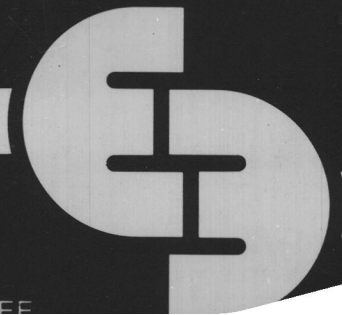


ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY

BULLETIN

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247th Plenary Session

The 247th Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee was held at its headquarters in Brussels on 1 and 2 July 1987. Mr Fons Margot, Committee Chairman, presided.

Commissioner Alois Pfeiffer attended the debate on the economic and social situation.

ADOPTION OF OPINIONS

1. ECONOMIC SITUATION MID-1987 (Own-initiative Opinion)

'The mid-1987 economic situation in the Community — The economic situation in Belgium'

It has long been the custom for the ESC to issue two Opinions each year on the economic situation in the Community.

The first of these is an Own-initiative Opinion, while the second is issued following a request from the Council.

Extracts from Mr Pfeiffer's speech, Member of the Commission

After reviewing the economic situation, Mr Pfeiffer stated:

'Any review of the application of Community strategy would be incomplete without a reference to the economic and social cohesion of the Community.

I note with serious concern the major difficulties being encountered by the economically disadvantaged regions in their attempts to catch up, and by declining industrial regions in their attempts to restructure their economies.

Current data and forward estimates for the period to 1988 do not point to any significant progress. Achievement of more crucial growth

in the Community as a whole is still crucial to improvement of the growth climate in the relevant regions and countries. The Community must make a determined contribution, above all by expanding and strengthening its structural funds and financing instruments.

The social dialogue is important for implementation of the cooperation strategy, which can only be a success if all concerned make a contribution in an atmosphere of mutual trust. It is therefore worth noting that the thrust of the Community strategy is supported by the two sides of industry at Community level.

When discussing the social dialogue, the role of the Economic and Social Committee must not be forgotten. You are able — and I categorically urge you to do so — to issue Opinions on any current issue. And I can assure you that these Opinions will not go unheeded.

Against this background, what sort of economic policy should be pursued in the years ahead to get the economy back onto a course which will bring down unemployment?

This growth must be lasting, which of course rules out an ill-thought-out stimulation of demand. The strengthening of domestic demand must be coupled with a sharp increase in investment. Implementation of the major Community projects can make a major contribution here.

Given the limited scope of monetary policy, there is a strong case for giving closer consideration to the opportunities offered by budget policy, with its familiar difficulties.

What is needed is a policy mix permitting both an improvement on the supply side and an increase in domestic demand. There are two possibilities here: tax relief and increased public investment.

It is important for the success of such a policy that:

- (i) budget consolidation is pursued as a medium-term aim; and
- (ii) the macroeconomic possibilities of the individual Member States are taken as the yardstick for their individual contributions to the joint endeavour.'

Mr Pfeiffer concluded by saying that the consensus on economic policy might be jeopardized unless unemployment was sufficiently reduced in the near future.



The Chairman, Mr Margot (left) welcomes Commissioner Pfeiffer.

Debate

During the discussion, the following speakers commented on Commissioner Pfeiffer's speech and on the Opinions on the economic situation and social developments.

Mr Aparicio Bravo (Spain — Employers) felt it was essential to agree on what was socially desirable and what was economically feasible. He stressed that Europe and its social programme would depend above all on the EEC's ability to compete at world level.

Mr François Staedelin (France — Chairman of the Workers Group) said that in such areas as investments and rolling-back inflation it was always the workers who paid without getting anything in return. He called for swift action to fight unemployment. He also said it was necessary to give people hope that the great internal market would lead to more social justice; otherwise one would not get the pressure from the public which would enable the Heads of State or Government to implement the policy that was needed to solve this problem.

Mr Walter Briganti (Italy — Various Interests) mentioned the role played by the Commission at the Venice Summit on 8 June 1987 and stressed the importance of small businesses, which were highly labour-intensive.

Mr Paul Arets (Belgium — Employers) felt that part-time work had a number of advantages as far as working hours were concerned. He stressed the importance of social dialogue, while opposing any directives or coercive measures from the Commission.

Mr Jean Rouzier (France — Workers) called for ways of combating the damaging behaviour of certain firms and of fighting unemployment, which was threatening the social security system. It would be a mistake to tamper with national solidarity towards the unemployed, the sick and the old.

Mr Robert Moreland (United Kingdom — Various Interests) stressed that the key person in the social dialogue was the consumer — if we wished to solve the problem of unemployment, we would have to make sure we produced the goods which the consumer wanted.

Mr Jens-Peter Petersen (Germany — Employers) considered that while consolidation and reform of public financing was a good thing, account also had to be taken of budgetary policy. The Commission's annual reports should also mention the principles of good management. This might help to mitigate unemployment and the employment crisis.

Mr Calvet Chambon (Spain — Workers) stressed that the Community did not necessarily have to follow the same employment policy as the United States; but it did have to tackle unemployment. Wage cuts were not the only way to increase company competitiveness — there were other methods, such as taxation, commercial efficiency and vocational training. The reform of public spending had to be coordinated at Community level.

Mr Vassilaras (Greece — Various Interests) wondered why it was felt profitable to privatize public companies. In fact, it was the poor who shouldered the cost. There was no evidence that privatization had created new jobs or brought economic benefits.

Mr Perrin-Pelletier (France — Employers) regretted that the Community's loss of competitiveness had been more serious than that of its rivals. He wondered whether the blame for this rested with its commercial aims, unemployment, the quality of its management or unions, or the business environment. He also noted that the number of public sector jobs in such countries as Italy (58% of all jobs), France (51%), Germany (47%) and the United Kingdom (46%) was much higher than in the United States (35%) or Japan (33%).

Mr Geuenich (Germany — Workers) expressed regret that governments ignored Council level agreements on the European social area when their ministers returned home. The only way to combat unemployment was to increase the volume of work or cut working hours.

Mr Hilkens (The Netherlands — Various Interests) deplored the superficial treatment of private consumption in the Opinion. Demand had to be encouraged to stimulate the economy and combat unemployment. The completion of the internal market entailed liberalization which must effect competition policy. This was an important issue for consumers.

Mr Springborg (Denmark — Employers) deplored the snail's pace of economic growth in Europe including Denmark. The Val Duchesse agreements were *inter alia* remarkable as regards cooperation strategy. Mr Springborg again criticized the Heads of State or Government for their lack of interest in this strategy.

Mr Drago (Italy — Various Interests) said that there was a withdrawal from Europe and that the European Summits had become a futile exercise. Alarming fluctuations in interest rates and exchange rates were on the cards and this would endanger economic coordination. Social dialogue had boosted production without any impact on employment to date. The Commission had to send the requisite signals.

Replying to the debate, Mr Pfeiffer admitted that he was somewhat disappointed. As regards the attitude of the Heads of State or Government, we had to continue our efforts to convince governments to stay on the correct course, the one mapped out in the Commission document 'Making a success of the Single Act'. If we succeeded in boosting economic growth, we must invest rather than speculate. The internal market had to be completed. There was no going back.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Committee's Opinion, adopted by a large majority, 11 votes against and 9 abstentions, notes that in 1987 inflation will be higher and growth lower than originally forecast with unemployment suffering as a result.

This bleak outlook, when seen in conjunction with the worldwide economic downturn, shows that with the international environment being the key consideration in the short term, the Community countries' response to changes in world competition must be based on four precepts: greater monetary stability, a more competitive corporate sector, a large internal market and social dialogue.

In its Opinion the Committee calls for:

- (i) the development of free and fair international trade: the US trade deficit should be corrected, the trade surplus in Japan should be reduced, the problem of the Third World's heavy debts should be tackled and a more stable international monetary system should be established;
- (ii) the strengthening and enlargement of the EMS through the membership of sterling and other Member State currencies currently excluded;
- (iii) the search for internal solutions to the problem of Community growth, regardless of the remedies to the other problems imported from outside the Community;
- (iv) the rapid creation of a large internal Community market and the application of the cooperative growth strategy for more employment;
- (v) the lowering of real interest rates, which are currently running at a high level;

¹ CES 647/87.

- (vi) action to encourage productive investments by firms and investments of general social benefit;
- (vii) the moderation of real wage increases and the investment of the savings thus made in extra jobs;
- (viii) the sharing out of the fruits of higher productivity between workers and firms, with some of the productivity gains made being used to reduce working time as part of a more flexible approach;
- (ix) specific measures to solve the problems of youth and female unemployment.

The Committee Opinion also discusses and makes suggestions with regard to:

- (i) expanding R&D whose modest programme at the moment is to be regretted;
- (ii) developing major forward-looking European programmes;
- (iii) stepping-up of vocational training;
- (iv) supporting measures to assist small and medium-sized enterprises which contribute as much as possible to creating jobs;
- (v) adapting rules on competition and consumer problems;
- (vi) rationalizing the CAP and its administration;
- (vii) developing the Community's self-sufficiency in energy.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic and Financial Questions, chaired by Mr Goris (The Netherlands — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Collas (France — Employers).

2. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

'Social developments in the Community in 1986'
(COM(86) 662 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

As in previous years the Committee has been asked to issue an Opinion on social developments in the Community over the last year, based on the Commission's Report on social developments in 1986.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The social situation in the Community remains extremely worrying, declared the Economic and Social Committee in its Opinion on social developments in the Community in 1986 adopted by 92 votes to 14, with 21 abstentions.

The Opinion deplored the snail's pace of Community decision-making on social matters and the lack of consistency between Member States' policies.

The Committee has always supported the development of social dialogue, which it feels cannot be an end in itself, but must foster a favourable climate and yield tangible results.

The Committee believes that the continued high level of unemployment could make it more difficult to complete the internal market by 1992. It calls for an acceleration of public and private investment to strengthen the competitiveness of the European economy, which would then enable new jobs to be created. An effort must be made to employ young people and to combat long-term unemployment.

The Committee has always stressed that part-time work should not be considered an alternative to a policy to expand employment.

As regards education, multi-disciplinary, broad-based training must be promoted, access to higher education extended and illiteracy must be eradicated. Education must be re-thought in order to develop critical awareness, initiative and adaptability to the rapid and frequent changes which will be encountered during a working life. The mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications, together with more extensive language teaching would improve mobility.

The Committee is very concerned by the tendency for Member States to reduce their financing of social protection schemes. There are inequalities, a 'marginalization' of particularly vulnerable groups, and a rise in the number of persons classified as 'poor'. The preventive aspect of social security schemes must therefore be maintained, because it also provides advantages for the economy.

The Committee urges the Commission to promote a selective, coordinated policy to stimulate the economy. This implies greater political determination by the Member States to combat unemployment and maintain social protection cover.

¹ CES 648/87.

The European Social Fund should be more adequately funded, as should the European Regional Development Fund, in order to reduce regional disparities within the Community.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social, Family, Educational and Cultural Affairs, chaired by Mr Carroll (Ireland — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Mourgues (France — Workers).

3. CHERNOBYL (Own-initiative Opinion)

'The consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident'

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Chernobyl nuclear accident has raised once more the question of the operation of nuclear power plants and the national and international responsibilities that go with it. The possibility of accidents with repercussions more than 1 000 km away demonstrates more clearly than ever before that the European Community will have to take a much harder look at nuclear safety and draw the appropriate conclusions.

In its Opinion adopted by 116 votes for, 7 against and 10 abstentions, the Economic and Social Committee demands that 'safety' assessment be carried out within the framework of transparent legal norms. Assessment criteria must be laid down and disseminated before inspections are carried out, a broad-based nuclear inspectorate must be set up, and both old and new plants must be inspected on the basis of these criteria. The European Parliament and the ESC must be involved more closely in safety matters, and internationally agreed monitoring systems and new ways of involving social interest groups in research and plant safety must be created.

In past years the Economic and Social Committee has repeatedly pointed out the dangers of ionizing radiation to the general public as well as to workers, and has called for the use of extra-safe, non-polluting sources of energy. Now that the Chernobyl nuclear accident has taken place, the ESC calls for a continuation of the discussion about the risks and advantages of new technologies, with the involvement of social and political forces.

The Chernobyl accident has led to various problems regarding the marketing of foodstuffs in the EEC countries. The ESC strongly urges the Commission to continue making full use of its powers to

¹ CES 644/87.

make recommendations on maximum radioactivity levels. But these recommendations must be patterned in such a way that consumers and particularly vulnerable groups have the possibility of obtaining foodstuffs with minimum levels of radiation.

Steps must also be taken to prevent as far as possible the mixing of heavily contaminated with lightly contaminated foodstuffs. The resulting dilution is unlikely to lessen the risk of radiation if all the foodstuff is consumed. Such practices are a danger to public health and are incompatible with the legal requirement that radiation be as low as possible.

Given the varying levels of dependence on nuclear energy in the Member States of the Community, and given state-of-the-art technology, alternatives to present forms of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes cannot easily be envisaged in terms of successive, clearly-defined stages.

The Chernobyl accident has meant that many political, social and church groups have come out increasingly in favour of an immediate or gradual abandonment of nuclear energy.

An overall examination of the existing energy supply structure should therefore go hand-in-hand with the planning of complementary or alternative solutions, such as the scrutinizing of new nuclear fission systems with extensive inherent safety, the enormous potential of energy saving, renewable energy sources, particularly solar energy, the further development of nuclear fusion and the development of domestic energy sources.

This approach offers the advantages of economic and technological continuity, a high degree of flexibility, a high level of job security and, finally, the requisite socio-political consensus.

The rapporteur for this Opinion was Mr Flum (Germany — Workers).

4. RADIOACTIVITY/FOODSTUFFS

'Maximum permitted radioactivity levels for agricultural products and drinking water'
(COM(87) 28 final)

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its Opinion, adopted by 45 votes for, 22 against and 9 abstentions, the Committee feels that the proposals are justified from a political,

¹ CES 649/87.

commercial and public health point of view, and that they take account of the international context.

It considers that the levels proposed are likely to achieve a balance by fulfilling the need to protect the health and safety of the public without jeopardizing the production, processing, marketing and distribution of agricultural products.

The Commission's proposals must not, under any circumstances, be considered in isolation. Their application results from a procedure which gives the Commission's whole proposed system flexibility.

The Committee believes that the very flexibility of this system should enable a large measure of agreement to be reached on the maximum permitted radioactivity levels proposed by the Commission.

The rapporteur-general for this Opinion was Mr Saïu (France — Workers).

5. ACCESS TO THE MARKET, CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY ROAD

'Proposal for a Council Regulation on access to the market for the carriage of goods by road between Member States'

(COM(86) 595 final/2)

Gist of the Commission's document

The Commission's proposal seeks to secure progress towards freedom to provide services in the sector in question and provides in particular for the following:

- (i) a 40% annual increase in the number of Community authorizations over a period of four years as from 1988, the total Community quota for 1987 being fixed as point of departure at 11 475 authorizations (see ESC Opinion CES 966/86 of 26 November 1986);
- (ii) the laying-down of the scope and validity of the Community authorizations and of all rules on their issue and use;
- (iii) in the transitional phase, tightening-up of the qualitative criteria that road hauliers operating between Member States must meet;
- (iv) parallel introduction, in the transitional phase, of a safeguard mechanism for dealing with any disruption of the market (crisis);

- (v) establishment, in the final phase, of a system governing access to the transport market which is free of all quantitative restrictions and specification of the conditions of issue and withdrawal of authorizations;
- (vi) complete or partial repeal of 15 Regulations, Directives and Decisions either as from the entry into force of the Regulation or with effect from 1 January 1992.

Gist of the Committee Opinion¹

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee recognized that it would be extremely difficult to set up a 'ready-made' European market regulatory system for the goods transport market. Though in theory the Committee was not opposed to this system, it felt that a 'modern' system should take account of the interests of haulage firms, their employees and customers in the Member States.

On the proposed safeguard clause the Committee took the view that the key issue for all parties concerned (industry, commerce, haulage firms and workers), was to ensure that market disturbances never arose in the first place. It did not reject a free market approach to the goods transport market. But its main criticism of the Commission proposal was that it did not make liberalization of the market hinge on real progress in harmonizing competition conditions.

The Committee felt that decisions on increases in the annual Community quota for authorizations should not be made under a pre-arranged automatic formula but rather in the light of market conditions — the aim being to achieve an orderly transition to 1992.

The Committee noted that there were as yet no known plans for further alignment of the rules and regulations governing national transport markets. It was hard to believe that there would be no need for some such measures. Clearly it was very difficult to solve cabotage problems as long as significant distortions of competition, caused by major differences in these rules, persisted. In addition, further liberalization of cross-frontier goods transport could well, in the absence of such further harmonization, exacerbate discrimination between haulage companies in different countries.

The Committee concluded that the Commission was taking the easy way out hoping that a liberal proposal, however pragmatically worded, would step up the pressure for political recognition of the

¹ C.E.S 643/87.

need for parallel progress on harmonization. The Committee feared that this proposal on its own could not be rapidly translated into a credible policy for the establishment of a European internal market in transport.

In working out a regulatory system for transport in Europe, the special position of major transit countries, both EC and non-EC, had to be taken into consideration. The Commission proposal leaned too much towards the 'purist view' that markets should be governed essentially by direct costs and prices. In this way it signally failed to do justice to the wider aims which an economically and socially acceptable transport policy should promote, in particular the effective use of transport infrastructure taking due account of such overriding interests as environmental protection, energy conservation and road safety.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Delourme (Belgium — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Lawrence Smith (United Kingdom — Workers).

6. TAXES AND ROAD TOLLS

'Elimination of distortions of competition of a fiscal nature in the transport of goods by road: Study of vehicle taxes, fuel taxes and road tolls'
(COM(86) 750 final/2)

Gist of the Commission's document

In its study of the way taxes distort competition in road haulage, the Commission concludes that there will have to be upward harmonization of the most common taxes on vehicles. The Commission's Communication of 10 December 1986 also maps out possible ways of eliminating these distortions and announces that concrete proposals will be submitted before the end of 1987.

The Commission notes that infrastructure costs will be a key criterion when harmonization proposals are drawn up. Only in the countries with the highest tax rates (i.e. Germany and the UK) is it possible to recoup a large proportion of infrastructure costs. In principle, a high priority should be attached in transport policy to the coverage rate of infrastructure costs, if only because of the position of road hauliers in relation to rival carriers.

The Commission therefore proposes greater alignment of the structure of the individual taxes payable by road hauliers. An increase in these taxes is the only solution, because otherwise the proportion of infrastructure costs recouped throughout the Community would continue to be small. The lower vehicle tax rates should be raised to the level of the higher rates, which should remain unchanged. In addition, the principle of 'nationality' (i.e. collection of vehicle taxes in the country of registration) should be foresaken in favour of the principle of 'territoriality'.

The Commission states that the decision reached on vehicle taxes will also determine how the question of motorway taxes is to be handled in future. For fuel taxes, the Commission recommends the gradual alignment of rates within a relatively narrow band.

Methods for measuring traffic densities should be devised in the individual Member States with the aid of data processing and electronics. The aim according to the Commission could be to calculate road tax along the lines of the 'kilometer tax' payable in Scandinavia.

In this case the country of registration would continue to collect the taxes, but a system of transfer payments between Member States would have to be devised for levying them. A compensation or equalization accounting system would have to be used for this purpose. Border controls could be kept at a minimum by using computer technology.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee notes that the urgency of agreement on commercial vehicle taxation, fuel taxes and tolls is underlined by the problems the Community faces in relation to transit through Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. A common position on such fiscal matters would strengthen the Community's position in relation to negotiations with these countries.

The Committee considered that the Commission's detailed proposals should take account of the following points:

- (i) any solution should not obstruct competition with other modes of transport, particularly in the context of infrastructure costing;
- (ii) taxation should, as far as practicable, be related to ensuring that the vehicle contributes fully to covering the costs it creates;

¹ CES 650/87.

- (iii) the 'territorial' basis of taxation has an attraction in that revenue is related to costs incurred. To take this into account and to encourage energy saving, a fair solution could include switching emphasis from taxation on the vehicle to fuel tax;
- (iv) discriminatory rebates on vehicles taxes, fuel taxes and tolls should be banned;
- (v) any solutions must not add to the complexity of taxation or to administrative burdens.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Delourme (Belgium — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Moreland (United Kingdom — Various Interests).

7. DISADVANTAGED ISLAND REGIONS (Own-initiative Opinion) -

Subject

This Opinion reiterates and slightly reshapes the conclusions of the Information Report adopted by the Regional Section on 11 July 1986, which have been amplified in the light of the Study Group's visit to the Canary Islands in January 1987.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

As there are already development programmes for the large islands (Corsica, Sardinia, Crete, Sicily, etc.), the Opinion is confined to the small islands. Nor, for reasons of time, are the overseas territories of France and Britain included.

The problems of small islands arise because, although they may be seen as geographical units, no specific policies have been developed to assist them and deal with their special problems. Nor are they covered individually in the large-scale regional aid programmes.

The Opinion outlines the problems of infrastructure in general and of specific sectors such as transport, energy, water supplies, environmental protection and social services. It then comments on sectoral measures in agriculture, fisheries, industry and services. The Opinion stresses the vital importance of a telecommunications and data processing infrastructure for the future development of the island regions.

¹ CES 651/87.

The measures should be tailored to the level of development of the islands and should complement Community policy for integrating the national economies.

The following measures in particular are proposed:

- (i) Sea and air links, at present both very infrequent and expensive, are especially in need of improvement; various kinds of national and Community aid are required to create an adequate infrastructure to overcome the isolation from which the islands suffer.
- (ii) Infrastructure schemes for improving energy supplies on small islands are indispensable. In the short term special financial support should be provided for traditional energy sources, while in the medium term a study should be undertaken of alternative energy sources.
- (iii) The shortage of water on the islands affects the health of the inhabitants, the environment and economic development. Technical measures are proposed for collecting and storing rain water, financed from Community regional funds; such measures are better than the partial solution of sea water desalination or could be used to supplement desalination.
- (iv) It is necessary to preserve the islands' tourist potential and conserve their ecosystems by keeping their coasts clean, saving endangered animal species, fire protection measures, etc.
- (v) A social infrastructure should be created in the following areas: health care, education, information and advice, housing. The Community should help fund these measures which are intended to induce islanders not to emigrate and to prevent the concentration of population on the mainland. The Committee stresses that the European Regional Development Fund is ill-adapted for the purposes of promoting housing.

The Committee stressed the inability of the ERDF to contribute to the housing sector.

The proposed sectoral measures are:

- (i) Fisheries: improve the exploitation of aquaculture, modernize boats and their equipment, promote infrastructure projects (docks, fish refrigeration and processing plants), and set up an effective fishery protection system.
- (ii) There is a need for special programmes for preserving, expanding, advertising and marketing tourist attractions (monuments, natural or architectural curiosities); cultural events should be organized to provide information about each island's traditions.

- (iii) Cooperatives and technical assistance should be encouraged in the agricultural sector.

All these measures could form part and parcel of a Community development programme for disadvantaged island regions; in the most serious cases an integrated operation could be undertaken, as is being done for the island of Réunion.

The Committee emphasizes that disadvantaged island regions should be the prime beneficiaries of the planned infrastructure improvements in the telecommunications sector.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Regional Development and Town and Country Planning, chaired by Mr Dassis (Greece — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Vassilaras (Greece — Various Interests).

8. BROADCASTING ACTIVITIES

'Proposal for a Council Directive on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the pursuit of broadcasting activities'
(COM(86) 146 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

As a follow-up to the discussion of its Green Paper,¹ the Commission submitted to the Council various concrete proposals aimed at establishing a single European broadcasting area for radio and television.

In the meantime the Council has adopted a Directive on technical standards for satellite transmissions,² and other decisions are pending on the promotion of an independent European programme industry³ and the creation of a European television channel.⁴

To ensure unimpeded retransmission and free reception the present proposal for a Directive coordinates the broadcasting laws of the

¹ OJ C 303 of 25 November 1985, (ESC Opinion CES 776/85 of 25 September 1985).

² OJ L 311 of 6 November 1986, (ESC Opinion CES 393/86 of 23 April 1986).

³ OJ C 303 of 25 November 1985, (ESC Opinion CES 777/85 of 25 September 1985).
COM(86) 255 final of 12 May 1986.

⁴ ESC Opinion CES 776/85 (Green Paper), point 4.6.3.

Member States in so far as different national provisions impede the free exchange of programmes and the free provision of services by all broadcasters across national frontiers.

Articles 57(2) and 66 of the EEC Treaty, which form the legal basis of the draft Directive, provide for the elimination of the legal obstacles to the provision of services, the transmission and retransmission of programmes representing a service within the meaning of the Treaty. Completion of the internal market in the audio-visual sphere was also provided for in the Commission's White Paper and was endorsed by the European Council in June 1985. In general programmes that comply with the Community rules may be freely retransmitted but national broadcasters may be subjected to more restrictive requirements by the relevant Member State.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its Opinion, adopted by 102 votes for, 5 votes against and 26 abstentions, the Committee expressed the view that encouragement should be given to the production of European television programmes, as the cultural diversity of the EC Member States is a source of exceptional richness for the Community.

Cultural pluralism and freedom of expression and opinion would be guaranteed by the coexistence of broadcasting organizations having different statutes, *inter alia*, private and public bodies.

A European broadcasting body with transnational responsibilities should be established.

If a quota system is introduced, it should be assessed in terms of the production of television programmes, bearing in mind the particular situations of the Member States and cultural agreements with non-EC States.

The Committee supported the coexistence and complementarity of the various media in order to avoid the danger of an excessive concentration of commercial television. It also approved the ban on cigarette and other tobacco advertisements. However, it felt that the question of a partial or total ban on drug advertisements should be left to the discretion of national legislatures.

The Committee went on to suggest that a transnational complaints committee be set up, independent of the EC authorities, to consider any cases of abuse with regard to advertising.

¹ CES 642/87.

According to the Committee, permitted advertising time should not under any circumstances exceed 10%.

Finally, the Committee asked the Commission to draw up without delay a separate proposal comprehensively regulating copyright in the Community and also providing a guarantee for vested rights.

The rapporteur for this Opinion was Mr Ramaekers (Belgium — Various Interests).

9. ACTION PROGRAMME FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES

'Draft Resolution of the Council concerning the action programme for SMEs' (COM(86) 445 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

The action programme essentially meets two requests made by the Economic and Social Committee in its last Opinion.¹ The Committee requested:

- (i) that an overall strategy for promoting SMEs should be drawn up;
- (ii) that the Council, as the Community's legislator, make legally binding the measures to encourage SMEs by adopting a resolution which embodies the action programme.

The action programme proposed by the Commission contains an analysis of SME needs, and lists the objectives of Community action, namely:

- (i) to contribute to the creation of a favourable environment for small businesses within the Community's internal market; this concerns both the administrative and regulatory environment as well as the cultural and social climate; and
- (ii) to make a positive contribution to the needs of small businesses in terms of flexibility and the provision of capital. This second major objective addresses both the problem of the creation of firms and the development of existing small businesses.

¹ OJ C 205 of 9 August 1982, see page 16, § 1.2.; page 20, § 3.5.

Short-term measures are the following:

(a) *Community information centres*

The idea is to make available in one place information concerning the Community which is likely to be of interest to small businesses (legislative provisions concerning the internal market, EEC grants, loans and research programmes, etc.).

Offices of this kind could rapidly be set up in the form of pilot information centres (three in the larger countries, two in the smaller ones) with the help of the Commission's information offices.

(b) *Programme of transnational cooperation between training centres for small businessmen*

The aim is to set up a transnational network of business management training institutes and work out *ad hoc* programmes with these institutes.

(c) *Promotion of the spirit of enterprise in Europe*

The intention is to work out European training programmes for use in secondary schools and vocational training schools in each country.

(d) *Mobility of heads of businesses within the Community*

The Commission will compile a practical handbook on the setting up of businesses in Europe indicating in nine languages the formalities involved in each country.

(e) Rapid adoption by the Council of the proposal concerning a special tranche of the New Community Instrument for SMEs (NCI IV).

(f) Proposals aimed at improving the tax rules for SMEs.

The action programme is to a large extent based on the contents of the action programme which was adopted on 8 December 1983 at the closing session of the European Small Business Year conference.

On 20 October 1986 the Council adopted a resolution approving the mainlines of the action programme.

Several of the specific projects provided for in the action programme are already being implemented.

The Commission has already drawn up a Report for the Council on the attainment of the objectives of the action programme.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee considered that the creation of a favourable business environment was the cornerstone of any action to support small firms; this environment is formed not only by the public authorities, laws and regulations, but account also has to be taken of large firms, small firms, employers' and trade union organizations, etc.

As part of the promotion of initiatives for young entrepreneurs, it should be ensured that the setting-up of cooperatives and similar bodies was just as practicable as the setting-up of any other form of small business, without this entailing any distortion of competition.

The national authorities should employ a tax system favouring firms.

The Committee approved any measures to encourage the social dialogue, in which all forms of cooperative must be included.

A distinction must be made between the training required by the entrepreneurs themselves and that required by their staff.

The Committee proposed that the Community information centres which are to be set up in all the Member States should be run by existing bodies (SME organizations, chambers of commerce, trade and industry, etc.).

As far as exports are concerned, special attention should be given to those regions which offer the best untapped opportunities for small firms, with greater emphasis on education, training and information.

The Commission was urged to encourage ERDF participation in productive investment in the SME sector rather than in infrastructure projects.

Finally, the Committee proposed that the Commission consider two new facilities for providing financial aid for small businesses (a line of finance to cover interest rate differentials and the setting-up of reciprocal guarantee companies at Community level to participate in the capitalization of firms).

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by

¹ CES 646/87.

Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Clavet Chambon (Spain — Workers).

10. DANGEROUS CHEMICALS

'Proposal for a Council Regulation concerning export from and import into the Community of certain dangerous chemicals — Recommendation for a Council Decision authorizing the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the Community within the framework of the OECD and UNEP the notification and consultation procedures concerning trade in dangerous chemicals'
(COM(86) 362 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

In view of the growing concern regarding the export of dangerous chemicals which are banned or restricted in the EEC to third countries, particularly Third World countries, the Commission has put forward two measures aimed at controlling trade in these products.

The two measures are for:

- (1) a Regulation establishing common EEC notification and information procedures for the import and export of dangerous chemicals;
- (2) a Decision authorizing the Commission to negotiate notification and information procedures with third countries within the framework of the OECD and UNEP.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee attached great importance to the control of dangerous chemicals exported to third countries and stressed Member States' responsibility to inform and protect the recipients of dangerous chemicals.

The Committee saw an opportunity to introduce into development aid policy an element of environmental policy which should include an emphasis on information, education and training.

The Committee hoped that all Member States would implement the OECD and UNEP schemes for export notifications and that Member

¹ CES 645/87.

States who wished to experiment with additional measures such as 'prior informed choice' would be encouraged to do so.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr de Normann (United Kingdom — Employers).

11. SAFETY OF TOYS

'Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning the safety of toys'

(COM(86) 541 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

In July 1983 the Commission put forward three proposals for a Directive on the safety of toys on which the Committee issued an Opinion approving the proposal with certain qualifications.

However, these proposals ran into difficulty in the Parliament and it was decided to re-examine them in the light of the 'new approach' to technical harmonization and standards.

The Commission has now decided to withdraw the original three proposals and to put forward a new text in conformity with the 'new approach' which provides for legislation for safety standards but voluntary standards for technical specifications.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The EEC Directive on the safety of toys should be tightened up and penalties should be imposed on manufacturers, importers and distributors of toys who fail to comply with the rules. This recommendation is one among many contained in the Opinion on the subject unanimously adopted by the Economic and Social Committee.

The Committee sees toy safety within the context of the more generally applicable Directive on product liability and it points to the need for greater public awareness both of responsibility for product liability and of the means of obtaining compensation for injury.

¹ CES 639/87.

It agrees that the starting point is the premise that all toys must be safe, that children — because of their age and inexperience — are vulnerable in cases of danger and must have a right to special protection.

The Committee recognizes that there is a price to be paid for safety, by society as a whole, not only in terms of money but also in terms of the acceptance of additional controls of various kinds, of the restrictions of freedom, of the demands of responsibility for vigilance and supervision.

The Committee is not against a certification system in principle, but it has reservations about the present proposals which imply two possible different levels of safety. These must be clarified and explained if they are to function properly.

It therefore seeks reassurance about formulation both of standards and of essential requirements, and about conformity with standards. It seeks clarification about the purpose of certification, about its effectiveness; above all it questions the ability to cope with the enormous number of toys (60 000 new toys a year), and process them with the speed necessary for marketing them quickly.

It suggests that the restructuring of the draft proposal should make a clearer division between authorization, inspection and enforcement. It also feels that any new text should more explicitly deal with the question of penalties for serious offences.

The Committee points out that the main emphasis in the draft Directive appears to be on toys produced within Europe, and draws attention to the greater difficulty of dealing with certification, inspection and monitoring of the vast numbers of imported toys.

It therefore asks the Commission to make quite clear the practical application of controls and certification to imported goods, especially in relation to fair competition.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mrs Williams (United Kingdom — Various Interests).

12. GOOD LABORATORY PRACTICE

'Proposal for a Council Directive on the inspection and verification of the organizational processes and conditions under which laboratory studies are planned, performed, recorded and reported for the non-clinical testing of chemicals (good laboratory practice)'
(COM(86) 698 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The proposal follows on from Draft Directive COM(85) 380 which seeks to introduce into the Community the OECD principles of good laboratory practice (GLP). The Committee endorsed this proposal (CES 1086/85).

The proposal is designed to standardize inspection and verification arrangements throughout the Community. The results of laboratory checks and audits of GLP compliance carried out in one Member State are to be binding on the other Member States in order to avoid duplication.

The Member States are required to designate the authorities responsible for inspection (Article 3) and to submit an annual report on the implementation of GLP in their territory (Article 4).

Article 6 stipulates that the Commission will be assisted with the technical implementation of the Directive by the Committee set up under Directive 67/548/EEC.

An inspection programme in line with OECD principles is set out in the Appendix.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

Unanimously, the Committee adopted an Opinion which welcomes the proposal to introduce a standard procedure of inspection and verification of compliance with 'good laboratory practice' and hopes that a centralized inspection system operating in a consultative capacity might be possible in the future.

The Committee suggests setting up a central list of laboratories on EEC territory. Such a list should be easily accessible to the public. The Committee also considers that it is necessary to include in the

¹ CES 627/87.

Directive the right of interested bodies to have access to inspection reports and the right to appeal when such inspections may lead to a laboratory being struck off the GLP list.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Rolao Gonçalves (Portugal — Employers).

13. ALDRIN, DIELDRIN AND ENDRIN

'Proposal for Council Directives concerning limit values for discharges of aldrin, dieldrin and endrin into the aquatic environment and quality objectives for aldrin, dieldrin and endrin in the aquatic environment'
(COM(86) 534 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

Aldrin, dieldrin and endrin (known as the 3-drins) are pesticides used in the mothballing of wool and the protection of wood and cables against termites.

The aim of this proposal is to amend the draft Council Directives (OJ C 146 of 12 June 1979 and C 341 of 31 December 1980) on the fixing of limit values for discharges of aldrin, dieldrin and endrin and on the quality objectives for aldrin, dieldrin and endrin in the aquatic environment.

The preamble, articles and annexes of the abovementioned Directives are amended and supplemented.

Specific programmes must be drawn up to eliminate pollution.

Groundwater is specifically excluded from the scope of the Directive.

Every five years the Commission will have to forward to the Council a comparative assessment of the implementation of the Directive by the Member States

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee observed that not all uses of drins are covered and pointed out that environmental problems could arise therefrom. It also notes that isodrin has been omitted.

¹ CES 628/87.

The Committee urged the Commission to propose a Directive which would ban products treated with the pesticides in question and called for closer cooperation of neighbouring Member States in harmonizing the measures outlined in the proposal.

Finally, the Committee suggested that the limits of determination for each substance in sediments and organisms should be defined on a separate basis and asked for a more concrete definition of the sediment analysis, so as to avoid discrepancies in the application of the Directive.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Rolao Gonçalves (Portugal — Employers).

14. COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME

'Proposal for a Council Regulation on action by the Community relating to the environment — Report from the Commission to the Council, Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee on the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC) No 1872/84 on action by the Community relating to the environment'
(COM(86) 729 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

It has been decided, in the light of experience, to replace the present Regulation by a new one. The most important changes are as follows:

- (1) The environmental action regulation should apply indefinitely, instead of for a period of three years.
- (2) Support could also be given to environmentally compatible waste management and the protection of threatened species and habitats, as well as to clean technologies, new techniques and methods for measuring the quality of the environment and to biotopes.
- (3) The maximum rate of Community financial support would be raised.
- (4) The referral procedure provided for in Articles 5(2) and 5(3) of Regulation No 1872/84 would be abolished and decisions simply be taken by an Advisory Committee.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee urged the Council of Ministers to advocate financial support for EC environmental projects without time restrictions.

For areas classified as 'particularly disadvantaged' according to the criteria laid down in the ERDF, the Committee felt that the proposed aid ceiling should be increased by 10 percentage points and proposed further that advisory activities should be eligible for financial assistance.

The Committee also called on the Commission to define more clearly 'Community interest' as regards projects and to give preference to transnational projects using simplified techniques and involving the lowest possible follow-up costs. The administrative procedures should be made more transparent and dual funding should be avoided.

In addition, the Advisory Committee should take account of the views of local and regional bodies when assessing the various projects.

Finally, the Committee called for an increase in the budget in the medium-term and for close links to be established with environmental organizations and groups. Wide publicity should also be given to the proposed measures and their results.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mr Jaschick (Germany — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Schmitz (Germany — Workers).

15. FLUID FERTILIZERS

'Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive No 76/116/EEC in respect of fluid fertilizers'
(COM(86) 704 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The purpose of the proposal is to modify Council Directive 76/116/EEC in order to extend to fluid fertilizers the provisions in force for solid fertilizers.

¹ CES 629/87.

The growth of mechanization in agriculture, an expensive labour force, and a bigger trade in fluid fertilizers between Member States have highlighted the need for technical harmonization in this area.

Fluid fertilizers fall into line with other fertilizers which have already been the subject of harmonization, particularly where manufacturing tolerances of nutrient content are concerned. Only Article 2 of Directive 76/116/EEC has to be generalized to include fluid fertilizers as well as solid fertilizers. Article 4 is completed in respect of their conditions of storage, especially as regards temperature.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Committee adopted unanimously an Opinion approving the Commission proposal and drew attention to the comments contained in an earlier Opinion, especially as regards the prospects for protection of the environment and of public health, and the harmonization of Member States' legislation on fertilizers, with a view to achieving fair conditions of competition on the market and guaranteeing the quality of fluid fertilizers through strict identification, so as to protect the consumer.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Bento Gonçalves (Portugal — Various Interests).

16. PUBLICATION OF ATTESTATIONS AND CERTIFICATES

'Proposal for a Council Directive amending several Directives concerning the approximation of the laws of the Member States where there is provision for publication of attestations and certificates'
(COM(87) 44 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

A series of Council Directives dating from the years 1971, 1975, 1976, 1979 and 1984 make provision for publication in the OJEC of extracts from certificates granted in the context of certification procedures envisaged by these Directives, also providing for publication of the withdrawal of certificates.

¹ CES 630/87.

The experience acquired demonstrates that for each particular area it is necessary not only to establish extensive working methods, but equally to carry out significant initiatory work in order to define and put into operation a common schema of extracts.

In the absence of additional funds and due to priority tasks, particularly in the context of the new approach in matters of harmonization and the achievement of the internal market, the services of the Commission had to abandon completely work directed towards the publication of certificates several years ago.

However, this lack of publication of certificates in the OJEC has not apparently been considered as a lacuna by interested circles and up until the present time, the Commission has received no complaints on this subject.

Publication in the OJEC of certificates and certificate withdrawals is in fact, in conformity with the provisions of these Directives, only an additional and partial information, adding to the direct exchange of information between Member States and competent bodies.

Furthermore, in the majority of cases, there currently exists at national level a specialized publication (monthly/bi-monthly) carrying not only certificates with Community significance but also national ones and allowing specialized readers to follow certificates in detail.

The Commission therefore questions whether the publication in the OJEC of very brief and un-updated extracts of certificates posing considerable problems of translation and codification, justifies the expense (which can be estimated at approximately 50 ECU per certificate without taking into account the depreciation on initial investments in computer equipment).

Also, it has to be taken into consideration that all the Directives concerned fall within the competence of the *acquis communautaire* of the classical approach to harmonization. Taking into account the new approach, where there would no longer be publication of certificates and their possible withdrawal, the problem even though partial and limited will be but a relic of the past. Because of these facts and with a view to the future, the Commission proposes to no longer consider the publication of certificates as essential and delete them in the Directives concerned.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In an Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee approved the Commission's proposal.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Pearson (Ireland — Employers).

17. MOTOR VEHICLES (OFF-ROAD)

'Proposal for a Council Directive adapting to technical progress Directive 70/156/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers (off-road)'
(COM(87) 109 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The proposed amendment concerns the inclusion in Annex I to Directive 70/156/EEC of the definitions of off-road vehicles within categories M (motor vehicles having at least four wheels, or having three wheels when the maximum weight exceeds one metric tonne, and used for the carriage of passengers) and N (motor vehicles having at least four wheels, or having three wheels when the maximum weight exceeds one metric tonne, and used for the carriage of goods). The principal parameters on which these definitions are based are, on the one hand, the traction afforded by the axles and hill-climbing ability and, on the other, the presence of a device for locking the differential or a mechanism producing a similar effect and certain requirements relating to the front and rear incidence angles, ramp angle and ground clearance.

The urgent need for a Community definition of off-road vehicles derives from the fact that a definition of such vehicles is either lacking or varies in the Member States. This absence of a common definition creates both serious disadvantages for manufacturers and barriers to intra-Community trade in these vehicles.

¹ CES 631/87.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In an Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee endorsed the Commission proposal, which it regarded as sufficiently stringent, as a whole, to prevent vehicles which were not really designed for 'off-road' uses from being classified in that category and thus benefiting from the 1 or 2 dB (A) derogation provided for by Directive 84/424/EEC.

The Committee acknowledged that no definition in this particular field can ever be perfect, when the kind of vehicle involved has so many variants.

Thus, in order to verify that the compliance criteria are indeed optimal, and also to ascertain whether in the future attempts are made to have vehicles classified as 'off-road' when that is not in reality the use to which they will be put or the purpose for which they were designed, the Commission should recommend to the Member States that they should monitor applications for new type-approvals.

The Rapporteur-General for this Opinion was Mr Perrin-Pelletier (France — Employers).

18. MOTOR VEHICLES (ON-ROAD)

'Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 70/156/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the type-approval of motor vehicles and their trailers (on-road)'
(COM(87) 26 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

Directive 70/156/EEC concerns the laying down of a Community wide type-approval procedure for motor vehicles and their trailers and details the procedure to be followed in order that complete EEC type-approval may be obtained. As laid down by that Directive, EEC type-approval for motor vehicles and their trailers will become applicable when all the separate Directives, which cover the various technical characteristics of motor vehicles (listed in Annex II) to the Directive, have been adopted. In the 16 years since the adoption of Directive 70/156/EEC, 41 of these separate Directives have been adopted and only three Directives now remain outstanding. These

¹ CES 638/87.

three Directives concern tyres, safety glass, and weights and measurements and have been before the Council since 1977.

The experience of Member States and industry concerning the operation of the EEC type-approval procedure has shown that pending the introduction of full EEC type-approval, Directive 70/156/EEC should be amended to improve the administrative procedures involved in granting type-approval to separate technical units and components. This is the purpose of the proposed Directive, which contains the following practical proposals:

- (i) to define the terms 'technical units' and 'components';
- (ii) to permit Member States to satisfy themselves that a manufacturer is capable of ensuring conformity of production to the approved type;
- (iii) to reduce the amount of paper in circulation between Member States;
- (iv) to clarify the administrative procedures between Member States where a Member State finds that a number of vehicles do not conform;
- (v) to delete the obligation that separate technical units which are required by the relevant separate Directives to have the type-approval number affixed to the unit also be accompanied by a certificate of conformity;
- (vi) to correct minor errors in the original wording of the Directive.

The Commission is also proposing that the Consultative Committee procedure be introduced into Directive 70/156/EEC.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In a unanimous Opinion, the Committee approved the proposal. Nevertheless, it reiterated its demand that full European type-approval be achieved as quickly as possible and no later than 1992.

It was of the opinion that the document exchanged between Member States should provide sufficient information for type-approval authorities to be able to verify that a particular vehicle, separate technical unit or component conformed to the type approved — but no more and no less. Further, this document, known as the Type-Approval Certificate, should be presented in a format and with a numbering

¹ CES 631/87.

system common to all Directives so that it would be easily adaptable to electronic data processing in the future.

The Committee could not, however, as far as the automobile sector was concerned, agree with the introduction of a new procedure which in the end would reduce the role of the Committee on Adaptation to Technical Progress to a purely consultative one. It was vital not to abolish the voting procedure of a Committee which had proved itself capable of results.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Perrin-Pelletier (France — Employers).

19. UNITED NATIONS — RESOLUTION ON THE FACILITATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT

'Proposal for a Council Decision with regard to the 'Consolidated Resolution on the facilitation of road transport' of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe'
(COM(84) 552 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

The aim of the Community proposal is for the European Economic Commission and its Member States to accept the Consolidated Resolution drawn up by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The Resolution, which was prepared by the Economic Commission for Europe's working party on road transport with the cooperation of representatives of the European Community and the Member States, classifies and updates a number of rules and procedures on road transport introduced in Europe during the post-war years. The main subject-matter covered by the Resolution concerns definitions and regimes applicable to passenger transport and goods transport by road, and insurance and registration of vehicles.

Since most of these points are covered by Community legislation, and the Consolidated Resolution as a whole is of particular interest to the common market, the Community and the Member States should act jointly to accept the recommendations made in the Resolution. It is unlikely that there will be unreserved consensus on all the provisions of the Consolidated Resolution, but in order not to prevent its application the European Community and its Member

States should accept its recommendations subject to certain reservations (see Annex 1 to the Commission document).

By simplifying and standardizing procedures and by approximating the different arrangements in force, the Consolidated Resolution is expected to contribute to the development of road transport in Europe.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The ESC Opinion (which was adopted unanimously) expressed concern that the Council had delayed for about two and a half years before taking the relevant decision. The Member States of the Community must lift their reservations as soon as possible, particularly as the Consolidated Resolution was a non-binding legal provision. The Committee also took the view that it was possible to achieve a minimum framework for joint action on goods transport, albeit with certain collective reservations being expressed, as in the Commission proposal. Finally, the fact that in the last few years Community transport policy had been constantly evolving must not be allowed to delay joint action even more. This problem could be solved by the Community and the Member States seeking to update the provisions of the Consolidated Resolution at regular intervals.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Delourme (Belgium — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Alexopoulos (Greece — Various Interests).

20. GATT/EEC (Own-initiative Opinion)

'The impact of current US economic and political developments on the Uruguay Round and international trade'
(Own-initiative Opinion)

Gist of the Committee's Opinion²

The Committee unanimously urged the Commission and the Council to:

- (i) react firmly to any measures taken outside the GATT framework which prejudice exports from Community firms and thus the employment levels of the Member States;

¹ CES 633/87.

² CES 634/87.

- (ii) make the Community's views clear — not only to American politicians but also, via the media, to the American public — on the dangers of an escalation of protectionism and on the need for a concerted effort to strengthen the GATT system and make the Uruguay Round negotiations a success.

The Committee urged the Member States to show the greatest consistency and cohesion, so that Community action is unanimous and unwavering.

Lastly, the Committee called for a joint effort from the industrialized nations and NICs, by means of growth policies and multilateral talks, to solve the current most pressing problems (trade, debts, monetary matters).

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for External Relations, chaired by Mr Kenna (Ireland — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Romoli (Italy — Workers).

21. COORDINATED INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC PAN-EUROPEAN DIGITAL MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS

'Proposal for a Council Recommendation on the coordinated introduction of public pan-European digital mobile communications in the Community and the proposal for a Council Directive on the frequency bands to be made available for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European digital mobile communications in the Community'
(COM(87) 35 final)

Gist of the Commission's document

Mobile radiotelephone services are extremely important: they are the only way of contacting subscribers when they are travelling and they provide the most efficient links to the public telecommunications network.

Mobile telephone services are used, *inter alia*, by lorry drivers, travelling salesmen, managerial staff in SMEs travelling on the major trans-European motorways or by train. Mobile communications facilities can also be used in aeroplanes, (public radiotelephone service) and for public paging systems (non-speech, one-way personal selective calling system with alert, without message or with defined message such as numeric or alphanumeric).

The radiotelephone market is expanding rapidly. The number of units in use in the Community is expected to rise from less than 150 000 in 1987 to 2.5 million in 1995. Current equipment does however use traditional technology and is frequently incompatible. As a result mobile communications frequently break down at frontiers. In addition, the cost of equipment is still too high and there are significant variations between the different countries. Current capacity is also expected to be saturated in the early 1990s.

The Commission has therefore submitted a blueprint comprising a draft Recommendation and a draft Directive for the rapid development of pan-European mobile communications in the 1990s.

The Recommendation encourages the Member States, the telecommunications authorities and industry to replace, within a reasonable timescale, the current incompatible systems by genuine pan-European public mobile communications. The Commission is proposing:

- (i) a gradual switch in accordance with a precise schedule, to a pan-European digital cellular mobile communications system;
- (ii) the start of service from 1991 onwards at the latest with geographical coverage and penetration targets compatible with commercial strategies.

The Directive seeks to ensure timely allocation of adequate frequency bands for the future pan-European system. The 905-914 frequency bands are to be reserved exclusively for the service from 1 January 1991 and the entire 890-915 and 935-960 MHz bands will be allocated to it over the following decade.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously.

The Committee felt that development of the new system would meet the growing needs of mobile radiotelephone users and bring about technological progress in the telecommunications sector, which is especially important if the Community is to withstand competition from the United States and Japan. The system would also boost employment as a result of new investment.

Finally the Committee made the following comments:

- (i) the legal form of proposal: the Committee wondered whether a Directive might not have been more appropriate than a

¹ CES 635/87.

Recommendation for introducing public pan-European digital mobile communications in the Community;

- (ii) the date for starting service: the phrasing in the Commission document is too vague;
- (iii) the financing of necessary investment: this should be given special emphasis;
- (iv) the part of the Annex which deals with the system's costs: the Commission should review its recommendations here.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Transport and Communications, chaired by Mr Delourme (Belgium — Workers). The rapporteur was Mr Rouzier (France — Workers).

22. LIQUEUR WINES

'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the preparation and marketing of liqueur wines produced in the Community; and the

'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) no X/87 on the common organization of the market in wine'
(COM(87) 91 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The aims of the Commission's present proposals are:

- (i) to replace the Commission's initial 1979 proposal on the preparation and marketing of EEC-produced liqueur wines in the Community, following the amended definition of liqueur wines in the Act of Accession as a result of Spanish and Portuguese entry, and
- (ii) to amend, in consequence, Regulation (EEC) No 337/79 as regards wine-making practices.

To respect wine-making traditions comparable to those relating to other special wines, such as sparkling or semi-sparkling wines, the Commission felt that it should present three proposals on liqueur wines to the Council, as it did for sparkling wines.

The first two proposals concern the rules for preparing and marketing quality liqueur wines. They also contain general provisions applicable to all quality liqueur wines produced in specified regions. The first draft has five main points:

- (i) a ban on enrichment;
- (ii) a limit on SO₂ content;
- (iii) recognition, within the sector of quality liqueur wines produced in specified regions, of traditional categories of liqueur wines linked to particular production or preparation practices;
- (iv) a list of recognized wine varieties; and
- (v) provisions concerning monitoring.

The second draft lays down, in particular, new provisions concerning wine-making practices to be inserted in Regulation (EEC) No 337/79.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In its Opinion adopted unanimously the Committee acknowledged that the two new Member States are major producers of products very similar to liqueur wines as defined in the draft Regulation of 1979.

It therefore recognized that a Regulation should be proposed covering all EEC wine products prepared by comparable methods and fulfilling a specific consumer need.

The Committee particularly stressed that the quantity, quality and undoubted fame of the products made in the new Member States have influenced the proposed definition of liqueur wines, and that in the EEC the production of quality liqueur wines *psr* is of major importance, while that of liqueur wines with no designation of origin is marginal.

The Committee emphasized that because of tastes and traditions, consumer demand is turning to liqueur wines whose essential qualities are constant and clearly defined.

The Committee asked that for essential criteria, especially the minimum alcohol content of the basic wines used, there should be harmonization covering all European production of liqueur wines.

Finally, the Committee stressed the big differences between the cost prices of products, depending on whether they are prepared with basic musts with more or less sugar, requiring differing amounts of additional alcohol to reach the minimum strength laid down.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lopez de la Puerta (Spain —

¹ CES 636/87.

Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Yverneau (France — Various Interests).

23. EGG PRODUCTS

'Proposal for a Council Directive on health problems affecting the production and placing on the market of egg products'
(COM(87) 46 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

The production and the placing on the market in the Community of egg products encounter several technical barriers connected mainly with the nature of the product. Egg products are highly susceptible to deterioration and contamination.

It is essential therefore that egg products be manufactured, undergo heat treatment, be handled, packaged, stored and transported in a similar manner in all Member States, in accordance with requirements guaranteeing that the product presents no danger to human health.

Compliance with these essential requirements implies that provision be made for approving establishments and for laying down rules governing inspection.

The planned provisions will apply to all egg products placed on the Community market. The adoption of the proposal should therefore lead to the removal of all health barriers to trade in egg products and help bring about an internal market in this area.

It should also contribute towards the smooth operation both of the common organization of the market in eggs and of the common system of trade for ovalbumin and lactalbumin.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Committee, in an Opinion adopted unanimously, was pleased that the Commission intends to use the present proposal to harmonize the Member States' national laws, in order to ensure that:

- (i) in future, eggs are produced in the Community under equal conditions;

¹ CES 637/87.

- (ii) differences between hygiene rules do not make it necessary to impose restrictions on trade.

The Committee believed that the proposal is in the interests of the consumer and that it also contributes to the effectiveness of the common market.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Agriculture, chaired by Mr Lopez de la Puerta (Spain — Various Interests). The rapporteur was Mr Broicher (Germany — Workers).

24. NOMENCLATURE

'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the tariff and statistical nomenclatures and on the Common Customs Tariff'
(COM(87) 228 final)

Gist of the Commission's proposal

On 1 January 1988 a new Common Customs Tariff will govern European Community trade which is worth some 1 500 billion ECU — the trade with third countries alone representing one fifth of all world trade.

The novelty of the new situation is not so much the level of duties or quotas provided for in the various tariff or non-tariff measures. These will remain substantially the same. The novelty resides in:

- the adoption of a new harmonized international commodity description and coding system (the HS), which is the subject of an international convention signed by the Community in its own right and all the EEC Member States, and is one of the most important administrative reforms of recent years affecting international trade. The objective of this reform is to achieve, for the first time, a real unification on a worldwide scale of the classification and coding systems for goods involved in international trade. Its objective, by harmonizing the various customs and trading procedures in current use in the world, is the introduction of electronic data interchange (EDI) to replace the assortment of documents which are currently required by the various customs, tax and administrative authorities in international trade.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

In a unanimous Opinion, the Economic and Social Committee endorsed the proposal for the following reasons:

The worldwide harmonized commodity description and coding system (HS) is one of the most important administrative reforms in international trade in recent years.

Thus, the ESC has all the more reason for welcoming the fact that the Commission has taken advantage of the switchover to the HS to:

- (a) amalgamate the tariff and statistical nomenclatures based thereon in a 'Combined nomenclature' and;
- (b) establish a coded, integrated common customs tariff (Taric) by incorporating other Community regulations.

Both systems serve the needs of industry and the authorities and can be brought into line with technological and economic developments in international trade. At the same time the Commission will also be provided with a tool for improving the coordination and implementation of certain policies.

Since a considerable amount of work is already in progress on the switchover to the new system and the deadline set for its entry date into force is 1 January 1988, the ESC felt the speedy adoption of the Regulation to be necessary.

This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr Kazazis (Greece — Employers). The rapporteur was Mr Broicher (Germany — Employers).

25. PREVENTIVE WITHDRAWALS OF APPLES AND PEARS

'Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending, as regards preventive withdrawals of apples and pears, Regulation (EEC) No 1035/72 on the common organization of the market in fruit and vegetables'

Gist of the Commission's proposal

In the light of the positive experience with apples in the past eight years, the Commission proposes that the measure provided for in

¹ CES 640/87.

Article 15a of basic Regulation 1035/72/EEC should be made permanent; the Commission also considers that dessert pears should continue to be included under the arrangements even though it has not been possible to draw any practical experience from the past in their case. The marketing year for pears is similar to that for apples and there could be some exceptionally good harvests on the Community market in years to come, as has already been the case.

Gist of the Committee's Opinion¹

The Economic and Social Committee adopted its Opinion unanimously less 1 abstention. It approved the Commission's proposal.

The Rapporteur-General for this Opinion was Mr Luchetti (Italy — Various Interests).

26. MOTION ON TERRORISM

Motion adopted unanimously by the Committee.

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was shocked to learn of the attempted assassination on 29 June in Athens of one of its Members, Mr George Raftopoulos, President of the Greek Confederation of Workers. Mr Raftopoulos, who was hit by several bullets, is seriously wounded.

The Committee sends Mr Raftopoulos' family, his organization and the Greek Prime Minister its sympathy and best wishes for the recovery of Mr Raftopoulos. The Committee supports all measures by the Member States and the Community to combat terrorism, whatever its origin, which are designed to increase the safety of citizens threatened by the action of groups or individuals who are a real danger to their fellow citizens and to democracy in a free, peaceful Europe.

¹ CES 641/87.

External relations

Chairmans' activities

The Chairman, Mr Margot and the Secretary-General, Mr Louet, attended the opening and closing sessions of the European Family Conference (Coface) in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 1987.

On 16 June Mr Margot delivered the opening speech at the Conference of the European Association for Personnel Management in London.

On 19 June Mr Louet and Mr Margot had talks with Mr J. Campbell, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the European Communities.

Mr Margot and Committee Member, Mr Neto Da Silva attended the opening of the Interparliamentary Conference: European Parliament — Latin-American Parliament in Lisbon on 21 and 22 June.

On 26 June Mr Margot and Mr Louet had talks in Brussels with Mr Crespo, President of the European Parliament's Social Affairs Committee.

Other activities

Committee Member, Mr Vassilaras, accompanied by Mrs Parr of the Secretariat attended a conference on island regions held in the Isle of Man on 13 to 15 May.

Committee Member, Mr Arena, attended the CEEP Conference (European Centre of Public Enterprise) held from 18 to 20 May in Vienna.

Committee Member, Mr Droulin, accompanied by Mr Laval of the Secretariat attended the 69th Congress of the CNMCCA (French Confederation of Mutual Benefit, Cooperation and Agricultural Credit Organizations) in Biarritz from 19 to 21 May.

Committee Member, Mrs Elstner, attended the 23rd Annual Assembly of the AESGP (European Association for Pharmaceuticals) in Vienna from 20 to 22 May.

Committee Vice-Chairman, Mr Zufiaur Narvaiza, accompanied by Mr Brunagel of the Secretariat read a paper at the European Day held during the Barcelona International Fair on 5 June.

Committee Members, Mr Proumens and Mr Hilkens attended a European Forum organized by CEN/Cenelec in Brussels on 5 and 6 June. Mr Kuby, ESC Director, addressed the forum.

ESC Vice-Chairman Mr Poeton attended a meeting of the Steering Committee for the European Year of the Environment (EYE) in Hamburg on 11 June.

Committee Member, Mr Jaschick attended the General Assembly of the Working Party on Medium-Sized and Large Retail Enterprises (BAG) on 11 and 12 June.

Mrs Parr, Regional Development Section Secretary, attended the IXth Seminar on Regionalism organized in Val d'Aoste by the European Institute for Advanced International Studies, Nice from 22 to 24 June.

Committee Member, Mr Vidal, attended the EC Commission Seminar on the social aspects of the CAP from 24 to 26 June.

Visit by a delegation of the Yugoslav Federal Economic Chamber

A delegation from the Yugoslav Federal Economic Chamber visited the Committee from 9 to 12 June in the context of EC/Yugoslav relations.

The Yugoslav delegation was headed by Ambassador J. Korosec, Head of the Yugoslav Mission to the EC and Mr Milan Pavic, Chairman of the Yugoslav Economic Chamber.

The delegation held talks with Mr Margot, Mr Louet and representatives of European and Belgian socio-economic interest groups.

The delegation also raised the specific problems of EC-Yugoslav relations at a meeting with a 12-man delegation from the Committee's External Relations Section. Finally, the Yugoslav delegation attended a meeting of the External Relations Section which dealt, *inter alia*, with the problems of Community Mediterranean policy.

ESC involvement in the European festivities

The Committee had a stand at the highly successful European festivities held in the Cinquantenaire Park, Brussels, from 27 to 30 June 1987. The stand comprised posters, slides and a video outlining the ESC's role and working methods.

ESC represented at Unido/FAO fishery meeting

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Community was represented at the first United Nations Industrial Development Organization/Food and Agriculture Organization consultation of the fishery industry, held in the first week of June at Gdansk, Poland, by Councillor Colin Hancock (UK), rapporteur for a Committee Opinion on the organization of the market in fishery products.

Press conferences

On 21 May, Mr Margot held a press conference in Brussels on the Committee Opinion on the economic situation in Belgium. Mr Margot was accompanied by ESC Members Mr Rouzier and Mr Collas (rapporteur) and Mr Libert (expert).

On 3 July, the Committee held a press conference in Düsseldorf, FR of Germany, on the Opinion on the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. The Committee was represented by Mr Flum (rapporteur) and Mr von der Decken (co-rapporteur).

New consultations

Since the last Plenary Session the Economic and Social Committee has been consulted on the following questions:

Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No 3796/81 on the common organization of the market in fishery products and amending Regulation (EEC) N 950/68 on the Common Customs Tariff
(COM(87) 213 final)

Proposal for a Council Regulation on the tariff and statistical nomenclatures and the Common Customs Tariff
(COM(87) 228 final)

Draft Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down maximum permitted radioactivity levels for agricultural products and drinking water
(COM(87) 28 final)

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive No 85/3/EEC on the weights, dimensions and certain technical characteristics of certain road vehicles
(COM(87) 220 final)

Third periodic report from the Commission on the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the Community
(COM(87) 230 final)

Proposal for a Council Decision on a system for health control of imports from third countries at frontier inspection posts (Shift project)
(COM(87) 207 final)

Proposal for a Council Directive coordinating regulations on insider trading
(COM(87) 111 final)



Provisional future work programme

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- Protection of workers (COM(86) 296 final)
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Subsequent Plenary Sessions

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Building products (COM(86) 756 final/3)
16th Competition Report (COM(87) 180 final)
Third period report on the Community regions (COM(87) 230 final)
Road passenger transport services (COM(87) 31 final)
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Cross-frontier labour problems
Social aspects of sea-fishing
Relations between the Community and State-trading countries

Information reports

Social aspects of the internal market
Development of upland areas
Training and supply of researchers in the Community
GATT/Uruguay Round
The problem of ACP countries' debt burden
Relations between the Community and Mediterranean countries.

Members' news

Mr Emo Capodilista was elected to the Upper House of the Italian Parliament in the June 1987 General Election.

On 2 July Dr Hans-Werner Staratzke, former ESC Member was awarded the 'Grosses Verdienstkreuz mit Stern des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland' (West German Order of Merit) by Dr Martin Bangemann, Minister for Economic Affairs. The ceremony took place in Bonn.

PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

General documentation

The other European Assembly, January 1987 (CES 87-004)
European Union, a people's Europe and the Economic and Social Committee
(Committee Chairman Muhr's speeches to the *ad hoc* Committees for
Institutional Affairs and a people's Europe), 1985 (EX-43-85-35)

Opinions and studies

National regional development aid (Opinion) (Brussels 1986)
EEC maritime transport policy (Brussels, June 1986) (ESC 86-008-EN)
Europe and the new technologies — Research/Industry/Social (Brussels 1986)
(ESC 86-004-EN)
Demographic situation in the Community (Information report) (Brussels 1986)
Occupational medicine — occupational cancer (1985)
Consumer-producer dialogue (Opinion) (January 1985) (ESC 84-011)
Europe and the new technologies (Conference report) (January 1985)
(ESC 84-016)
Irish border areas (Information report) (February 1984) (ESC 84-002)
Transport policy in the 1980s (Opinion) (March 1983) 99 pp. (ESC 83-003)

Obtainable from Gower Publishing Co. Ltd, 1 Westmead, Farnborough, Hants GU 147RU:

Community Advisory Committee for the Representation of Socio-Economic
Interests (UKL 8.50)
European interest groups and their relationship to the Economic and Social
Committee (UKL 25)

Obtainable from Editions Delta, 92-94 Square Plasky, 1040 Brussels:

The economic and social interest groups of Portugal (BFR 350)
Action by the European Community through its financial instruments (Brussels
1979) (BFR 425)
The economic and social interest groups of Greece (BFR 350)
The right of initiative of the ESC (BFR 400)

Obtainable from Kogan Page Ltd, 120 Pentonville Rd, London N1

Directory of European agricultural organizations (UKL 39)

Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

Bulletin (monthly publication) (per issue: ECU 3.50, UKL 2.50, USD 3.50,
IRL 2.70). Annual subscription: ECU 27.70, UKL 19.80, USD 29, IRL 21.20)
Effects of the CAP on the social situation of farmworkers in the European
Community (Brussels 1987) (ISBN 92-830-0093-5) (ECU 3.40, BFR 150,
IRL 2.40, UKL 2.10, USD 3.50)
European environment policy: Air, water, waste management (Brussels 1987)
(ISBN 92-830-0108-7) (ECU 3.50, BFR 150, IRL 2.70, UKL 2.60, USD 4.00)
EEC air transport policy (October 1985) (ESC 85-10) (ECU 5.50, UKL 3.30,
IRL 4, USD 5)
The economic and social situation of the Community (1985) (84-015) (ECU 5.60,
IRL 4, UKL 3.50, USD 4)
GATT — towards a new round (Opinion) (Brussels 1986) (EX-46-86-937-EN-C)
(ECU 2.20, BFR 100, IRL 1.60, UKL 1.40, USD 2.50)

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