council on the basis of a report from the Commission submitted before 31 March. This proposal is also applicable to potato starch, but it includes at the same time measures designed to maintain the incomes of potato growers.

Gist of the Opinion

In its Opinion on Changes to the Common Agricultural Policy, the Economic and Social Committee adopted the following points:

- a) **Sugar sector(1)** (27 votes in favour and 31 abstentions)
- b) **Milk sector(2)** (58 votes in favour, 21 against and 23 abstentions)
- c) **Beef and veal sector(3)** (54 votes in favour, 11 against and 21 abstentions)
- d) **Cereal sector(4)** (15 votes against and 17 abstentions)
- e) **Fruit and vegetable sector(5)** (8 votes against and 17 abstentions)
- f) **Starch sector(6)** (adopted by a large majority with 9 abstentions)

(1)	Committee Opinion number	CES 234/80
(2)	"	"
(3)	"	"
(4)	"	"
(5)	"	"
(6)	"	"

The Economic and Social Committee has repeatedly drawn the Community authorities' attention to the need to improve the workings of certain common market organizations. It recognizes that agricultural surpluses should be avoided by balancing the markets and rationalizing expenditure. However, the need to make budgetary savings must not be an objective to be attained regardless of the consequences.

In its Opinion the Committee stresses the following points.

It recognizes that the **dairy sector** is in an alarming state and that market equilibrium should be re-established.

The Committee points out that the Common Agricultural Policy ought to help to bring about economic and social balance between the various regions of the EEC and improve the situation of the most underprivileged regions. Accordingly, it proposes the following alterations to the proposed supplementary levy on milk:

- . Small farms should be exempted;
- . The supplementary levy should be made to depend on the increase in deliveries and the amount of stocks going into intervention over a given period (e.g. the previous three years);
- . The Committee stresses that in the next few years constant thought will have to be given to adjusting the CAP. The general aim of these adjustments must be to re-establish a balanced market, while at the same time ensuring that the CAP's objectives, as set out in Article 39 of the Treaty, including those for incomes, are preserved.

As far as **sugar** is concerned, the Committee is in favour of preserving the quota system for a period of five years. It agrees with the Commission that the quotas should be

allocated at Community level on the basis of objective criteria.

Yet it trusts that:

- . the Member States will have a margin for manoeuvre within the framework of their overall quotas which will enable them to vary the A and B quotas in the light of specific regional circumstances;
- . the reduction of guarantees will take account of the important factors, viz. maintenance of the current export flows and employment in the sector;
- . proposals to cut back sugar beet production would inflict unnecessary hardships on local communities, resulting in job losses, especially those in the disadvantaged areas. Such proposals should be deferred pending an examination of their impact on employment in those areas.

It agrees to isoglucose being covered by the common organization of the market in sugar. It urges that commitments vis-à-vis the ACP countries be respected but hopes that the burden on the EEC will progressively diminish. It considers that the cost of re-exporting ACP sugar should not be imputed to the CAP but to the general budget.

As for **beef and veal**, the ESC indicates certain difficulties inherent in the proposal to suspend intervention between 1 April and 15 August. Also it has doubts about the chances of rapidly achieving a Community carcass classification system for beef and veal, a proposal which the ESC favours.

In addition, it considers that setting the intervention threshold at 90 % of the guide price would threaten the intervention price's function as a protection of production prices.

On the subject of **cereals**, the Committee considers that in view of the situation in the rye sector the intervention price for rye should not be lowered.

The Committee urges that the aid granted to producers of certain processed **fruit and vegetable** products should be maintained at a realistic level capable of offsetting the unequal competition between Community products and products from outside the Community which are heavily subsidized by the State.

In addition, the drop in the amount of aid must not call into question the safeguarding of producers' interests nor the Community's commitments pursuant to the "Mediterranean package".

Coming to the question of **starch products**, the Committee is unable to approve the Commission's proposal to do away with the present system of production restitutions unless something is done to avert the danger to this sector which uses a considerable proportion of the Community's agricultural raw materials and which has considerable importance from the point of view of employment.

Lastly, it shares the Commission's view that special measures are needed to assist potato starch production.

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Agriculture under the chairmanship of M. EMO CAPODILISTA - Italy - Various Interests. The Rapporteur General was Mr. SCHNIEDERS - Germany - Employers.

3. COMMON ORGANIZATION OF THE MARKET IN WINE

"Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No. 337/79 on the Common Organization of the Market in Wine."

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The Commission feels that the additional intervention

measures reserved for those with long-term private storage contracts represent an appropriate management tool, selective in nature, simple to apply and whose scope is easy to control. This is why the Commission proposes, until the measures intended to adapt winegrowing potential to market requirements on a lasting basis take their full effect, that the validity of these provisions should be extended to cover three more years, that is to say, up to 1982/83.

Gist of the Opinion(1)

The Committee adopted its Opinion by a large majority and stressed the usefulness and suitability of the additional intervention measures reserved for those with long-term private storage contracts and approved the Commission's proposal to extend the validity of such provisions until the 1982/83 marketing year.

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Agriculture under the chairmanship of Mr. EMO CAPODILISTA - Italy - Various Interests. The Rapporteur was M. RAINERO - Italy - Various Interests.

4. INSURANCE CONTRACTS

"Proposal for a Council Directive on the Coordination of Laws, Regulations and Administrative Provisions relating to Insurance Contracts."

Gist of the proposal

The explanatory memorandum states that the proposal aims "firstly, to guarantee the policyholder that, whatever the choice of applicable law, he will receive identical protection as regards the essential points of the contract. Secondly, to eliminate as competition factors for undertakings the fundamental differences between national law. Such is the object of this Directive".

(1) Committee Opinion No. CES 229/80.

Accordingly the following points are to be coordinated as a matter of priority: declaration of the risk, obligations of the policyholder during the contract period, payment of premiums, declaration of the claimable event, duration of the contract.

The coordination proposed in the present Directive must not be considered as automatically entailing freedom of choice of the law applicable to contracts covering mass risks or those risks in respect of which insurance is compulsory. Any extension of freedom of choice in the case of such risks must be dealt with in special Directives laying down the exact conditions and limits of such extension.

Having regard to the situation of the marine, aviation and transport insurance markets, the widely international nature of these classes and the freedom which has traditionally been enjoyed by the parties in concluding such contracts, it was not considered appropriate to make them subject to binding uniform provisions.

Having regard to the characteristics of credit and suretyship insurance contracts, it was considered that they could not be covered by the Directive as it stands. These classes require detailed examination prior to separate coordination.

Gist of the Opinion(1)

In its Opinion,* adopted unanimously, the Committee paid special attention to the protection of the policyholder.

It points out that a distinction should be made between policyholders depending on whether they are, on the one hand, industrialists or businessmen, or, on the other, private individuals or small businesses. The latter are often ill-equipped to negotiate and assess the terms of an insurance contract which is often presented as a standard form contract.

(1) Committee Opinion No. CES 226/80

The Committee therefore asks the Commission to include express provisions on questions such as the introduction of a cooling-off period, the banning of improper clauses, express mention of exclusions and dates and the terms on which the contract may be cancelled.

The Committee understands the reasons which led the Commission to opt for the solution set out in Article 12 of the proposal, viz. that only the parties to the contract, and not the Member States, may agree on more favourable terms for policyholders.

The Committee considers that to allow the Member States freedom to alter the solutions enshrined in the Directive would end by robbing the work of harmonization of all point. However, the Member States are free to lay down what rules they please in respect of points excluded from the scope of the Directive.

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers. The Rapporteur was Mr. DE BRUYN - Belgium - Various Interests.

5. CREDIT INSURANCE

“Proposal for a Council Directive amending, as regards Credit Insurance, First Directive 73/239/EEC on the Coordination of Laws, Regulations and Administrative Provisions relating to the taking-up and pursuit of the business of direct insurance other than life insurance.”

Gist of the Proposal for a Directive

The first Council Directive of 24 July 1973 on the Coordination of Laws, Regulations and administrative Provisions relating to the taking-up and pursuit of the business of



On the right Mr. VANNI, Chairman, on the left Mr. LOUET, Secretary-General of the ESC at the Plenary Session.

direct insurance other than life insurance has the purpose of facilitating freedom of establishment in indemnity insurance. Credit and suretyship insurance were nevertheless excluded from the scope of this Directive, by virtue of Article 7(2)(c), "pending further coordination", which is what this proposal is intended to achieve.

Coordination is necessary because in Germany, for credit insurance in its entirety and suretyship insurance in part, specialization is mandatory, i.e. those classes of insurance may not be undertaken together with other classes of insurance.

As far as the Community is concerned the specialization rule has the effect of enabling all German credit insurance undertakings to become established in the different Member States, Whereas foreign composite insurers are not allowed to write credit insurance in Germany.

Gist of the Opinion(1)

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion* unanimously.

Having analysed the insurance market, the Committee endorsed the Commission's prudent compromise whereby the German Federal Republic's ban on combining credit insurance with other classes of insurance was abolished, while at the same time the capital requirement laid down for companies writing credit insurance were raised considerably and a distinct management structure was laid down for credit insurance firms.

Because of this composite insurers from other Member States who wished to write credit insurance in the Federal Republic of Germany would not have to specialise (e.g. by setting up a subsidiary).

This Opinion was based on work prepared by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services under the

*chairmanship of Mr. van CAMPEN - Netherlands - Employers.
The Rapporteur was Mr. DE BRUYN - Belgium - Various
Interests.*

6. CEREAL SUBSTITUTES (Own-initiative study)

*"Agricultural Cereal Substitutes in particular Substitutes
for Feed Grain."*

Gist of the Committee Study(2)

In this study, adopted by 48 votes in favour, 23 against and 17 abstentions, the Economic and Social Committee expresses fear that in future there will be a net surplus on the Community cereal market thus making it necessary for the EC to export cereals on a permanent basis, rather than having to contend with a net deficit as it does at present. The Committee calls upon the EC Institutions to find a solution to this problem which is consistent with the achievement of a long-term overall balance in the EC's cereal market. The Committee urgently requests the EC Institutions to work out a common policy in this field.

With this aim in view, the Committee advocates, that the Community should initially stabilize its imports of cereal substitutes intended for use in animal feed.

It notes that there has been a considerable increase in the Community's imports of cereal substitutes (particularly manioc) because they are available cheaply and are subject to either no import levies at all or only slight import levies, unlike cereal imports.

This situation is all the more disturbing as it is leading to a considerable reduction in the amount of cereals used in animal feed, thereby reducing the outlets for EC grain.

The Committee notes that the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) is having to pay

heavily for this imbalance. This is because of the paradoxical situation which has arisen in that the EAGGF is losing money as a result of the lack of levies on imports of cereal substitutes but, at the same time, is having to pay out more in the way of refunds to Community farmers who have to find alternative outlets for their wheat and barley which they are unable to sell on the Community market.

The use of these imported cereal substitutes (such as soya bean oil-cake) has been facilitated by technological progress in methods of manufacturing compound feeds. This in turn has facilitated the development of "factory farming" of pigs and poultry in some areas and of dairy farming in areas with poor feed resources. It has also helped to keep small farms going.

On the other hand, as feed costs make up two-thirds of production costs, there have been distortions in competition which have hit farmers in the least favoured areas, particularly as a result of differing currency values.

The Committee point out that if manioc imports were to be subject to the same levies as those applied to cereal imports, the price of pork would go up from 4 % to 5 % which would put up families' food bills by between 0.4 % and 0.5 %.

Finally, the Committee warns against a continued imbalance in this field as it would make the Community more dependent on external suppliers and would bring the market for animal products in the Community under the influence of the world market.

This study was based on work prepared by the Section for Agriculture under the chairmanship of Mr. EMO CAPODILISTA - Italy - Various Interests. The Rapporteur was Mr. BERNS - Luxembourg - Various Interests.

- (1) Committee Opinion number CES 227/80
- (2) Committee Study number CES 236/80

II

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

In the period between the 175th and 176th Plenary Sessions, the Committee Chairman met with the following people:

- Ambassador G. POENSGEN who was recently appointed the Permanent Representative of Germany to the European Communities. Ambassador POENSGEN and Mr. VANNI discussed in particular the problems involved in strengthening the Committee's contacts with COREPER.
- Mr. GLINNE, Chairman of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament. This was one of the meetings planned by the Committee Chairman with the Chairmen of the European Parliament's Groups and Committees to establish better relations between the two Institutions.
- The members of the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament, at one of the Group's Plenary Sessions. In his statement at the meeting, the Chairman outlined the Committee's functions and activities and again stressed the need to strengthen the contacts between the Committee and the Parliament.
- Mr. JUDITH, President of the ECSC's Consultative Committee, with which the Committee has had excellent relations for some time.
- Mr. KOK, Chairman of the European Trade Union Confederation. At their meeting, the Committee Chairman stressed the importance he attached to relations with the European organizations representing the various interest groups.

- The Chairman also met with Mr. OPITZ, the Secretary-General of the European Parliament; Mr. TRYFON, the Secretary-General of Greece's Economic and Social Council; and Mr. BLUME, the Chairman of Germany's Consumer Organization.
- **Meeting between EFTA and the ESC**

Representatives of the Consultative Committee of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Economic and Social Committee held their sixth joint meeting in Brussels on 12 February. During the meeting particular attention was drawn to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to economic and monetary problems.

III

NEW CONSULTATIONS

During the month of February the Council consulted the Committee on the following points:

“Draft Council Directive on statistical returns in respect of Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway, as part of regional statistics”
(Doc. COM(79) 741)

“Council Directive on statistical returns in respect of carriage of goods by rail, as part of regional statistics”
(Doc. COM(79) 743 final)

“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) relating to the zootechnical standards applicable to breeding animals of the porcine species”
(Doc. COM(79) 785 final)

“Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning

electrical equipment for use in potentially explosive atmospheres in mines susceptible to fire-damp"
(Doc. DOM(80) 12 final)

"Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 71/307/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to textile names"
(Doc. COM(79) 778 final)

"Proposal for a Council Directive on the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on cereals intended for human consumption"

"Proposal for a Council Directive on the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on foodstuffs of animal origin"
(Doc. COM(80) 14 final)

"Proposal for a Multiannual Community Programme of Research and Development in Biomolecular Engineering"
(Doc. COM (79) 793 final)

IV

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF FUTURE WORK

MARCH 1980 PLENARY SESSION

Opinions requested by the Institutions

- Fourth amendment, dangerous substances
- Dangers arising from use of consumer products
- Fuel consumption and engine power (motor vehicles)
- Powered industrial trucks
- Sound emission from construction plant
- Rear-view mirrors (two- and three-wheeled vehicles)
- Public supply contracts

- Major accident hazards of certain industrial activities
- Inland waterway vessels
- Peas and field beans
- Fruit juice and similar products
- Farm prices
- Zootechnical standards - animals of the porcine species prices
- Monetary compensatory amounts
- Right of residence

Study

- Regional policy
- Lorraine integrated operation

APRIL 1980 PLENARY SESSION

Opinions requested by the Institutions

- Generalized tariff preferences scheme

Own-initiative Opinion

- Regional development programme

MAY 1980 PLENARY SESSION

Opinions requested by the Institutions

- Radiation protection
- Legal expenses insurance
- VAT on the stores of vessels, etc.
- Social situation in 1979
- R & D biomolecular engineering
- Regional statistics - carriage of goods by inland waterway
- Regional statistics - carriage of goods by rail

Own-initiative Opinions

- International standards - working conditions
- Economic situation in mid-1980

SUBSEQUENT SESSIONS

Opinions requested by the Institutions

- Development of transport infrastructure
- Air transport (Supplementary Opinion)
- Income tax provisions with respect to freedom of movement for workers
- Changes in working hours
- Protection of workers against lead
- Protective structure for construction plants
- Textile names
- Pesticide residues in cereals
- Saint-Geours Report (long-term consumption of energy)
- Competition policy
- Investment guarantees (LDCs)
- Electrical equipment for use in potentially explosive atmospheres

Studies

- DNA conjectural risks
- Consistency of external policies

V

MEMBERS' NEWS

Changes in the composition of Committee Sections

Mr. BROICHER, member of Group I, replacing Mr. HIPP, has been nominated to the Sections for Economic and Financial Affairs, Industry and the Environment.

Mr. BLASIG has been nominated a Bureau member following the resignation of Mr. HIPP.

Mr. WAGEMANS, member of Group II in replacement of Mr. HUBREGTSE, is nominated to the Sections of Industry, Regional Development and Energy.

Mr. PRONK leaves the External Relations Section for the Agriculture Section.

Mr. van RENS leaves the Industry Section.

Mr. van GRUENSVEN leaves the Regional Development and Energy Sections for the External Relations Section.

VI

PRESS CUTTINGS

La Libre Belgique 5.2.80

CONSOMMATION

Vers une nouvelle réglementation européenne du crédit

Le Comité économique et social (C.E.S.) des communautés européennes réclame des mesures permettant un réel libre accès de tous et sans discrimination au crédit à la consommation, ainsi qu'une garantie plus approfondie des droits du consommateur en la matière.

Dans un avis émis le 30 janvier 1980 sur l'harmonisation des législations en matière de crédit à la consommation, le Comité reconnaît que le recours à ce type de crédit dans les pays de la Communauté a permis aux consommateurs d'améliorer leur niveau de vie.

Le CES estime, tout comme la Commission, qu'il convient d'assurer une protection complète du consommateur et de maintenir une concurrence loyale entre les entreprises de crédit. Il met, dès lors, l'accent sur plusieurs points et propose notamment l'interdiction de toute démarche à domicile à l'exception des cas où un délai de réflexion est accordé au consommateur.

Il considère qu'en cas de non-exécution du contrat, le consommateur devrait pouvoir se retourner contre le fournisseur et, si nécessaire, contre le prêteur, lorsqu'il y a une coopération établie sciemment entre eux. En effet, pour le consommateur, l'acquisition de biens ou de services et le contrat de crédit qui y a trait ne constituent qu'une seule opération.

D'autre part, considère encore le CES, l'existence de centres de renseignement, qui constituent des « fichiers clients », risque d'affecter la vie privée des individus, en cas de situations socialement graves pour le consommateur, la faculté de suspendre les paiements devrait lui être offerte.

Enfin, le Comité souligne la nécessité d'interdire la lettre de change et le billet à ordre déjà demandée par la Commission. En effet, dans ces deux cas, le débiteur est obligé de payer son créancier, quelle que soit l'exécution du contrat par ce dernier.

Gazzetta del Teramo 27.1.80

Per una vera politica comunitaria

Nella sua ultima sessione plenaria, il Comitato economico e sociale (C.E.S.) ha denunciato la mancanza di coordinamento delle politiche energetiche dei vari Stati membri. La Comunità dovrebbe limitare le sue partecipazioni energetiche al proprio consumo. Secondo il C.E.S., il pubblico va meglio informato sulle conseguenze che la crisi può avere sul livello di vita, affinché sia più disposto ad accettare le misure che si dimostrano necessarie. Ha pure sottolineato la necessi-

tà di maggiori sforzi nel campo dello stoccaggio di residui radioattivi, di uno sviluppo di nuove fonti di energia e di un vero dialogo con i paesi produttori di petrolio.

Il Comitato economico e sociale della Comunità è una istituzione consultiva composta da 144 membri che rappresentano i datori di lavoro, i sindacati e numerosi gruppi di interesse, come gli agricoltori e i consumatori.

VDK Zeitung Bayern 2/80

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Marie Weber ausgezeichnet

In Würdigung ihrer hohen nationalen und internationalen Verdienste um die Durchsetzung der Belange der berufstätigen Frauen sowie die Verwirklichung einer zeitgemäßen Bildungs- und beruflichen Ausbildungspolitik ist die stellvertretende Vorsitzende des Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (DGB), Marie Weber, mit dem Großen Verdienstkreuz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland ausgezeichnet worden.

Als Mitglied des Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses der Europäischen Gemeinschaft initiierte sie einen Bericht über die Situation der Frauen in Europa und wirkte maßgeblich an den inzwischen vom EG-Rat erlassenen drei Richtlinien für die Gleichbehandlung von Mann und Frau mit.

Forum International 11.2.80

• Le Comité économique et social des Communautés européennes réclame qu'un poids maximum de 40 tonnes soit fixé pour les véhicules agricoles, aucun essieu ne pouvant dépasser 11 tonnes

L'Echo de la Bourse 15.1.80

AU FIL DES JOURS

• Le Parlement de Strasbourg a invité les commissaires européens à faire preuve de modération dans les notes de frais.

• Les pouvoirs de la Commission européenne doivent être clarifiés pour permettre la suppression définitive des quotas techniques à la circulation des marchandises dans la C.E.E., a déclaré à Paris M. Claude Brühl, membre du Comité économique et social de la Communauté européenne. M. Evain est le rapporteur d'un avis émis à l'initiative du C.E.S.C.E. pour la simplification des réglementations de décision dans ce domaine.

Aarhus Stiftstidende 7.2.80

Mindre lastbiler kan spare på veje og energi/80

Arbejdsministeriets partier i Fællesrådet ønsker indført maksimumsvægt for lastbiler for at begrænse medmindringen af vejstatet, mindre energiforbrug og forbedrede miljøforholdene.

Efterskoleudvalget og sociale udvalg, som er et rådgivende organ med repræsentanter for bl. a. arbejdsgivere og fagforeninger, siger i en udtalelse, at det må træffes skrappe foranstaltninger til forbedring af vejtilstanden og arbejdsvilkårene.

Udvalget siger, at trafikken er et område, som er omfattet af meget forfæltige bestemmelser i de enkelte medlemslande. Udvalget foreslår, at der træffes en fælles beslutning om 40 tons (inkl. 11 tons pr. aksel) for lastbiler, samtidig med at der er stillet til spærrelast om indføring af færre og svovelstærke i lastbiler over 11 tons.

Irish Times 19.2.80

Meeting of EEC institutions in Dublin

Irish members of two major European institutions, The European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, met in Dublin yesterday to establish contact and to co-ordinate input to the EEC policies which come before both institutions.

The European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee are directly involved in the evaluation of proposals from the EEC Commission with the objective of influencing these issues before the proposals are adopted by the Council of Ministers.

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- The Economic and Social Committee (April 1979) (A descriptive brochure) 16 p.
- Annual Report (1978) 70 p. (1976) 80 p.
- Directory (January 1979) (List of Members) 41 p.
- The Right of initiative of the Economic and Social Committee (October 1977) 124 p.
- 20th Anniversary of the Economic and Social Committee (May 1978) 19 p.

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