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Appearing at the same time as the English edition are editions in the eight other official languages of the Communities: Spanish, Danish, German, Greek, French, Italian, Dutch and Portuguese. The English edition contains the original texts of the interventions in English and an English translation of those made in other languages. In these cases there are, after the name of the speaker, the following letters, in brackets, to indicate the language spoken: (ES) for Spanish, (DA) for Danish, (DE) for German, (GR) for Greek, (FR) for French, (IT) for Italian, (NL) for Dutch and (PT) for Portuguese.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR BARÓN CRESPO

President

(The sitting opened at 5 p.m.)

1. Resumption of the session

PRESIDENT. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament, adjourned on 15 December 1989.¹

2. Tribute

PRESIDENT. — It is my painful duty to inform you that our colleague, Axel Zarges, died on 29 December in Kassel.

Born on 2 October 1932 in Kassel, Mr Zarges studied law, political science and history in Marburg and Bonn. He held a doctorate in law and was a solicitor. He held various senior positions within the CDU, a party he belonged to since 1958. He was a Member of the European Movement from 1951, in which he discharged

many responsibilities. Mr Zarges was elected Member of the European Parliament in the direct elections of June 1984 and in the current parliamentary term. In the European Parliament our colleague, Mr Zarges, belonged to the Group of the European People's Party and was extremely active, particularly in the Committee on External Economic Relations. I would ask you to observe a minute's silence in memory of our colleague and friend, Axel Zarges.

(The Assembly observed a minute's silence)

* * *

PRESIDENT. — I would also inform you, ladies and gentlemen, that, in relation to the disaster which occurred in a discotheque in the city of Saragossa in Spain, I have been in touch with the Spanish authorities, both the Government and the regional and municipal authorities, to convey to them our deep sorrow at this terrible accident.¹

* * *

¹ Approval of the minutes of the previous session: see minutes.

¹ Verification of credentials — Petitions — Transfers of appropriations — Documents received — Texts of treaties forwarded by the Council: see minutes.

FORD (S). — Mr President, I just want to draw the Members' attention to the quaint feudal custom in the United Kingdom of having a New Year honours list and the fact that Mr Prout, the leader of the European Democrats, was included on that list this year and will henceforth be known as Sir Christopher. I have to congratulate him on behalf of the Socialist Group.

(Applause)

It is normally meant to indicate in the United Kingdom the termination of one's political career. That obviously cannot be the case here, otherwise Mrs Thatcher would have to give a further 31 knighthoods out to the rest of the European Democratic Group who are sometimes unruly. But, on behalf of the Socialist Group, our congratulations.

(Laughter and applause)

PROUT, Sir Christopher (ED). — Mr President, I would like to say thank you very much indeed to Mr Ford for his very kind remarks and that I am quite overcome by the way in which he expressed these sentiments. I only hope that the other 31 Members, in due course, become overcome like me!

(Laughter and applause)

TITLEY (S). — Mr President, I should like your guidance on the degree of accountability under your presidency of the staff of Parliament because on 7 November I wrote to the Secretary General on the matter. I have not had the courtesy of a reply. I wrote again on 14 December. I still have not had the courtesy of a reply. There are times when it seems this institution is a black hole into which all correspondence disappears. I would be grateful if you could give us guidance as to whether you expect your staff to reply to letters or simply put them in the bin.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Titley, I am informed by our staff that it was not a question of a 'black hole', but rather of problems arising from the fact of our institution having three places of work. The Secretary-General replied to your letter last week, apologizing for the delay.

MOTA SANTOS (V). — *(PT)* Mr President, on behalf of my political group, I would like to take advantage of the beginning of our Parliamentary work to reflect briefly on the conditions in which our Assembly operates. This is an Assembly which already has difficulties in meeting and an unwieldy apparatus which needs a more flexible organization to enable it to adapt its activities to the dynamics of important and unexpected events, such as those in Eastern Europe for example, which have introduced new parameters of reflection into political debate.

In fact, Mr President, practice has shown that, due to Parliament's unwieldy structure and to the system for setting the order of work for the sessions, rapid political reactions, which are becoming essential for the

democratic functioning of the Community, are not possible.

On behalf of my group, I would like to invite the Members of this Assembly to consider this point and to ask the Committee on the Rules of Procedure to study the possibility of relaxing the procedure for calling extraordinary meetings.

This Parliament, Mr President, cannot continue to be a chamber which echoes decisions which have been taken elsewhere. Parliament cannot remain spineless, motionless and powerless whilst the Council of Ministers and the Commission take all the decisions. It is already bad enough that Parliament is lacking in powers, without making this situation worse as a consequence of its own ineffectiveness.

I think, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, that making these remarks now at the beginning of the year, is quite appropriate for our future activities.

PRESIDENT. — Mrs Santos, I thank you for your thoughts for beginning the New Year. I hope we can live up to them, since we have in this week's agenda, among other things, a special debate on the situation in Eastern Europe.

3. Agenda

PRESIDENT. — We shall now proceed to the drawing up of the agenda.

The draft agenda for the current part-session has been distributed, and the following changes have been proposed or made to it (Rules 73 and 74):

Monday:

The draft agenda covers, under Items 340 and 341, the second report by Mrs Martin on modified starches intended for human consumption (Doc. A3-106/89) and the second report by Mrs Schleicher on antioxidants for use in foodstuffs (Doc. A3-115/89). Both reports recommend the rejection of the Commission's proposals.

The Commission has informed us that it is prepared, in accordance with the wishes of the Committee on the Environment to withdraw the two proposals.

COLLINS (S), *Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.*

— Mr President, Parliament deserves to be told the background to this. I do not want to go into the minute detail, because these are both rather technical directives. But Parliament ought to be aware, nonetheless, that it was on 17 April 1986 that the Commission first consulted us on the Martin report and on 10 March 1987 on the Schleicher report. The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection at that time recommended rejection of both, because we did not think they were consistent with the rest of the Commission's policy in the first case and, in the second case, because they did not prohibit the use of a

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substance that we considered should be banned. When it came to plenary, this Assembly agreed with the committee and asked the Commission to withdraw. The Commission refused. It persisted, and this argument has gone on for four years in the one case and for three years in the other.

Finally, I congratulate the Commission that the penny has dropped. It has finally realized that we do not like it. It has finally realized that this is a democratic Assembly whose word really has to be taken into account. I hope the Commission has learned its lesson from this and that, when we next reject something, it will have the decency to withdraw — not after three or four years, but immediately.

PRESIDENT. — I would ask you not to open the debate now since Commission Vice-President Mr Bangemann has informed the Presidency he will arrive in the Hemicycle at 6 p.m. This item will be considered in his presence, so that he may explain the Commission's position. The debate can take place then and I would hope that Mr Collins could reiterate to the Commission the remarks he has just made.

COLLINS (S). — Mr President, I do not want to open a debate, but what you have said raises another interesting question. Are you proposing that there should be a debate on this, or are you simply saying that the Commission should say it withdraws and that that will be the end of it? Which is it to be?

PRESIDENT. — Under the Rules, the Commission has the right and indeed the duty, to state its opinion on this subject. I have dealt with the question in relation to the agenda, but the decision will only be taken when the Commission formally states its opinion that the debate is superfluous. This is laid down by the Rules; the decision can therefore be taken within an hour.

CUSHNAHAN (PPE). — Mr President, I would love to be here for Mr Bangemann, but I have to go to a meeting of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning and I am coordinator of our Group. I should like you to convey to him that I hope that withdrawal of these reports will perhaps lead to the Commission introducing a much wider directive to ban the use of dangerous substances. I have already tabled a resolution before Parliament on this issue. What concerns me is the failure of manufacturers of these products to self-regulate and indeed the failure of governments to take action. This is the situation in my own country, where products such as tinned peas and jellies contain substances which have been described as dangerous and cancer-producing. I would hope the Commission will take action to ensure that consumers are protected.

*(The President read out the changes to Tuesday's agenda)*¹

¹ See minutes.

Wednesday:

PRESIDENT. — At midday in formal sitting I shall present the Sakharov Prize to Mr Alexander Dubcek, who will make a short statement.

VERBEEK (V). — *(NL)* Mr President, I wanted to say something about Alexander Dubcek being here on Wednesday to receive the Sakharov Prize. I do not know if Parliament asked Sakharov himself if he approved of this prize being associated with his name. Now that he has died, it seems to me that you might consider inviting his widow, Ielena Bonner, to attend the prize-giving ceremony on some future occasion, next year for instance.

Another point I want to raise is that, if Nelson Mandela is actually released in February — I believe he was awarded the first Sakharov Prize by Parliament — I hope you will invite him to come here as soon as possible to receive his prize in person.

PRESIDENT. — In the first place, Mr Sakharov gave authorization that the prize should bear his name. Second, Mr Sakharov was invited to be present on the occasion of the presentation to Mr Dubcek. Unhappily Mr Sakharov died on the Friday of the last part-session and his widow has been invited. I trust you are satisfied with this reply.¹

*(The President read out the changes to the agendas for Thursday and Friday)*²

PIERMONT (ARC). — *(DE)* Mr President, I should like to make a personal statement on the subject of urgency. For some weeks now the Berliner Flugring company has been handing out to international travellers in Berlin maps depicting Germany with its borders as they were in 1937/39, not divided into two States, the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, showing the 1937 eastern frontier of the Nazi Reich as Germany's eastern frontier and claiming East Prussia, which now belongs partly to Poland and partly to the USSR, for the Federal Republic of Germany along with the corridor annexed by the Nazis between the then eastern boundary and East Prussia.

I see this as an extremely dangerous and disturbing development, an indication that there are forces who are trying to bring about a Fourth Reich by economic or other means. I should therefore like to put another subject on the agenda for urgent debate, and I am in the process of collecting signatures. I ask all the Members present to sign this motion.

¹ For other changes to Wednesday's agenda: see minutes.

² See minutes.

PRESIDENT. — You are entitled to raise an objection to the agenda, but I believe I have sufficiently represented your position.

*(Parliament adopted the agenda thus amended)*¹

4. Amendment of Rule 37(5) of the Rules of Procedure

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the debate on the report (Doc. A3-95/89) by Mr Bru Purón, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities, on the amendment of Rule 37(5) of the Rules of Procedure concerning the drawing up of reports in cases where the power of decision has been delegated to a committee.

BRU PURÓN (S), rapporteur. — *(ES)* Mr President, Members, the report which I have the honour to introduce here today presents very few difficulties. As you will remember, in the October 1988 part-session, a very important amendment was made to the Rules of Procedure with the aim of simplifying and extending the procedure for delegating the Plenary's power of decision to the competent committees. As a result of this amendment, such a delegation was no longer limited to the legislative procedures of consultation and an opinion, but could also be applied to what are known as non-legislative procedures, such as own-initiative procedures by a Member, in accordance with Rule 63, and procedures initiated by a committee of this Parliament.

However, Mr President, just when the voting was being held in the Plenary that day, maybe because of the gremlins which work not only in the printers and computers, but also, it seems, in the electronic voting buttons, because the voting had to be done paragraph by paragraph — a procedure which must be examined one day because it is highly questionable — when it came to paragraph 5, there wasn't the necessary quorum, and so paragraph 5 of Rule 37 was not adopted. In other words, paragraph 5 remained embedded in the new revised Rule 37.

Thus paragraph 5 incongruously refers to an 'opinion' of the committee which 'may take the form of a letter', however there is no opinion nor is there a letter, because the procedures for delegating the power of decision always specify that the committee will use the instrument of the report. This is referred to specifically in paragraph 1 and also in paragraph 6 and so a principle is included which covers the whole procedure. The delegation is made to the committee, but the committee has to draw up an orderly report, with a debate and a vote. In other words, the only instrument possible is a report and there is no other type of solution.

We find ourselves, therefore, with a contradiction, and after examining the matter at length in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, we have reached the conclusion that the simplest and most effective way to correct it is to remove the whole of paragraph 5 of Rule 37 and to replace it. It would not be sufficient just to remove the last sentence since it only refers to the consultation procedure, because — I repeat — the scope of the delegation of the power of decision has also been extended to the so-called non-legislative procedures.

However, there is no harm in removing certain references to amendments, to the result of the vote and, in general, to Rule 119 from paragraph 5 of Rule 37 because they are now unnecessary. The amendments, the result of the vote and Rule 119 all have to be fully taken into account when the committee concerned drafts the reports. Thus, the Rules of Procedure state that it is the report, and no other type of procedure, such as a letter etc. which is the operating procedure required when there is a delegation of the power of decision to the committee.

With this simple solution of removing paragraph 5 we are correcting a contradiction in the Rules of Procedure and our internal rules will be made clearer and more concise.

STAVROU (PPE). — *(GR)* Mr President, as Mr Bru Purón has explained, the amendment of Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure proposed in his report involves simply the deletion of a paragraph, namely of paragraph 5. The deletion is necessary because this paragraph contradicts provisions elsewhere in the same Rule, and this can seriously complicate the implementation of the Rules. Mr Bru Purón's proposal restores consistency with Rule 37 throughout and will prevent future confusion of the sort which has frequently occurred in connection with the power of decision of a committee and, in particular, the field of application. The rapporteur is offering the simplest possible solution for the restoration of consistency in the Rules, and I congratulate him on his proposal. He points out also that the inconsistency was caused by an oversight, and this should impress on us the need to be more attentive when making future amendments to the Rules of Procedure via which we regulate the workings of this Parliament of ours, Mr President, given that the manner of its functioning necessitates constant and careful adaptation of the Rules to cope with complexities as they arise. The essential thing, Mr President, is that Members, and especially those like yourself who have the job of implementing the Rules of Procedure, should be safeguarded against all risk of confusion.

WIJSENBEK (LDR). — *(NL)* Mr President, the amendment of the Rules of Procedure we are now considering is in fact a technical matter. My group will not therefore be raising any objections. On the contrary, the amendment has its approval. But, Mr President, we must not leave it at this technical amendment. Rule 37 is in our Rules of Procedure for other reasons. The only

¹ Procedure without report — Deadline for tabling amendments — Urgent procedure — Speaking time — Topical and urgent debate (subjects): see minutes.

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time we have made, let us say, consistent use of Rule 37 was during the final sitting of the previous part-session. Rule 37 is not applied now, and far too few reports are referred to the committees. Our sittings are too short. As we have to make do with speaking times that are often as ridiculously short as the time I now have to speak, three minutes — what national parliament would stoop to devoting a mere three minutes to a subject which is bound to have a number of basic aspects? — we must refer matters to committees, because we do not have the time between Monday morning and Friday evening to discuss them properly with the Commission and the Council. What we have here is an endless succession of monologues, after which the Commission gives a very brief reply, and that is the end of the matter. We ought in fact to discuss the matter with the Commission again.

Mr President, there is another aspect that goes much deeper than the lack of time during part-sessions, which again has to do with the fact that Parliament does not have a seat. There will come a time — yes, I am addressing you, Mr President, and the Secretary-General — when the Bureau will have to do something about the seat. And I hope it will be soon, because this is one reason why we do not have enough time to conduct proper debates during part-sessions.

Mr President, I should just like to add a few words about the even more basic cause, the fact that, as this Parliament lacks real powers, we are consulted on all kinds of petty subjects that a national parliament would not condescend to discuss. In short, the attempt is made to compensate in breadth for what we lack in depth. We should confine ourselves to matters of primary importance in plenary and transfer powers to the committees.

Yes, Mr President, because I had to call you to order, I had to speak a little longer than the time allocated to me.

McINTOSH (ED). — Mr President, I would like to add my congratulations and that of our group to the rapporteur, in particular on managing to achieve unanimity on this report. I would also like to say that I am delighted that Parliament has been able to put right one of the oversights of the previous Parliament, and leave this particular rule clearer, without possible misinterpretation in the future. I would like to join Mr Wijzenbeek in his call for a greater use of Rule 37, particularly for noncontroversial reports, leaving more plenary time for the single market. I would say that in this context it is appropriate to talk about a single working place for the European Parliament so that we can meet in continuous session, allowing more time for Parliamentary debates.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will take place on Wednesday at 5 p.m.

5. Amendment of Rules 86 and 87 of the Rules of Procedure

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the debate on the report (Doc. A3-117/89) by Mr Janssen van Raay, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities, on the amendment of Rules 86 and 87 of the Rules of Procedure as regards the temporary exclusion of Members.

JANSSEN VAN RAAY (PPE), *rapporteur*. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to explain the subject of this debate. We have studied the matter as a result of the incident on the Wednesday of the first October part-session, with which you are all familiar. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities has made a very careful study of what we can do to Rules 86 and 88, which concern the maintenance of order, and Rule 87, which concerns disciplinary measures in the event of serious disturbances. I would point out that different approaches are involved. Under Rule 86, disturbances, and Rule 88, serious disturbances, the President may take decisions without reference to anyone else. It does not matter whether he is right or wrong. It does not matter whether the Member in question is guilty or innocent. The overriding importance of the continuation of the sitting requires that it possible to stop the Member speaking, to exclude him from the Chamber under Rule 86 and to suspend the sitting pursuant to Rule 88, whereas Rule 87 concerns the disciplinary sanction of suspension — and I would emphasize that I am not now referring to the financial consequences of suspension. Rule 88, very serious disturbances, has been applied only once in Parliament's history, and that was when Mr Telkämper suspended the sitting of 11 October pursuant to Rule 88. Rule 86 has been applied on a number of occasions, even by yourself, Mr President, on that famous day of 11 October.

A careful study of the video recording — and I have watched it for two hours — shows that you, Mr President, applied Rule 86 correctly. You called someone to order, and after he had repeated the offence, you called him to order, again. This was recorded in the minutes. You then warned him again, as was clearly to be heard from the benches, and that should have automatically resulted in his exclusion. In other words, you applied Rule 86 correctly in every way. The problems which then occurred and persisted for about two hours arose from the failure to implement the decision you had correctly taken. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities has therefore considered whether we should amend Rule 86, which is clear in itself, or whether we can refrain from doing so because the wording is clear.

We have nevertheless proposed an amendment, which concerns the Secretary-General, since the discussion revealed a difference of opinion among the Members of this Parliament about the implementation of your

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decision and specifically as regards this question: if you exclude someone from the sitting, should your decision be implemented, if necessary, with what I would euphemistically call physical persuasion, or if the Member concerned does not obey your order, must it be accepted that, despite Rule 86, he remains in the Chamber and that, if necessary in the event of a very serious disturbance, Rule 88 will be applied.

The Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities is of the opinion — and, I might add, unanimously — that, where necessary, physical persuasion should indeed be used, and we have therefore proposed this amendment, so that Parliament can decide during the vote on Wednesday whether physical persuasion should be used by approving Amendment No 1 or whether things should be left as they are. As I have said, Rule 86 has already been applied, in respect of Mr Paisley and Mr Capanna among others, and so far our uniformed ushers, our own staff have been able to remove defiant Members from the Chamber. We feel this is a good procedure for the very simple reason, Mr President, that there are parliaments — I have studied the rules of procedure of all twelve parliaments — which use force, an example being the House of Commons, where the Sergeant at Arms is the person responsible, and parliaments that do not. In the European Parliament we cannot afford the luxury of suspending the sitting and leaving the Member in the Chamber. We will have to resort to physical removal because, unlike other parliaments, this one does not have a *next week*. In a national parliament they can say: there is a disturbance; we will continue next week. We do not have a next week, and we do not have a week after next week. We do not meet again until four weeks later. I have calculated that we have no more than 22 hours a year for the really essential part of our legislative work, the voting on Wednesdays. If we allowed any meddling with this — in good faith, I assume — we would be forgoing our legislative power. I would remind you that, given the deadlines we have to keep to, Parliament would then be in danger of being unable to propose any amendments at all. As this is a specific situation unknown to the national parliaments, we say that, however unpleasant it may be, physical persuasion should be used and — although we leave this to the Bureau to decide — that our own ushers should be the ones to use it, as is now the case. It has been asked whether this should be done by the Secretary-General or by the Quaestors as colleagues of the Member in question. This is an easy question to answer. You can see the Secretary-General on the telephone at the moment, but Quaestors are not always here. The Secretary-General or his deputy is always here, and he has a telephone. He can get on the phone and warn the service after the President has called the Member concerned to order the first time. The Quaestors have assured me that they simply do not want to be involved in this. They are too busy, and sometimes none of them is around. So it must be left to the Secretary-General to ensure that the Member concerned is physically

removed by the appropriate service. Now I realize, of course, that, if there is a very serious disturbance, we cannot have a pitched battle here and that the President would then apply Rule 88, but we are assuming — we know our own ushers, we know our own staff — that, if they approach the Member in question tactfully, he will almost always comply with their request. That, then, is the significance of Amendment No 1.

We have not needed to amend Rule 88. As I have said, this rule has been applied on one occasion. It was applied correctly by Mr Telkämper. He will go down in parliamentary history as the first President to use our strictest law-and-order rule. No amendments to this rule have been tabled. We can leave it as it is.

We want to improve Rule 87 because it is out of date and unclear. As I have said before, it concerns not a call to order but a sanction, which is not imposed but proposed by the President, the decision being taken by the Assembly. I repeat, it concerns the sanction of suspension, which the Quaestors have decided has financial implications in that a Member is not paid while he is suspended. But it is not a real sanction in the form of a fine. Nor are we proposing that it should be, because if we were to go so far as to impose fines of, say, ten or a hundred thousand ecus, we would need a separate, independent body and a right of appeal to the Court of First Instance, for example. We make do with an improvement to the present situation. This is a technical problem. Rule 87 now says that the disciplinary action must be taken immediately and that the Member concerned is entitled to be heard. But we have seen that this is impossible in practice. It is not logical to apply Rule 86 in the event of a disturbance, and so exclude the Member, and Rule 87 in the case of a serious disturbance, whereby the Member is entitled to return to be heard. The first proposal is therefore that the President should take action either on the day on which the disturbance occurs or at the next sitting. If, for instance, the disturbance occurs on a Friday, the President may formally announce on the Monday of the next part-session that he intends to apply Rule 87. The announcement must not come any later than that: for purely practical reasons it must be made not later than the next sitting because, otherwise, if the announcement was made immediately, the Member who had been excluded would have to return because he is entitled to be heard. The right to be heard provided for in Rule 87 is very important. The Member concerned is in fact deprived of this right if he is first told he must get out and not come back. To give a practical example, a Member has to leave the Chamber on a Wednesday, and on the Thursday the President says he thinks the matter serious enough for him to propose to the Assembly that Rule 87 should be applied, because then the right to be heard must be taken seriously. A vote is then taken on whether or not the Member should be suspended. So we have been prompted to give the President this very limited scope not by reasons of principle but by purely practical reasons, because there is simply no other way.

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This is in fact what it amounts to. Those are the proposed amendments, which we hope will not be applied very often. But if it is necessary, we can act as I have described. All the members of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities have approved these amendments. So we have a unanimous decision, and I hope that Parliament as such will agree to this new ruling, which focuses on the implementation of the measure in question. The Secretary-General will not need to concern himself with the disturbance as such. He can stay where he is, get on the phone and warn the appropriate Director-General, who will ensure that our friends the ushers implement the decision that is taken. Finally, we will really have to do this electronically.

(Interruptions)

There have been proposals that this should be done by other people. We feel that the present practice is the best and that we do not need any police or military organizations here. In this respect, I agree with the Member who has just interrupted me.

A final comment. One of the Greek Members has referred to a custom in ancient times. In Greek antiquity it was the custom in the theatre for the director to press a button if someone in the audience was disrupting a play, whereupon the offender fell into a deep cellar and so could not cause any further disruption. As this is impossible in the Chamber, I assume you agree that we must content ourselves with the procedure we have adopted hitherto and that the old Greek method is out of the question. As we cannot shoot Members out of the Chamber on a rocket, we must make do with the means we have.

ROGALLA (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I have referred to the importance of the Rules of Procedure here on many an occasion and said that they also set the scene for our political work. It would be difficult to think of a better example of this than today's debate.

When it comes to determining focal areas of political activity and political guidelines, the emphasis is on the responsibility and will to ensure the best conditions for the democratic process in the European Parliament. In this, of course, the rapporteur plays a part. I hasten to add that the Socialist Group could hardly have chosen a more respectable and more experienced member of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities than Mr Janssen van Raay, the author of this report. I say this without anger and without enthusiasm.

All I am concerned about today is the technique of what we are debating on the basis of the discussion in committee and intend to adopt the day after tomorrow by a majority of the votes cast in the House. Democracy, who would deny it, must be protected against malicious trouble-makers. Considering the work the European Parliament does for peace, its duty to strike a balance of interests in difficult economic and political areas

through compromise, it seems almost inconceivable that Members would wilfully disturb its proceedings. But a recent debate has sadly shown that this is not so. Hence the need for the preventive measures we are discussing today.

In principle, it is fair to say that in the heat of political debate we are all in danger at one time or another of getting carried away and disturbing proceedings here in the Chamber. But history shows that such methods have often been systematically applied by forces intent on using noise to compensate for their lack of political strength, their comparatively small number of representatives. There must be effective measures to prevent this.

Rule 86, as the rapporteur has just pointed out, simply needed a sentence added to say who ensures that such measures are taken. We Socialists are for the new ruling. Similar rulings apply — as the rapporteur has again pointed out — in all our Member States, as we know from the information provided by Parliament's Research and Documentation Service.

As a rule, sittings are suspended when unusual disturbances occur, and — as the rapporteur has again said — infringements of the rules have serious financial consequences. We have decided to leave it at this simple addition to the wording of Rule 86.

Rule 87 poses two problems: firstly, the time elapsing between the disturbance and the Member's exclusion. I believe the wording that has been chosen is satisfactory: immediate exclusion or exclusion from the beginning of the next sitting. As a rule, this will be the next morning. It should be remembered that suspension for two to five days has financial implications and entails the loss of daily allowances.

We thought it only natural that the Member concerned — this is the second problem — should have the opportunity to voice his opinion on the disciplinary measure to be taken against him. The rule here should be three minutes' speaking time — something with which we are familiar — but to be on the safe side, we have been more generous and stipulated that five minutes must not be exceeded. The decision on the President's proposal will then be taken by Parliament, all of us here.

It may help to soothe troubled minds if I reiterate how much we in this House depend on a variety of opinions and on passionate debates, which should be the rule for all sides of the House. I believe that what many Members see as too weak a public response in our Member States is partly due to the fact that we have yet to make it clear everywhere how important our work is and how profound, therefore, our political differences of opinion and debates are.

Nevertheless, all sides of the House must show a minimum of respect for order and for the prominent and leading role played by the President in the Chair. The proposed amendment of the Rules of Procedure is

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intended to make a constructive contribution in this respect.

IN THE CHAIR: MR PETERS

Vice-President

MALANGRE (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, this House, the world's first freely elected multinational parliament, has had to amend its Rules of Procedure. We have no precedents on which to model ourselves. The more functions this Parliament gains for itself, the more carefully it must ensure that it remains capable of functioning and protecting itself against the disruption of its proceedings. Tasks and duties grow alike. That is the way we want it, and we are realists who are determined to discharge these duties. This House reflects the variety of European traditions, temperaments and interests. This is what distinguishes our Parliament, but it also requires tailor-made instruments that are appropriate to its working methods and ensure that its business proceeds smoothly.

But in certain circumstances serious assaults on the ability of the House to function cannot unfortunately be ruled out. We have witnessed this. We do not want to have to stand by and watch it happen. A suitable response to the assault must be possible, a response that is appropriate to the situation and defends the ability of the House to conduct its business. Our Community must not find us helpless and irresolute, neither outwardly, when our rights are at stake, nor inwardly, when the attacks come from our own ranks. This is the purpose of the rapporteur's proposal, which has the approval of my group. The proposal is realistic: it enables the Bureau to respond appropriately, it safeguards the principle that the means used should be reasonable, and it takes account of the call for *audiatur et altera pars*. The Member concerned will have the opportunity to make a statement.

Of course, other wording for Rules 86, 87 and 88 are conceivable, but a rational examination shows the rapporteur's proposal to be the most balanced and the most realistic. Measures designed to keep order are not a source of joy: they are a necessary evil. It would be unrealistic and irresponsible to ignore the need for them in view of the major interest that has to be protected, the ability of this House to conduct its business. We have an obligation to our constituents, to the 320 million citizens of our Community and to those who may join them to ensure that this is so.

On behalf of my group I therefore ask you to approve the rapporteur's proposal.

WIJSENBEK (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, my colleague Mrs Salema will be discussing a few technical aspects. I for my part want to say generally that I find it sad that in this third Parliament we need to introduce stricter measures to ensure the application of these

Rules of Procedure. This says something about the style of the Member concerned. It also says something about the President's style.

Mr President, there are, of course, differences of temperament and demeanour in the Assembly. I will not — as I once did here in a colloquy — start talking about good manners, but I do feel that in this case something needs to be said about the fact that adequate measures can never be taken against those who are determined to be malevolent. There are differences: I once heard the Danish speaker say that a small silver bell was enough to restore order in his parliament, whereas Members of other parliaments regularly come to blows. These differences will remain, but we should not be deciding on stricter measures here because, when the President speaks, order should be restored and his word should be respected. At all events, I do not think it right that we should include the obvious in the Rules of Procedure, as if the Secretary-General would ever think of not carrying out the instructions he received from the President or the Assembly as a whole. I therefore find the amendment to Rule 86 completely superfluous.

Mr President, I can take a rather more favourable view of the proposed amendment to Rule 87, but I still find this report a little sad.

McINTOSH (ED). — Mr President, I also wish to congratulate the rapporteur on behalf of our group. We will indeed be supporting the amendments.

I feel that the temporary exclusion of Members is one of the more difficult provisions of the rules to apply, yet it is crucial to the proper functioning of this House. I agree entirely with the rapporteur on the use of force where Members do not willingly agree to be excluded. However, I believe that the real sanction probably arises from the financial consequences and the loss of allowances for that period. I hope that I never find myself in the unfortunate position of having this ruling applied against me.

My group will be supporting the report on the proposed amendments and we commend this report to the House.

LANGER (V). — (DE) Mr President, unlike the previous speakers, my group is unable to approve this report and the proposals it contains for tightening up the Rules of Procedure. On the contrary, we are worried that practically any criticism the chairman of the Socialist Group, Mr Cot, levels at Parliament will immediately be followed by eagerness to change the Rules of Procedure and a desire to make them more repressive. We really see no need for measures and stricter procedures to police sittings and certainly cannot understand the demand included in Mr Cot's proposals that insubordinate Members should also be fined and, who knows, perhaps even put in the stocks.

In particular, we do not share the view that the service responsible for maintaining order in this or any other parliament should be strengthened and trained to use force. We do not consider that appropriate to a

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Parliament. My group also regrets that in the life of this Parliament there have been Members who have failed to obey the President's instructions, and we expressly condemn this. But the two gentlemen concerned quite obviously disqualified themselves, as the film of the episode clearly shows, and we do not see this as sufficient reason to make the Rules of Procedure stricter.

The rapporteur, Mr Janssen van Raay, has undoubtedly done his best — we quite appreciate that — to prevent further excesses, so that the reform now being sought does not depart too far from parliamentary usage. Despite this, we cannot agree with his report and will vote against it, one reason being that it provides for the Secretary-General to be militarized in a way and put in charge of a unit responsible for maintaining order. He is unlikely to be very happy about this. Provision is made for the use of force, although, as we understand it, this is a matter for the Quaestors. Despite the arguments advanced by the rapporteur, the President of Parliament can, if necessary, briefly suspend the sitting until order is restored.

We also find it highly questionable that these measures may be discussed or decided on at later sittings. As the rapporteur himself has pointed out, this Parliament may not sit again for a month. The Members then present, who may not have been in the Chamber at the time of the incident, are to take a decision in a vote that is neither by roll call nor preceded by a debate. So we see only repressive aspects in the proposed measures and ask the House not to approve the report but to stick to the present version of the Rules of Procedure, which we consider adequate.

GOLLNISCH (DR). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, what has been the instigator of these events, with the result that we are having to take a decision today on an amendment of the Rules of Procedure? The instigator has been a deliberate wish on the part of the Socialist Group, and more precisely, on the part of the Chairman of the Group — because I cannot believe that all the European Socialists wholeheartedly support this manoeuvre — to exclude a minority group from the natural prerogatives conferred on it both by the letter of the Rules of Procedure, and the spirit and the customs of this Parliament. In fact, Rule 126 of our Rules of Procedure — and many others — lay down that various responsibilities in this Parliament should be divided between the groups, in proportion to their numerical strength, because there is no difference in status between those who have been elected by the European people — which means all of us. Everyone must be able to put across his own point of view. That is what democracy is all about.

The Chairman of the Socialist Group has decided otherwise, and I have to say, has acted with a complacency which itself violates the Rules of Procedure. What is more, violating the principle of non-retroactivity, the administration thought that it was able to organize elections on its own initiative in a case

where a legitimate procedure had already appointed one of our colleagues as the chair of a delegation, in this case, the delegation for relations with Switzerland. I am well aware that when you lead a lamb to the slaughter the slightest bleat of protest is considered by its butchers as something quite unacceptable, which disturbs the order and seriously disrupts the discipline of the debates. This is what has happened. Consequently, the Chairman of the Socialist Group thought that he could go even further with the repressive measures which he, his friends and the French Lord Chancellor are continually raining down on the office of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities. He asked for exemplary penalties. He wanted to be able to extend the period during which Members could be excluded to two months. Above all, he wanted financial penalties. The French Socialist Party, to which the Chairman of this group belongs, is compromised to the hilt in countless financial scandals. There is the Nucci affair, where a Minister for Cooperation turned the bowls of rice intended for Third World children into petits fours at the receptions he used to organize. There are the backhanders accompanying the illegal arms sales to Iran, the terrorist and enemy of Europe. There are the scandals of the fictitious research organizations which have financed the President of the Republic's campaign to the tune of several thousand millions. So, if it were possible — I can see Mr President, that you are not very pleased about this list, but I could go on with it — to lay a finger on the wallet of the only group...

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

If it were possible to lay a finger on the wallet of the only group which does not benefit either from these hidden grants or from official grants, what a victory that would be! Fortunately, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities, and the rapporteur in his wisdom, have decided on a much more moderate text which breaks with the repressive tendencies of the Chairman of the Socialist Group. We are very pleased about that.

EWING (ARC). — Mr President, I would like to thank the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities for performing what is usually a rather thankless and painstaking job. They reacted quickly to deal with a problem, and for that I think we are all in their debt.

It is an improvement. Rule 87 could not really be used because no time limit was placed on the right to be heard. The rule was of no use as it was. We are a young Parliament. In a sense you only find out how good rules are when somebody tries to break them and, perhaps because we are fairly law-abiding democratic people, you don't get them broken all that often, so it is not always easy to discover whether the rules are adequate or not. I am not saying that a demonstration by a Member can never be justified. I myself was once expelled from the House of Commons on the same day as an old lady, Dame Irene Ward, now dead, though for

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different reasons. We were both escorted out by the sergeant-at-arms and we went peacefully having made our point. I am not against that. As Mr Janssen van Raay said, whether the demonstrator is right or wrong — and here we come to the crunch — Parliament must be able to carry on its business in a dignified way. That is, I think, what any democrat would seek. I am not going to say that there can never be a reason for demonstrating but, having said that, I believe that the demonstrator must accept that Parliament must then be able to carry on its business.

Despite this improvement I would now like to say to Mr Janssen van Raay that more prolonged reflection on this problem — which may be an ongoing one — may show that there is a further problem where physical ejection is concerned. I would like to suggest that where the President decides on this course of action he should adjourn the sitting for five minutes during which time the microphones should be switched off and the press informed that it would be a breach of privilege if anything was reported or photographed.

If Parliament were adjourned I think it would solve one of the problems that we have witnessed, namely the problem of ejection. I would like to suggest that the President should be able to do this. He should say at the first manifestation of disorderly conduct, 'Resume your seat'. If the Member refuses, he should say, 'Leave'. If the Member refuses to leave he should be named and the sitting adjourned. No press and no microphones should be permitted for five minutes. The President in the Chair should then ring the bell for the vote. Then there should be a vote on the President's decision on the way to deal with the disturbance. There should be no debate and no hearing, because it is a little ironic to give the person whom you are calling to order another opportunity to repeat the disturbance. I am only making these suggestions in the long term. I am going to vote for the improvement in the rules at the present time because it has come along when we needed it, and I do think that that is really what we are after. I am rather an expert on being in a minority. I was a minority of one in the House of Commons for three years and in a minority party of eleven in the House of Commons for five years when we held the balance of power and the only UK Member in neither one of the two big parties. I am reasonably expert at being in a minority, yet I trust the essential fairness of the President of the sitting. I think I am the fourth longest serving Member of this House and I think only on about two occasions have I felt aggrieved by the conduct of the various Presidents in the Chair. I think that is what it comes to. The President of the sitting is our protector, whether we are in a majority or a minority. He is much more important than the groups. He is there to ensure fairness for us. If we continue to get fair treatment, we should give him more powers in the long term. I would commend these thoughts to Mr Janssen van Raay.

PANNELLA (NI). — (FR) Mr President, it is obvious that we are debating this question here now because

there was an attempt on behalf of the Socialist Group to gag the Members with proposals which came from Jean-Pierre Cot.

So, Mr President, we had proposals from Jean-Pierre Cot, which were made on behalf of the Socialist Group, and yet many of the German Members and all of the Italian Socialist Members did not agree with them. This arrogant initiative of the Chairman of the Socialist Group has forced us to undertake a work which, however, thanks to the moderation, the goodwill and the know-how of our rapporteur, has practically come to nothing.

I think that we have to remind ourselves what is behind this story. The main thing is to understand that the best defender of each Member and of the minority groups is the President and not the majority of the Parliament. When some people claim that a decision should be taken according to the wishes of a majority of the Parliament, they are obviously putting the President in a lesser position than Parliament itself.

We have to realize, Mr President, that this is a very difficult beginning to the session. Every one of us has to put up with a great deal of harassment from regulations on funding, finances or other matters. Every day there is an attack on the dignity of Members. For example, in relation to the written declarations referred to in Rule 65, the Secretary-General of the Parliament, with the passive agreement of an enlarged Bureau — where, incidentally, the Group Chairmen are quite happy to see the administration gag and supervise the Members in almost military fashion under the excuse of keeping order — simply said that in order to submit our resolutions, we had to go and put our signatures in room number such and such. We said that that wasn't possible. During the previous session, Parliament made between 14 and 16 very important political declarations which contributed to the prestige of our Parliament. I think that during this Parliamentary session there hasn't even been a single one.

And what about the security staff? They no longer want to use uniformed ushers who fit in with the decorum of our Parliament, but 'muscle men' who may be stronger, but goodness knows how they will be dressed. We might just as well ask the stewards of some of the groups present to provide some strong men who are capable of keeping order... Perhaps they could assist the Secretary-General in such cases? I don't agree with that. I want the ushers to ensure our security. I don't want 'the cops' because they would be acting on the orders of an administration which we could no longer control.

As far as Rule 87 is concerned, without calling into question the power of the Presidents of the sitting, I agree that Parliament should act after every decision.

Mr President, to sum up, I do not think that our ushers should be replaced just by any kind of security staff. On the other hand, I think that we must ensure that the Member concerned is defended by making the Assembly act after every decision of the President of the sitting. For all these reasons, I will vote against the resolution

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which has been presented, whilst at the same time thanking the Committee on the Rules of Procedure for having refused to bow down to the orders of a corporal, even if he was the Chairman of the Socialist Group.

GALLE (S), *Chairman of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities*. — (NL) Mr President, Mr Janssen van Raay has reacted very swiftly to the events that are still, unfortunately, fresh in our minds, and I should like to congratulate him on his efforts. He has drawn up a report which was unanimously approved by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities.

Two points require our attention in this context. Firstly, in the case of the proposed amendment to Rule 86, we are confronted with different national traditions. It was clear from the outset that, where the President was compelled to exclude a Member, the first consideration had to be to ensure that his order was obeyed. It was proposed that the Quaestors should be responsible for this. This proposal was disregarded so as to avoid a situation in which Members of this Parliament became involved in a scuffle. The Quaestors themselves also let it be known that they did not feel capable of carrying out the President's orders. This left the possibility — the practice in some national parliaments — of having the Secretary-General or his deputy carry out the President's orders with the help of Parliament's security staff.

Secondly, as regards the procedure defined in Rule 87, the rapporteur and I have tabled two amendments which merely concern the wording of this rule. Where the substance is concerned, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities has been guided by the principle that any action taken in this highly delicate matter should be effective and respect Members' rights. Effectiveness is improved by the possibility of allowing some time to pass between a serious disturbance and the action taken by Parliament on a proposal from the President. This period can be used to restore order and to propose and impose the right disciplinary sanction. To ensure effectiveness, the new paragraph 3 also provides for the use of the electronic equipment and the exclusion of requests regarding the quorum and for voting by roll call. Respect for Members' rights is improved by clearly specifying the time they are allowed to speak in their own defence. I consider the proposals put forward by the rapporteur and the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities to be balanced. I nevertheless hope that the President, who has now given me an effective tool, will never have to use it. For in this temple of European democracy there is no place at all for force and its provocation.

SALEMA (LDR). — (PT) Mr President, as some of the previous speakers have emphasized, it was as a result of the incident which occurred in the first part-session of

October 1989 that the enlarged Bureau of the European Parliament asked the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities to quickly draw up a report in order to improve the rules concerning the maintenance of order in the plenary sessions and respect for decisions taken by the President in the case of disorder.

As has also been mentioned, the committee discussed the matter at length and adopted the report which is now being considered. Nevertheless, within the committee we had the opportunity to express certain reservations. In fact, in relation to Rule 86, we thought that it should not be specifically stipulated that the Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring that the exclusion from the Chamber is carried out. This is mainly for two reasons:

Firstly: such a function does not fit in with the functions of the Secretary-General, as derived from the relevant statutory rules;

Secondly: such a function, if entrusted to the Secretary-General, weakens the specific powers held by the President, and only the President, during the plenary session.

I should emphasize that my remarks must be understood without prejudice to the relevant role which is played by the Secretary-General in the European Parliament, particularly by way of support for the European Parliament, as laid down in Rule 133 of the Rules of Procedure. In this respect we intend to abstain on Amendment 1, thus maintaining the position we adopted in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure. We firmly believe therefore that this function must not be specifically stipulated in the Rules of Procedure.

As far as Rule 87 is concerned, and some other amendments have appeared now, in particular Amendments 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 we had some difficulty, and here I will break off because I'm running out of time say that the secretarial services should be careful about the presentation of the proposed amendments, since there are differences in terminology between the same proposed amendments in the various documents we have received for this part-session.

I should also like to say that I cannot understand, on a political level, why it has suddenly become necessary to introduce an amendment since, as far as I am aware, this Rule 87 has never been implemented. Nevertheless, thanks to the goodwill shown by Mr van Raay — whom I should like to congratulate personally on the work he has done in order to find compromise solutions — I must say that I tried to submit proposals in order to work out a good system for defending the Member concerned. We shouldn't be discussing whether the Member concerned should be allowed three, five or ten minutes, but instead that he be allowed a reasonable time to be decided by the President depending on the particular case and the gravity of the situation.

Therefore, to finish, Mr President, assuming that the amendments to Rule 87, whilst not particularly benefi-

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cial are also not really harmful, we have no difficulty in supporting them, except for the second sentence of the amendment to Rule 87 where we would prefer no limit to be set for speaking time.

To finish, on the question of disciplinary measures concerning Members, I must say that this is such a serious situation that no hard and fast rules should be stipulated in the Rules of Procedure. And in this respect I call on my colleagues once again to pay attention to the type of measure which might be adopted into the Rules of Procedure in case such a proposal were actually passed.

BANDRÉS MOLET (V). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would just like to reinforce the opinion already put forward by my colleague, Mr Langer.

I would like to remind you of the underlying principle of all parliamentary democratic systems — that the legitimacy of the Members does not come from the law nor from the Rules of Procedure, but derives simply from the popular will which forms the basis of sovereignty. I think that we all agree on this principle. And I would also prefer to forget the incident which gave rise to this attempt at reform, because it is not a good idea to reform regulations or important laws just because of an incidental occurrence.

I think that the amendment which is being proposed transforms the Secretary-General into the head of an almost police-like organization. I respect the Secretary-General too much to want him to have to act almost like a police inspector, so that he is obliged to force a Member physically to leave this Chamber at a given moment. Nor do I wish the Member to undergo a form of treatment whereby people under the orders of the Secretary-General come up to him and take him physically by the arm and escort him out into the corridors, because I think that, even when he has lost his self-respect, the Member cannot be led away like a criminal who has been caught *red-handed*.

The explanatory statement itself talks about using 'a heavy hand' — in the Spanish translation I would translate by establishing a way out from this Chamber 'manu militari'. Mr President, Parliaments defend themselves differently. The President's power comes from his moral authority, it is not a coercive power; I think that to adjourn or suspend the sitting is enough. In fact, the ridicule which the Member brings upon himself and the rejection of his equals, of his peers, is the best penalty for a Member who forgets his own dignity and also the dignity of Parliament. For this reason, Mr President, our group is going to vote against the proposed amendment of the Rules of Procedure, whilst, like my colleagues, thanking the rapporteur for the interesting and important work he has done to bring together the two sides. Thank you very much, Mr President.

BETTINI (V). — (IT) Mr President, our group wanted to speak more than once in this debate because we think

that the proposed measure is extremely serious. In fact we think that it is unacceptable for a Member who disturbs the sitting to be ejected without being able to explain his reasons: the supreme good to be protected, Mr President and ladies and gentlemen, is not the order of the sitting, it is something quite different.

In the new context which has been proposed, the Secretary-General of this Parliament would be given police-like functions, which we do not consider to be really suitable. As other colleagues in this Chamber have already stated, the suspension of the sitting would surely be a better solution.

It is also proposed to pass a vote of censure immediately, without however allowing the Member concerned to react immediately; or rather, to put off till later the ceremony of his beheading. In my opinion, this is neither pleasant, exemplary nor significant for any of us.

Therefore we think that this souring of the Rules of Procedure is nothing more than an 'own goal' by the very Parliament in which we are sitting. The problems are different, Mr President! The problems are different, ladies and gentlemen! It's not a question of anaesthetising ourselves, as the Socialists would like. Some reactions are justified, both inside and outside this Parliament, and it is necessary to understand why they happen and not just condemn them for reoccurring!

We consider this proposal to be prohibitionist — prohibitionist in the worst sense, and we cannot accept these methods. For this reason, the Green Group in the European Parliament will vote against the entire report and the amendments.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will take place on Wednesday at 5 p.m.

(The sitting was suspended at 6.45 p.m. and resumed at 7.15 p.m.)

6. Modified starches intended for human consumption — Antioxidants

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the Commission statement on:

— the second report by Mrs Martin (Doc. A3-106/89), on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection,

on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(84) 726 final — Doc. C3-20/89) for a directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to modified starches intended for human consumption;

— the second report by Mrs Schleicher (Doc. A3-115/89), on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection,

on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(86) 384 final — Doc. C3-23/89) for a directive amending for the fourth time Directive 70/

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357/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning the antioxidants authorized for use in foodstuffs intended for human consumption.

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I must begin by saying how grateful I am to you, Mr President, and to the House for sympathizing with my scheduling difficulties. I have not been on a private trip: I have spent the whole weekend canvassing for the Community and the internal market.

Since our last debate during the April 1986 part-session there have been developments which leave us with no alternative but to abandon our former approach. For one thing, a general framework directive on food additives, which also applies to modified starches, was introduced at the end of 1988. As the European Parliament urged, a far more horizontal approach must now be adopted, and the proposal now before us, which takes a sectoral line, can no longer be upheld. The Commission therefore intends to withdraw it.

As regards the starches not covered by this proposal, the only problems likely to occur will concern such purity requirements as the maximum content of heavy metals. To overcome these problems, there is to be in the future a general ruling on food contaminants, on which the Commission is currently working. This should, then, take care of this item of the agenda.

I can say virtually the same about the Schleicher report. In this case, we told Parliament as long ago as March 1987 that we were willing to review the proposal. The Commission could not agree to a formal withdrawal at that time because the proposal is based on sound scientific findings.

To overcome this difficulty between Parliament and the Commission, I would like to suggest a provisional compromise. The final discussion on this subject should take place at the time of the debate on the global directive on additives, and I would then withdraw the current proposal. I hope Parliament can agree to this, because we can then discuss this particular problem together in a wider context at a later date.

LANE (RDE). — Mr President, I am delighted to see the directives withdrawn at this stage. The first point to make is that food is at its best when consumed in a natural form. Any additives that are put into food create two problems. First of all, you reduce the value of that food and, secondly, you add to the price to the consumer.

When we are talking about directives on antioxidants, on irradiation which will be coming up at a later stage, and on the whole question of biotechnology, which in future will be used in the preservation of food, we have to make sure that all of these considerations are taken into account. As we know, certain antioxidants, E additives which in the past were considered harmless,

have now been proven to have effects such as adding to cholesterol, and so on.

In the area of irradiation we see that the findings of research done a few years ago have been reversed by new research. No one knows what the effect will be of irradiating food, first of all, and then, at a later stage in the processing of food, of adding antioxidants.

What I would hope to see is a comprehensive draft directive emerging from the Commission which will take into consideration all the effects of all of the systems of treating food. I do not think any piecemeal effort should be undertaken by the Commission until such time as we have full knowledge of the effect of one system in combination with another. The consumer, above all, must be protected and this Parliament has a duty in that role.

SCHLEICHER (PPE), rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, as vice-chairman of the committee I should like to thank the Commission on the committee's behalf for complying with its request to withdraw both directives. But as the author of the second report I should like to ask Mr Bangemann when he thinks the global directive will appear.

We know we must have rules on the whole foodstuffs market by the end of 1992 if it is to endure. I also know that this will be very difficult because each country has slightly different ideas, which does not make the Commission's task easy.

But Parliament has put forward various proposals since 1986 or 1987, and the fact that the Commission now agrees with us, which it was unwilling to do in the past, confirms that we were right. We are grateful to the Commission for accepting our proposals, but I would ask the Commissioner to make something like a binding statement on when we can expect this global directive.

ROTH-BEHRENDT (S). — (DE) Mr President, I can also say on behalf of the Socialist Group that we are very pleased that the Commission has, in the end, 'wised up' and is no longer ignoring the European Parliament's proposals, which are not, of course, new. But in this context I should like to say a few words about the global directive we are now all awaiting.

This example makes it clear — and we of the European Parliament have also made it clear — that we must go back to leaving foodstuffs in their natural state. We must stop thinking that anything can be done with chemicals. In the past we have found that environmental protection is a major problem and that we are exposed to serious pollution. We must therefore insist that food, the things which people eat and which should be natural, is in fact natural. So additives should be permitted only if they are completely harmless and also really necessary on technological grounds.

This was in no way the case with this particular antioxidant. The Commission simply decreed that it was technologically necessary even though there was no proof that this was so. The Socialist Group will

ROTH-BEHRENDT.

therefore be making absolutely sure that the additives covered by the global directive are really necessary, because we should bear consumer protection in mind and attach far more importance to it than to minor commercial advantages for the industry, such as keeping mayonnaise looking nice a little longer.

In the future we should ensure that the foodstuffs we buy are pure and natural, as we need them, and the Commission should help us in this respect and do more than pay lip service to consumer protection. We must stop thinking that everything must be clinically pure and perfect, and we must also relearn that things can go bad. There is no need for everything to last for ever. We must change our attitude towards nature, beginning with the basic necessities of life, foodstuffs, and insist that they are pure in every respect.

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, I will begin with Mrs Schleicher's question. I am grateful for the understanding she has shown for the Commission's seeing the light relatively late in the day: 'You have come late, but you have come. The long road, Count Isolan, excuses your tardiness.' Sometimes, probably even when we think, the road is long.

At all events, we agree with you, and I am grateful to Mrs Schleicher and Mrs Roth-Behrendt for saying that a global approach is better than a sectoral one. It is an approach that we are now adopting in other areas as well.

We must, of course, be very careful in drafting the global directive for the very reason that it will cover a wide range of problems, but we shall draft it as quickly as possible. Not having these directives means, of course, that we have nothing in the meantime, and that is a situation we can tolerate only for a certain length of time.

We will be submitting the global directive some time this year, and I will urge my services to waste no time in drawing up this proposal. We may be able to consider the directive at first reading this year, which will enable the Council to adopt a common position.

As regards the principle referred to by Mrs Roth-Behrendt, I would ask her to appreciate that we need very sound reasons for banning something that has been scientifically proved to be harmless. We cannot simply impose a ban without a reason. A ban means intervention in a process, an opportunity open to someone when something is completely harmless. That is the difficulty we face, because in one of these cases the Commission's problem — and it took up a great deal of its time — was that all the scientific evidence available to us showed the additive concerned to be completely harmless.

There was certainly no need for it. That is true. We could spend a long time arguing about whether it is essential for veal to be white. It is not essential. But some consumers prefer white veal to other kinds of veal, not,

of course, that consumer habits are in themselves any justification for using a given product.

On the other hand, it is difficult to ban something which scientific evidence shows to be completely harmless. Nor, in some cases, does the principle, which you have outlined very impressively, that we should leave everything in its natural state get us very far, because some things are certainly harmful in their natural state. Alcohol, for example, is not by any means an artificial product. As you know, wine can also be produced in a perfectly natural way. That may not be generally known, but it is possible.

Can we, then, take this principle as a guideline? I suspect that in some cases we are going to need more than this principle, because it will simply not be enough in itself.

The Commission is prepared — or I am at least — to go down this road with you, but we must realize that in some cases it will make foodstuffs more expensive. Let us take the problem of durability. Foodstuffs can always be marketed without additives, of course, but then they go bad earlier. But this does not mean the producer makes less profit, because the risk of a product having to be withdrawn after a while grows both for the producer and for those who store and sell it.

Nobody produces anything unless he can cover his costs. That should be borne in mind. After a cost-benefit analysis has been made, it may be decided to use one or other preservative or additive with a preservative effect. You have referred to this problem, and we have no easy solutions to offer. The principle that we should take things as we find them in nature and when they go off, no matter, presumably takes us a little further, but not the whole way.

PIMENTA (LDR). — (PT) This is a short statement on behalf of my Group, since Mrs Simone Martin — who is the rapporteur of one of the reports and who was here at five o'clock — was prevented, due to the change of timetable, from being present again.

I only want to say that we are pleased that the Commission's proposal has been withdrawn. As a matter of fact, it was on 18 April 1986 that the European Parliament adopted our report here in this Chamber and we regret that the Commission has only now taken into account what Parliament said at that time.

To conclude, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that this proposal — like the one examined in the report by our colleague, Mrs Schleicher — deals with a subject which has not been properly tackled either by the Commission or by the Council, concerning the safety of foods. Parliament has already asked the Commission on various occasions to draw up rules and to press on with the proposal to set up a 'Food and Drug Administration' at a European level. We are still waiting for those proposals. In our view, it is not possible to guarantee the necessary level of food safety for European consumers, particularly those who are

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concerned about food issues — which basically means everyone — just by introducing the odd directive.

DÍEZ DE RIVERA ICAZA (S). — (ES) I wasn't planning to say anything, however there is no doubt that after listening to Mr Bangemann's last intervention, we are extremely pleased that these directives have been withdrawn. I would just like to emphasize, in relation to the latest digressions about natural products being more expensive if they do not contain additives, that this, Mr Bangemann, was a demand of the European Parliament, we asked for it and therefore, we are very pleased that the directives are being withdrawn. But please don't let us digress now onto the subject of whether or not what is natural is good. Thank you for having withdrawn the directives and a special thank you to the European Parliament for the pressure which it exerted on this issue.

CUSHNAHAN (PPE). — Mr President, I am grateful for having the opportunity to speak in this debate. Unfortunately I have been at a meeting of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning. I would like to make a number of points, particularly as Mr Bangemann is present. It seems to me that the withdrawal of these two reports, for the reasons outlined, confirms the view that a piecemeal approach in dealing with the problem of additives in food is totally inadequate and that there is an imperative need for a much more comprehensive approach on the part of the Commission, particularly in banning additives and colourants in foodstuffs which are regarded as harmful. I have noted in particular research carried out in France in this particular area which has led to the French Government taking action in banning certain substances.

Unfortunately that is not true of all national governments and before Mr Bangemann spoke, I had already outlined matters about which I felt concern in my own country. It would be more desirable if the manufacturers of products were self-regulating and ensured that they researched adequately the kind of additives they were putting into foodstuffs before going ahead. That does not happen and, during the last couple of weeks, I have come across a number of foodstuffs which appear quite regularly in my own household, for example tinned peas, which is something one uses nearly every other day, jellies, cheese, etc. which contain additives regarded as dangerous or cancer-producing by one of the research institutes in France and in respect of which the French Government is active. I pointed out that it would be desirable if manufacturers themselves acted or, indeed, national governments. The reality is that that has not been the case and therefore the pressure is going to have to come from the Commission.

I should also like to raise the question of labelling. Because of the current concern of consumers about the quality of food and about the environmentally friendly nature of certain products, not least some of those in the food area, a lot of labelling is carried out purely for

marketing, making claims for which there is no basis or substance in fact. The Commission should also adopt an approach which ensures that, where labelling is carried out that points to the value of a particular product for environmental reasons, certain criteria must be satisfied before that particular label can be used. I have been concerned about this area for some time. I have a hyperactive child who is affected by some of those colourants and that, together with other information, prompted me eventually to table a resolution for debate in this Parliament through its committee procedure. However, I would hope, before even going down that road that the Commission itself will take the necessary action and take it in an absolutely comprehensive way, rather than in the piecemeal way it has followed until now.

MAHER (LDR). — Mr President, it is very important that we have a clear idea of what we mean when we speak of quality. I do not think everyone means the same thing. What is quality? Some people say quality food is food in its natural state. We know, for instance, that very few of us would drink milk unless it was pasteurized. Yet, as it comes from the cow, it is natural.

Mr Bangemann was right to make that point.

This is not a simple problem. We want to be very clear about what we mean. There is a lot of confusion about this. You cannot just take every food as it is grown or as it is produced naturally and eat or drink it without taking a risk. It has to be treated in some form or another. After all, we cook food. That is not natural. We boil it and so on but that is not leaving it in its natural state. Let us at least be clear and get rid of the ambiguity.

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) I am very grateful to T.J. Maher for what he has said, because he has illustrated what I said perhaps rather too briefly just now. I did not say that natural products are good or bad. I pointed out that the phrase 'in their natural state' used by Mrs Roth-Berendt will not get us any further in every case. That is all I said, and what Mr Maher has said underlines what I was saying just now. But we can discuss this at length when the directive is presented. I just wanted to introduce this aspect into the debate.

We shall certainly be able to ban colourants and additives that are harmful. There is no problem at all about that. The problem arises only when colourants and additives are not harmful, because we then move into a sphere where we need a legal basis for imposing a ban. I cannot, of course, ban every form of human behaviour as I see fit. The European Community too is bound by constitutional principles. We cannot simply impose a ban without a reason.

The argument over whether or not something is harmful is, of course, not only political but also scientific. Scientific assessments of carcinogenic substances, for example, vary considerably. Five or six years ago there

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was a great debate on whether beer should be banned because it was alleged, or the findings of some scientific institute showed, that it contained a carcinogenic substance. It must have been proved in the meantime that this was a mistake because serious discussion of the subject has stopped. I am not saying — I see heads being shaken again — that we can submit a decision to you on these individual cases at this stage. I am merely repeating what T.J. Maher has said perhaps more cogently, that as a yardstick 'in its natural state' does not get us any further. We must therefore have more serious, more detailed discussions on these questions — but that will not really be possible until the directive is available.

ROTH-BERENDT (S). — (DE) I did not intend to speak again, because I really thought we could continue this discussion when the global directive was presented, but I feel compelled to comment on what you, Mr Bangemann, and Mr Maher have said. I may have been misunderstood by the interpreters, but certainly not by you, Mr Bangemann. My group believes that foodstuffs should be left in their natural state when there is no objective reason for them to contain any additives whatsoever. By 'objective reason' I also mean certain convenient processes for trade and industry, when, for example, transport routes or the time spent in transport could be increased. I fully appreciate, Mr Bangemann, that there may well be a price problem, although, I do not wholly share your view that the resulting costs should automatically be passed on to the consumer.

Leaving foodstuffs in their natural state certainly does not mean that we should now suddenly eat all fish and meat raw. That is silly. Leaving foodstuffs in their natural state means that, if peas do not need to be preserved, they are not preserved, because it is not essential for them to be as green as grass, and that an antioxidant does not need to be added to mayonnaise. Let it go brown four days after the bottle is opened! It also means that certain things should contain additives only if they are really necessary, and that calls for a change in the way we think.

I am a lawyer, and I quite understand the constitutional objections you have, but we must tackle the question from a different angle. We should not be saying that we must not impose bans but that — and this is a principle we must apply if we are serious about consumer protection and environmental protection — foodstuffs must not contain additives. An exemption will then have to be obtained for every additive. In other words, additives will not be banned, but permission must be sought for their use. If we tackle the question from this angle, the whole thing becomes rather more serious, rather more credible. I am sure we will be continuing this discussion in great depth in the very near future.

DÍEZ DE RIVERA (S). — (ES) I would just like to point out that I did not know that we were going to take part

in a debate on the quality of foodstuffs. Parliament would have been extremely grateful if the Commission had pointed this out beforehand and had taken into consideration the amendments it had put forward. I had no idea that we were going to start a debate now on the quality and purity of foodstuffs. Mr Bangemann, we would have appreciated knowing this beforehand.

BANGEMANN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (DE) Mr President, it is in my nature, as Members know, to enter into discussions. If somebody says something in a discussion, I react. I do not want to start a debate, but if you prefer the usual procedure whereby a Commissioner gets up, reads something out to you and then sits down again, then I will sit down again now.

PRESIDENT. — You can criticize as much as you like, but at least say something!

BANGEMANN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (DE) This is, of course, very simple, this little ploy: I do not want to ban anything at all. First I impose a ban, and then I permit exemptions. But you have already imposed the ban. That is precisely where the constitutional problem lies, and that is why we will not solve this problem with the formula you are suggesting. But we will consider the various possibilities when this debate is on the agenda.

One Member has referred to the problem of labelling. In my opinion, this is a possibility when an additive is absolutely harmless. That is the limit we are all agreed on. If something is harmful, it is not authorized. In this case, we also have a legal basis for a ban. That is no problem. If an additive is absolutely harmless and if not only convenience but also factors of real substance argue for its authorization, an appropriate indication must be given.

This gives us precisely the situation in which the consumer faces a clear choice. He can then say, 'I don't want this with this additive in it. I'll buy something else that doesn't contain this additive.' To keep to the example of peas, he will buy peas in their natural state and must expect them to be somewhat dearer.

Nor will we allow the costs to be passed on, Mrs Roth-Behrendt. That is the result of the market economy system, and if you like a more detailed explanation, I shall have to give it to you in private, because I see the other Members are getting restless.

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission has withdrawn both directives. The two reports by Mrs Martin and Mrs Schleicher are therefore no longer on the agenda.¹

(The sitting closed at 7.50 p.m.)

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see minutes.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR BARÓN CRESPO

President

*(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)*¹

1. *Decision on urgency*

Proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 627 final — Doc. C3-7/90) for a decision on a medium-term loan to Hungary

DE CLERCQ (LDR), *Chairman of the Committee on External Economic Relations*. — (NL) Mr President, the Committee on External Economic Relations eventually took a favourable decision, but I would be stretching the truth if I said that this decision was reached quickly and easily. I feel it was very useful to have Vice-President Christophersen to provide the information which the committee was generally lacking. It was precisely because of this that there was understandable dissatisfaction about the way the Committee on External Economic Relations in particular and Parliament in general is consulted by the Commission. I want to underline this.

The final decision, Mr President, and it has my full support, is that the matter should be declared urgent. The Hungarians must not be allowed to suffer because of what goes on here. We would also be sending out the wrong political signal if the matter was not declared urgent, but I must emphasize that this decision was not taken easily in my committee and that there is a feeling of apprehension, which naturally concerns far more than the actual problem we are now discussing. It is due more to a lack of what is sensed, a lack of satisfactory cooperation between the Commission, let alone the Council, and this Parliament. To conclude, we are in favour of urgency.

TOMLINSON (S). — Mr President, this request was foreseen in September, was formally made on 15 November, and yet the proposals in their final form were only seen by Members of this House last night. Therefore, we have a proposal before us which Parliament has not had the opportunity of examining properly.

The Committee on Budgets and the REX Committee discussed it at great length last night and they recognize that the competence in this area lies with the REX Committee, and will therefore follow the advice given to the House by the REX Committee, but with the same degree of hesitancy and reservation. We have that hesitation because although the proposal for the medium-term loan for Hungary requires a new budget line, we have received the proposal without having any

idea yet of when we are going to receive a preliminary supplementary and amending budget. The point we have to make to the Commission is that of course the Community needs to respond positively to developing and changing circumstances in Eastern Europe. But we have to add that it cannot be on the basis of the assumed compliance of Parliament with whatever the Commission comes forward with, however late, and in whatever form it comes forward with it, and particularly when it is not properly and adequately prepared. Where compliance cannot be assumed, it becomes our responsibility and we are going to have to discharge that responsibility seriously. I merely make that point because I do not think that when we require supplementary budgets to give proper effect to proposals, the Budget Committee will be quite as ready and compliant in future, as it is proposing to be on this occasion.

*(Parliament approved the request for urgent procedure)*¹

2. *Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency*

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the statement on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency.

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — Mr President, distinguished Members of the European Parliament, it is a privilege to come before you today to present the Irish presidency work programme at the start of a new decade. A century which began under the gathering clouds of war draws to a close under breaking skies of hope. Ireland assumes the presidency of the Council at a time of great opportunity for all Europeans, East and West. Old moulds are breaking on our continent. Patterns that have been fixed for over 40 years are shifting and changing before our eyes.

The events of the past months in Central and Eastern Europe and the changes that have taken place are the most significant in our recent history. They carry with them a historic responsibility for our Community and for its Member States. They also carry uncertainties. We do not underestimate them, but the climate of confidence in our Community is soundly based. It rests on all that has been achieved since the Community's foundation, on the innovations of recent years, on the major objectives we have set ourselves for the near future and on those still to be articulated which we can see increasingly closer on our horizon.

Some have seen the developments in Central and Eastern Europe as presenting the Community with a fundamental choice between deeper integration and wider cooperation with our European neighbours. We see no such choice, Mr President. Our destiny as Europeans is a shared destiny. We share a continent and

¹ *Approval of the minutes — Documents received — Application of the Rules of Procedure: See minutes.*

¹ *Topical and urgent debate (announcement): See minutes.*

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we can now dare to share a future. The Community has no alternative but to press ahead towards greater unity and, at the same time, we must support the emergence of new democracies in Eastern Europe and create new and better forms of cooperation with them and with our European neighbours.

Against this background what will be the overall aims of the Irish presidency in the coming months? First, we must continue on the road to European integration. This is imperative. For the past 30 years the Community has helped to give Western Europe a period of unprecedented peace, stability and prosperity. It would be a betrayal of the hopes of all Europeans, East and West, if now, at the moment when the success of our Community is most manifest, we were to fail in our resolution or falter before the tasks ahead. We must therefore press on with the completion of the single market and work steadily towards economic and monetary union.

Second, we must work to make our Community relevant to all our citizens. European integration will mean little if it does not bring real and tangible benefits to our people and improvements in their living and working conditions. At the heart of this lies the promotion and development of the social dimension, greater employment opportunities and better social conditions together with our policies in other areas, a cleaner and healthier environment, cheaper and better transport, and the removal of barriers to free movement will transform the integration process into a Community in the fullest sense of that word. I know that we shall have the full support of Parliament in making the Community more relevant to the everyday concerns of our people and making its institutions more responsive to their needs.

Third, we must develop our relations with our European neighbours and the world beyond. At a time when the walls in men's minds are coming down as surely as the Berlin wall, we must not fail to grasp the historic opportunities open to us to reach out to our fellow Europeans and to build new structures of assistance and cooperation. This will require imagination and generosity. We must strive to make the 1990s a decade when democracy, individual freedom, respect for human rights and the rule of law flourish throughout our continent to build a Europe of economic achievement, political harmony and stability. An informal meeting of Foreign Ministers will take place on Saturday next in Dublin to consider the common policy of the Twelve in relation to Central and Eastern Europe. This early initiative of the Irish presidency is an indication of our determination to ensure that the Community is in a position to respond rapidly to the pace of events.

Fourth, we shall use the instruments of European political cooperation to examine and address the major issues of international life. We must match the dynamism and drive of our economic cohesion with a unified and coherent approach to issues in the

international arena. We will give special attention to ensuring that consistency is maintained between the Community's external relations and the policies developed within European political cooperation. This is essential to the success of the Community's action in the world.

The contribution of your own institution, Mr President, will be crucial to the Community's future and to achieving the aims I have outlined. Parliament has been alert to the need to build on the reforms of the mid-1980s and you yourself, Mr President, outlined your hopes for the future course of the Community at the Strasbourg European Council in December. The Irish presidency will devote its fullest energies to cooperation with Parliament. We shall do so because only thus will the institutional synergy vital to the Community's advance be achieved. We shall do so because we recognize that the role and responsibilities of the Parliament are a cornerstone of European construction. I say to you clearly today that major institutional advance in the Community is indissolubly linked with the strengthening of the role of this Parliament.

The achievement of economic and monetary union will be the most tangible demonstration to date of the commitment of our peoples to a common European future. Stage one will begin on 1 July and preparations for this are already well advanced. Capital movements are being liberalized according to an agreed timetable and those Member States whose currencies are not yet fully integrated into the exchange rate mechanism of the EMS have committed themselves to doing so as soon as circumstances favour this. The Council of Ministers has been considering the Commission proposals for improved cooperation between central banks and for the progressive convergence of economic performance. We look forward to receiving Parliament's opinion on these important proposals. As regards the subsequent stages of EMU the Irish presidency will carry forward actively the work of preparation for the intergovernmental conference to be convened under the Italian presidency before the end of the year. This work will take place both in the Economic and Financial and the General Affairs Councils with a view to reporting to the Dublin European Council in June. There already exists a substantial body of information, proposals and analysis for this preparation, including several resolutions of this Parliament. In addition, the Council looks forward to the composite paper from the Commission on all aspects of EMU provided for by the Strasbourg European Council. This paper will be an essential contribution to further work.

I believe that Parliament's resolutions represent a significant contribution to the debate both on EMU and on the wider question of the future evolution of the Community. The Irish presidency values your ideas and shares your concern that progress on European integration must be accompanied by essential democratic control. We must ensure that, in constructing the framework for European unity, the European Parliament is put in a position to give full expression, in

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conjunction with the national parliaments, to the democratic will of the people. What then should be the role of the European Parliament in the preparations for the intergovernmental conference? Already Parliament, through its debates and resolutions, is exercising a significant influence on the climate in which the intergovernmental conference will take place. Beyond this, I look forward to examining with my colleagues in the Council the suggestions you have made on the expanded role and powers of Parliament. Given the significance of economic and monetary union, I am convinced that all Member States will want to give Parliament's views the most serious consideration and will take them into account in mapping the way forward. It will be necessary to obtain agreement on an acceptable method for the association of the European Parliament with the work we have to do.

The internal market is beginning to assume its final shape. Its positive effects are being felt in all sectors of economic life. While the timetable is being largely adhered to, some difficult decisions remain to be taken. The contribution of the European Parliament to the legislative work is of the utmost importance, especially now that the Commission has tabled most of its proposals. Our mutual objective must be to maintain the pace of legislative progress over the next six months. Discussions are also taking place with the two following presidencies, Italy and Luxembourg, in the context of the rolling programme. I wish to pay tribute to the outgoing French presidency for its success in agreeing a number of proposals vital to the completion of the White Paper programme. The Council has still to reach agreement on opening up public procurement in the hitherto excluded sectors of water, energy, transport and telecommunications. Public purchasing represents a substantial element of Community GDP and it is clear that the internal market cannot be completed without the necessary decisions in this area.

In the area of financial services I would mention the important investment services directive and proposals relating to life assurance, motor insurance and insurance accounts. The company law sector has not kept pace with developments in other areas, despite the need for European business to have an appropriate legal framework within which enterprises can cooperate and merge across Community frontiers. The Irish presidency will endeavour to achieve progress on a number of existing proposals, the most significant of which is of course the European company statute. We look forward to receiving the opinion of Parliament on this important proposal. With regard to intellectual property, significant progress was achieved during the French presidency. There remain, however, a number of important pending proposals, most notably that relating to the Community trademark. In the area of veterinary and plant health, the Commission has now tabled almost all its proposals, and the Irish presidency will be making a determined effort to clear some of the backlog which has arisen in this part of the programme. Because of its size, both in national economies and in an international context,

transport is one of the key sectors for the attainment of the single market. This was fully recognized in the White Paper.

The key areas in the next six months will be the adoption of the second phase of liberalization in air transport, further liberalization of road freight and road passenger transport and the adoption of an integrated transport infrastructure programme for the Community.

In addition, we should take forward work on other areas such as maritime transport, railway policy, transit negotiations with third countries, harmonization of the conditions of competition and road safety.

We would hope, with the full collaboration of the European Parliament, to see the final adoption of the longstanding proposals concerning the right of residence on which there is now a political consensus. We hope also to make progress on the second general directive on the mutual recognition of diplomas.

The development of trans-European networks will reflect the pan-European needs in the areas of transport, telecommunications, energy and training. The Council will have a first detailed discussion during the Irish presidency.

You will be fully aware of the difficulties and complexities surrounding the questions of savings tax and of tax harmonization. The December Economic and Financial Council arrived at a consensus on an outline framework on VAT rates. This represents progress upon which we want to build. It is our intention to push ahead further in relation to finalization of the post-1992 VAT regime, including structures and control arrangements. In addition we will initiate early discussion on excise rates.

The social dimension is an integral part of the internal market programme. Its development will constitute a major objective for the Irish presidency.

The action programme adopted by the Commission contains a comprehensive set of measures, the most urgent of which will, no doubt, be included in the Commission's work programme for 1990 to be presented to you by President Delors tomorrow. We are committed to advancing these measures.

To this end the troika of Social Affairs Ministers, representing the presidency, Italy and Luxembourg, will meet shortly with the Commission in order to produce a detailed timetable for the period to the end of 1991.

We also hope to adopt, with, of course, the active support of Parliament the proposals submitted under Article 118a of the Treaty relating to health and safety at work. In addition, the presidency will propose a special initiative in regard to long-term unemployment and will aim for the adoption next May of Force, the major new programme of continued vocational training for adults.

Our peoples understand the need for a new relationship between man and his fragile planet. We must match

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their perceptions with political action. This is an urgent priority. The Community must harness all its political, administrative and scientific resources to develop a coherent approach to environmental protection. It must use its stature in international life to press for action on global issues.

Internally, the Community already has an extensive body of environmental legislation. A number of important proposals are on the Council's table. Others are in the pipeline. The presidency hopes to make progress in the next six months on measures for dealing with nitrate pollution, the protection of habitats, water quality, hazardous waste and access to environmental information.

There is already political consensus in the Council on the setting up of the European Environmental Agency. However, before proceeding to the formal consideration of the proposal, the Irish presidency awaits receipt of Parliament's opinion. We hope that the Member States can come to a rapid decision on the location of the agency as requested by the Strasbourg European Council. The presidency will make every effort to facilitate final adoption of the proposal and knows that it will have the full cooperation of Parliament in this endeavour.

Of course, the environment is more than a European concern. It is a global one. The Community can play a vital role as a catalyst for effective action in all areas where there are environmental dangers of a global character such as the threat of a climate change and the destruction of tropical rain forests.

Preparations are already under way for the major Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 which will provide a vital opportunity to address environmental problems in a truly global manner.

An immediate priority is the need to protect the ozone layer. There appears to be widespread support amongst the international community for a radical revision of the Montreal Protocol on this issue. The Irish presidency will conduct a wide-ranging discussion in the Environment Council with a view to defining a strong negotiating mandate for the London Conference in June which will review the terms of the Protocol.

The Community is uniquely positioned to act effectively in this way. It constitutes an influential group of countries with a comprehensive approach to environmental problems, as underlined by the commitments undertaken in the Single European Act. We believe that the time is now right for the Community to dedicate its best efforts to the prevention of pollution and the promotion of higher environmental standards worldwide. My Prime Minister will ask his colleagues to review progress on these issues and the role of the Community at the European Council next June.

The common agricultural policy, Mr President, remains one of the cornerstones of the Community. The Irish presidency will have the major task of securing agreement for the adoption of the 1990-1991 agricul-

tural price proposals, and in achieving progress on the proposals relating to rural development. The continued development of the common fisheries policy will also be a major concern.

In the area of telecommunications, the significant measure of political agreement reached under the French presidency on the future direction of Community action provides a solid basis for further progress. The strengthening of Community action in the audiovisual and cultural fields will also be actively pursued.

In the energy sector we attach particular priority to the new proposals linked with the single market and to the Thermic programme of energy technology. The issue of nuclear safety will also be important. The new impetus in Community research policy resulting from the Single Act will be sustained by the Irish presidency. A major task will be the adoption of the third framework programme for the period 1990-1994.

In my opening remarks, I stressed the need to make the Community more relevant to the everyday needs of our citizens — the aim of a People's Europe. During the coming months we must press ahead with work on free movement where our primary objective will be agreement on the proposed Asylum Convention. We will continue the fight against drugs which is a major challenge, not just for the Twelve, but for the international community as a whole. We also aim to achieve substantial progress in the health field. I mention in this context the objective of overcoming the plagues of modern times — AIDS, cancer and the abuse of alcohol and tobacco, especially among our young people.

Finally, I want to refer to another important topic which concerns Parliament directly, the revision of the financial perspectives in the context of the inter-institutional agreement. The Commission will shortly be bringing forward proposals. We intend to give this matter our full attention and would expect, with the active cooperation of Parliament, to see the amended perspectives adopted in good time to allow the 1991 budgetary procedures to commence in the normal way.

There is no period in the Community's history when its external relations have assumed such importance as at the present time. The success of the Community's internal construction has made it a focus of interest and influence as never before.

This has required fresh thinking on ways to develop or adapt relationships to meet new needs and circumstances. The Irish presidency will give this continuing and complex task particular attention. Where concrete actions have already been decided they will be vigorously pursued.

The developments in Eastern and Central Europe pose a special challenge. Thanks to the efforts of the French presidency and the Commission, our initial responses, first in the cases of Poland and Hungary, and most recently in the case of Romania, were put together

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quickly and effectively. The pivotal role given to the Commission in coordinating the assistance programme of the Group of 24 was a recognition of the Community's capacity for action and leadership.

The Community now has trade and cooperation agreements with Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union, in addition to more limited agreements with Romania and Czechoslovakia. Negotiations for an agreement with Bulgaria await resumption. They will shortly begin with the GDR and will conclude under our presidency.

In the further development of the Community's actions, the framework of trade and cooperation agreements will be reviewed and adapted as necessary. Our actions must reinforce the process of political reform and economic liberalization under way. However, they must also take into account the pace of these reforms. We must look for constructive and innovative ways, as democracy and economic reform take root, to respond to the needs of each country. Our actions should include trade, cooperation, technical and appropriate financial support.

The situation is unprecedented. Our response must be imaginative and meet the urgencies involved. They must also be carefully constructed to achieve durable results.

Already, alongside measures of financial support planned or under way for Poland and Hungary, innovative wider reactions have been proposed. The Commission will shortly make formal proposals for a new Training Foundation and for exchange programmes. The Irish presidency will work on these. It has already begun necessary coordination for the leading role of the Community and Member States in the important initiative for a European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The informal meeting of Ministers in Dublin next weekend will provide an important opportunity to update our evaluation of recent developments, facilitating the Community's decisions that must follow. We can also begin discussion of how relations with these countries might develop over the medium and longer term.

Eastern Europe requires the Community's fullest response but I want to refute the notion that the Community's energies for other tasks will thereby be exhausted. The work programme for the presidency provides the best answer.

Great importance will be given to the preparation for formal negotiations with the EFTA countries which are to begin during Ireland's presidency. This work will require concentrated and constructive effort on both sides. We look forward to the Commission presenting its mandate for these negotiations in the coming months. This is a major presidency priority.

The Community has always recognized its special ties with the countries of the Mediterranean region which are not Member States. These ties must be strengthened and adapted to meet new circumstances. Our presidency

will ensure full discussion of the Commission's important communication on this subject. The Council will also be devoting further study to the Commission's opinion on Turkey's accession application, communicated to it last month. The presidency will ensure that the full range of considerations involved receive the most careful attention.

A strong and cooperative relationship between the European Community and the United States is of fundamental importance not just for Europe and America but to the world as a whole. We welcome US support for the progress of European integration and US recognition of the central role the Community has to play in the evolving situation in Europe. I had a very fruitful meeting last week with President Bush and Secretary Baker. Ireland's long and close friendship with the United States allows us, I believe, to play a constructive role during our presidency in exploring ways to strengthen US-EEC relations. The search for solutions to trade matters currently in contention between us can only benefit from this.

A liberal, international trading environment is vital for the well-being of the Community. For this reason we attach a special importance to progress on the Uruguay round of GATT. The Irish presidency's work programme provides for concentrated discussions on this within the Council as the negotiations enter their final year.

The Community's relations with regional groupings will continue to receive full attention. We look forward to presiding over the 8th ASEAN-EEC ministerial meetings, the first Ministers' meeting between the Community and the Gulf Cooperation Council to be held in Oman, and the meeting in Dublin with Central American countries.

The presidency will also give the closest attention to the Community's relations with the developing world. The economic situation of many of these countries calls out for renewed international action. Particular areas of importance are the implementation of the Fourth Lomé Convention, and the special UN General Assembly session on international economic cooperation in New York in April. The Development Council in May will consider the operational consequences of the link between the environment and development.

The Community's activities in the EPC area have developed considerably. The renewed dynamism of the Community in recent years has created a general expectation that the Twelve can, and should, play an effective role in international affairs, making a substantial contribution to peace, stability and justice in the world.

Our first and most immediate priority is the establishment of a new climate of cooperation and security on our continent. Events of the past months have put this objective within our reach. The Twelve intend to develop with the countries of Eastern Europe, insofar as they are committed to the path of democratic change, closer and more substantial relations, based upon an

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intensification of political dialogue and increased cooperation in all areas. A major aim of this policy is support and encouragement for the establishment of free, open and democratic societies in which the full enjoyment of human rights is guaranteed by the rule of law.

The CSCE process constitutes a major pillar in our efforts to overcome the divisions of Europe. The vitality of this process has already contributed greatly to the welcome events that have taken place in recent months on our continent and the Twelve are committed to its continued development as an integral part of future European equilibrium.

The Vienna follow-up meeting of the CSCE, which ended one year ago, provided further proof of the vitality of the CSCE process particularly in the field of human rights.

Two further meetings under the CSCE umbrella will take place in the coming six months. We hope that the changed situation in Europe will be reflected in the level of cooperation between the participating states at these meetings. The Bonn Economic Conference is an ambitious meeting. The contribution of the Community must be imaginative and forward-looking. In each of our countries we must bring home to the private sector the opportunities that the Bonn Conference will provide. The challenge we face in Copenhagen at the conference on the 'Human Dimension', is to continue to develop and enrich our dialogue on the protection of human rights within CSCE participating States, even though there will be fewer and fewer instances — or so we firmly hope and expect — of systematic, government-led denials of basic civil rights.

The negotiations in Vienna on measures aimed at fostering confidence and security and on conventional armed forces in Europe are continuing. Hopes for early agreement are higher than ever. Such agreement will allow far-reaching force reductions in Europe as well as greater military transparency and confidence.

As I have already mentioned, we welcome the support which the United States and President Bush in particular have expressed for European integration. It is clear that the US fully shares our appreciation of the European Community as a force for stability in Europe. The United States has an essential role in Europe as evidenced not least by its participation, along with Canada, in the CSCE process. The importance of that role is now acknowledged even by the Soviet Union. When I met with Secretary Baker a few days ago I explored with him the ideas which he outlined in his Berlin speech on 12 December. We shall be exploring within the Community how best we can respond to the US proposal for a new transatlantic partnership so as to ensure that our intensified cooperation with the US will work to the benefit of all. A productive relationship with the US in all forums, including in the trade field, is essential.

The Irish presidency will also emphasize the regular dialogue pursued by the Twelve with like-minded

Western countries and Japan. Regular coordination meetings between the EC and the Council of Europe have been taking place since last July. The Irish presidency welcomes this development and looks forward to continuing this cooperation between the two organizations and in particular to the forthcoming quadripartite meeting on 15 March.

The protection of human rights has long been a cornerstone of European political cooperation and will continue to be so. Each of us has been moved in a personal way, I believe, by the expression of the popular will we have seen in recent months on the streets of cities like Leipzig, Prague and Bucharest. We should not underestimate the extent and significance of popular insistence on certain values — the values of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, prosperity, social justice and peace. It is for political authorities to give practical expression to such sentiments. The Irish presidency is determined to pursue and reinforce the activity of the Twelve in the field of human rights, making use of all of the channels set out in the Strasbourg statement of the European Council.

In this enterprise the presidency counts on the support and assistance of the European Parliament which, over the years, has played a significant part on the international stage in the struggle to promote and ensure respect for human rights.

The Twelve have repeatedly stated their support for the peace process aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, notably in the Madrid and Strasbourg declarations, whose elements remain fully valid. It is in the spirit of the Madrid declaration, and with the guarantees that it spells out, that the Twelve support the proposal for elections in the occupied territories, considered as a step in the process towards an overall settlement. We also encourage efforts which seek to establish dialogue between the parties directly concerned. We will continue through our own contacts with all the parties to press for acceptance of the principles on which a political settlement of the conflict must be based, namely security for Israel and self-determination for the Palestinian people.

The Twelve are seriously concerned at the situation in the occupied territories with the consequent loss of life, impoverishment and violation of the most elementary rights of the population. Our policy is to do what we can to bring the occupying power to fulfil its obligations to the people of the territories and to comply with its international responsibilities, notably in the areas of education and health.

The Community and its Member States will continue to assist the Palestinian inhabitants of these territories. The programme of direct access for Palestinian produce to the Community market appears to be working satisfactorily this season, although there have been some incidents of administrative hurdles being placed in its way by the Israeli authorities. We shall be monitoring the operation of the programme carefully.

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The Euro-Arab Ministerial Conference held in Paris on 22 December was a major initiative and success of the French presidency. We will build on the impetus which it gave to the dialogue between the Community and the Arab world. We look forward to hosting in Dublin the sixth meeting of the General Committee of the Dialogue. Concerning Lebanon, the Twelve reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the Ta'if agreements. I would echo to European Council in recalling the very positive role played by Unifil, under whose flag the cause of peace has claimed the lives of so many of our own European citizens. The Twelve support the Unifil operation, which is playing a valuable role in keeping the peace in southern Lebanon.

The Community and its Member States will pursue their active policy in Africa designed to end apartheid and promote respect for human rights, encourage the peaceful settlement of conflicts and contribute to the social and economic development of the countries of the continent. The objective of the Twelve remains the achievement, through peaceful means, of a democratic and multiracial system in South Africa. We will maintain our pressure on the South African Government in order to promote the profound and irreversible changes which we have repeatedly stood for. We will reconsider it only when there is clear evidence that these changes have been obtained. It is the firm belief of the Twelve that only broad-based negotiations bringing together the true leaders of the South African people can result in a lasting settlement.

The Community and its Member States are determined to pursue their constructive role in the Horn of Africa. We are convinced that the conflicts in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia can only be solved by peaceful means and through negotiated political settlements. We will spare no effort in assisting the populations affected by famine and will continue to urge all parties concerned to facilitate the delivery and distribution of humanitarian assistance and emergency aid.

As in the past, the Twelve are determined to play their role in Latin America. We look forward to meeting the Central American countries next April, in Dublin, and we hope that the situation will allow constructive, in-depth discussion and the prospects for an end to conflict and for a new focus on the needs of the peoples of the area. San José VI has to be, as we expect it to be, a ministerial conference which will mark the beginning of a new era for Central America.

Furthermore, the Irish presidency will welcome to Dublin, for an informal meeting, the ministers of the Rio Group in Latin America. Positive developments such as progress in regional integration, the return of Chile to democratic rule, and the consolidation of democracy in other countries in the area, constitute a landmark in the history of South America.

The European Community has been steadily developing its relations with the countries of Asia. The Irish presidency, with the help of its partners, will actively pursue the political dialogue of the Twelve with India,

as well as with ASEAN, whose members we will meet at the forthcoming EEC-ASEAN meeting in Malaysia.

It is well known that since the tragic events of Tiananmen Square last June, our relations with China have not flourished as we would wish. The Twelve will continue to urge the pursuit of internal policies of economic and political reform, respect for human rights and openness to the outside world.

Public opinion in Europe, as reflected notably in this Parliament, has been particularly moved by the predicament of the Cambodian people. It is imperative that the international community, with the involvement of the United Nations, make the maximum effort to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops to achieve a lasting settlement. The Twelve gave their full support to the convening of the Paris Conference last August. We will continue to encourage all efforts to promote a political solution that will prevent the return to power of the Khmer Rouge, ensure the unity and independence of Cambodia and establish a democratic government representative of the people's will.

On Afghanistan the Twelve will continue to support the role of the UN Secretary-General and to encourage the Afghan parties to seek a political solution to the conflict.

The many regional problems I have reviewed have the common feature that the concern of outside parties, including the Community, is seen as a positive factor, whether that concern is expressed through dialogue, mediation, or economic support for a negotiated settlement. The Irish presidency attaches great importance to the Twelve's support for the UN Charter and for the role of the United Nations in the solution of disputes and the lowering of international tensions. We recognize also that the UN can provide the forum for handling broad multilateral issues. Our goal is to bring about an international environment responsive to the possibilities for constructive change and marked to a greater and greater degree by the values we find it natural to pursue within our own societies.

Pursuing the foreign policy objectives of the Twelve in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world will require the full commitment of the presidency. In fulfilling this task the presidency knows that it will be able to count on the encouragement and support of the European Parliament.

We live at a time of radical, historic modifications of the political landscape. In the words of Abraham Lincoln: 'As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew'. It is our common task to make sure that out of this time of opportunity there results a safer and better world.

(Loud and sustained applause)

DESMOND (S). — Mr President, on behalf of my group and particularly on my own behalf, I join with you in warmly welcoming Mr Collins and Mrs Geoghegan

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Quinn. I thank the Irish President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Haughey, for readily meeting my chairperson, Mr Jean-Pierre Cot, in Dublin at the outset of the presidency. I also thank the Irish Ministers who made themselves available in Dublin to discuss their priorities.

We are witnessing momentous political upheavals throughout Eastern Europe. This decade will bring many new governments and many new political parties in Eastern Europe. It will perhaps bring a new Soviet confederation and perhaps a new Germany. It will bring a new Euro-US security policy and, above all else, it will bring new economic and trading relationships with Eastern Europe. In the light of these major developments the particular preoccupations of this Parliament, such as the Single European Act, the internal market, the Social Charter, may well be somewhat academic. Mr Collins rightly stressed in his address that we must create new and better forms of cooperation with the new democracies in Eastern Europe. I submit that if this Parliament is to exert a real influence on the future of Eastern Europe, we must have a fully coordinated, integrated, parliamentary intergroup policy on these fundamental questions. We desperately need to bring about stable, democratic progress in Eastern Europe and throughout the Soviet Union. We must, in my view, do our absolute utmost to prevent the drift into factional nationalism, racism and disintegration in Eastern Europe. Accordingly, I submit that *ad hoc* resolutions and informal ministerial discussions are no longer adequate.

I have two proposals to make. The first proposal is to the President of the Commission. I think that the President should restructure and reallocate his portfolios in the Commission and give a senior Commissioner direct full-time responsibility for Community relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. A major restructuring of the work of the Commission would also provide the President with an opportunity for an appropriate general reshuffle of the Commission's work and enhance the general authority and impact of the Commission on Community policies.

Parallel to this we must revise the structure of this House. There should be, in my view, within our 1990 budget an entirely new major committee on relations with Eastern Europe and the USSR. This committee could make a decisive, coherent contribution on the fundamental questions we will now face throughout the 1990s, and it should be chaired by a senior Member of Parliament. Already my group has appointed a deputy secretary-general with special responsibility for Eastern Europe as a move in that direction.

These new structures as such are not enough. I call on the Irish presidency to reaffirm more direct support for President Gorbachev. He has uniquely made the process of democratization in Eastern Europe possible. We must seize the opportunity to give priority to holding the Helsinki II Conference. I would urge the President to adopt a guarded approach in relation to the overtures

from the US or indeed the Baker plan itself because we do want a sound trading relationship and a sound security relationship with the United States. However, we do not want — and I am thinking here of Panama — certain aspects of United States security policy to be imported into the European security situation. I commend the Irish Government for its refusal to endorse the deplorable American military invasion of Panama. I hope that throughout the Irish presidency there will be far better cooperation between Member States on such fundamental issues.

As vice-chairman of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, I call on the Irish presidency to adopt the measures needed to ensure that the first stage of EMU enters into force in July of this year. I am most concerned that there now seems to be a drift, a laid-back drift, in many areas, but hopefully not within the Irish presidency, where the decisions needed to complete the process of abolishing physical frontiers are concerned.

I share the three priorities of the Irish presidency for its six-month term of office: the environment, the single market and Eastern Europe, but I would add full employment as a clear goal of European Community economic policy. I add economic and social cohesion as vital for all relatively poor areas of the Community. The holding of an Irish Social Affairs Council meeting at the tail end of the Irish presidency with a rather derisory agenda, devoid of any Social Charter content and not even having one single reference in it to the fundamental issues affecting women in society and women in European employment, is just not good enough. I call on the Irish President-in-Office to redress this imbalance in the agenda for his presidency. My party is making a major submission to the Irish Government in this regard this afternoon in conjunction with the Socialist Group.

I think we also need a new Delors report on the question of social cohesion and social policy throughout Europe. For example, the entry of 720 000 East German citizens into the Federal Republic and their involvement in employment questions there pose enormous problems for the whole of social policy within Europe. Just as Jacques Delors produced his historic report on economic and monetary union, we need another report on social cohesion in Europe. For that idea I give credit to Mr Donnelly in our group who put it forward at a recent meeting with the President of the Commission.

I welcome the fact that the Irish presidency has chosen the environment as one of its priorities. But I would stress the statutory monitoring and enforcement procedures of any new environmental agency. Without that kind of mandate there is little point in having any agency at all. I thoroughly agree with Mr Collins, the chairman of the Environment Committee, in that regard. We must also have an independent inspection mandate within any agency, otherwise the exercise is going to be entirely cosmetic. We must have an independent parallel nuclear inspectorate in place in that regard. I think we should also decide very firmly —

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and I hope it will be done during the Irish presidency — on a site for the agency. I would strongly suggest Copenhagen as a possible site, having examined as objectively as I can the relevant data. That, however, is a personal view and not necessarily the view of my group. I am sure there are many conflicting demands in that regard, but the Irish presidency should take an urgent decision on the matter.

Finally, as an Irish ACP-European Parliament delegate, I would ask the Irish presidency to give more emphasis to the Third World and Lomé issues throughout the next six months. Frankly, I am ashamed of my governments' — and I speak about successive Irish Governments — contributions to overseas development aid. Our record is appalling in contrast to the unique generosity of the Irish people themselves who have always contributed substantially. This year's budget in Ireland is perhaps an opportunity to make amends on this fundamental issue.

On behalf of the Socialist Group, I wish the Irish presidency every possible success. I have no doubt whatsoever that Mr Collins and his colleague Mrs Maura Geoghegan Quinn, who spoke to us eloquently in Brussels on the priorities of the presidency last week, will work most effectively and they may be fully assured of the full cooperation of the Socialist Group throughout the six-month period. I thank you for your work and your assistance to date and for your contribution this morning.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR CAPUCHO

Vice-President

McCARTIN (PPE). — Mr President, I would like to join with you and with my colleague, Mr Desmond, in offering a sincere welcome to the new President-in-Office, and wishing him much success and satisfaction in the job that he has undertaken.

Sometimes there is an idea that the small countries only mark time in the presidency and that it remains for the bigger States to make the real achievements, but I see no reason why the present President-in-Office will not be successful; he is one of the most experienced Ministers in the Council and he has behind him an electorate and a political situation in Ireland that will give him absolute support in all his work for the development of the Community. We are one of the regions of the Community most committed to promoting its full development in all its aspects. He has come to this office at a time when the pace has changed in Eastern Europe and the situation within the Soviet empire itself brings into new focus the importance of the Community position in the world.

Until now, the European Community has seen its role mostly in relation to its own citizens. From now on, not only within the Community but in the wider world,

there is a strong belief and expectation that Europe must adopt a new role. It is the business of this generation of Europeans to organize itself to fulfil what is expected from us in the world. Mr Haughey, the Irish Taoiseach, has used the word 'superpower' on a number of occasions to describe the European Community and its role in the world. We should not believe that we can wish the Community into this role without paying the political price and making the necessary investment.

One of the things that concerns me — I thought about it when the Minister was speaking and Mr Desmond referred to it as well — is the whole idea of European political cooperation. The reality is that until this Community learns to speak with one voice, we cannot be taken seriously in the world.

I listened to the Minister threading his way carefully through the whole area of foreign affairs. Nevertheless, we have to recognize that we cannot arrive at a common view on Panama, we cannot coordinate our attitude to Afghanistan and we have our dissenters on South African policy.

Mr Desmond congratulates the Minister on the Irish stand on the question of Panama. I agree with the sentiments expressed, but on the other hand, one of the prices we must pay for being strong and powerful is that we must submerge our own vested interests and form a pool with the common wisdom of all of the peoples of Europe to arrive at a single effort. There is a price to be paid there and certainly there is progress to be made.

One of the things the Minister should think about when considering the new intergovernmental conference is that although we made some progress with foreign affairs in the Single Act, we still have further to go. Until the day comes when we arrive at our opinion by majority decision-making we will not be taken seriously in the world. No matter how we feel, how much money we have or how many people are working in this Community, we will not have that status and the President-in-Office will not have the right to speak as an equal with the President of the United States who speaks with one voice while we very often speak with twelve.

It is the same with defence. We cannot give the people of the Community the ultimate guarantee that the democracy which has been built up can be maintained and protected unless we can make common arrangements for our own defence. This must be on the agenda and we cannot have a political union without a common arrangement for our defence policy in Western Europe. No matter how optimistic we may be about the future of Europe and the new developments in the world, we cannot foresee a world in which there will not be some need to provide for ourselves the basic requirements that any political union requires to defend its people and give them that ultimate democratic guarantee.

My group was pleased to hear the Minister say that he will be making it a priority to review the financial perspective and the interinstitutional agreement so that we can have more progress in budgetary matters. In the past the discussion about European budgetary affairs

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has been so much linked with surpluses and overspending on agriculture that people get the impression that there is a lot of money there. It does no harm to remind people that by comparison with national public spending and the wealth of this Community, what we spend through Community measures is infinitesimal. It does not count. An increase would not be noticed by the European taxpayer and even if he did notice, he would not grudge an increase in Community spending. Under the present legislation, we can increase Community spending by something like 25%. That would bring in extra money of something like ECU 10 billion. Considering the changes in the day-to-day situation in Eastern Europe there is the possibility that any month or any week we might have new requirements, but we cannot sit down and go through a new budgetary procedure on every occasion. We must introduce a budget that will have sufficient flexibility to meet the needs that may develop in the year ahead.

It is not just the question of Eastern Europe, there is also the situation regarding agriculture. I was a little disappointed that the Minister only skipped over this subject. The EPP Group is seriously concerned about the way agricultural policy is developing. First, farmers are concerned about the GATT agreements and the concessions being made by the Commission, which we hear very little about. There is concern that new trade agreements with Eastern Europe and bilateral trade agreements with countries all over the world are undermining the position of European farmers.

There is of course also the knowledge that prices are pegged down and when the Minister refers to the decisions to be taken with regard to agricultural prices, there are no decisions to be taken. The Commission is simply proposing that everything be left as it is. We are getting a slight reduction in some areas, but generally speaking there is very little being proposed in the area of agriculture. We were promised when stabilizing mechanisms were introduced that compensation would be improved in the Guidance Section so that the rural regions and peripheral regions would receive extra benefits. The reality is that we had 3 billion in savings last year; we transferred a very small amount of money to the Guidance Section of agriculture and that has been bound up within the expanded structural Funds and the regulations covering these. The result is that we have a fixed amount of money in the structural Funds and the argument about what farmers get takes place in the individual Member States where the Minister of Agriculture bargains with his own Finance Minister.

In Ireland in the past we got 25% of the structural Funds for agriculture, in the new situation we are getting 15%, admittedly of an increased Fund. It is the same in Portugal and Spain and the reality is that proposals for new regulations in the area of rural development, unless they carry new finance and unless the financial perspective is reorganized, will not mean anything to the poorer areas and will only be a licence to the richer areas to go back to State aids for their own farmers. I know that this was not the original intention either of

the Commission or Council but this is the way it has developed. As spending in the agricultural sector moves from the Guarantee to the Guidance Section then I can see it moving back to the national governments with a sum of money being given from Brussels and our most important common policy becoming re-nationalized.

I would ask the Minister to consider these things carefully, thank him for his statement which was comprehensive and constructive, wish him well and offer him our complete cooperation for the six months ahead.

(Applause)

COX (LDR). — Mr President, I would like to begin by wishing Mr Collins and his colleagues in government every success in the next six months of the Irish presidency and to thank him also for his very wide-ranging policy statement to this House today. I do so on my own behalf and on behalf of the Liberal, Democratic and Reformist Group.

The European Community today, in terms of its economic and political stability, stands as a pillar of strength and symbol of hope, not just for its own citizens but also for the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. I am glad to see the emphasis which has been placed by the President-in-Office on the urgent need to press on with the process of deepening integration to which we have committed ourselves in Western Europe. That is not simply an end in itself. It is also a means which enables us to assume a continent-wide responsibility in support of democracy and freedom throughout Europe. We must also give priority to the foundations on which our own stability as a Community of Twelve is now based. Here I would like to refer to the German question.

During the Irish presidency the Community is set to negotiate and conclude agreements with the German Democratic Republic. The GDR is a special case. It requires, both of the Commission and the Council, special urgent and sensitive treatment. How we handle the German question the the strategic challenge of the European Community today. One cannot presume how, after free elections, the people of the GDR will exercise their sovereign choice with regard to their place in the German nation and what institutional or constitutional form such a development might take. But the strategic challenge to our Community is to ensure that any such movement happens within the framework of European Community integration itself.

Here, one welcomes the speedy response of the President-in-Office to the US initiative for strengthening the trans atlantic relationship. Both through its role in the CSCE process and in its legacy through liberating Europe in the last war, the United States has a special role to play. US/EC relations are now set to enter a new and more mature phase. Developing this relationship is one of the imperatives of the coming months.

I believe, in conjunction with what Mr Desmond said earlier, that political dialogue with the Soviet Union is

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no less imperative and deserves an emphasis perhaps greater than that shown and evident from today's work programme for the Irish presidency. The Soviet leadership is now labouring under great strain. Sensitivities related to the German Democratic Republic will not diminish that strain. We must develop a balanced relationship with both superpowers in this regard, particularly on the defence implications for NATO and the Warsaw Pact. I believe that you, Mr Collins, as President-in-Office and Foreign Minister of the only neutral country in the European Community, are uniquely placed to explore the sensitive strategic agenda which arises in this regard. And I would hope that during the next several months you can render a service to the Community on this account.

While there is much in the field of external relations one would like to address, I will confine myself to just one other area. That is Cambodia. It is my earnest hope that the European Community of Twelve will do everything in its power and through the Irish presidency will seek to ensure that when next the Credentials Committee of the United Nations considers the matter of Cambodian representation, Europe would ensure that the Khmer Rouge or their surrogates find no legitimacy whatsoever in that august international body.

I note your proposition that the role of the European Parliament is 'as a cornerstone of European construction'. We in this House look forward to the hopefully generous implications of that view when we submit our opinion to the Council on the framework for stage 1 of economic and monetary union. This opinion was stalled last month precisely because of the inadequate role given to Parliament and the absence of generosity on the part of the Council in this regard.

The tax harmonization agenda which emerged from the French presidency was, I must say, frankly disappointing. In a sense it was, in my view, a consensus in favour of a tax collector's Europe rather than a citizens' Europe and the ideals of the single market. Perhaps the Irish presidency could afford to be more ambitious on this particular front in the months ahead.

I note with interest the proposed initiative on long-term unemployment. If this is to reach a conclusion or even substantial maturity under the Irish presidency, then hopefully it will be advanced at an informal level since I note, as Mr Desmond has done, that the first scheduled full meeting of the Social Affairs Council does not take place until close to the latter end of this presidency.

In conclusion, I would like to say that this Community bases its strength on the ambitions of its founding generation and on their courage to think big and act accordingly. The wheel of history has now turned a full circle. The continent-wide challenge today is no less than that which we faced 40 years ago in Europe. I hope that working together in the coming months, the Commission, Council and Parliament will be courageous and ambitious enough to succeed in this task.

(Applause)

PROUT, Sir Christopher (ED). — Mr President, I would like to extend on behalf of my group a warm welcome to the new President-in-Office, to wish him the very best of luck and to make a few observations about the role of our Parliament in this programme of work.

We were glad to hear you say, Mr President-in-Office, that in general you would devote your fullest energies to cooperation with the European Parliament. However, as you are well aware, the devil almost invariably lies in the detail. Your term of office, Mr President-in-Office, promises to be an eventful one. We can expect general elections in up to four of the countries of Eastern Europe by the middle of June. Elections are also due to take place at regional and local level in the Soviet Union where Mr Gorbachev is virtually besieged by growing unrest in the Republics. These momentous events are placing immense responsibilities upon the Community as it seeks to underwrite the endeavours of these nations to launch free and prosperous societies.

In the months that lie ahead, bilateral negotiations of the greatest importance for the liberty and prosperity of each one of these fledgling democracies will be conducted by officials from the Commission and the Council. Mr President-in-Office, I listened carefully to the passage in your speech about external relations in the hope — in the vain hope, I am afraid — that I would hear you say at least something about the role of Parliament. We call upon you now, as we shall be calling upon Commissioner Andriessen tomorrow afternoon, to guarantee that Parliament plays, as the Single European Act intended it to play, but as it has not so far been allowed to play, its full part in monitoring and concluding these negotiations.

(Applause)

Mr President-in-Office, we cannot call upon other countries to respect democratic values that we are not prepared to respect ourselves.

At the same time, as you said, it will also be your task to begin preparations for the Intergovernmental Conference whose first meeting will take place in December. My group firmly believes that this conference should place any proposals to amend economic and monetary provisions of the Treaty in the wider context of the balance of power between the Community's institutions and their democratic accountability. We are opposed to any attempt to plan for two conferences, such as the President of the European Commission — no doubt with the best of intentions — has suggested.

In settling the terms of reference for this conference, it is important to include, as the Strasbourg European Council underlined, a thorough review of the capacity of the individual national parliaments to enhance the democratic accountability of the Community institutions. There is, in particular, no doubt that the policies pursued both by Ministers and by national civil servants in the course of their work in working parties of the Council, in Coreper and in the Council itself — work, Mr President-in-Office which takes place, as you know, wholly behind closed doors — could be

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exposed to much more rigorous public scrutiny by national parliamentarians than hitherto.

However, it would be futile to pretend that perfecting scrutiny procedures within the twelve national parliaments would make it unnecessary to enhance the power of the European Parliament. The reason is a simple one. By incorporating the terms of the Treaty of Rome and of the Single European Act into their national legal systems, the national parliaments have voluntarily and freely placed the behaviour of the European Commission as an executive authority, and the behaviour of the Council of Ministers voting by qualified majority, beyond their reach. It is in these two critical areas that we must deploy our energies and our imagination in the coming months to find a way of improving democratic accountability in the European Community. It is not a question of increasing the powers of the European Parliament at the expense of national parliaments. It is a question — to adapt the famous Heineken advertisement — of giving the European Parliament the power to reach the undemocratic parts of the European Community which other parliaments cannot reach.

(Applause)

MOTA SANTOS (V). — *(PT)* Mr President-in-Office, I should like to start by saying how much we respect your country, above all for refusing to join in the confrontation between the military blocs and remaining neutral.

In revolutionary times such as those in which we are living, when the Cold War has ended, walls have been torn down and freedom and democracy are gaining ground in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, there is no doubt that the only neutral country in the Community bears a particular responsibility during its six months in the presidency.

The Green Group therefore calls urgently on the Irish presidency, which is supported by the resolute anti-militarism, non-violence and pacifism of the majority of its people, to work for the demilitarization of Europe, to encourage the conversion of industry to peace-time production and the banning of arms exports, paying particular attention to ensuring that trade in arms does not enjoy special Community arrangements.

We also hope to see from you a genuine commitment to democracy in the operation of the Community, starting with an opening up of the dealings of the Council to public view and the end of the intolerable situation in which unelected officials act as legislators, to mention just one of the many pressing issues that need attention.

Our group has not forgotten that Ireland was in the forefront of efforts to bring about the 1957 Non-Proliferation Treaty. We now need to go beyond this by drawing up a plan for the permanent abandonment of nuclear power and to encourage research into renewable energy.

Your presidency must also ensure that the radiation standards contained in the Chernobyl directive are not

dropped. The directive has been extended until February, but we condemn the implicit clearance for the export outside the Community of contaminated produce.

We do not want the presidency to take any action until the outcome of the current proceedings before the Court of Justice in Luxembourg on becquerel standards is known. The Green Group cannot accept any relaxation of the standards for radioactive contamination of foodstuffs or any difference between standards for food within the Community and those for exports — what is bad for people within the Community is bad for people outside it.

Your government has already said it intends to devote considerable attention to the environment. But we have all heard the alarming warning sounded by the report by the Task Force on the environmental implication of the single market, which shows that the environment will unfortunately be one of the main victims. We must therefore as a matter of urgency end the indiscriminate use of pesticides and artificial fertilizers, the destruction of the soil and its covering vegetation, air pollution by toxic emissions, water pollution, the destruction of the countryside, urban blight, mass tourism geared solely to consumption, the extinction of wildlife and all the policies that are leading to the exhaustion or unbalanced use of natural resources.

Mr President, the 0.1% of the Community budget earmarked for environmental protection is therefore an insult. So is setting up a European Environmental Agency with no real powers. We urgently need to break out of the paradigm of growth gone mad. The time has come for far-reaching action to restructure industry and the machinery of production.

We believe we must help the countries of Eastern Europe, but we should like to place on record the fact that we shall oppose resolutely any attempt to use aid as a kind of Trojan Horse for damaging commercial interests or to impose our economic model.

At a time when there is talk of a European home based on the Helsinki Agreement, the Community must also ask questions about itself. No one wants to go back to the international system of the last century, but equally we cannot allow the Community to become a centrifugal and centralizing force that tries to subordinate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, perhaps by exploiting nationalist sentiments. We have a historic opportunity to construct a Europe that is united in its differences, based on the regions, tolerant and peace-loving, a Europe that eradicates all forms of racism and embraces all the peoples from the Atlantic to the Soviet Union. This Europe, Mr President, is too important to be sacrificed to revanchist nostalgia for Cold War imperialism.

You set out in your speech a strict timetable for the completion of the single market and preparatory work for economic and monetary union. This contrasts sharply with the emptiness of the seven paragraphs on

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social issues and the vague promises and lack of action on the environment.

At the beginning of your speech you referred to the Community's historic responsibilities. Let us say clearly what these are. For the Community is responsible. It is responsible for the growing disparity between wealth and poverty. It is responsible for the systematic poisoning of the atmosphere and the resulting acid rain and the destruction of our forest. It is responsible for global warming. It is responsible for destroying the ecological balance of the Mediterranean, for desertification in Africa and the destruction of the Amazon forests.

It bears primary responsibility for the mounting pollution and destruction of our home and our natural resources. One of the most important tasks is to put this right. This is your responsibility.

(Applause)

GUTIERREZ DÍAZ (GUE). — (ES) Mr President-in-Office, our Parliamentary group, the Group for the European Unitarian Left, recognizes that Ireland is taking over the presidency of the Council from France in the midst of a complex situation, at a time of accelerated change and massive demands and responsibilities. This makes us happy to offer our sincere support, in the hope that it will be possible to achieve a positive balance within six months.

It is in this spirit that we wish to assess the very well-intentioned proposals you have brought to us today. In our view, the preparations for the intergovernmental conference should represent a stimulus to the institutional reform of the Community. From a democratic point of view, it is unacceptable to set economic and monetary union in motion if the Community institutions do not adapt themselves in parallel to the new economic and political realities thus created.

In this new phase, we regard the participation of the European Parliament as necessary and indispensable, both in the preparatory work and at the intergovernmental conference. So we expect a clear commitment from your presidency in calling a preparatory interinstitutional conference, as proposed by the previous presidencies, and firm support for the meeting planned by our Parliament with representatives of the Governments and the national Parliaments of the Twelve.

The staggering changes in the countries of the East have given rise to new hopes for peace and cooperation on our continent, but they have also made it clear that existing resources and mechanisms are not adequate to respond to the new situation. Beyond sending immediate emergency aid, the Community needs an overall vision for a solid, long-term development strategy for the East, with a view to greater European economic integration. Member States could be asked to make a greater economic effort to promote this policy, as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development is seeking to do, but the Community still does not have adequate legal bases or budgetary resources for

facing up to this responsibility. On the principles of interdependence and shared security, it is urgent to accelerate the planned timetable for disarmament, cutting military expenditure drastically and thus liberating huge resources for real economic development.

Mr President-in-Office, our group deplores the weakness of your proposals in the field of social policy. They are a pale reflection of the weak programme drafted by the Commission. The response to the problems of structural unemployment, reorganization of working hours, worker participation and the social dialogue are particular areas where the presidency's programme is obviously feeble.

Furthermore, formulating a global policy for the protection of the environment implies incorporating an ecological dimension into Community sectoral policies and establishing close cooperation with the other countries of Europe and the countries that border on the Mediterranean. But that is impossible with the limited resources so far earmarked by the Community. As an example one need only cite the Envireg programme, endowed with the ridiculous sum of ECU 500 million for three years, or the ten-year programme for the Mediterranean region, currently blocked for budgetary reasons.

Mr President-in-Office, let me devote my last few words to the foreign policy of the Community, which needs to be related increasingly closely to political cooperation. The Community response to international incidents ought to be collective and *wholly independent*. This was unfortunately not the case on the occasion of the United States military intervention in Panama. Contrary to what occurred, we should reach our policy positions on current situations quite independently — as you yourself said — on peace in Lebanon, peace in Central America, peace in Palestine, the end of apartheid, and always with the national sovereignty of each country fully respected.

Mr President-in-Office, we are living through a crucial period when we are faced with a great responsibility, you within the Council, and we in Parliament. This Parliament wishes to play and ought to be playing its proper part as an institution elected by the citizens and it calls for effective action from the Council on the great issues, as recognized by the Council itself.

LALOR (RDE). — Mr President, it is particularly pleasant for me as an Irishman and as a member of the same political party as the President-in-Office of the Council, to offer him a hearty *céad míle fáilte* — a hundred thousand Irish welcomes — here today.

He has outlined for us the Irish presidency's programme for the next six months. It is indeed an ambitious and challenging one. However, I am very mindful of and fully aware of the elaborate and painstaking preparations which the Irish team of ministers under their demanding Taoiseach has been making for this presidency over a long period now. I am in no doubt

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whatsoever that their programme, while ambitious, is both realistic and attainable.

In the few minutes available to me, I could not possibly properly review his outlined schedule except to comment that it is exceedingly comprehensive. It is good to hear an Irish Council President-in-Office describing our destiny as Europeans as a shared destiny and stating that all of us Europeans can now share a future and can press ahead towards greater unity East and West, promising both support and cooperation to emerging democracies. This, as he said, need not in any way slow down the completion of the single market and the achievement of economic and monetary union. Very succinctly he spelt out his priorities. Greater employment opportunities and improved social conditions, a far cleaner environment with cheaper and better transport. I fully concur with all those aspirations and would exhort him to explore every avenue in the creation and generation of these employment opportunities for our unemployed and, particularly of course, for our youth.

I was particularly pleased to note that Mr Collins clearly indicated on behalf of the Council that any major institutional advance within the Community would be undisputedly linked with the strengthening of the role of this Parliament. In relation to European unity he went on to say that the European Parliament must be put in the position to give full expression to the democratic will of the people in conjunction with the national parliaments. This I take to mean that the Council is at last, at individual national level, to give a hearing to and proper recognition to — and, hopefully, a platform or forum for — their Members of the European Parliament. This type of acceptance of the democratic will of the people and the electorate of Europe is a little overdue.

As a Member of the Committee on Transport and Tourism I was delighted to hear the President's aspirations in relation to the liberalization on air transport, road freight and passenger transport services. On the integrated transport infrastructure programme this Parliament has suffered frustration with the Council for years now, and having heard the President-in-Office stress that a key object for the next six months is the adoption of an integrated transport infrastructure programme for the Community, I am looking forward to the meeting of the Transport Committee with Mr Brennan next week and an in-depth discussion on his plans and aspirations on this and on transport liberalization. I was most interested in Mr Collins' outline of the position on the environment. We are confidently expecting considerable progress in this area as the Irish Taoiseach has already described the period as the 'green' presidency. I would request the President-in-Office to apply himself to speedily finalizing the creation of the environment agency which he has promised. Personally I am hoping to see Johnstown Castle, the Irish Agricultural Research Centre in County Wexford in my Leinster constituency, being recognized for what it is already, a centre of environmental

excellence and a potential headquarters of elaborate environmental research. Like the President-in-Office, I am hoping that rapid progress can be made on decision-making in this field so that we can speedily get off on the right foot towards the 'green' presidency.

Finally, I have every confidence that the six months of the Irish presidency will be an outstanding success and I take this opportunity again of wishing the President-in-Office and his team of Irish Ministers a period of tremendous progress.

(Applause from the right)

DILLEN (DR). — (NL) Mr President, now that an Irishman has the presidency of the Council, it is my duty to greet him as an Irishman. This is a greeting from one people to another, whatever differences of political opinion there may be. In their continuing struggle for self-determination and independence the Flemings have always seen the Irish as their European model. I say this without approving of all the methods they used and without any anti-British intentions or ulterior motives. But such names as Pearse, Connolly, Terence MacSwiney and De Valera have been an inspiration for many Flemings. What Charles Parnell said in Cork in 1885 has always been one of our axioms: 'No man has a right to fix the boundary of the march of a nation, no man has a right to say "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further" and we have never attempted to fix the *nec plus ultra* to the progress of Ireland's nationhood and we never shall.' We must give this quotation a European dimension for the future, both without its national relevance to the people and the fatherland being abandoned. Such a synthesis of peoples with a fatherland and of fatherlands respecting their peoples, cooperating and growing into a larger European entity is the only way to a healthy future.

We have a duty to take this course. Down this road of strong and free peoples, nations in a Europe that is becoming fairly unified there must be an end to the defence of every possible form of depravity, such as marriages between homosexuals and transsexual behaviour, to give but two examples, an end to the totalitarianism of a European bureaucracy that makes everyone toe the line and has become an end in itself, a killing leveller, an end to typically left-wing disinformation and manipulation, particularly in the mass media, an end to such fatal diseases as international terrorism and drug trafficking, which are still not being tackled vigorously and decisively enough, an end to the threat of Europe being flooded with non-European foreigners. Europe is not an area of immigration, none of its peoples inhabits an area of immigration. The road we take must lead to a Europe that is strong enough to preserve itself and its peoples and strong enough to help and support other peoples and countries if need be. But it must lead to a Europe of beauty and greatness, with a fresh flowering of the European cultures, of European culture. The occident with a new renaissance. When the youth of Europe call us to account, we must be able to say that we have done everything in our power to make

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the words of the poet Marcel Beerten come true: 'Young people bear the inheritance of poets and patriots, young people who believe in themselves and in fighting, young people who, in harmony with poets and patriots and the dead, have devoted themselves entirely to their goal. May God teach us again to contemplate the values which moved the dead to do their utmost. May God teach us faithfully to love life and to join with the youth, clean as Sunday clothes, in guarding the inheritance of poets and patriots.' For these young people it is worth — despite all the wailing — going our national and right-wing, our European way.

DE ROSSA (CG). — Mr President, on behalf of the Left Unity Group and myself I want to welcome Mr Collins, the President-in-Office, who is here on behalf of the Taoiseach who is taking over the Irish presidency. The President-in-Office's speech indicates that by and large presidencies take over and continue the programme which is already in place and established by the various institutions of the European Community. That is in no way to belittle the efforts which Mr Collins and the other Irish ministers, and indeed, the Irish public service, will make over the next six months to implement that programme. I have no doubt they will do so effectively and efficiently. Nevertheless, I feel that there is an important area where the Irish presidency could make a serious impact. Indeed, the President-in-Office has referred to it to some extent in his contribution. That is the area of the relationship between the institutions of the Commission, the Council, and Parliament. It is becoming a disgrace to see how the Council and Commission treat this Parliament. Time and time again the views and amendments passed by this House are ignored by the Council and the Commission and it is time that more than just lip service was paid to giving this democratically elected forum a real role in the decision-making the European Community.

In relation to the Social Charter and to the quota for television production we have seen how the decisions of this House have been ignored by the Council. In relation to our concerns about the jobs in the motor industry across Europe we have seen how our concerns have been ignored. I welcome Mr Collins' reference to his intention to cooperate with this House. However, it requires more than simply a declaration of intent to cooperate. The Irish presidency would make an important contribution to the development of the European Community if they proposed and thought out serious institutional changes which would give, for instance, this House a real say in not only the establishment of central banking institutions for the European Community but an actual say in the control of those institutions. That would be a real democratic step forward.

If the governments of Eastern Europe in the past month had met in concert and decided to ignore the democratic wishes of the people of Eastern Europe there would quite rightly have been an outcry. The Council and the

Commission consistently ignore the democratic wishes expressed in this House by the elected representatives of the people of Europe. It is important to place these particular points on record.

In relation to external matters, I would urge the Irish presidency to take on board the proposal of Mr Gorbachev who suggested a Helsinki II-type meeting this year. The Irish presidency could play an important role in bringing such a proposal to fruition. It is not good enough for the future of Europe and for the future of the people of the European Community, in particular, to be left in the hands of either the North Atlantic Treaty Organization of the Warsaw Pact. It is not good enough for the fate of the countries of Northern, Western or Eastern Europe to be decided by powerful interests which by and large are more concerned about weapon production, and the maintenance of nuclear weapons in particular, on the European Continent. Such a meeting would give a real say, not only to the large countries and States which exist on the European Continent but would give a say to the independent, the neutral and the non-aligned States of Europe. Ireland, as a neutral country, could have a real role in this type of meeting.

I would also like to touch on a few points the President-in-Office made in relation to Cambodia. It is a problem which will not go away. It is a problem in which this Community has an important role to play in ensuring that the Khmer Rouge do not come to power in Cambodia. I appreciate what the President-in-Office has said in relation to that particular problem and I hope that he will take firm and decisive steps through EPC to try and ensure that does not happen.

In relation to the Vietnamese boat people, it is important that we recognize that by and large these people are economic refugees and not political refugees. However, the answer is not simply to ship them back to Vietnam. The answer is to lift the blockade against Vietnam and to recognize that it is a country which needs aid.

Mr President, thank you for your patience and I wish to welcome Mr Collins to Parliament here today.

BLANEY (ARC). — Mr President, I also join with the other speakers in welcoming on behalf of the Rainbow Group, and particularly on my own behalf, the visit here from Mr Collins, the Foreign Minister, but I would say that that welcome is tinged with quite a bit of regret and disappointment. The speech he made, which was far-reaching and covered practically everything from Latin America to Moscow, could have been delivered by any other occupant of the presidency at this present time.

I have been looking forward to the Irish presidency for the opportunities that it would provide, as it does provide to every nation within the Community as its turn comes up. In this case, as the rapid developments in Eastern Europe and Central Europe have been unfolding in these recent months, it is a historic time for any president to take office and certainly places him on the world stage in the role of leading historic developments

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in the whole of Europe and, indeed, in the whole world. I have talked to the president elect over the last six or eight months. I have written to him pointing out — not about Eastern Europe because neither I nor he or anybody else knew about what was to happen there — the opportunities within the Community to make his mark on the Community, for the Community and by the Community, but also to use his presidency to rectify quite a number of difficulties that are inherent in our membership of the Community.

So it was with almost disbelief and growing disappointment that I listened to Mr Collins deliver his far-reaching address. In that address there was no mention of a very significant matter that differentiates Ireland as a member of this Community from all others, that is our neutrality. There was no mention of it whatever. Neither was there any mention by the Minister or by any of the speakers who followed, most of whom were from Ireland, of a further significant point. In fact it awaited the contribution of a man from Flanders, Mr Dillen, to point out that there was no mention of the continuing struggle by the people of Flanders for their ultimate freedom and independence, inspired, as he mentioned, by the role of many of our dead heroes. There was no mention of the war in Ireland; no mention of the denial of human and civil rights that still continues. What are we doing by brushing these things under the carpet and not bringing them to the forefront, not bringing them into this Parliament while we are dealing with all the other matters, not just in Eastern and Central Europe but throughout the world, and rightly so?

We must have regard to the fact that within this Community there is the festering sore of an occupied Member State, namely Ireland, and no mention was given to it. Common agricultural policy got four lines. Fisheries were scarcely mentioned. Rural development was given a nod but no real bone was to be seen in it. Added to these three aspects of our peripheral location was transport which we are told we are going to liberalize further. We require transport to be equalized in order that the peripheral regions like Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal in particular should be enabled in the future to have a free market and a single market in order to be able to compete. Otherwise they are going to be wiped out.

Nor was there any mention of the common agricultural policy as it affects Ireland, or the renegotiation of the fisheries policy, which was a mad policy in the first instance in 1972 as negotiated by our own team. Unless those things are taken to heart and unless they are given real prominence by the Irish presidency during these six months, who else can be expected to give it prominence in the future?

These things are being neglected. They are being ignored and highlight the very greatest problems that they cause us, namely, unemployment at an unprecedented level and emigration at a level that is frightening. We are talking about rural development

while there is a rural exodus out of my small country, and, I am sure, out of other peripheral regions as well. Lip service is all that we are now giving to rural development in so far as the peripheral rural regions and provinces are concerned.

Energy is given a mention, as it might well be. There is no mention of any detailed plans to speed up the research into renewable energy that was being talked about enthusiastically when I came to this Parliament ten years ago. Since then, it has scarcely made any headway. The nuclear scourge and the disposal of waste is continuing and Sellafield was not mentioned. There was talk about the environment and making the Irish presidency a green one. I am glad of the conversion because it is not obvious back in Ireland. I hope it means more than just the few words that have been written.

The gap between the better-off and the poor has widened and this surely is an indictment of the entire effort of this Parliament over the years. We joined, as others did, with great expectations that there would be, by convergence, a levelling up of the less well-off to the standards of the better-off whereas, though there have been improvements all round, relatively we are dropping further and further behind and the Single Act does not in any way give us hope that that gap will be closed in the future but rather that there is a great danger that it will widen during the years ahead.

I say again that my disbelief listening to the Minister speak today and my disappointment were totally confirmed. I thought I could not believe my ears at what was not in his speech. However, I still welcome you, Mr Collins. Welcome to the Irish presidency. Would you please, in the next five-and-a-half months try to focus on the matters that concern our country, Ireland, within this Community as well as on events in the world at large. You have never before had the opportunities that are now offered to you.

Thank you, Mr President, for your patience.

(Applause)

PANNELLA (NI). — (FR) Mr President, Altiero Spinelli used to say this Parliament would not really demonstrate its strength until it passed a vote of no-confidence in the Commission.

By the same token, not until the Commission has the strength and courage to engage in a full-blooded institutional and political battle with the Council will we have travelled the road mapped out by Mr Delors for the Commission and the Community as a whole.

I was touched by your kind words, Mr President. You were kind about Parliament, about the Community, about everyone. But though I was touched, I was disgusted at the lack of firm proposals by the Irish presidency, which is remaining true to the dreadful tradition of the Council when presented with historic opportunities. What has happened, as we have seen on French and Belgian television, among others — and we have already seen this, we are seeing it today and we

PANNELLA

shall see it tomorrow — is that the French government, under the leadership of the French President, has stolen a march on the Community with regard to aid for Eastern Europe, the establishment of a development bank for the Eastern European countries, etc. The Community is not saying a word and is doing nothing and Paris is setting itself up as the only point of contact for the new Europe, all the way to the Urals.

What I am saying, Mr President, is quite simply that we shall not get anywhere until your powers are taken away from you. Not your powers under the Treaties, but your political powers. And not until Parliament has constituent powers and it is Parliament and not governments that interpret the will of the people of Europe. But get where? Get to the United States of Europe that Eastern Europe is looking to for political and institutional certainty.

Given the new political situation, which Jacques Delors did not foresee and which no one could foresee, it is becoming clearer and clearer that economic and monetary union cannot be achieved without European Union.

European Union will have to be achieved before economic and monetary union, not after it, because it is the vehicle for achieving the goals we have decided to reach with economic and monetary union. I have no option but to say to you that I want only one thing, Mr President: an alliance between the Commission and Parliament to reduce your powers to a minimum and to ensure that the vast bureaucracy you are forcing on Europe to destroy it is swept away by the political will of the people of Europe. East and West they are calling for a United States of Europe, and they are not interested in your technocratic speech-making, which in reality serves to prop up your decaying countries, our decaying countries.

VERDE I ALDEA (S). — (ES) Mr President, the Socialist Group's essential points on the statement presented by the Irish presidency have in fact already been made by my colleague Mr Desmond.

But I am going to try to highlight certain points that also seem relevant to me, from the point of view both of my group and of Parliament in general.

The President-in-Office of the Council has started his term by concentrating — how could he do otherwise? — on the great challenges that now face the Community. He has spoken of the duality contained in greater Community integration and cooperation, particularly with the other countries of Europe, given the changes in Central and Eastern Europe. That is certain, and I think we would agree, Mr President, that precisely because those challenges are so immense and so urgent, each presidency has been and will increasingly be dedicated to one essential aim and purpose. A failed presidency, a presidency which does not accomplish the most urgent and vital tasks would be a step backward in the construction not only of the Community, but also of this new world which is taking shape

before our eyes and which will take shape whatever happens, irrespective of our weaknesses and what we fail to do.

Mr President-in-Office, from the socialist point of view I think that I ought to begin by mentioning, if not a disappointment, certainly a number of questions aroused in me by your speech as regards social issues. You referred to something I consider important, perhaps a new way of operating: the establishment of a Troika dedicated to social problems, not in the style of political cooperation but with a view to the future, a Troika consisting of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the government holding the presidency and the two governments that will hold it subsequently — in this case, as you have said, Italy and Luxemburg. I think this is a good system. I believe that continuity in this field — as in others, but especially in this — is absolutely vital and therefore I must congratulate you on this initiative.

But I have to say that the rest of your speech on this subject, Mr President-in-Office, has left us in the dark as to exactly what the Irish presidency is going to do. Reference has been made to a package of measures which the Commission will present to us this afternoon. My understanding was that the Irish presidency accepts them and that the Troika was established precisely in order to accomplish them in the period 1990-1991. This seems fine to us. There are some urgent matters in this field which are of interest both to the Community in general and to certain countries in particular — yours would seem to be one of them.

But you have not told us anything, Mr President-in-Office, about something very important which we have heard that the Commission is also going to propose, which is that the rule of unanimity in the Council should cease to apply to social affairs. We would like to know, Mr President, whether that is the position of the Irish presidency. We cannot know what will happen in the Dublin Council, but at least we should be able to know now — and this will be important for the debates that are being held during these six months, based on the Commission's programme of work — the exact position of the Irish presidency on this matter.

Mr President-in-Office, you have also referred to the intergovernmental conference. In your speech presenting the programme you have spoken constantly of the need for Parliament to be involved in decision-making. You have mentioned your appreciation for the work of Parliament, but we still do not know exactly how Parliament is going to be associated with the intergovernmental conference, what role it is going to play. An earlier speaker pointed out the need for parliamentary control from both this Parliament and national Parliaments. I think that is true and it may be useful, but there is a series of Community powers wielded by the Commission and the Council over which the European Parliament has insufficient control and that is what we are interested in examining.

VERDE I ALDEA

The intergovernmental conference will begin the establishment of economic and monetary union, and will form one of its elements. But, Mr President-in-Office — and here too some countries including your own have a greater interest than others — pure and simple liberalization of the economic life of the Community, free movement of capital which we will already have virtually from the beginning of July and an improvement in ease of movement of this type of service is not sufficient if it is not accompanied by the fulfilment of the other requirement of the Single Act: economic and social cohesion. On this no announcement of any Irish initiative has been heard, and the presidency, which has spoken to us of the internal market and of the many things that must be done, has made no mention of the notion of European citizenship, not only the fundamental rights of the European citizen — guaranteed both by national legislation and that of the Community — but also the real significance of European citizenship. I refer to problems that have been dragging on for a very long time: participation in local elections, freedom of movement for workers, freedom to set up service firms, and the recognition of qualifications. A constant refrain of all presidencies for some considerable time and one which we would finally like to see fulfilled, Mr President-in-Office.

I am going to dwell for just a moment on one of the headings to which you have dedicated considerable attention: foreign relations. Various areas that you mentioned, especially Central and Eastern Europe, have been covered by my colleagues and I shall not discuss them. Here the Community may suffer, as in other areas of international life, from competition which I will not call unfair, but certainly excessive and a little too free, from a given member country. So it is appropriate, in such a case too, to strengthen the cohesion of the Community in its foreign relations.

But you have also spoken of the problems of the Mediterranean region and the need to deal with them; of relations with the EFTA countries; you covered regional problems and passed very rapidly over the problems of Central America. I think there was good reason for you to tarry a little longer. You mentioned that the San Jose VI conference is going to be held in Dublin. But important events are about to occur in Central America: for example, during the Irish Presidency there will be elections in Nicaragua. What is the Community's position on supporting these elections? If these elections are, as we hope, honest elections, what is going to happen when we know the results? Because this is a serious problem and considerable doubt hovers over it, Mr President-in-Office, and arose at the end of the year with the United States intervention in Panama.

We regard political cooperation not just as reaching agreements between member countries of the Community, but chiefly as reaching agreement to defend the fundamental principles of international law, and one of

these principles is non-intervention, non-interference, let alone armed, in the affairs of another country.

Political cooperation has not succeeded in protecting this principle. What is the situation going to be in the future? I thought the President-in-Office was very orotund when he defended the independence of Cambodia. He did not sound as lofty when it came to defending the independence of the Central American countries.

Finally, Mr President, I want to emphasize that, as I said at the beginning, the presidency is important. Sometimes it is judged by whether the countries which hold the presidency are big or little. That is not important. If the presidency in office produces achievements and progress in Social Europe, if it works to establish a fair internal market and economic and social cohesion, and if an effort is made to achieve a Community presence in foreign relations and the defence of the principles of international law, whether the country holding the presidency is big or small, it will have worked for the good of the Community and for the good of the citizens of the world. And if you could do this, Mr President-in-Office, we would be most grateful.

LUCAS PIRES (PPE). — *(PT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to start by welcoming the new presidency and wishing it well. The task facing the leadership of one of the Community's governing bodies is now more challenging than ever, and it now has a much more political dimension than before. The future has suddenly come a lot nearer as the last walls have come down, and we cannot have minor presidencies when the challenges we face are of historic significance. The next six months could be more important in the history of Europe than many of the last few decades. Against this backdrop a new presidency of the European Council has to be realistic, but it cannot confine itself just to sticking to timetables. It must move faster and look farther ahead, starting to prepare for Europe after 1992. Until now 1992 might have looked like the final stage of the journey, but now it is only the first and shortest. Perhaps it is even the smallest of the aspirations and hopes now coming out of our continent, both East and West.

So we must complete the single market as a matter of urgency. On the one hand, support for Eastern Europe can only be founded on economic growth and a new era of peace, democracy and development. On the other, the Community's internal cohesion must be strengthened before any new countries become members. We hope that in this regard the Irish presidency will demonstrate that it is the more outlying or less developed countries that have the most to gain and the least to lose from the liberalization of transport, energy and telecommunications, or the establishment of a more unified, stronger and more mutually supportive economic, monetary and social area.

We need an economically and socially integrated Europe, that is to say a true Community, more than ever

LUCAS PIRES

before. The monetary dimension, for example, is crucial, not only for the management of capital liberalization but also to increase common resources and stand up to mounting pressures from both outside and within the Community. Union will require inflation to come down and structural reform in some of our countries, but the political will and the common commitment are now a match for the economic and technical problems. The Community must continue to be the driving force and the launching pad for the new Europe that is developing. Otherwise the aspirations that are emerging will be set back or frustrated.

We must start now to prepare for life after 1992. 1992 is within our grasp. In some senses we are already there! German reunification, for example, will be all the more a reunification of the European Community if it takes place within a plan for genuine political union. Growing European unity also means the powers of Parliament must be increased, not only to give it the legitimacy it needs, but also because Parliament is in a better position to express the desire for democracy that now runs throughout the whole of Europe.

The Community's preparations for life after 1992 must also include the budget. The Community needs a forward-looking budget if, starting next year, it is to meet the new goals of the Single Act, on social policy or the environment. As the disappointing history of the Social Charter to some extent demonstrates, it is unrealistic to hope for a genuine policy for social rights in Europe unless the Community has the financial independence to implement it directly. We must also end the distinction between compulsory and non-compulsory spending, which is preventing the infrastructure and agriculture of the poorest countries from benefiting from the savings being made in the EAGGF Guarantee Section. Above all, every member of the Community must in future pay money into the Community budget and receive money from it in proportion to their gross domestic product. This would be a much better and much fairer basis for financial relations within the Community and between the various countries.

Mr President, the long wait is almost over. What we need now is courage and imagination. On top of this, I wish you good luck.

MAHER (LDR). — Mr President and Mr President-in-Office of the Council, we are all in our turn proud of the fact that our country, our Government and our Ministers get the opportunity to provide leadership for the Community over a period of six months. That leadership, I think, should be different from country to country, depending on the particular qualities of the people and the aims and aspirations of that particular country. Of course I am not saying that this should necessarily be to the exclusion of the requirements and aspirations of the peoples in all the other countries, but nevertheless, Mr President, I want to refer to a few important points.

You spoke today, and rightly so, about the People's Europe. This is something very close to my heart. If we are talking about a People's Europe, it means that all of the people of the Community must benefit from the advancement of Community policies and must have a role to play. I think that it is rather ironic that, at a time when these wonderful events are taking place in Eastern Europe, and when perhaps the most obnoxious part of the Communist system is being rapidly demolished, at least in the Russian satellite countries — that of overcentralization — in many of our countries in the European Community we have the same centralization. Of course, it is not operated in the same brutal way as in Communist countries, but nevertheless we have it, and our country is one of the worst. This problem of centralization is not necessarily related to the geographical area or the size of a country; people can feel isolated from the seats of power even in a small country, and they do in Ireland. We have consistently, down through the decades, removed more and more of the little power that local authorities had to determine the destiny of the people in that particular region and, even though successive political parties in my country have paid lip-service to this concept of giving more power to the people at local level, once they get to government they do nothing about it.

I would ask you, Mr President, if you could give a particularly Irish flavour to this aspect of leadership by indicating what we are prepared to do, for instance in our country, about giving power back to the people in the regions. We had a wonderful opportunity in connection with the use of the European Community's structural Funds to create real regions giving people a real say in their own destiny at local level under their national governments, but we failed to do so. Indeed, DG XVI of the Commission has expressed grave reservations about the Irish Government's approach to this particular problem.

It is also an opportunity, Mr President, for you to speak out on behalf of the people at the periphery of the Community. It is inevitable, in my view, that the development of the single market will mean that, whatever we do, there will be a pull towards the centre. What will happen is that people in the peripheral regions will tend to become poorer and more disadvantaged as compared with the people in the centre. I do not think that the structural Funds are adequate to compensate for that. That is a point which needs to be underlined.

Mr President, you mentioned in passing the question of agriculture. Just in passing! I was absolutely taken aback. Agriculture is extremely important to our country, and yet here we have a proposal from the Commission this year to actually decrease prices for farm products at a time when the farming community is under threat. They are a threatened species in fact. We are going to see the overall population drop from twelve-and-a-half million to seven-and-a-half million in the next decade. I was also disappointed, together with other speakers, Mr President, that you made no

MAHER

mention of a problem within our own country, that of Northern Ireland. We are great people for discussing problems, whether in Cambodia, Nicaragua, Afghanistan or whatever. The further away they are, the more we are likely to debate them and propose solutions, but we are not prepared to grasp the nettle within our own Community. At least this Parliament has raised this problem, but you have said nothing about it. Why, Mr President?

(Applause from the right)

PRAG (ED). — Mr President, I am going to start off with a few words on transport, though it is hardly my usual field. The more one sees the danger of Western Europe's airways and motorways becoming one gigantic traffic jam, particularly with Members of the European Parliament held up either on the motorways or at airports, the more one realizes that there is an immense task ahead of us, there and in the fields mentioned by the President-in-Office, such as the road infrastructure programme and work on road safety.

I would particularly commend some attention by the Member States' governments to the enforcement of speed limits. My own country is the only country where buses can legally travel at the same speed as motorcars legally and illegally even exceed that speed limit by about 15 kilometres per hour.

The Community can and must also play a major part in determining the public role in the development of the railways, the whole question of who pays for environmental costs, as fast rail services develop, the question of the subsidy level. The Community should also be playing a major part in the reorganization of air traffic.

I was very impressed by the goodwill shown by the President-in-Office towards this Parliament. It is right and proper that he should be ready to press the need for a strong presence of this Parliament at the intergovernmental conference. I know the difficulties he faces as President-in-Office and it was reassuring to hear that he was prepared to face up to those difficulties. I hope that he will bear in mind the principle that everything that is done in the Community should have, as one of its underlying aims, the progress of this Parliament towards co-decision. That is a fundamental requirement in a Community of twelve democratic States. It is a fundamental requirement that the Community itself should be democratic.

In the year to come we have a unique opportunity in this Community. We have a unique opportunity above all of creating or of helping to create in Central and Eastern Europe a community of nations which is democratic and stable. Only in one country has there been a major casualty list, and that was Romania. Thanks largely, but not only, to President Gorbachev, the revolution so far in the other countries has been peaceful.

But the dangers continue: the dangers of an army role which need not necessarily be democratic in Romania, and the dangers of nationalistic excesses everywhere, even in the Soviet Union where an organization like

Pamyat is openly and manifestly racist, anti-semitic and violently nationalist. I believe that all our efforts at assistance and all our trade and cooperation agreements should bear in mind the need for stability and we should always avoid the temptation to stir up or even condone the excesses and the violence of rampant nationalism. Our influence should be in the direction of stability and moderation and the rule of law and respect for human rights.

At the core of all this must be the continued development and strengthening of the European Community, which has long been a model for those who suffered under dictatorship, oppression and the abuse of human rights. It was so in Greece, Spain and Portugal. Now, in a continent of turbulent change the Community is again a model and an anchor for Central and Eastern Europe. The development and strengthening of this Community must continue to be the keystone of all our policies.

(Applause)

3. Welcome

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to extend a cordial welcome to a delegation from the Austrian Parliament led by Mr Peter Jankowitsch which has just taken its place in the official gallery. This visit is a source of particular satisfaction to the House and is the fifth meeting with the corresponding delegation responsible for relations with Austria, which is chaired by Mr Mihr.

It is my sincere wish that the dialogue which we have always maintained will continue to strengthen the understanding and the relations between the people of the Community and of Austria who have always been linked by history, culture and economic relations. For Parliament, Austria's request for accession to the European Community is a matter of the highest importance and I hope that you will have the opportunity of gaining a better understanding of the role and functions of the European Parliament in the process of European integration.

Finally, I wish the Austrian delegation every success for this fifth meeting and a pleasant stay in Strasbourg.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR CRAVINHO

Vice-President

4. Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency (continuation)

CARVALHAS (CG). — *(PT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to start by welcoming the new presidency, which has said that its priorities are the

CARVALHAS

single market, economic and monetary union, the environment and third countries. It is to be regretted that these priorities do not include explicitly any action on the Social Charter or any new initiatives on economic and social cohesion. Details and timetables for these priorities relate primarily to the single market and economic and monetary union.

The social dimension cannot continue to take second place and to be something to which mere lip service is paid. A token gesture compared with the detailed measures to deregulate capital and help the multinationals. I should like to hear what the Irish presidency has got to say about unemployment, lack of job security and the position of women in society. I should also like to know what the presidency thinks about possible measures to foster economic and social cohesion, for example enhancing structural measures after 1992.

On the environment, it is a good thing to recognize that the threats now facing it are a truly common enemy: global warming, the destruction of marine life and tropical rainforests, desertification, oil spills and acid rain. But I have to agree that the action that has been taken is a long way from being enough. It would be interesting if the Irish presidency could say in more detail what practical action it intends to take on the environment. This is another area where Parliament cannot continue to be presented with *faits accomplis*.

With regard to relations with third countries, the Community must face up to its responsibilities towards the Third World, which is still labouring under the yoke of debt and neo-colonialism.

Mr President, the clearing of the skies in Eastern Europe has also created new opportunities for genuine cooperation and for a new type of Europe. A Europe that respects sovereignty, economic systems and diversity but has common interests in development, security and peace. We need new forms of cooperation, and this is a new challenge to the Community. I hope the Irish presidency will make a positive input to the second Helsinki Conference. Interference, subtle or otherwise, and the new free market dogma will not build a new future or new hope for Europe and the world. I listened with interest to the presidency's positive remarks concerning disarmament, the safeguarding of human rights, peace and cooperation. I wish the presidency success in achieving these ends.

GANGOITI LLAGUNO (NI). — (ES) Mr President, I think it can be deduced from the President-in-Office's speech first that there is a willingness, but only a willingness, to proceed along the path of European Union. In my opinion one issue is highly important, indeed fundamental: the intergovernmental conference. A decision has got to be taken, a firm decision to associate Parliament, with full guarantees, in the development of this intergovernmental conference. In the final analysis what we are dealing with here is of vital significance. Some of us believe it is the true touchstone of the credibility of the process of European

unification, the process towards this federal Europe which is the ultimate objective of a great many of the Members of the European Parliament sitting on these benches.

So I want to ask the Irish presidency to take the appropriate measures so that Parliament is really associated, and in a permanent and definitive way, with this process. Because otherwise we will once again be witness to a process which is increasingly undermining the faith of European citizens in Project Europe. We will be witness to the fact that those who represent the popular will in the Europe of the Twelve, clearly, resonantly and forcefully, have no share in decisions and plans which are going to affect all the citizens of Europe.

Secondly, I want to highlight the fact that in reality this Economic Community, this political project, the Europe of the Twelve, has long ignored the cultural content. If we really want to create this united Europe, if we really want to create a political project, it is necessary, once and for all, for us to advance towards creating a cultural Community as well, so that this Europe of the Twelve will not be only and exclusively a technocratic Europe, an economic Europe, but will have the basis and the backing which makes any project credible, that of the world of culture.

PAPOUTSIS (S). — (GR) Mr President, after the revolutionary changes that have occurred over recent months in the countries of Eastern Europe we are, truly, at a historic crossroads.

For those countries the year 1990 will be decisive, the year in which they consolidate their reforms and complete the transition to democracy. But it will also be a decisive year for the European Community, as the process of integration in Europe, and its durability, come under scrutiny against the background of the new scenarios opening up across our continent. The European Community faces a twofold challenge in the months ahead. In the first place it must seize the opportunity offered by the historic developments in Eastern Europe, and secondly, it must strengthen its own efforts towards the integration demanded by the Single Act.

The Irish presidency has presented a genuinely ambitious programme that fully matches up to the crucial nature of the times. It hardly needs saying that one major priority for the Community must be the continuation of the policy of providing political and economic support for the countries of Eastern Europe which have already embarked on democratization. The Irish Presidency must act expeditiously on this and produce real results. It is vital — and the position of the Socialist Group is quite unambiguous — that an aid and cooperation framework-programme covering the Eastern European countries be drawn up very quickly. Apart from providing direct aid, the Community's policy must be directed also at nurturing the conditions in which development in those countries can thrive and

PAPOUTSIS

at promoting multi-level and long-term cooperation between them and the European Community. I want to stress that these policies must always support the self-determination of the peoples of Eastern Europe and must not exploit the present situation to ensnare them into mortgaging their future prospects to new forms of dependence.

Mr President, at a time when the main demand by all of the peoples of Europe is for greater democracy at all levels — political, institutional, economic and social — we need to ask how appropriately the Council, the Presidency and the governments are addressing themselves to the matter. To what degree are they tailoring their policies to this end? This reminder has become monotonous, but we are, after all, only two years away from 1992 and the major issues in the Community are still unresolved. On the social level how much has been done towards creating the social Europe? On the institutional level, how much has been done to establish effective democratic control in the Community? On the economic level, how far have we gone towards making convergence of the various levels of development across the Community a real possibility? The commitment by the Irish presidency to speed up the integration of the internal market is, certainly, important. For the Socialist Group, however, and for the vast majority in this House, further development of the internal market is unacceptable unless it is accompanied by equal progress towards the social Europe. The Social Charter comes nowhere near enough by itself. We need the action programme, now, with a strict and binding timetable. But, of course, there is more to the realization of the social dimension than is contained in the Charter. The Council must approve the remaining organization of work directives and press ahead with all those items which are necessary for the realization of the social Europe — the social dialogue, consultation, worker participation — immediately.

The Irish presidency will be responsible during these six months for the preparations for the intergovernmental conference which will map out the future shape of the European Community. As regards progress towards monetary union, this objective must be clarified beyond the generalities. To us, as socialists, it is manifestly obvious that there is no value in monetary union in itself. It must take account of economic development, work in favour of job creation and economic and social cohesion and give an impetus to the policy of closing the regional disparities. However, the intergovernmental conference must not confine itself to the monetary issue. It must also establish the instruments for a real Community foreign policy. It must take effective steps on social and environmental policy and set the parameters for genuine democratic control. Aside from the necessity of its participating in the conference itself, it is also very important that the European Parliament be given a role in all of the preparations.

To conclude, Mr President, I do not think it is an exaggeration to maintain that the decisions taken and the policies pursued in the coming months will be

decisive for the future of the Community. The response of the European Community to the twofold challenge of the times will determine how Europe moves ahead into the future, and I sincerely hope that the Irish presidency can rise to this challenge.

DE DONNEA (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, the Irish presidency's programme as set out a few minutes ago deserves very broad support.

The President-in-Office gave a very detailed, indeed scrupulous account of all the work to be done in the next six months if we are to move forward in completing the single market, preparing for the intergovernmental conference on economic and monetary union, implementing the Social Charter and consolidating our external relations.

But I would like to direct one criticism at the President and to make a suggestion. First the criticism. Freedom of movement was hardly touched upon in the statement we heard just now. Yet this is a crucial component of the 1993 single market and most of the work has yet to be done to abolish checks on travellers at borders within the Community. As far as the public is concerned these checks are one of the most tangible signs, one of the most visible symbols of the fact that Europe does not yet exist. Is it right that the presidency's programme should devote only two lines to this vital issue for the people of Europe — six times less than to Kampuchea or South Africa? Obviously I do not want to play down the importance of the problems in these countries, but I think the people of Europe believe freedom of movement for people in Europe deserves at least as much space in the presidency's programme.

Mr President, is it the failure of the Schengen agreement that makes you so timid and tight-lipped on this issue? If we are to complete the single market on time, I believe a substantial step forward on freedom of movement, over and above the signing of an agreement on the right of asylum, which you quite rightly mentioned, should be a central goal of your presidency. Could you explain your policy on this matter in greater detail?

This brings me to my suggestion. On European political cooperation, you say your priority is the establishment of a new climate of security on our continent, and you are absolutely right. But it is not enough to rely on the CSCE processes and disarmament talks. The Community as an entity must also develop new approaches and a new security and defence policy that takes account of the upheaval in Eastern Europe, the disarmament agreements that are on the way, the geostrategic changes taking place outside Europe and developments in relations between the United States and Europe. I would say in passing that I was very pleased to hear your desire to strengthen relations between the Community and the United States — a response to the call by Secretary of State Baker — which are still the cornerstone of our security and of that of the United States.

DE DONNEA

Having said this, a Community security policy that has the support of the Twelve and by implication ensures the essential integration of their defence capability, will not be established overnight. But this is a central feature of the political union of the members of the Community that most of us want to see. It would therefore be constructive and innovative if the Irish presidency were to see to it that the Twelve looked thoroughly at the work that needs to be done, the obstacles overcome and the specific measures taken if we are to move towards integrating the Member States' security policies and resources.

Having said this, I wish you every success in your role as President of the Community, which comes at a particularly critical and important moment in the history of the Community and of the continent, which could see considerably more upheaval in the East in the coming months.

(Applause)

5. *Welcome*

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in welcoming a delegation from the Israeli Knesset led by Mr Uzi Landau which has just taken its seat in the official gallery. The European Parliament particularly welcomes this visit which is the fifteenth meeting here with our delegation for relations with Israel, chaired by Mr Imbeni.

I hope that the dialogue which we have always had will continue to strengthen understanding and relations between the peoples of the European Community and of Israel.

I wish the Israeli delegation every success for this fifteenth meeting and a pleasant stay in Strasbourg.

(Applause)

6. *Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency (continuation)*

LO GIUDICE (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, we are all aware of the fact that the changes that are taking place in Europe and elsewhere in the world mean that the European Community has an essential function that must be exercised in various fields — political, economic, financial and social. But in contrast to these new processes we see the slowness and difficulty with which, on the other hand, construction of European political union is proceeding. In a Community that is equipped with adequate instruments for providing answers to the problems of our times, the Irish Presidency — to which I address a greeting and my hopes for its success — must come to grips with these problems, so that the ambitious projects that we are planning at both the international and the internal levels can be translated into concrete action and decisions.

At the international level we must define our policy towards the Central and Eastern European countries, so as to support the process of their democratization and development; we must strengthen cooperation with the developing countries, especially the Mediterranean, Latin American and Asian countries, and we must define our political and trading relations with the USA and Japan.

At the internal level we are faced with problems deriving moreover from the Single Act: economic and monetary union, economic and social cohesion and questions to do with the environment, technological development and research. Well, faced with these problems, we have to wonder whether we have the necessary political, institutional and financial instruments to enable the Community to take appropriate decisions commensurate with their range and urgency. We lack a common foreign policy that would enable the Community to speak with one voice in international affairs, despite the fact that Article 30 of the Single Act stresses the need for European cooperation on the subject of foreign policy, for a common policy, which is today more essential than ever in the face of the changes that are taking place, and which would call for a stronger, more united voice for Europe.

At the institutional level we are still faced with the inadequacies to which the Single Act and the recent Strasbourg Summit have provided the answer that was to be expected, and that the situation seemingly makes essential. The democratic deficit remains, and the role of Parliament makes no significant progress — indeed, it is very often deprived of its own prerogatives. Institutional reform, which presupposes the determination of Member States to transfer national powers and responsibilities, seems far away. We hope that the next intergovernmental conference will achieve some progress with the reform of our institutions.

At the financial level the total inadequacy of the present instruments and regulations that are in force cannot fail to be apparent. The Community is not in a position to draw up a budget policy commensurate with the political commitments and problems that face it both internally and internationally. We must therefore ask ourselves, what resources and procedures are necessary in order to tackle problems such as the question of aid to the Eastern European countries, and how we can tackle questions raised by the Single European Act in regard to economic and social re-equilibrium, research, technological development and new policies? Well, in this perspective we call urgently for a change in budgetary philosophy so that, from being from some points of view purely an accounting instrument the budget is converted into a political instrument. On this subject, unfortunately, we have not heard one word in the statement by the President-in-Office.

We must introduce medium-term economic planning with financial and budgetary instruments that are flexible — capable, in other words, of tackling new emerging problems. That makes it essential to put in

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hand the reform of the Community's own resources, so as to give the Community sufficient resources to finance the policies that it proposes to implement; it makes it necessary to alter the interinstitutional agreement, and to revise the financial perspective. In 1990 we shall have to tackle other problems in relation to the Eastern European countries; we shall have — that is — to extend aid to other countries that ask for it and need it for their democratic civil development. We must, therefore, draw up a medium-term plan that will reconsider both objectives and resources, so avoiding entering appropriations the purpose and destination of which are not clear, with a view to the creation of a modern market economy in the countries concerned.

The same problems, Mr President, have to be faced within the Community, with reference for example to the aim of economic and social cohesion, in regard to which we have to get away from action of an assistential character that is wasteful, and adopt instead policies that go to the strategic heart of the development problems of the most disadvantaged regions of the Community. There is therefore an urgent need for a budgetary economic policy that is based on the logic of a plan and programming — not mere financial aid, which is, moreover, generally inadequate. These problems face us now, since we have to tackle the 1991 budget, which can only embrace the problems that we have indicated if we put in hand the procedure for revising the financial perspective in view of the internal and international commitments. We hope that for the examination of the 1991 budget we shall meet with greater willingness on the part of the Irish presidency to accept the proposals that Parliament will make, in a context of united commitment as between the Community's institutions, so that the budget and the Community's aid and financial commitment can achieve the objectives that we have set ourselves.

Mr President, we are faced with commitments and prospects that are new and, from certain standpoints exciting, because the times in which we are living are exciting; but the Community must develop a new, clear political will to reaffirm the Community's role and make it progress in the direction of political union.

(Several members of the Green Group held up Israeli and Palestinian flags)

PRESIDENT. — I would ask those Members who are demonstrating to desist. They have expressed their views. Until now we have had no disturbance, and I would therefore ask Members out of deference to Parliament to cease their demonstration.

ALAVANOS (CG). — *(GR)* Mr President, allow me to say first of all that I applaud the initiative of the Green Group as constructive. We should not be perturbed by it. It was a statement emphasizing that two peoples can co-exist side by side without strife and war, and I believe that we should give our support to the notion of a statement of friendship between peoples and urge the Irish presidency to insist on initiatives of that sort in the

context of efforts by the European Community to find a solution to the problem in the Middle East.

I want to mention just three points in the little time I have. Firstly, I think it is helpful and important symbolically that the presidency of the Community has now been assumed by the only country which is not a member of a military alliance. It is also appropriate to the times. By working from the basis of this distinguishing characteristic Ireland can help the European Community adjust to the new conditions of the nineties, which differ greatly from those of the eighties, and demand the pursuit of a genuinely pan-European policy, cooperation between countries on the basis of equality and a complete and final break with the cold war which must, of course, extend to the military alliances. We also think that Ireland, as a small country and one of the weakest in the Community, like my own country, Greece, is ideally suited to intervene more actively in the negotiations with the socialist countries to ensure that the agreements reached are not slanted exclusively towards the interests of the big countries and the big undertakings but also allow the smaller countries of the Community to play a positive and worthwhile role in the new processes. As my second point I want to say that concrete measures must be implemented in the social sector. My third and last point is that the Irish presidency must work hard within the Council to secure agricultural prices and associated measures far different from those proposed by the Commission. I do not think we can accept price falls in the order of 7% or 5%, such as those being proposed for citrus fruits and cotton. There must also be an increase in the production quotas for the deficit Mediterranean products and a refund of the co-responsibility levy for small farmers and for products like cotton.

MELANDRI (V). — *(IT)* On a point of order, Mr President. We have made this small demonstration to indicate that, if it is right that we should extend a welcome to a delegation that is here from the Israeli Parliament, it is equally right to remember that the Israeli Parliament represents a people who are living in a situation of war against another people; to remember the need for everything possible to be done by our Parliament to enable these two peoples to live in peace; and to remember also that, at the end of 1989, there was a peace demonstration in Jerusalem that was broken up by the Israeli forces and that, in these circumstances, a colleague from the European Parliament — Mrs Dacia Valent — was beaten so severely that she had to be taken to hospital, and another woman, also an Italian citizen, lost an eye.

I would simply ask our Assembly to remember, always, that problems can only be resolved by living together in peace — not by force of arms.

CAPUCHO (LDR). — *(PT)* Mr President, I listened to the President-in-Office's statement with the greatest interest, and from my side of the House, from the Liberal, Democratic and Reformist Group, there have

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already been speeches making detailed comments on the Irish presidency's programme for the first six-month period in a decade we all expect to be crucial for the future of the Community and of European Union. In view of the shortage of time I shall therefore confine myself to a few general observations and a number of requests for clarification on matters of particular interest to me.

I think the four main objectives for the Irish presidency are right and clearly defined, although I agree they contain nothing particularly new: first of all rapid and decisive progress towards the single market and economic and monetary union, not forgetting the crucial objective of the social dimension. Lastly, the development of our relations at the political and every other level with our European neighbours and the international community as a whole, with a stepping up of European political cooperation.

Where foreign policy is concerned, it is becoming increasingly necessary for Europe to speak more with one voice and less with twelve voices which, it must be said, are not always in tune. I also note the presidency's commitment to work more closely with Parliament, in recognition of our institutional responsibilities and our democratic legitimacy. I hope this was not said just out of politeness but out of a genuine desire to correct certain unacceptable facets of our relationship and a commitment to contribute to overcoming as matter of urgency the lack of democracy that characterizes us. Without a true parliament, a strong parliament, we shall not be able to build the Europe of the future on solid foundations.

I should also like to point out one omission, Mr President, at least in what you actually said, although I am sure this point will be covered in what you actually plan to do. I am referring to the lack of any clear mention of economic and social cohesion as a central principle in the completion of the single market and the embodiment of the principle of solidarity we must build into the shared destiny we are creating. As has been said, the single market will fail if it does not help substantially and quickly to narrow the yawning gap that still separates the less favoured and outlying regions of the Twelve from the areas with the greatest wealth and level of development. But as I said, I am sure this was just an oversight, and indeed it would be odd for the Irish presidency not to attach any great importance to economic and social cohesion.

I should like to finish by asking for clarification on two specific subjects. Firstly, how does the Irish presidency intend to progress the major trans-European networks agreed at the Strasbourg European Council, given that they highlight the need for particular attention for the outlying areas with a view to economic and social cohesion? And secondly what new thoughts does the Irish presidency have on controls at external borders, since this will be a crucial step towards ensuring freedom of movement and inevitably requires solidarity amongst the Twelve?

All in all I think we can welcome the programme that has been outlined to us, which, although it is not particularly ambitious, is founded on solid political realism. I warmly wish the Irish presidency every success, which is the same thing as hoping for the success of the construction of the European Community of the future. The Irish presidency can count not only on our critical and active support, but also on our solidarity — Community solidarity but also Atlantic solidarity.

VON WOGAU (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we must decide today where the Commission, the Council and Parliament should set priorities in the next six months and the next twelve months. In my opinion, we parliamentarians should look for our priorities where the citizens of the Community and the citizens of all European countries see that Europe exists and that Europe and the Community are capable of coping with the challenges they now face from Central and Eastern Europe.

In this the emphasis must, to my mind, be quite clearly placed on two things. One is the economic and monetary union, an internal task for us to perform. We have decided that there is to be an intergovernmental conference at the end of this year to consider this question, but we must use this year to take certain decisions on the direction to be followed.

The Delors Commission's report is extremely interesting, and it contains very many basic truths and things that we must watch out for in the future of the European currency. But let me say this: when doubts arose, the dominant people in this group of experts were the governors of the central banks. Every governor of a central bank brings a child — his own currency — to these meetings. It is also clear from the report that twelve men arrived with their children.

But the report sometimes gives me the impression that the ecu, the European currency, is an orphan. If we want the European economic and monetary union to be regarded as a reality by the public, we must avoid creating a monetary system which, while having fixed exchange rates, still consists of twelve different currencies. At the end of this road there must be a common, uniform European currency.

The second fact seen by the public is the frontiers, or the question of the frontiers, the opening of the frontiers. I believe the Community is developing a concept for solving the frontier problems. There used to be a frontier near here, over which many bloody wars were fought in the past. Nobody talks about this frontier these days because it is becoming increasingly open, because it can be crossed, because people can live and work on either side as they wish.

We have shown how problems are solved by opening frontiers. But we still have to take the final step of opening the frontiers once and for all, and we Members of the European Parliament were therefore alarmed

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when the Schengen Agreement could not be signed at the end of last year.

In my opinion, the Netherlands, which will have the presidency under the Schengen arrangement for the next six months, has a special responsibility, because I am convinced the Schengen Agreement is a pilot project that is also of major importance for the European Community. It will enable us to show even before 1992 that problems arising in connection with open frontiers can be solved. So this must be a second area on which we focus our attention.

Unless I am mistaken, the main reason for the Schengen Agreement not being signed was that agreement could not be reached on whether visas should be compulsory for GDR citizens. I would propose two stages for this. Firstly, an unbureaucratic solution when the frontier is crossed. In Berlin at the moment a citizen of France or one of the Benelux countries can obtain an entry visa for the GDR at the border without any bureaucratic formalities.

This is not yet the case in the other direction. The procedures are far more difficult. So the first step should be an unbureaucratic procedure when citizens of the GDR cross the French and Benelux frontiers.

After 6 May, after the elections in the GDR, I believe it should be possible for these countries to agree to do away with visas altogether. I believe that it is quite possible to solve this problem and that we must make every effort to ensure the Schengen Agreement is signed in the first six months of 1990, so that it can be ratified by mid-1991 at the latest. Schengen must be a reality before 1992 because, if this pilot project fails, we will have serious difficulties in 1992, when the twelve of us have to solve this problem.

In my opinion, Parliament must now take the initiative. We have decided to convene this preliminary conference, which should start this or next month making preparations for the intergovernmental conference in December and will comprise twelve Members of this Parliament, twelve representatives of the Member States and twelve appointed by the Commission.

But we should also take the initiative by convening a meeting of Europe's parliaments in Strasbourg. This would not be a decision-making body, but it would have broad democratic legitimacy. It would represent the democratic forces of the whole of Europe and would be fairly free, not tied down to discussing certain subjects.

This would give us a chance to discuss with our counterparts in the Member States of the European Community our proposals on the future not only of the European Community but of Europe as a whole.

CANO PINTO (S). — (ES) Mr President, let my first words be to congratulate the Irish presidency and to wish it every success. I am sure that these six months of Irish leadership of the Community will bring to the current climate of Community confusion the necessary dose of political enlightenment, because, Mr President

of the Council, not in vain are you the compatriot of the great seer of this century, James Joyce.

Other Members, Mr President, have already spoken of particular aspects of the presidency's programme. In these few minutes I shall restrict myself to speaking on an issue which I regard as paramount at this time; paramount first, because it is important in itself and paramount secondly, because it has been placed under an interdict: I refer to political cooperation. Political cooperation was recently smashed to pieces like a china vase. Political cooperation, two beautiful words which are, to a great extent, the concrete expression of a possible European Union, was destroyed on 29 December. Of course I know that the current President was not the President-in-Office of the Council on that day. But I also know that the President was a member of the Troika.

The Irish presidency will have to make an enormous effort in this area because on 29 December there was a vote in the UN General Assembly on Resolution 44/240 condemning the invasion of Panama. Seventy-five countries voted in favour of the UN Resolution condemning the United States intervention in Panama, twenty voted against and forty abstained. Of the twenty who voted against the UN Resolution, nine were members of the EEC; one Community country, Spain, voted in the politically honourable way, and two, Ireland and Greece, abstained, maintaining — as I see it — their political dignity. This means that in the face of an event of such significance, in the face of the most serious foreign aggression since the Vietnam War, in the face of the most obvious usurpation of the sovereignty of the Panamanian people, doubtless by the hawks who regard Latin America as their private hunting ground, in the face of the most flagrant violation of international law and in the face of the programmed massacre, actually accompanied by rock music, of thousands of Panamanian citizens, the EEC fails to present a common and united front, its member countries are not in agreement but vote against each other as if they were enemies.

In my view this is a shameful situation. I think the UN's vote on this resolution was, in the end, a crippled decision. And if, faced with an issue as important, as paramount as this, the EEC is not in agreement and its members vote against each other, then no political cooperation exists, political cooperation is in the end — if I may mix a metaphor — mere windowdressing to put some icing on the cake. No more than that.

What does political cooperation consist of, Mr President of the Council? Does it merely amount to agreeing what colour ties Ministers should wear at ministerial meetings? It is a very serious matter, Mr President-in-Office of the Council. Because if that is the case, the failure of the Member States of the Community to reach a common position means, to put it bluntly, one of three things: first, they were not in agreement because this was not an invasion but perhaps a humanitarian intervention, if you will permit me the

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irony; or, secondly, that the nine countries of the EEC bow down before the Monroe doctrine on American intervention and the Brezhnev doctrine on limited sovereignty; or thirdly, the situation means that in the end the EEC grovelled and got down on its knees to the splendour of the new dominion, which was already old actually.

This third interpretation is the saddest, Mr President-in-Office of the Council, because I think it is the truth. Because now that we are pronouncing our elegies for the October Revolution, the feebleness of the EEC amounts to an inexplicable and blind belief. It is entertaining to think that because of the EEC's self-contradictory position we could all be mere subjects already.

That is why I think that the Irish presidency will have to dedicate a great deal more effort to political cooperation. If the Community remains just an economic club and no more, we will never get anywhere.

Mr President of the Council, I know this is a difficult issue for the Irish presidency, but I am well aware of your courage. Believe me, I wish you every success in this area.

BANOTTI (PPE). — Mr President, I notice this morning that it is quite fashionable — I am very happy to say — to quote from some of our wonderful Irish writers. However, I would like to start with a quotation from a man who is considered perhaps the greatest writer of all, Mr William Shakespeare, who, when he said: 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune', very aptly described this particular moment in history in Europe. That makes it a particular pleasure also for me to welcome the presidency of Ireland. This, indeed, is very much a historic time. This, indeed, is the time, and while recognizing the sterling work that has gone in at governmental level in Ireland preparing for our presidency, I would like to take this opportunity also to pay tribute to the backroom boys. If I single out just two, Mr President, you will understand that it is because as parliamentarians we have perhaps had more direct dealings with them. I refer, of course, to Ambassador Campbell and Mr Frank Cogan who like John the Baptist have been preparing the way marvelously for your coming here today.

Many of my colleagues have referred to different aspects of the Irish programme for the next six months. Because it is my particular interest, I would refer first of all to the 'Green Irish presidency'. I was delighted to hear that we are going to have a Green Irish presidency. I was delighted to hear that it was also, in the words of the Taoiseach, going to give us the opportunity to tidy things up a little back home. If we intend to take a high moral tone and to be an effective and pungent presidency in relation to green issues, we must also take careful note of the fact that our own backyard is not particularly clean.

Much reference today has also been made to East Europe and, as you are no doubt aware, there are

catastrophic environmental problems in the Eastern part of Europe. Last week I was wandering through the city of Dresden in Eastern Germany and while I was bemoaning the loss of the wonderful heritage of that city, I also became aware that there was something vaguely familiar about it. Unfortunately, it was the strong smell of smog in that city. I was told that there they can only use soft brown coal or that they do only use soft brown coal in providing their energy needs. Of course, that is precisely the coal that is burning in millions of Irish grates at this moment, resulting in our serious smog problem. In fact, the Commission is deeply concerned about the response of Irish governments to the serious smog problem in Dublin.

I also look forward to this presidency giving the *imprimatur* to the European Environmental Agency and with my colleague, Mr Desmond, I too feel that perhaps Copenhagen would be the best location for this, notwithstanding the fact that I would also like to see it in my constituency. There is a certain value in having an agency in a small peripheral country that is not overburdened with European institutions, exactly like our own. I noticed today, Mr President, that there has been a significant contribution from Members of Parliament from the peripheral areas, obviously signifying the great hope that the peripheral countries have in the Irish Presidency, for taking particular note of the serious problems and the particular needs of peripheral areas.

In the context of the environment, we must see in the next six months some movement towards providing a nuclear monitoring agency within the Community. This has been put on the back burner too often and we have been told that this is simply beyond our legal competence. It cannot remain beyond our legal competence for a number of reasons. However, in this context I would note that there are in fact only one or two countries within the Community for whom the nuclear industry is all risk and no benefit and we are one of them. I hope, therefore, that the President-in-Office will make this one of his particular priorities.

Reference was also made to the needs of the EFTA countries and to our relationship with EFTA. I had the privilege of serving on the delegation to the Nordic countries in the last parliament and I was particularly struck when speaking with them and with the EFTA countries — we had a delegation here this morning from Austria — by the enormous efforts they were making to adjust to changes here within the Community. In fact, in many cases it appeared that some of the EFTA countries were better prepared for 1992 than we were ourselves. I would therefore particularly ask the President-in-Office to give special emphasis over the next six months to our relationships with EFTA.

Finally, Mr President, a brief word about the United States. At the US delegation last week, the US parliamentarians made it abundantly clear to us that they see that they no longer have the role of providing yet another Marshall plan for Europe. They see the responsibilities of providing economically for the needs

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of Eastern Europe as coming directly from this Community.

Mr President-in-Office, I would like to wish you the very best of luck in the next six months and go *n'éirigh an bóthar leat*.

DE CLERCQ (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, the New Year will require an extra effort of the European Community, not only to complete the internal market and give it more substance but also to respond to the developments in the Central and Eastern European countries in a reasoned and effective way. The historic and revolutionary developments in Central and Eastern European countries in recent months must not undermine the existence of the European Community or delay the current process of integration: on the contrary, they must be an added stimulus to activate this process. In the New Year economic, monetary and political union must therefore continue to be our top priority. So we look forward with every confidence to the intergovernmental conference, which must provide the EMU with a suitable framework and give the European Parliament greater institutional power.

Until a common foreign policy has been established, the twelve Member States should always pursue a coordinated and cohesive policy towards the outside world and, now especially, towards the Central and Eastern European countries. As the Eastern European countries are fundamentally different, I do not think it possible or desirable for the European Community to pursue a global *Ostpolitik* in the sense of a single policy towards all these countries. A uniform blueprint cannot be drawn up for the overall policy to be pursued in Central and Eastern Europe. So dirigistic a view must clearly be rejected, because the people in these Central and Eastern European countries are tired of having central planning imposed on them. The economic and political situation in each of these countries differs so much that each needs an appropriate form of economic, technological and financial support. Our aim must clearly be to pursue a differentiated Community policy that is adapted to the specific needs, requirements and expectations of the people of these countries. Only then will the European Community succeed in ensuring economic and political stability in Central and Eastern Europe and in consolidating its guiding role in the support being given to developments there. Mr President, I hope the Irish Presidency will persevere, and I wish it every success in the coming six months.

(Applause)

DURY (S). — (FR) Mr President, the President-in-Office has just launched a year that will see a number of developments and a year of the utmost importance for the Community. Many Members have highlighted the need for a stable European Community in a turbulent Europe.

I should like to say how disappointed I was that you did not explain in detail your thoughts on the intergovern-

mental conference, which is so crucial for the future of the Community. You were kind enough to point out that Parliament had an influence on the climate and that what it said was of course taken heed of. We were pleased to hear you say this, very politely, even warmly, but although the climate between the Council and Parliament is mild, it could become frosty if a lot more notice is not taken of what Parliament says.

We voted on the intergovernmental conference on 23 November and we said three main things. Firstly, that we want the agenda of the conference to be broadened. Secondly, that Parliament must be involved, one way or another, and must take part in the conference. Thirdly, that the conference must be preceded by an interinstitutional conference to enable us to clarify our current positions. Lastly, we said we wanted meetings between the European Parliament and national parliaments.

I am sure our goal is the same. Firstly we must make the Community democratic. This is all the more necessary if monetary union is going to get closer. Secondly, as Socialists we want to humanize Europe and give it objectives on the social and other issues we are concerned about: education, the environment. We also want the intergovernmental conference to discuss institutional issues.

I am going to repeat things people are saying all the time, but I think it is important for the President of the Council to hear them again.

Firstly, we want qualified majority decision-making extended to social and environmental issues. We have said this in a number of debates, but it is extremely important to make progress on social issues. The Commission's proposed programme on social issues includes the possibility of qualified majority voting in the Council. But we will not make significant progress unless qualified majority decisions are made on social matters in the same way as on the internal market.

Secondly, we want joint decision-making power with the Council on legislation. We represent the people of Europe; parliamentary democracy now seems to be the ideal for the whole of Europe, and I include Eastern Europe. So we want shared decision-making power for the European Parliament too. That is one of our battles. I would have liked the presidency to say something specific on this.

Thirdly, as we said in the resolution, we want to be able to appoint the President of the Commission. I am sure that if Parliament had had this power earlier, you would have been proud of the choice of Jacques Delors. We are even prouder today because we did not appoint him, but I think we can take some of the credit for all the progress he has brought to the Community.

Fourthly, we want a genuine power to initiate legislation. When Parliament has good ideas — even if they are not taken up by the Commission — we want Parliament as an institution to be able to use these ideas,

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which are the ideas of the people of Europe, to initiate legislation.

Fifthly; we also want democratic supervision in the monetary sphere. This is why I shall finish by saying the Socialist Group does not favour two parallel or successive conferences. Although we are ardent supporters of monetary union, we believe equally strongly that there must be genuine democratic supervision of it. It is now commonplace to talk about our lack of democracy, but if we have two conferences in parallel, can we be sure there will be as much discussion of monetary issues as institutional issues? If they follow each other, how do we know that one will not turn out to take precedence over the other? I believe the intergovernmental conference should look at both monetary and institutional issues. People are saying we shouldn't take on too much. But in the interests of a democratic future for the Community and of monetary union itself, we must tackle these two areas at the same time at a single conference.

Mr President, you have heard that Parliament wishes you well during your term of office. We want to improve the climate between the institutions, but you see before you Members of Parliament who are more and more assertive and want to see Europe just as you do. But they do not just want to hear the language of the diplomat — although I respect that. We are here to fight, and we shall use every peaceful means at our disposal to get what we want: a democratic Europe.

(Applause)

SARIDAKIS (PPE). — *(GR)* Mr President, as the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers has himself said, the Community is not faced with a fundamental choice between deeper integration and wider cooperation with our European neighbours. However, it does face the challenge of combining this wider cooperation and solidarity with the countries which are now on the road to democracy, and of making its efforts in those respects and its aid to them more effective, while continuing its drive towards deeper, closer and more all-embracing unification within its own borders. Without this continuance the wider cooperation will rapidly become ineffectual and bereft of meaning.

I hold firmly to the view that the European Community has long been and remains a beacon and a model for the peoples of Eastern Europe as regards social policy, economic organization and cooperation between countries. Without the presence of this Community of ours and the hope for a better future that it has inspired in other peoples, developments in Central and Eastern Europe might well have moved at a different pace, at least, and possibly have taken a different form. Furthermore, without this European Community, and, most importantly, without the ultimate prospect that it holds out, relations between the two superpowers would, without any doubt, have been different qualitatively speaking.

For these reasons, Mr President, I believe that deeper integration of the Community, acceleration of the strengthening of its institutions, with the development first and foremost of an expanded role for this Parliament, and diligent promotion of economic and social cohesion between the more developed and the less developed regions are necessary conditions for ensuring that our cooperation with others benefits them, and our own peoples as well, and carries real effect.

The Irish presidency is, I believe, a trifle more alert to the needs, and I feel sure that it will demonstrate this with concrete initiatives, in particular to help the remoter island regions and the less-favoured mountainous areas of the Community.

Mr President, we have noted with great interest the remarks on the protection of human rights in the statement by the presidency. That aspect has been and remains the fundamental driving force behind the popular uprisings in Central and Eastern Europe, with the results that we have seen so far, and provides their full vindication. I hope that the Irish presidency will be attentive, within the framework of political cooperation, to the human rights situation in our neighbour Albania.

Mr President, if a small outlying country can register achievements during its presidency this will confirm the logic and value of the Community system itself. I wish the Irish presidency, Ireland and the Community success.

DONNELLY (S). — The President-in-Office addressed a number of points this morning, but I am sure that he is aware, as we are all aware, that inaugural speeches are not the basis upon which a president is judged. A President-in-Office of the European Community or any other president is judged upon his or her achievements. That is the way in which we will judge the Irish presidency. We will make that judgement in July and August at the end of the presidency.

In his address the President-in-Office referred to economic and monetary union. He referred to the internal market and he referred to the social dimension. I commend him for the way in which he spoke about these issues. Yes, I agree that our goal must be economic efficiency and improved competitiveness in international markets, but these aims will mean nothing unless we can give those goals a human face. At the present time, the European Community is failing to give a human face to the actions and to the things that we are trying to implement within the Community. We do not command the support yet of the 320 million people within the Community because we still seem to put the goals of industry and of multinationals above the requirements of our 320 million people. These aims which the President-in-Office mentioned will mean nothing if there is no improvement in the quality of life for our people. For the European Parliament, 1990 must be the year when we begin to build a bridge across the huge divide in democratic accountability. And I am

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grateful for the comments of the President-in-Office when he talked about relationships with Parliament. It means that the Commission and the Council must take steps to establish co-decision making. I therefore welcome the dialogue that we will have during the next six months.

But what does that commitment given by the President-in-Office actually mean? Could it mean that the President-in-Office will extend the present occasional practice of inviting the President or a representative of the competent European Parliament Committee along to key meetings of the Council? If that is his commitment then I welcome it. Does it mean that he will seek to take on board our opinions when the preparations are begun for the intergovernmental conference later this year? If that is his commitment, then I welcome that. Does it mean that on economic and monetary union the President-in-Office will welcome the desire of this House to be fully involved in stage 1, including the accountability of the Committee of Central Bankers? If that is his commitment, I welcome it.

You stressed your desire for the Irish presidency to bring about greater social cohesion. Could this perhaps mean that you will support the use of the qualified majority in voting on key social legislation? Does it mean that you will support the initiative that Mr Desmond mentioned earlier today for a Delors report, with the same status as the Delors report on EMU, on the social dimension so that we have a balanced programme during the next couple of years? If that is your commitment then I welcome that commitment. I hope that perhaps the presidency's commitment on social cohesion will mean that we can persuade the President of the Commission to introduce a report on the social dimension.

Does it mean that in relation to the market, you will respond to the reports that are emanating now from the Commissioner responsible for regional development? These state that the peripheral regions of Europe are going to be worse off if we continue with the internal market along the lines that are presently being proposed. If that is your commitment then I welcome it. Those regions need protection and I hope the Irish presidency will give the strength of their support to those regions.

I think your presidency will be crucial for all of these reasons. I hope when we consider in July and August your achievements, we will have seen real progress in many of these areas. If we do not see progress in these areas then the President-in-Office will have failed to meet the goals that he has set himself in his inaugural speech.

COONEY (PPE). — Mr President, first of all I would like to welcome the President-in-Office to Parliament and to offer him my good wishes for a successful term in office.

The Community as we know it is an evolving entity. The current presidency has to oversee that continuing

evolution. That evolution involves making sure that the ordinary, mundane, housekeeping things are done efficiently and done well, but because the Community is essentially a political entity, we have to be prepared for the possibility of political changes and political initiatives emerging during the term of any presidency. I think that is particularly true in the six months that face the Irish presidency so that, in addition to the housekeeping, minding-the-shop role, the Irish presidency is going to be faced with the possibility of taking serious political initiatives for the future of the Community.

The main feature on the political horizon is, of course, the intergovernmental conference scheduled for the end of the year to discuss economic and monetary union. Economic and monetary union has to be seen in the context of the evolution of the Community. I think it is common case that we saw economic and monetary union as being the first necessary step, a condition precedent, to the achievement of political union. We were content to see economic and monetary union achieved before political union. We were content to see these developments happen in a comparatively unhurried way. But the recent events in the Soviet Union and especially the developments in Eastern Europe over the last number of months have provoked a realization that only a fully integrated Community can be relied on to preserve its own cohesion and, at the same time, have the capacity to deal with the political and economic changes in the countries of Eastern Europe. A fully integrated Community is one that is both politically and economically united. Consequently, in the timetable which envisages economic union as followed by political union, there is the possibility of too much delay. Both objectives will now have to be pursued in tandem rather than in succession.

The agenda for the intergovernmental conference has not been set. Beginning work on setting that agenda will be one of the most important tasks facing the Irish presidency. I would urge the Irish presidency to ensure that there is a broadly based agenda, an agenda that is sufficiently broad to deal not just with economic and monetary union, but can also take into account and put on the table political union so that the two can go in tandem and so that our Community can develop to meet the huge challenges now facing it.

There is already available to the presidency a draft treaty adopted by this Parliament which could be the basis for discussions on political union. There is a historic opportunity for the Irish presidency to use its strategic presence at this period of 1990 to set the agenda for the intergovernmental conference. This conference is going to shape the future of our Community. If it deals urgently with the task of putting economic and monetary union in place and at the same time or very quickly, puts political union in place, it will have achieved a historic breakthrough.

FUCHS (S). — (FR) Mr President, in politics following up and implementing decisions is often just as

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important as making them. There is unanimous agreement that the French presidency enabled the Community to make substantial progress through the adoption of the Social Charter, progress on the difficult issue of taxation, and the commitment that was achieved to a conference to establish economic and monetary union. But the word 'substantial' will only really be justified if the Irish presidency keeps up the momentum of the Community, and as a French Member I would say to the President-in-Office that he bears no less a responsibility than his predecessors. I would therefore like to ask Mr Collins four groups of questions which I shall answer myself so that the debate, if there has to be one, is straightforward.

Firstly on social issues. You expressed your support for a detailed programme of action on the Social Charter, but what will your priorities be from the long list of measures proposed by the Commission? As I see it there are three. How working time is organized, i.e. working hours, lack of job security, and worker participation. Do you agree?

Next tax. I agree this is a complex and difficult issue, but we now need to sort it out. With regard to VAT, do you intend to implement the agreement reached at the last Economic and Financial Council? Do you intend to back it up, as Parliament wants, with a commitment to standardizing minimum VAT so that we can then move to a system in which zero-rating for intra-Community exports can be abolished? Do you intend that all restrictions on duty-free status at internal borders should be abolished by 1 January 1993, as this is the best guarantee of standardization of VAT rates? I know these are difficult questions in your country as well, but I should like a clearer statement of your intention to resolve them.

What is your position on taxation of large-scale savings, which I believe to be essential not only for reasons of fiscal fairness but also to create at last the concept of the Community tax resident. Do you hope to get agreement by 1 July on a minimum amount of cooperation between civil services and judicial authorities from the last Member State that is opposing any progress in this area?

On progress towards economic and monetary union I have only one question, but I think it is a crucial one. Some people believe we should have two intergovernmental conferences to look separately at institutional and monetary changes to the current treaty. I believe a monetary conference that did not look at the next question of which European institutions a European central bank system would be accountable to for doing its job would not be acceptable to Parliament. Do you agree?

My last group of questions concerns the Community's attitude to the rest of the world on economic matters. Do you believe completion of the internal market should be accompanied by the dropping of all regulation *vis-à-vis* non-Community countries? To take a specific example, should free movement of cars

within the Community lead to free entry to the Community with no conditions attached for cars manufactured elsewhere, notably in Japan? Do you believe, as I do, that the Community should take part in world trade talks with the intention of expanding trade but also of defending its own interests with just as much vigour — no more and no less — as the other powers involved in the talks, and with the same weapons?

Minister, I wish the Irish presidency every success. I am convinced success will come all the more easily if you adopt clear stances on the questions I have just raised.

FORTE (PPE). — (IT) Mr President, I would like to thank President Collins for the very full presentation he has given us of his programme, touching as he did on the many problems, both internal and external, with which the Community is faced. I would, however, add that I should like to detect in what he said also a strategic view that goes beyond the mere listing of individual questions. From the Irish Presidency we expect, in fact, a thrust to ensure that, in the evolutionary process towards the single market, special attention is devoted in particular to the most depressed regions and areas of Europe. President-in-Office Mr Collins fully illustrated the European scenario over recent months, and has sketched the role that the Community can and must have *vis-à-vis* the Eastern countries and their evolution towards democracy. This evolutionary process, which also means their attraction to the Community, makes it incumbent upon us in the first place, however, to strengthen the process of building the Community itself, not only as regards the creation of the single market but also, and essentially so, for the implementation of the People's Europe. This in turn commits us to moving towards the implementation of the social principles — strengthening in our citizens, in other words, the need for Europe, freedom of movement, the workers' right of establishment, about which we have only so far talked in relation to students and those who find themselves in economically favourable circumstances; but we have also, however, to talk about the workers' right of establishment, the problem of transport, the unemployment question, etc. — all of these subjects that are very much to the fore in the awareness of European citizens, and that indicate the way to make the People's Europe grow.

Coming back, however, to the question of the strategy, the fundamental strategy, of this presidency: may I suggest that it must be a strategy designed to eliminate, or at least to mitigate, the imbalances that exist today between the rich and poor areas of the twelve countries. We hope that the Irish presidency will be able to provide the maximum guarantee that these imbalances will be eliminated, so that — when the time comes — as it inevitably will — that we are face to face with the other European States that will ask to join the Community, we shall not have a three-tier Europe — an A-tier Europe, a B-tier Europe and, possibly, a C-tier Europe. This is a fundamental question: clearly, in the face of the imbalances that still exist today and will probably

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still exist also in 1992, it will be difficult to talk about enlargement with other countries that might give momentum to and further increase such imbalances. That is why we call on the Irish presidency to give utmost support to the guarantee that the implementation of the single market will be effected on the basis of rules that are designed to protect the balance between rich and poor areas. We shall not accept a market without rules, and Ireland can be the architect of a policy along these lines. This raises again the question of the structural Funds to which, Mr President, you made the briefest of references in your statement. As I was saying, the structural Funds are an instrument, not for the provision of charity or aid but for determining development processes; they must therefore be revised, insofar as the method of their application is concerned, and their financing must be expanded. This could well be, for example, a commitment that would single out the Irish presidency.

Then there is the ecological aspect, which is linked with the development question. We cannot in fact tolerate Europe's poorest areas becoming the dustbins for industry, probably with a high level of pollution, and from this standpoint we must therefore ensure that no concentration of firms displaced from richer areas can establish itself, with a highly pollutant effect, in poorer areas. In short, we shall only be able to guide the Eastern European countries towards democracy and attract the peoples of the East and European peoples in general towards the Community if, before 1992, we strengthen our Community and make it a really balanced one. But the basic strategy still remains, and it is a strategy designed to extend Parliament's powers. In accordance with the Act the powers of our Parliament are subject to institutional revision. You referred to an intergovernmental conference, and told us you will collaborate with the Italian presidency; we are pleased with this statement because it means that the conference will be prepared together. Well, we ask why you raised the problem of what Parliament's role will be? We ask you to consider Parliament as one of the subjects, not the object of this conference. I will conclude by wishing you, Mr President, the maximum success and the maximum collaboration from all the institutional bodies of the Community.

COLLINS (S). — Mr President, I cannot but congratulate the President-in-Office on his ambitious programme, but how could I do other than congratulate a member of the Collins clan in producing such a programme? I wish the Irish presidency well. There is every evidence that they are taking great care to prepare their work for the coming six months. Just before I came into the Chamber, I had the Irish Representation in Brussels on the telephone trying to arrange a meeting with one of their Ministers, the Commission and myself to try to sort out the programme. That is impressive; it shows an attention to detail and a willingness to recognize that if the Irish presidency is to work, it will

have to follow the grain of the parliamentary timetable. It is to be congratulated for that.

The Irish have made much of the fact that this is going to be a 'green' presidency. The Taoiseach himself said as much. I want to reserve my comments therefore for this 'green' presidency. When I met Minister Flynn last week in Dublin, I said to him that I listened with great interest to what he had to say, but that, since he was the 21st President-in-Office of the Environment Council that I had listened to over the years, I reserved the right to be a little sceptical about the programme. There is a danger that it will get a little too ambitious. I would point out one or two things. We are also very keen that there should be an environmental agency established and I should like to see it established firmly during the Irish presidency. However, I note that, when the President-in-Office spoke this morning, he said that they would take notice of Parliament's opinion. That is not enough. I do not want him to take notice of it. I want him to observe what we have said very carefully and take it on board. Because as Barry Desmond said earlier on, there is no point in having an agency unless it has reasonable powers and, at the very least, it ought to have the power to audit the kind of information being supplied by Member States. Without that it will not achieve anything at all and will simply be a distraction.

It is also good to see that the Irish presidency recognizes that environment is a global matter. However, I would point out that the other word that was missing from the President-in-Office's speech this morning — and, indeed, from Minister Flynn's speech last week in Dublin — was the word 'implementation'. Parliament is very keen to make sure that existing legislation on environment is actually implemented in all the Member States. That includes, for example, my own country, and Ireland as well.

We also hope that the Irish presidency will recognize that it has the presidency during the preparatory work for the intergovernmental conference. I would emphasize yet again the need to widen that agenda and to consider the possibility of extending cooperation procedure to those areas of environment policy.

Finally, I am little disappointed that, during the six months of the Irish presidency, there is very little attention being paid to consumer policy and I do hope the presidency will give a specific commitment to having a consumer council sometime during the next six months. It is important, because the European Community has to be a community of citizens, a community of consumers. If it is not that, it will not work.

PRESIDENT. — The debate will be continued after Question Time at 4.30 p.m.

(The sitting was suspended at 1.05 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR MARTIN

*Vice-President*¹

7. Question Time

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the first part of Question Time (Doc. B3-20/90).

Today we are taking questions to the Council and to the Foreign Affairs Ministers meeting in political cooperation.

We begin with questions to the Council.

Question No 1, by Mr Galland (H-537/89)

Subject: Aid to Poland

In the 'RTL/Le Monde' radio programme on Sunday, 22 October the President of the Commission criticized those who, by proposing a Marshall Plan or plans for substantial aid to Poland, widen 'the gap between the reality and the way it is perceived by the Polish people'. Does the Council not agree that a structured Community plan of aid to Poland, along the same lines as the Marshall Plan, including, in particular, (as has always been advocated by proponents of such a plan) the setting up of a central bank and an intensive training programme for managerial staff and technicians to accompany the financial aid, would be particularly appropriate in the present situation?

Does the Council not feel that this would be an improvement on its current proposals and initiatives to meet the challenge represented by the prospect of democratization in Eastern Europe?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Council. — The Strasbourg European Council on 8 and 9 December 1989 took a series of initiatives to assist Poland, supplementing the other measures already decided at Council level. This set of measures forms an economic aid programme meeting Poland's specific needs in the present circumstances. Thus the European Council decided to set up a European Bank for Reconstruction and Development aimed at promoting, in consultation with the IMF and the World Bank, productive and competitive investment in Poland and in the other East European States. These countries are, moreover, invited to participate in the capital and management of this bank.

As regards vocational training, one of the top priorities defined by Poland itself, the European Council decided on the principle of setting up the European Foundation. The actual decision will be taken once the Commission has submitted a proposal on the subject. The foundation is to be a technical clearing house and

organizational base to promote the necessary cooperation for the various activities involved.

Finally, the European Council agreed in principle to set up educational and training programmes similar to existing Community programmes such as Erasmus, Comett and Lingua, etc. exclusively designed for nationals of East European countries. The Ministers of 24 Western countries responsible for economic assistance to Poland and Hungary who met in Brussels on 13 December 1989, some days after the Strasbourg summit, expressed satisfaction at the Council's latest decisions in favour of those countries. In addition to the Member States of the Community, several other countries have already said that they are considering participating in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

These measures are in addition to the trade measures already adopted: access to EIB loans, the creation of a 1 000 million dollar stabilization fund for the zloty and the economic aid of ECU 300 million to Poland and Hungary. The extent of economic aid to Poland and Hungary in 1990 was determined largely on the European Parliament's initiative under the budget signed by the President of the European Parliament on 13 December 1989. ECU 300 million have been entered in this year's budget for that purpose. Parliament further decided to include the same amount in the opinion it delivered on 14 December 1989 on the proposal for a regulation on economic aid to Poland and Hungary. For its part the Council has stated that it will continue to keep a close watch on the needs arising from future developments in the situation in Eastern Europe. I am convinced that all these measures will make an effective contribution to the recovery of the Polish economy.

GALLAND (LDR). — (FR) Minister, this Question Time, which you are starting today, could be either a very interesting exchange between the Council and Parliament or a totally uninteresting one.

I should just like to point out that it would be a good thing if in future we could avoid the kind of reply you have just given, which contributes absolutely nothing to the debate and was not a reply to my question.

Mr President, perhaps I could just very politely and very briefly ask you this. Are you prepared to take new Community steps that meet the challenge we face — above and beyond the European Council's decision — in other words, do you seriously believe, in view of what we now know, that ECU 300 million is enough aid for Poland and Hungary? Are you not worried about the fact that bilateral action is at the moment considerably more extensive than Community action?

COLLINS. — I thank the Member for his advice. I will be glad to take it on board. I would have thought that it would be important — I say this by way of explanation to the Member — to give as much information as I possibly could. But I take note of the comments and

¹ *Topical and urgent debate (subjects selected):* See minutes.

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shall certainly reflect on them before the next session of Question Time here in the European Parliament.

With regard to whether or not I consider the sum of ECU 300 million sufficient, I am sure the Member will have noted that in the course of my reply I laid particular stress on the fact that the situation was being monitored very closely by the Council and if it is felt that further moneys are necessary, that will be a matter for decision by Council.

The Member should understand that the Council views this particular area with very great concern indeed and, I am sure, will not be found wanting at the appropriate time if there is further need for additional funds.

LANE (RDE). — Could I compliment the President-in-Office for giving a very comprehensive reply to the question. I don't quite understand what Mr Galland was getting at because if the reply were not comprehensive he probably would have put another question.

At the informal meeting of the Council there will be a review of what is happening in Poland and, as was said a few moments ago, this question of the ECU 300 million will also be reviewed. I take it that you will be discussing this at the informal meeting of the Council next weekend?

COLLINS. — I thank the Member for his comments. I note what he says, in particular with regard to the reply to his colleague's question. I will take that on board too, bearing in mind my responsibilities.

With regard to the specific part of Mr Lane's question, the conference which is scheduled for Dublin Castle this weekend is, as I have already said during the course of my programme address to the European Parliament early this morning, will evaluate the situation not just in Poland alone, as the Member is anxious that it should, but also the situation in Eastern Europe generally.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 2, by Mr Ephremidis (H-581/89).

Subject: Initiative to restrict Cocom activities

A number of initiatives have been taken to establish closer ties between the Community and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but these have failed to address the problem of Cocom which is proving a major stumbling block to better international relations.

Does the Council intend to launch an initiative — backed by the widest possible social consensus in the Community countries — aimed at immediately curbing Cocom's restrictive interventions in East-West trade?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — The Council as such does not belong to Cocom and the Irish presidency has no information on the proceedings of that body to which, for that matter, Ireland does not

belong either. Matters concerning Cocom are dealt with by those States which belong to that organization.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) In the nature of things neither the Council nor its representative are naive. Everyone would agree with that I think. But the other side of the coin is that we expect the Council and its representative not to treat questioners in this House as if they are naive. He tells us that the Council as such does not belong to Cocom. All right. But the Council knows full well that Cocom is a stumbling block to the development of economic and trade relations with these countries. That is the crux of my question, and indeed it is reinforced by his own statement this morning when he said that one of the main objectives of the Irish presidency will be to improve and develop these relations. So I put it to him: can relations improve while Cocom exists? Is it not a major stumbling block, and is not the Council entitled and obliged, at least under the Irish presidency, to launch an initiative aimed at curbing its restrictive interventions and, hopefully, at freeing the Twelve entirely from these restrictions which, quite clearly, serve only the interests of the American multinationals? I want an answer to this question, and not to be told again that we do not 'belong' to Cocom. The Community does not belong to it, but the twelve countries are suffering the effects of it. Are you going to launch an initiative or are you going to sit on your hands?

COLLINS. — Mr President, I thank the Member for the supplementary question. I can readily understand his line of argument and I accept it as I am sure he will accept the argument and the logic of my reply. I have already given him an outline of the Council position. Neither the Council nor the presidency is, as I have said, a member of Cocom. It would therefore be inappropriate for me to comment or speculate on how the members of Cocom might decide to respond to recent events in Eastern Europe.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) The reply given by the President-in-Office is to some extent understandable, bearing mind in particular that Ireland is not a member of Cocom. All the same, there is a question to answer in that the European Community is now negotiating with the countries of Eastern Europe on matters of trade and economic cooperation effectively on behalf of the twelve Member States, and it does have an overview of the situation through this collective approach. I would therefore like to ask the President-in-Office for his opinion in the context of this overall perception, this collective approach. Does Cocom assist these trade relations or should we press immediately for the curbing of its restrictive interventions and ultimate dissolution? This question is being asked not only by politicians but also by industrialists in the Member States.

COLLINS. — In reply to the Member, I would like to help him by suggesting to him that it is not Ireland that is

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involved. The fact is that there is no Council position on Cocom.

GUTIERREZ DÍAZ (GUE). — (ES) On the same lines, I would like to remind the President-in-Office of the concern behind the reiteration of this question, which is that of course the Council as such does not belong to Cocom, Ireland does not belong to Cocom, and equally — hence the direction of my question — the rules of Cocom interfere with East-West relations at a time when we all realize that great walls have come down and that such relations should therefore be accelerated.

Mr President-in-Office, do you not think that the rules of Cocom will interfere with this process of developing relations and cooperation between Eastern Europe and the Community?

COLLINS. — With regard to that particular question, I am sure the Member will agree with me that each organization is in the best position to assess its own role in relation to Eastern Europe. This must be so. Of course the Council intends to keep the various aspects of the Community's relations with Eastern Europe under careful consideration at all times.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 3 by Mr Raffarin (H-6/90):

Subject: Linguistic communication with Eastern European countries

In East-West relations, the language barrier is a serious obstacle to mutual understanding between nations. What measures is the Council prepared to take in order to provide facilities for teachers from Eastern European countries, and what resources could be released for language exchanges and the promotion of the teaching of Eastern European languages in Western Europe?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — In the framework of joint action of the Community and its Member States concerning the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the particular role of education and training has been stressed. One of the conclusions of the Strasbourg European Council in this regard was to invite the Council to take decisions allowing citizens of Central and Eastern Europe to participate in educational and vocational programmes similar to Community programmes. Such programmes could therefore cover exchanges for linguistic and other purposes. The Council awaits with interest the proposals which the Commission is due to submit concerning education and training adapted to these countries' dates.

RAFFARIN (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, Minister, I concur absolutely with what my colleague Yves Galland said just now. In the context of relations between the Assembly and the Council we should not vent our frustrations on such important subjects as Commission proposals.

We need political will to continue the incredible march of freedom all over Europe that has seen freedom overturn shame overnight. If we want freedom to spread throughout Europe, we must overcome the language barrier. The countries of East and West now have a much more difficult barrier to overcome than trade — the barrier of culture. Starting in the summer I think we should therefore think about large-scale exchanges so that young people in particular from West and East can work together towards understanding each other.

COLLINS. — I understand the Member's concern in this area and, from the cultural, political and economic point of view, it will be necessary to develop our linguistic abilities in Eastern European languages. As regards linguistic exchanges, these will be given due attention in the context of ongoing dialogue with the Eastern European countries about the needs which they are asking the Community to meet. The Commission has not made any proposals as yet for a specific Community action in this field.

ELLIOTT (S). — Parliament very wisely and fortunately voted in its amendments to the budget for this year, an additional ECU 10 million for the Lingua programme. Could the Council discuss with the Commission the possibility of using some of this greatly increased availability of funds for Lingua to help with this particular issue?

COLLINS. — The initiative in this particular instance is with the Commission which executes the budget. However, I would welcome any proposals from the Commission along the lines mentioned by the Member.

PRESIDENT. — As the authors are not present, Questions Nos 4 and 5 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 6 by Mr Musso (H-550-89):

Subject: Treatment of Members of the European Parliament at intra-Community borders

Will the Council undertake to make representations to the national authorities and, in particular, the French authorities, to ensure that Members of the European Parliament, who very frequently cross intra-Community borders, are given the priority treatment which they already receive in Belgium and to which they are entitled by virtue of the privileges and immunities they enjoy?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — It is not for the Council to ask Member States to accord Members of the European Parliament, travelling to or from the place of meeting of the European Parliament, facilities in addition to those deriving from Article 8 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of Members of the European Parliament.

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

MUSSO. — (FR) If I dared, I would say the Council was having a field-day today, and I too endorse what has been said by Mr Galland and Mr Raffarin. That was not a reply. The Council referred to a statute I mentioned in my question, when I was asking precisely why that statute is not being observed.

Mr President-in-Office, I am not asking for extra-special treatment, I am asking for the treatment Members of the European Parliament deserve when they are crossing European borders! That is all.

COLLINS. — I would suggest to the Member that, if he has a particular difficulty in this area, he should consider taking it up with whatever government is not respecting Article 8.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 7 by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (H-561/89):

Subject: Dutch shipowners buying up licences for old Belgian fishing boats

Quite a number of Dutch shipowners have recently been buying up licences for old Belgian fishing boats. They put the boats to sea under Belgian masters, or operate them as limited companies under Belgian law but, apart from this, the crew consists exclusively of Dutch personnel.

This practice is, quite naturally, having an effect on employment in Belgian offshore fishing. The catches are also deemed to be part of the Belgian quota.

There is also evidence of similar practices in other Member States.

What does the Council intend to do to put a stop to this practice and to permit fair competition?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — The right of establishment, like the principle of free movement of persons, goods and services within the Community, is one of the fundamental freedoms laid down in the Treaty of Rome and a basic feature of the single market. However, the Council is aware of the existence in the Community of the practice mentioned by the honourable Member which is one aspect of the phenomenon generally known as quota-hopping and, that being said, the Council has not as yet received any proposal for the adoption of new rules to be applied to Member States as regards freedom of establishment in the fisheries sector. The Commission did, however, submit a communication on 19 July on a Community frame of reference for access to fishing quotas. These questions are, and have been, subject to proceedings at the European Court of Justice. Should proposals be submitted to it, the Council will certainly devote every attention to them.

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (ARC). — (NL) I am very grateful to the President-in-Office of the Council for the fairly complete answer he has given, but the first question was specific: is it again possible for quotas to

be swapped in this sector? Secondly, can the Council tell me when it will be taking its decision?

COLLINS. — The first part of the supplementary question is what the courts are talking about at the present time and the reply to the second part of the question is that I would need Commission proposals on it.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 8 by Mr McMahon (H-564/89):

Subject: European Social Charter and Commission action programme

Can the Council inform the House how many drafts of the Social Charter were placed before the Social Affairs Council meetings of 30 October and 30 November and the December summit meeting in Strasbourg? What were the main differences in each draft and will the Council advise the House what priority it will give the social dimension of the internal market during the Irish presidency?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — The text of the Charter adopted by the Heads of States or Government of the eleven Member States at the European Council on 8 and 9 December 1989 is the same as that submitted to the Council on 30 October 1989 and adopted at that meeting. There are no differences between the two texts. In my programme address I underlined the importance which the Irish presidency attaches to the social dimension of the internal market and the priority it is giving to achieving it. The presidency also intends to do its utmost to ensure that proposals for the action programme drafted by the Commission and to be submitted to the Council in the coming months are examined under the best possible conditions. Having regard to the substantial amount of work to be completed by the end of 1992, the presidency, in conjunction with the troika and in cooperation with the Commission, will attempt to produce a timetable for progress on as many proposals as possible in the period to mid-1991.

In the wider perspective of the social dimension, the presidency will give priority to advancing work on proposals in relation to long-term unemployment and continuing vocational training. Moreover the presidency will do its utmost to advance those social policy proposals as yet unconcluded, many if not all of which respond to the aims and objectives of the Social Charter.

McMAHON (S). — Having heard the President-in-Office, would he care to explain to the House why it is, given the importance which he says the Irish Government has placed on the Social Charter, that at the press conference held by President Delors and Mr Haughey, as reported in the *Irish Times*, there was no mention of the Social Charter being one of the priorities? In addition would he comment on the fact that there is going to be only one Social Affairs Council meeting held under the Irish presidency with eight items on the

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agenda as against five Internal Market Council meetings with 42 items on the agenda. Where is the priority — 8 against 42?

COLLINS. — As I said in my programme address, the Irish presidency regards the social dimension as an integral part of the internal market and therefore we attach a high priority to advancing work on the various proposals to be put before the Council in the immediate future. We look forward to the specific proposals to be made by the Commission and intend to take them up as soon as they become available. I can assure you that social Europe will not be ignored in the coming months. The scheduling of meetings of the Social Affairs Council during our presidency is based on a careful appreciation of the proposals that are likely to be ripe for consideration by that Council. We would, however, be prepared to convene another meeting of the Council if developments were to suggest that this would be worthwhile.

LE CHEVALLIER (DR). — (FR) Mr President, following the adoption of the Buron report on the Social Charter, and in particular of the amendment including non-Community workers, does the Council believe that non-Community workers will benefit under the Charter and the action programme drawn up by the Commission?

COLLINS. — I think the Member would agree with me that this depends on what the Community is going to propose with regard to non-Community citizens.

DESSYLAS (CG). — (GR) Would not the President-in-Office agree that the Social Charter approved at the Strasbourg Summit is nothing more than a set of pious aspirations utterly devoid of any practical benefit to workers, and that this is a bitter pill to swallow at a time when racism, xenophobia and Fascism are already being provided with the social basis for resurgence by the existence of 17 million unemployed in the EEC and 45 million who are forced to live below the poverty line? What specific initiatives does the Irish presidency intend to promote to meet the demands of the unions for a reduction of working hours and the lowering of the pensionable age and for a serious effort to combat unemployment and poverty?

COLLINS. — I should say at the start that I do not accept the description by the Member of the outcome of the Strasbourg Summit in this area. In fairness, I cannot see how the particular decision there can be described or dismissed as pious aspirations. In my view — I am sure it is a view shared by very many — a 'firm declaration of intent' would be a far more appropriate term to apply to that particular decision.

CHRISTIANSEN (S). — (DA) The President-in-Office firmly assures us that the presidency will give priority to the social dimension in the implementation of the single market. He said he would ensure that that dimension

was built in. May I take it he is satisfied that the existing Treaty is sufficient to provide the legal basis for the implementation of every piece of the social action programme?

COLLINS. — I wish to thank the Member for his supplementary question and say to him again that I want to assure him that the Irish presidency is fully committed to advancing the social dimension, as I have already spelt out in great detail during the course of my programme address here this morning. With regard to the second part of this question, I am sure the Member will agree with me that this particularly depends on the legal basis which the Commission suggests.

CUSHNAHAN (PPE). — I would like to ask the Minister whether, bearing in mind that some Member States were very reluctant supporters of the Social Charter, the Minister would give us an assurance that the Council will not be prepared to allow those Member States who are reluctantly committed to the Social Charter to use the principle of subsidiarity to thwart and delay implementation of the most important elements?

COLLINS. — I would like to assure the Members that the Council will very definitely act on the action programme and on the proposals which will be submitted.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 9 by Mr Newton Dunn (H-577/89):

Subject: Article 113 Committee

How is a consensus reached in an Article 113 Committee on what are to become the negotiating priorities for the Community?

Do the Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers apply?

In other words: is there an agenda, is there majority-voting, are there minutes?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Council. — The special committee provided for in Article 113 of the EEC Treaty assists the Commission in the trade negotiations it conducts under this Article of the Treaty within the framework of directives issued by the Council. In accordance with Article 113 the Commission remains solely responsible for the conduct of negotiations the results of which are submitted to the Council.

The special committee operates within the Council framework in accordance with the usual Rules of Procedure. Agendas are drawn up by the presidency in the light of the items and priorities requested by the Commission or by the delegations. No votes are taken, delegations being required to express their views for the Commission which is thus fully informed of the position of the Member States and can take these into account in the course of the negotiations.

NEWTON DUNN (ED). — I thank the President-in-Office for that helpful and informative reply. Since the Commission is present at these meetings — and the Commission is, after all, an entirely separate institution — and since the Council of Ministers is present at meetings of parliamentary committees — and the Parliament is a separate institution — does the President-in-Office not think it would be appropriate if representatives of Parliament could sit in as observers at Council meetings?

COLLINS. — The honourable Member will be aware that proceedings of the Council are confidential under Article 18.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 10 by Mr Alavanos (H-585/89):

Subject: Seat of the European Environment Agency

No Community agency is located in Athens and the city also has the most chronic air pollution problems of any capital in the Community.

What is the Council's reaction to the Green Environment Minister's proposal that Athens should be the seat of the European Environment Agency?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — At the Summit meeting in Strasbourg on 8 and 9 December 1989 the European Council instructed the Council to take a decision on the seat of the agency as soon as possible. The Irish presidency hopes that the Council can come to a rapid decision on the location of the agency so as to allow an early commencement of its important work.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) That is not a proper answer because everything that the president-in-Office has told us we knew already. I would like to repeat my question, and while not wishing to embroil the president-in-Office in rivalry between the various member countries and their principal cities, I would at least like to know whether, as the spokesman for the Irish Presidency, for the Presidency held, as it is now, by a small country on the periphery of the Community, he subscribes to the view that the main agencies of the Community, or new agencies, ought to be located more widely rather than always in the big and powerful countries?

COLLINS. — I am sure the Member appreciates that it would be very unhelpful to speculate in public on the claims of the various locations which have expressed an interest in hosting the agency. This matter will be discussed in the Council when the examination of the various submissions from the Member States has been completed.

I indicated this morning the high priority that the Irish presidency intends to give environment matters. In this context we wish to see an early decision on the location

of the agency as requested by the Strasbourg European Council. We will make every effort to facilitate final adoption of the proposal and we hope that we shall have the full cooperation of Parliament in this endeavour.

LANE (RDE). — The essential priority is that the Environment Agency be set up as soon as possible and located in the best possible place within the Community. I do not think it is correct for somebody to suggest Greece or Ireland or whatever. What we need is an agency in a green location. Where else but Ireland?

COLLINS. — Everybody here would agree with the views of Mr Lane on the need for an early decision on the establishment of the agency. It is our firm intention to get agreement on this. That is what matters. The location is a secondary matter.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) I would like the Bureau to intervene to ensure that Question Times produces proper answers. I have tried twice, with my written question and with my supplementary, and all I have got back are two answers written in advance that bear no relation to the questions.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Alavanos, that was not a point of order. The Council is free to answer questions in whatever fashion it deems appropriate.

Question No 11 by Mrs Banotti (H-587/89):

Subject: European Charter for children in hospitals

Could the President-in-Office please indicate if the Irish presidency would be prepared to ask the Commission to draw up proposals to introduce the European Charter for children in hospitals in all the Member States following Parliament's acceptance of this Charter in 1986?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — The European Parliament's resolution of 13 May 1986 specifically asks the Commission to submit a proposal for a European Charter on the rights of children in hospital, to the Council. It is therefore for the Commission in the first place to consider this request. While this is my formal response on behalf of the Council, I would wish to express my personal support for the Parliament's view on the need to provide for a broad recognition of the special needs of children in hospital. Therefore I have noted the Commission's statement to this House in May of 1989 to the effect that it is giving careful consideration to the substance of Parliament's resolution on this matter.

BANOTTI (PPE). — Thank you, Mr President-in-Office. It looks as though nothing is being done and the substance of my question is to ask the presidency whether they will be doing anything about it apart from waiting with bated breath like the rest of us for the Commission to come up with some suggestions?

BANOTTI

As you rightly say, it is now nearly three years since Parliament specifically asked for a charter for children in hospitals. We gave it a push in May, still nothing has been done. Could you be a little more explicit, Mr President-in-Office, as to what you propose to do about pushing the Commission on this matter?

COLLINS. — I would be glad in a personal way to give all the help I can to the authors of the resolution to push it. I would refer the Member to the second part of my original answer to the question which I shall repeat: I said I would wish to express my personal support for Parliament's view on the need to provide for a broad recognition of the special needs of children in hospital. As a result I have noted the Commission's statement to the House in May 1989 to the effect that it is giving careful consideration to the substance of Parliament's resolution on this matter. I shall certainly, on a personal basis, be very glad to help the authors of the resolution get the matter on board as quickly as possible.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 12 by Sir Jack Stewart-Clark (H-592/89):

Subject: Drugs

Is the Council aware that 70% of the world's cocaine production is now sourced from coca leaves grown in Peru and that 250 000 hectares are now under cultivation with coca bushes in that country? At the same time, climate and soil conditions make it possible to grow in that same region corn, rice, pineapples, bananas, palm trees and also to raise cattle. However, roads to the coast from the coca growing areas either do not exist or are in unsurfaced form only and subject to severe flooding. This currently makes transport to the coast of alternative crops grown in the area almost impossible.

What action does the Council intend to take to help the Peruvians improve the present unsatisfactory situation?

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Council*. — I would remind the honourable Member that the European Council in Strasbourg stated that the Community must strengthen its cooperation with the Latin American countries and in particular support the efforts of the Andean Pact countries to combat drugs, find substitute crops and improve the outlets for those crops. As for the funds made available by the Community, the 1990 budget adopted at the last part-session comprises in Article 949 appropriations totalling ECU 9.8 million to support the programme to combat drug abuse in the Andean States of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

In Item 9310 — Financial and technical cooperation with Latin American developing countries — appropriations totalling ECU 115 million are entered to cover *inter alia* agriculture and food development schemes in those countries, in particular the poorest of them.

STEWART-CLARK, Sir Jack (ED). — I wonder if the Council really understands the nature of the problem. As I said in my question, you can grow not only coca but corn, rice, pineapples, bananas, palm trees and also raise cattle in the area where drugs are being grown. There is no infrastructure between the drug-growing areas and the coast and until that is so I would like to know what the Council is intending to do. Does it recognize the scale of the problem? Does it recognize also that the street value of coca being grown in that area of Peru is no less than \$150 000 million? Does the Council not feel ashamed on behalf of us all at the smallness of the amounts that are being put to this vital task?

COLLINS. — I am sure the Member realizes that the Council and Parliament agreed on the amounts and I would like to reassure the honourable Members that the Council collectively and individually very much try and understand the nature of the problem. It is a very broad and complex problem and I am sure they are as interested in trying to understand the problem as anybody else anywhere else can be. Of course, the object of the funds provided by the Community is to assist in improving the infrastructure as mentioned in the Member's question.

In my programme address this morning, I stressed our determination to continue the fight against drug abuse which represents a major challenge for the Community and, indeed, for the wider world. The coordinators' group on drugs will ensure the vital coordination of Members States' activities. The group has already met under the Irish presidency and will deal in particular with prevention, health and social policy, suspension of drug trafficking, and international action. I can assure the honourable Member that there is a major problem here to be confronted by all of us if we are to succeed, as we must do, on behalf of those whom we all represent in our different democracies and whose interests for the future are in our hands.

TARADASH (V). — (IT) I would like to ask the Council how, in effect, it proposes to operate. The problem of the spread of drug consumption and production is a problem that we can no longer expect to solve with words, unaccompanied by any concrete action whatsoever.

The information with which we have been provided by Mr Stewart-Clark has made me aware of a fact that I consider absolutely frightful: scarcely five years ago the land under coca cultivation in Peru amounted to 37 600 hectares whereas now — as Mr Stewart-Clark tells us — five years later, it amounts to 250 000 hectares. This means that there is tremendous economic pressure which cannot be countered by the normal market forces.

Well then, my question is: Does not the Council think that the main line of action should be to deprive this agricultural product of its value and that, in order to so deprive it, it is necessary to legalize a market that, no

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longer itself having any value, would no longer have any interest in spreading all over the world?

COLLINS. — Firstly I would like to inform this House that I have a very strong personal commitment on this particular issue bearing in mind the fact that I was Minister for Justice in my country for six or seven years. I know at first hand the difficulties we have to meet in an effort to deal successfully with this problem.

I also want to say that the decision during the French presidency to establish the coordinators' group to bring together all the various groups that were involved in this particular area was a very wise one and the French presidency is to be congratulated and thanked for that. As I have already said, this group has met during the Irish presidency and will be working very effectively to try and collate all the information within the Community in an effort to develop a European plan to fight drugs.

Let us not for a second mislead anybody by saying that that will be the end to drugs in the European scene. Drugs are not just a problem for Europe. Drugs are an international problem and we too have our responsibilities in other parts of the world where the plant is grown as regularly as it is. Indeed, from what I understand from friends of mine working in the Trevi Group, when the pressure gets too hot, certain well-known producing countries are now finding softer and easier regimes in other countries which have similar climatic conditions where they can move in overnight and grow drugs.

MAHER (LDR). — In view of the very adequate and very worrying information provided by Sir Jack Stewart-Clark in his question, I would like to put two questions to the Minister. Has the Council had, or is it intended to have, specific discussions with the Peruvian authorities on this particular problem, since Peru, as Sir Jack Stewart-Clark points out, is the main growing area for cocaine? Since he also points out that producers of these products must have alternatives if they are to continue existing in these regions — you cannot just tell them to stop growing drugs and give them no other opportunities — would the Council be prepared to consider putting on a priority list alternative products that could be imported into the European Community? We would then put those products on a priority list for importation. We must give them an outlet when we tell them they cannot produce drug-producing products.

COLLINS. — I note what the honourable Member from my own constituency has raised in his supplementary question. Of course the position is, as he will recall, that it is not the Council which conducts discussions with Peru or anyone else, it is the Commission. It is its task to talk to the countries where Community funds are being spent. I am quite satisfied that it does that. Regarding the second part of the question on providing alternative cash crops, of course we would all be in full agreement with this. This would

have to be a part of the European plan which I have already mentioned, and which it is the responsibility of the drugs coordinating group to put before us for consideration.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 13 by Mr Bandres Molet (H-602/89):

Subject: Adoption of draft legislation on the environment

In the light of the growing public awareness of environmental problems in the Community, the many resolutions repeatedly adopted by Parliament on the need to take rapid, effective measures to protect and regenerate the environment, the fact that such measures should be supported by Community legislation and, lastly, Parliament's resolution on the year of the environment (Doc. A2-161/88)¹ calling *inter alia*, for the adoption of Community standards on the environment which would be binding on all Member States, when does the Council plan to adopt any of the draft legislation on the environment which has been pending before it for some time?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Council. — As I stated earlier today, the Irish presidency regards the advancement of the Community environment policy as one of its main priorities and intends that during the next six months the Council, in consultation with Parliament, will conclude the negotiations on a significant number of proposals and will ensure that the Community continues to play a leading role in negotiations on the global environment. During 1989 the Council adopted or approved in substance seven major legislative acts on the protection of the environment. They are proposals for directives on (a) the prevention of air pollution from new municipal waste incineration plants; (b) the reduction of air pollution from existing municipal waste incineration plants; (c) the amendment of Directive 80/779/EEC on air quality limit values and a guideline use for sulphur dioxide and suspended particulates; (d) the procedures for harmonizing the programme for the reduction and eventual elimination of pollution caused by waste from the titanium dioxide industry; (e) the amendment of Directive 70/220/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to measures to be taken against air pollution by emission from motor vehicles; (f) the contained use of genetically modified microorganisms; and (g) the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms.

BANDRES MOLET (V). — (ES) I too would like to associate myself with this Assembly's salute to the new Irish presidency and I want you to know, Mr President-in-Office, that your reply is satisfactory. And I say that because as you are well aware, concern for the environment is now shared by everyone at least at the

¹ OJ No C 262, 10.10.1988, p. 197.

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verbal level. Right, left or centre, everyone expresses their concern on the issue. But beyond knowing what has been done up to now — I know that more or less — I wanted to know about the future. That is, does the Council yet have a timetable and a programme, at least for this presidency?

COLLINS. — The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection has a number of significant proposals on the table. These include measures dealing with the European Environment Agency, nitrate pollution, water quality, protection of habitats and access to information on the environment. We will press for agreement on these. We will also seek to advance discussion of other proposals, such as those on hazardous waste, municipal waste water and the disposal of batteries and accumulators. Proposals are also awaited on ecological labelling and vehicle emissions and these will be given appropriate attention by the Council.

SMITH, Llewellyn (S). — One of the environmental resolutions which has been passed by this Parliament is a call that toxic waste be destroyed as near as possible to the point of production. Would the Council therefore support a call for the ban on the exportation of toxic waste within the EEC? Secondly, the Minister referred to the role of incineration plants. Would the Council support a demand that information relating to the activities and the workings of those plants be brought into line with the kind of information allowed in countries such as the United States of America?

COLLINS. — I thank the Member for his supplementary question and say with a certain regret something which he already knows, namely that we can only act on Commission proposals. Of course, there is a proposal already on the table with regard to access to information on the environment.

GUTIÉRREZ DÍAZ (GUE). — (ES) Mr President-in-Office of the Council, naturally we are aware of your great sensitivity about ecological issues and I would like to put two questions along these lines: first, do you not think that the provisions being drawn up should be in the form of regulations not directives, given the importance of the environment and the legislative power of regulations? And, secondly, do you not think, Mr President-in-Office, that the economic resources intended for the preservation of the environment are insufficient? I said this morning, and I would like to recall it as an example, that only ECU 500 million have been earmarked for a three-year project like Envireg. Does this quantity not seem to you, if not ridiculous, at least insignificant?

SMITH, Llewellyn (S). — Mr President, on a point of order. As you will be aware, there were two parts to my question. The first part was the most significant part. It said that the European Parliament had passed a resolution saying that toxic waste should be destroyed

as near as possible to the point of production. I then asked the Minister...

PRESIDENT. — Mr Smith, you have attended enough Question Times to know that the Council answers the questions it chooses to answer. It is under no compulsion to answer all the questions.

COLLINS. — My apologies to the Member. Of course the toxic waste issue will be discussed by the Council. I should have mentioned that during the course of my reply. With regard to the supplementary question from my Spanish friend here behind me, I want to say to him that there is of course an obligation on us to fight all sources of pollution, irrespective of where they are, and in doing so use the general principle that the polluter pays. That will help us, because the costs involved are enormous.

CUSHNAHAN (PPE). — Bearing in mind that certain Member States do not comply with current EC directives on the environment, would the Minister give his assurance that, especially during the next six months under the 'Green' presidency of Ireland, those defaulting Member States will be pursued with the utmost vigour?

COLLINS. — I am sure the Member knows better than I that what he suggests is purely a matter for the Commission. It is their responsibility to deal with such matters, and far be it from me to do the Commission's job for it.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 14 by Mrs Izquierdo Rojo (H-607/89):

Subject: The European Community and its Mediterranean policy

Having regard to the Community's preferential relations with the Mediterranean countries, can the Council guarantee that the Community will continue to give priority to its Mediterranean policy?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Council. — In fact, at the meeting of the Council on General Affairs on 27 November 1989, the Council wished to emphasize the importance of the Community's relations with its Mediterranean partners and its will to strengthen them in view of the situation in that region and the increased interdependence between the Community and the Mediterranean countries. At the same time the Council agreed to examine further the Commission communication on redirecting the Community's Mediterranean policy submitted to the Council at its request. The communication is now being examined and the presidency will do all it can to ensure that operational conclusions are worked out as rapidly as possible. In any event, this matter will appear on the agenda for the Council meeting in February of 1990.

IZQUIERDO ROJO (S). — (ES) First I must say that the reply is quite encouraging, although somewhat inadequate given the significance of the subject: the challenge of the Mediterranean. Certainly the Community has done a great deal and chronologically — since 1970 — progress may well have been great, but if we analyse the state of the problems of Mediterranean countries, we have to recognize that the situation has unfortunately worsened, the economy is deteriorating even faster, the environmental problems are more acute. So I would like the President-in-Office to tell me whether the Mediterranean is really going to continue to receive priority attention from the Council. Can you tell us whether this new stage will be met with a renewal of policy, can we speak of quantitative and qualitative change?

COLLINS. — In reply to that specific question, I should like the Member to understand that the Community has agreements with 12 out of the 14 non-EEC Mediterranean countries. It grants them free industrial access, preferential access for agricultural products and EIB financing. It also maintains an institutional dialogue with these countries. The Commission communication entitled 'Redirecting the Community's Mediterranean Policy' spells out what is at stake. The Community cannot allow the gap to widen between its own economic and social development and that of its Mediterranean partners. The stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean basin are staple elements for the prosperity and stability of the Community. As I said in my programme address, our ties with the Mediterranean countries that are not Member States must be strengthened and adapted to meet these circumstances.

PRESIDENT. — We now come to questions to the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation.

Question No 24 by Mr Arbeloa Muru:

Subject: Killings in Palestine

What reactions have there been in the twelve Community Member States to the continued killings of Palestinians, especially young people and children, in Palestine over the last two years? Do not the Ministers consider that, in addition to verbal condemnations and preparations for the peace conference, they should have taken further steps to prevent the loss of so many lives?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — As honourable Members are well aware, the Twelve have in the course of the last two years followed very closely the continuing deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories, marked by the constant increase in the number of dead and wounded and the suffering of the population, which seriously affects the living conditions of the people, compromises in a lasting fashion the future of Palestinian society and prevents the economic and social development of the territories. In their opinion this situation is the dramatic result of the lack of progress in the search for a peaceful settlement of

the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israeli practices in the occupied territories have led the Twelve to stress repeatedly to the Israeli authorities that violence and repression have to stop and that human rights have to be respected. I have just had confirmation that, following a decision taken by the Twelve last week, a Troika *démarche* to the Israeli authorities on these issues was made on 14 January. At the European Council meeting held in Madrid, the Heads of State and Government launched an urgent appeal to the Israeli authorities to put an end to repressive measures in the occupied territories and to implement Resolutions 605, 607, 608 and 636 of the Security Council. At their meeting in Strasbourg, seriously concerned by violations of human rights in the occupied territories, they recalled the need for the occupying power to observe strictly its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilian populations in times of war, to which it has notably not conformed in such basic areas as health and education. At the same time the Community and its Member States announced their decision to increase substantially their aid to the inhabitants of these territories, in particular establishing as an objective the doubling of the Community's direct aid. The Twelve thus intend to contribute to the economic and social development of the occupied territories and help to preserve the common future of the Palestinian people.

ARBELOA MURU (S). — (ES) Thank you for the information, Mr President-in-Office of the Council, but I already know all that. All we are doing is pouring out words, making statements. So I find myself obliged, Mr President-in-Office, saddened by your sad reply, to ask you this: in view of what Israel is doing, violating every kind of human right, trampling all over United Nations declarations, those of the Council, Parliament, etc., has the Council planned or is it planning, directly or indirectly, any economic, cultural or political sanctions? Is it not even calling for a period of coldness in relations through the EC embassies, as it did when a Middle East power issued the death-threat against the writer Salman Rushdie?

COLLINS. — I assure Member that we have noted the European Parliament resolutions in question and, in a *démarche* to the Israeli authorities on 14 January, the Troika, in the name of the Twelve, emphasized once again the importance for Israel's relations with the Twelve of full respect for the human rights of the Palestinians of the occupied territories. The Troika expressed serious concern at the unjustified use of generalized violence against hundreds of people during authorized peaceful demonstrations in Jerusalem on 29 and 30 December which resulted in injuries to many participants, including a distinguished Member of the European Parliament. It expressed concern that current guidelines appear to permit the use of firearms in situations which are not life-threatening or even violent and referred in this connection to, among other things, the finding by Amnesty International that, since

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December 1987, Israeli forces have shot dead over 560 Palestinians. The Troika appeal to Israel to allow peaceful demonstrations to proceed freely, to cease using excessive force to put down demonstrations and other manifestations of the uprising, to ensure that law-enforcement officials do not exceed their powers, to review urgently the guidelines on opening fire and to implement Security Council Resolutions Nos 605, 607, 608 and 636. The Troika reiterated the view of the Twelve that the Geneva Convention on the protection of civilian populations in time of war are applicable to the occupied territories, noting that the occupying power has not conformed to its obligations in such basic areas as health and education. It recalled the terms of the Declaration of the Heads of State and Government in Madrid and Strasbourg, in particular the decision that the Community and its Member States will increase substantially their aid to the inhabitants of the occupied territories, establishing as an objective the doubling of the Community's direct aid. On the basis of the Declaration of the European Council in Strasbourg, the Troika recalled the need to open dialogue in order to reach a peace settlement, which alone can ensure the rights and legitimate aspirations of each of the parties. In this connection, it recalled that the measures recently taken against Faisal Hosseini and the other inhabitants of the occupied territories are not conducive to the climate of confidence necessary for any negotiation.

COONEY (PPE). — Surely it is clear to the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation that Israel does not give tuppence about diplomatic *démarches*, UN resolutions, declarations by the European Council or anywhere else and that Israel's continued intransigent obstruction of the peace process in the occupied territories is the cause of the continued trouble there and that, until the Ministers meeting in political cooperation follow up the suggestion of Mr Arbeloa Muru and impose sanctions, nothing else will bring Israel to heel and bring peace to that area.

COLLINS. — I thank the Member for his comments and would like to say to him that I am sure they will be taken into consideration.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, a little while ago, in response to a point of order raised by Mr Alavanos, you said that the Council is free to answer questions in whatever fashion it deems appropriate. That worries me, and first of all I want to raise a point of order, because the Council does not have the right to reply as it thinks fit. That is not acceptable in any parliament, and this is the European Parliament. The Council has a duty to answer the question, and so far it has not done so. The questioner has not asked if the Council is concerned or not, or whether it has said this or that to the Israeli Government. It is something else he is after. He wants to know what the Council is doing to stop this genocide which threatens to trigger off a general war in the region. The question to the President-in-Office is: what is the Council actually doing? But he

will not give an answer. He says the Council is concerned, but we did not ask about that. Not concerned? That really would be all we ever needed! We have not asked whether you have appealed for restraint. What are you actually doing to stop this barbarity against unarmed people, against women and children? You yourself have said how many have been shot dead. Bearing in mind that a section of your own population is suffering in the same way — though I will say no more about that — what steps are you, as the Irish presidency in particular actually taking?

(*Applause*)

PRESIDENT. — Thank you Mr Ephremidis. I think we all recognize the strength of your feelings on this matter, but I should make it clear that the presidency is here to answer questions on behalf of the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation. He is not here to give his own opinions but to speak on the views of the Foreign Ministers collectively. If he is unaware of those views, it is very difficult for him to give an answer. Perhaps the President-in-Office would like to comment on that?

COLLINS. — Mr President, I gave a very comprehensive reply as to what we were doing at the present time.

PRESIDENT. — As they deal with the same subject, the following questions will be taken together. Question No 25 by Mrs Ewing (H-548/89):

Subject: Cambodian representatives to the United Nations

Will the President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation now make representations to the United Nations, based on the European Parliament's resolution, that the present representatives for Cambodia be disqualified?

and Question No 26 by Mr Alavanos (H-583/89):

Subject: Follow-up to Parliament's resolution on Cambodia

At its November part-session the European Parliament adopted a resolution¹ on Cambodia calling on the Community's Member States to withdraw their military, economic and political support for the opposition forces in Cambodia, among them the Khmer Rouge who are once again threatening the people of that country with genocide, and to assist the Phnom Penh Government, following the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, in its efforts to achieve reconciliation and rebuild the country.

What action have the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation taken along the lines of Parliament's proposals?

¹ Joint resolution Docs B 3-528, 538, 544, 557, 558, 563 and 566/89, Minutes of 23-11-1989.

COLLINS, *President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers*. — In response to Mr Wynn's question on 12 December, the then presidency outlined a number of aspects of current Twelve policy towards Cambodia. Like other members of the international community, the Twelve are actively considering how best to contribute in present circumstances to a comprehensive political solution of the Cambodian problem. I can assure the honourable Member that the resolution of Parliament on Cambodia is being duly taken into consideration in the course of discussions within the EPC framework.

EWING, Mrs (ARC). — May I first of all congratulate Mr Collins to the House as President-in-Office, and wish him a very successful six months in this position of great dignity.

Could I ask him whether his reply really answers my question. He has stated what they are proposing to do about Cambodia. I am asking a very specific question as to whether the Twelve, who have great power in the world, could not use their muscle to put an end to the obscenity of the present representation of Cambodia in the United Nations? It is a living insult to democracy and to the world. Surely it would not be asking too much for the Foreign Ministers to use their power to intervene and say that they should not be sitting there. All too often the Foreign Ministers say that they cannot do anything, but they can actually do quite more than they admit. This is one thing they could do. Will you ask them to do it?

COLLINS. — In reply to Mrs Ewing on this particular issue, I feel I should say that the Twelve have welcomed Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia, and following this significant step, there is an obligation on all parties to intensify the search for a peaceful settlement to the Cambodian problem. The objective of the Twelve is to pursue a solution to the Cambodian conflict, guaranteeing the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and neutrality of Cambodia, and enabling the Cambodian people to control its own destiny through free and fair elections.

The test for international diplomacy in the coming months will be to build on the dialogue which took place at the Paris Conference, to bring that objective within reach. In this regard, there have been a number of proposals for a strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the achievement of a comprehensive settlement. It is encouraging that the permanent members of the Security Council have been meeting in Paris yesterday and today to discuss the Cambodian issue. A readiness to explore the possible role of the United Nations in achieving a solution, with all that this implies, would be consistent with the stated priorities of the Twelve.

BANOTTI Mrs (PPE). — The President-in-Office will be aware that unfortunately, the Paris meeting was a total failure. In fact it was a complete fiasco.

Following on Mrs Ewing's supplementary question, and referring also to Mr Alavanos' question on Cambodia which follows, could the President-in-Office tell us if the Foreign Ministers meeting in European political cooperation intend to take any active part in the current discussions, which I understand are taking place under the sponsorship of Australia which made the suggestion in the first place? Are they aware also that, notwithstanding the pious hopes expressed in this Parliament and indeed in the United Nations earlier, that the Khmer Rouge are making a significant progress in their march towards Phnom-Penh?

COLLINS. — I would like to assure Mrs Banotti that one of the key elements in the Twelve's position on Cambodia — and I am confident that I speak here for all my colleagues of the Twelve — is that a peace settlement in Cambodia must avoid, at all costs, a return to power of the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge. As the European Parliament has made clear, the return to power of this group would be unacceptable, not only to the governments, but more particularly to the peoples of Europe. The crimes of the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s involve the extermination of hundreds of thousands of people. There is ample evidence of the continuity between the government of that period and the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge of today. As far as the Twelve are concerned, no opportunity must be given for a repetition of the horrors of the past.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) Let me have a third go on Mrs Ewing's question. As a political institution of the Community, an institution elected by the people, the European Parliament has adopted a resolution calling on the Member States to withdraw their support for the present representation of Cambodia in the United Nations. Are the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation going to act on Parliament's resolution, and what steps has the Irish presidency taken, what steps does it intend taking, to ensure that this support for the Pol Pot representatives at the UN is stopped?

COLLINS. — I refer the honourable Member to my answer to Mrs Ewing's question in which I said that the Twelve are taking Parliament's resolution into account in their current assessment of the situation in Cambodia.

GARCIA ARIAS (S). — (ES) An Australian proposal to place Cambodia under United Nations administration pending free elections in that country was discussed at the recent meeting of the representatives of the Security Council of the United Nations. As we know, an obstacle arose when the Secretary-General of the United Nations pointed out that the economic resources of the UN are very limited. Faced with this clear example of the need to strengthen the United Nations' ability to take action in the cause of peace, I ask the Ministers for Foreign Affairs meeting in European political cooperation whether they will seriously look at ways of making United Nations action in such conflicts possible.

COLLINS. — I am sure that the Twelve will consider very seriously indeed the outcome of the meeting of the members of the Security Council of the United Nations who are meeting yesterday and today in Paris and will want to play a very active role in preventing the Pol Pot/Khmer Rouge regime ever returning to power in Cambodia.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) Perhaps the question has now been answered, but I would like to put another supplementary. According to today's newspapers, Pol Pot forces have now entered Battambang, Cambodia's second city, and according to the same newspapers these forces have been receiving training in the use of mines from the British special forces — with all the harm that these mines can inflict on the population. I would therefore like to ask the President-in-Office how hard he is prepared to press in political cooperation for the withdrawal of military support and training for the Khmer Rouge forces by the Community's Member States, and by Great Britain above all.

COLLINS. — I understand that the Community has never supported the Khmer Rouge. I have not seen the newspaper reports the Member refers to. I will avail of the first opportunity so see what they say and evaluate it as best I can.

PRESIDENT. — As the author is not present, Question No 27 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 28, by Mrs Giannakou-Koutsikou (H-560/89):

Subject: The human rights of Greeks from the Black Sea area living in the Soviet Union

There are now more than one million Greeks from the Black Sea area living in the Soviet Union. Their human rights situation is appalling and they are unable freely to exercise the basic right of choosing where they wish to live, as they have been living in the steppes of Kazakhstan and other deserted areas of the USSR since 1937 when they were banished there by Stalin. These Greeks do not even enjoy the basic human rights accorded to the other inhabitants of the USSR.

Will the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation make official representation to the leaders of the USSR to remedy this flagrant violation of the rights of the Black Sea Greeks?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — The Twelve welcome the positive developments in the Soviet Union concerning the exercise of human rights. However, they remain vigilant as they were during the first meeting of the Conference on the human dimension of the CSCE held in Paris in June 1989 concerning the promotion of all fundamental freedoms included in the final document of the Vienna meeting.

The meeting of the Conference on the human dimension to be held in June 1990 in Copenhagen and in Moscow in 1991 will provide the opportunity for a further review of the manner in which the commitments in the field of human rights have been observed.

GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU (PPE). — (GR) Other Members have been saying it, and I am sorry to have to say it again, but it worries me that the Council never answers questions properly. We all welcome the changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. We all want the situation to improve still further, which is why the European Community is supporting change in the Soviet Union. But I did not ask you about that, nor, for that matter, did I ask about international conferences that I have all the information on anyway. I asked if you are prepared, within the framework of political cooperation and not at some conference or other, to make representations to the Soviet Union about the particular matter my question refers to, and not about human rights in general. That was the question and you could have told me that you are not prepared to do so, but I did not need you to tell me about international conferences and that you welcome the developments that have taken place, because we all do and we have never stopped saying so.

COLLINS. — In an effort to be helpful to the Member I would say that it is now recognized in the Soviet Union that the legitimate rights of the population of Greek origin and of other ethnic minorities were not adequately protected in the past. In recent years the position of the Greeks in the Soviet Union has improved, for example, through the establishment of their own associations aimed at promoting their cultural identity and pursuing activities mainly in the cultural and social fields.

There has also been a dramatic increase in the numbers permitted to leave for Greece. We must acknowledge, I believe, the favourable trend under Mr Gorbachev as regards respect for the rights of minority groups. The Madrid European Council drew attention to the concern of the Twelve where such individuals are concerned. As I have said the situation will be kept under review in the CSCE framework.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) I have asked to put a supplementary because my roots lie in this particular section of the Greek diaspora and I follow things closely. I would like to question the President-in-Office on another aspect. Black Sea Greeks have been taking advantage of their right to return to Greece on such a scale that some twenty or thirty thousand of them have arrived in Greece quite recently. One wonders, therefore, whether the Community, acting through the process of political cooperation and using the Commission as the coordinating institution, is prepared to assist with social and vocational integration programmes for those who have arrived in Greece, and, if so, to what extent? That, really, is what we ought to be concentrating on, because the other points are, in fact, not

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

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borne out by what the Greek Foreign Ministry is saying. According to its account, schools where Greek is taught do exist for the Black Sea Greeks of the Soviet Union, and there is even a college where Greek language teachers are trained. Having said that, I shall be grateful now if the President-in-Office can tell me whether funds can be made available to the Greek Government to help it carry through its social integration programmes for those twenty or thirty thousand people who have chosen to live in Greece.

COLLINS. — I feel I must say to the Member from Greece that on the question of need for a Community programme of assistance to people returning to Greece from the Soviet Union for the purpose of providing training programmes, I am sure the Member would agree with me that this is a matter for a separate question. Nevertheless I can see the importance of it. I am reasonably sure, though I would not put it any stronger than that, that moneys are not being given by the Community to the Greek Government for this specific purpose at this particular time.

PRESIDENT. — As the author is not present, Question 29 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 39, by Mr de Rossa (H-11/90)

Subject: Central America

What steps are being taken to ensure that substantive progress on political and economic issues will be made at the forthcoming meeting with Foreign Ministers of the Central American States under the San Jose framework?

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — The honourable Member's question will be answered more fully in the context of the debate on Central America later today. I would only say at this stage that it has been the policy of the Twelve for a number of years to encourage the efforts of the Central American countries to achieve peace in the region. Through our dialogue on the San Jose framework, we have sought to be a catalyst for progress. In this perspective, we are encouraged by the agreement of the Central American countries on 10 and 11 December aimed at resolving several serious problems of the region, and notably the demobilization of the Contras. I can assure the Member that the necessary political and economic contacts to ensure a successful outcome of the San Jose dialogue are ongoing. As has been made clear to the Central American countries on a number of occasions, our goal is to see the type of progress that San Jose seeks which will permit the further development of economic and technical cooperation between the Community and the countries of the region.

DE ROSSA (CG). — Mr President, I thank the President-in-Office for that reply. Given that in general

the Irish Government have tended to have a fairly good position in relation to Central America, would the Minister, in view of his new status in Europe and in relation to EPC, initiate a round of diplomatic talks in Central America in order to pinpoint the issues which need solutions, which need rectification so that the meeting, when it takes place in Dublin, can have some fruitful outcome and there will be some substantive progress made and it will not simply be another meeting where a lot of words will be used but very little progress made. Surely the Minister would agree that he has an opportunity now to make a real input into this area? I would ask him if he would consider doing so.

COLLINS. — In reply to Mr de Rossa, I would say generally I am in agreement with his request. I would hope that progress will continue. I would have to bear in mind, of course, the outcome of the discussion which we are going to have here this afternoon which I am sure will be helpful to all of us in clarifying the situation and our thinking on the issues. I very much welcome the suggestion. It will be given very serious consideration.

GUTIERREZ DÍAZ (GUE). — (ES) Mr President-in-Office, would you not agree that San Jose VI is likely to prove another disappointment unless there is some progress towards peace in the area? San Jose V offered opportunities, but in spite of ECU 120 million, interregional trade has not increased due to the tensions in the zone. In this connection, do you not consider it fundamental to assist with the elections in Nicaragua and consequently to ask the United States, in the name of the Twelve, to demobilize the Contras once and for all?

COLLINS. — I trust the Member will agree with me that this is an issue we can discuss in greater detail during the course of the debate here this afternoon. We will have the benefit of views, not just from yourself and myself, but from other Members who, I am sure, will participate in the debate as well.

PRESIDENT. — Mr President-in-Office, thank you for your participation.

The first part of Question Time is concluded.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ANASTASSOPOULOS

Vice-President

8. Statement by the Council on the programme of activities of the Irish presidency (continuation)

CUSHNAHAN (PPE). — Mr President, I would like to join with my colleagues in welcoming the new President-in-Office of the Council. He has my best wishes for a successful six-month presidency and I assure him of our broad support for the programme he

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

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outlined this morning. With tongue in cheek I welcome him as one Limerick man to another.

I noted that half the Minister's address to this House concerned events outside the European Community. Of course, that is not surprising given the dramatic events that are taking place in Central and Eastern Europe. However, whatever happens in that region, progress within the Community on economic, monetary and, I would add, social union must not be impeded. I appreciate the importance of the historic changes that President Gorbachev has unleashed and is trying to achieve and our need to support him. I also realize the importance of our close relationship with the United States. However, it is by achieving progress in economic and social cohesion within the existing Community that we can grow in political importance and have a greater influence outside Europe and we must not be deflected from that particular task.

One must say that to date there has been a lack of sufficient progress on economic and monetary union and tax harmonization. I believe that the Irish presidency is uniquely placed to speed up the pace of progress because it has less vested interest in these areas than the larger Member States. However, because of the decisions involved there is an imperative need for democratic accountability and for that to be exercised particularly by this Parliament. When one talks about increasing the powers of this Parliament, it is not just simply the Parliament having full legislative powers but also that it should have real political control over the Commission as well. I regret that the Minister did not dwell in detail on that particular issue this morning.

On the question of regionalization, particularly as the trend at the moment within Europe is towards a Europe of the regions, it is the responsibility of the Irish presidency to create a new dynamism in the regions, especially to encourage self-development in such a way that regional planning utilizes its own human and natural resources to the best effect. Coming to the question of structural funding, we have had the latest batch of increased structural funding. But as yet there has been no real obvious benefit in reducing the problems of peripheral regions, particularly in the field of unemployment. I would put this question to the President-in-Office: Is it not now time to take stock and ask if the funds now being distributed are being spent in the most effective and efficient way?

As regards the social dimension, this Parliament, and my group in particular, believe that the progress on the social and economic dimensions of European Union can only go forward in tandem. With his speech this morning the Irish presidency seems to have abandoned this principle in making little provision for achieving a social Europe and I would repeat what I said to the President-in-Office earlier. The Irish presidency must not allow national governments to use the principle of subsidiarity to thwart the implementation of a strong and progressive social charter. As regards unemployment in the Community there is huge reserve of unspent

funds in the budget, in the region of some ECU 10 billion. Representing as I do a country that has one of the highest rates of unemployment and, as a consequence, high emigration, I am disappointed that Mr Collins did not give any priority in his speech this morning to tackling the problems of unemployment. A passing reference to our greatest evil is quite frankly insufficient. I would hope that during his presidency he would call a special meeting of the Council to address this issue in more detail because progress in this area will accelerate in a genuine way progress towards a social union.

Those are the main comments I would like to make in this debate and the points where I would take issue with the President-in-Office. I repeat that I wish him well in his six months of office and I assure him we shall do all we can from these benches to help him in moving many of the important issues on the agenda to the point where they are truly implemented and making progress towards the road towards political union in Europe.

NICHOLSON (PPE). — Mr President, as the European Community develops towards 1992 we all have a daunting challenge ahead of us. The damage caused to the environment over the years must be uppermost in all our minds. We have a responsibility, I believe, to all our people and especially to future generations for our inheritance. We have a duty to ensure that inheritance is passed on in a preserved condition. Time is not on our side. You must during your term in office pursue with positive proposals the betterment of Europe as an environmental area of which we can all be justly proud.

My area is one of the most peripheral within the Community. Our dependence on agriculture as the backbone of our economy is undeniable. Coming from a peripheral part of the United Kingdom, never mind the Continent of Europe, I have to say to the President-in-Office that he has a duty during his term in office to ensure that areas to be most affected by 1992 receive constructive support to prepare for the challenge. This must come from regional and structural Funds. Areas like Northern Ireland suffer enough. Rural development must be pursued with the utmost vigour to restore the regions and bring agricultural and rural areas back to their former states. The nations with the strong economies must support the weak and the strong nations must support the weaker areas within their own frontiers.

It is a fact, Mr President-in-Office, that areas within my constituency have suffered financial loss following the decision of your government to introduce the 48-hour rule against their own people coming to Northern Ireland, buying goods and bringing them home. Towns like Newry, Enniskillen, Omagh, Strabane, Londonderry and Armagh have suffered most from this policy. I suggest to the President-in-Office that such a policy is parochial and contrary to all he has said here today. I invite the President-in-Office to take the only honourable decision now open to him, not to wait for

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the Court of Justice's decision, and withdraw this unacceptable decision immediately.

This is my first opportunity to join in a debate in this Parliament with a government minister from a neighbouring State. It is a rare occasion that a Unionist can stand face-to-face with a minister from the Republic of Ireland on an equal footing as I do today so I intend to speak my mind on behalf of those I represent and I hope he will take it in the way it is meant.

I would like at this stage to say that I heard comments from two Members here in this Chamber today who clearly proved the differences that exist between the two parts within the island of Ireland. I have to say that their nationalistic speeches are out of date. Their aim and object are unattainable, despite what they have said — and I certainly hope and trust that the Minister in his replies will make that quite clear from his position today. When the President-in-Office and I recently exchanged letters, about a month ago, I stated my position clearly and openly. I do not retract what I said and I shall treat your presidency as I would that of any other national government. I can assure you that the people I represent will not be disenfranchised during your term of office. There are many differences between us, cultural and otherwise, stretching back over the centuries. However, I believe it is correct to say that the Ulster Unionist Party which I represent has played its part in improving relations between our two Member States in recent times. There is a long way to go.

At a time when we witness the growing freedom in Eastern Europe we rejoice in their deliverance from tyrannical regimes. You spoke of democracy and as a democrat I find I have to say that my own province is not in that same position.

HERMANS (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, the Irish are taking over the presidency at a historic moment in world events. The recent developments in Eastern Europe make us more than ever aware that we are now working on the Europe of the year 2000 and that, where political, economic and security developments are concerned, we face completely new challenges, not only to the Europe of the Twelve but to the whole of Europe and the whole world. I wish the presidency of the Council every success, but I hope it will also ensure that there will be a place in policy in the next six months for the everyday concerns and expectations of ordinary men and women. I hope it will succeed in giving social Europe a sound basis. This social Europe must give the people confidence in the future.

I am thinking here, among other things, of policy measures that ensure genuine equal treatment of men and women in employment. I hope that, in consultation with Parliament and recognizing the role it plays, the presidency will be able to do something, for example, for the protection of workers in atypical occupations, for women returners, for people who interrupt their careers and for parental leave. I have referred to only a few of the possible measures that can help to strengthen

the position of women in society. Nor is it a question of doing women favours, as is sometimes proposed. They are measures that will make it possible for men and women to combine family tasks and employment more flexibly in the future. If we want a future in which care for children and young people and for the sick, the elderly and the disabled in interpersonal relations is possible and important, we must take the necessary action at European level now. We must get to work on family-oriented policy. In Belgium the present Minister for Employment and Labour has put forward a ten-point programme which will permit closer coordination of employment and family life. I would like to see more research, exchanges of information and programmes of action concerning the family and employment throughout the Community.

Secondly, I want to draw your attention to the education and training problem in Europe. I do not think we treat this sector very well. This is also apparent from the Commission's programme for 1990. At the moment both policy-makers and the education community itself are concerned about two things: firstly, the retention of as much autonomy and responsibility as possible as regards organization and content, and secondly, awareness of and a desire to be involved in the new prospect offered by Europe of creating scope for the European dimension in both vocational training and general education. What we have here are, as it were, processes of innovation that are emerging spontaneously. They are emerging at all policy levels, from the nursery school to university. But processes like this require more support, supervision and coordination.

I therefore call on the Irish presidency to promote European thinking on education and training and to work constructively on a European policy in this respect.

In education and training Europe must stop being a privilege restricted to a few thousand young people who have the good fortune to be able to participate in Erasmus, Esprit and Lingua. Europe must be able to offer millions of young people a future that is worthy of consideration. During their education young people must be able to grow towards Europe, consciously and enthusiastically. I therefore hope you will take a particular interest in the democratization of education. I know that this is a subject of very grave concern in Ireland too.

LLORCA VILAPLANA (PPE). — (ES) Mr President-in-Office of the Council, I want to welcome the Irish presidency and wish you every success during your term. Ireland has demonstrated its special sensitivity to social issues both in the previous Irish presidency and in the programme you set out this morning. And in that I include women's issues. The beginning of your presidency coincides with the United Nations declaration proclaiming this year of 1990 International Literacy Year. There is probably no greater human calamity, no greater helplessness, than cultural marginalization, and it is an extremely serious problem

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when one realizes that it affects a quarter of the world's population, that is, more than one thousand million inhabitants. Although 90% of these people who cannot read or write live in Third World countries, some Community States are affected by this evil. There persists amongst us not only the illiteracy known as 'functional', but also absolute illiteracy, and it is one of the constant causes of unemployment, crime, drugs, human servitude and failure of communication.

Although I do not want to discriminate between the sexes, it is a fact that illiteracy is more widespread amongst women, which is more worrying with a view to the future single European market. Faced with this opportunity and this challenge, I ask the Irish presidency to be sensitive to these facts and to cooperate with the United Nations to achieve solutions and actions which mitigate this malaise in what should be a constant battle for the complete elimination of illiteracy.

COLLINS, President-in-Office of the Council. — At the outset I want to say that the debate here today has given me a very valuable opportunity to acquire a first-hand acquaintance with the views of Parliament on the most important issues confronting the Community at the present time. You will appreciate, Mr President, that it will not be possible for me to cover the whole range of issues raised during the debate which was quite extensive. However, I would like to focus on a number of issues which struck me as being of particular importance for our work over the next six months. All the comments made have been very carefully noted.

On the economic and monetary union issue I very much welcome the views and comments expressed by Mr von Wogau, Mr De Clercq, Mrs Dury, Mr Cooney, Mr Desmond, the group spokesmen and others who took part. I was particularly glad of this opportunity to hear Parliament's views on how the negotiations for economic and monetary union should be conducted. Parliament has traditionally been a powerhouse of ideas directed towards furthering the cause of greater European integration. Your resolutions on economic and monetary union have already contributed greatly to public debate on this most vital aspect of the Community's development.

I appreciate Parliament's interest in being closely associated with the preparations for the intergovernmental conference and the Irish presidency will ensure that Parliament's ideas will be thoroughly discussed in the Council, I have every confidence, given the significance of Parliament's proposals for the future of the Community, that these will be given full and serious consideration by the Member States.

In my address this morning, Mr President, I stressed the need to press ahead with European integration and to make the Community more relevant to the lives of all our peoples. Central to these efforts is progress on economic and social cohesion. My government has welcomed the recent decisions on the structural Funds.

However, the achievement of economic and social cohesion requires more than structural funding, essential at this is. It requires an awareness in the application of all Community policies of the impact that such policies can have on cohesion and regional development. Balanced Community development is necessary and is in the interests of all.

I thank the Members for their views on the social dimension, in particular Mrs Dury and Members who spoke in the earlier part of the debate, Mr Desmond, Mr Cox, Mr Lalor, Mr De Rossa and Sir Christopher Prout. I want to say that they among others have reaffirmed Parliament's devotion to the development of the Community's social dimension. The Strasbourg Summit stressed the importance of the Community's social policy at the highest political level. During my programme address this morning I drew attention to the fact that the social dimension is an integral part of the internal market programme and that its development is one of our major presidency objectives. It is our intention to make as rapid progress as possible on proposals to be presented by the Commission arising out of the action programme.

There has been reference to our decision to hold one Social Affairs Council during the coming six months and to the question of the legal base for action in the social area. The scheduling of meetings of the Social Affairs Council during our presidency is based on careful appreciation of the proposals that are likely to be ripe for consideration by that Council. The agenda for this Council will be full and comprehensive and we are, of course, prepared to convene another meeting of the Council if developments suggest that this is worthwhile. The Commission will propose a legal basis for each measure presented to the Council in connection with its action programme to implement the Community Charter. The Council will consider these bases on their merits having regard to the content of the individual proposals and, of course, to the provisions of the Treaty.

I would like to thank the Members of the European Parliament for views on the environment question. In particular, I would thank Mrs Santos, Mrs Banotti, Mrs Fontaine, my namesake, Ken Collins, and others and to say to them that I have been encouraged by the positive response evoked by the desire to give special attention during our presidency to environmental matters. This initiative springs from our recognition of the vital necessity for Europe and the world of countering the threat posed by pollution. We want to maximize the Community's capacity to contribute effectively to the elaboration of concerted, international action on such grave environmental problems as the depletion of the ozone layer, the prospect of climatic change and the destruction of tropical forests.

Some Members, Mr President, have placed great emphasis on instances in which the Twelve have failed to reach a common position in EPC. The obligation we have accepted in the Single European Act is to attempt

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to harmonize our positions as far as possible. Instead of focusing on individual cases where a common position has not been achieved I would look more optimistically to the number of cases where the Twelve have acted together to very great effect.

As regards our overall approach to Central America the Twelve have at all times adopted a common position which we know has had a positive effect on developments in that region. The common position of the Twelve in the Middle East sustained over many years is a further clear illustration of the ability of the Twelve to articulate a common position of principle and to bring about an ever-widening acceptance of those principles by the international community. These examples, Mr President, could be multiplied but they show, I believe, that EPC methods and procedures are working well and have permitted the progressive development of common positions. Although some of our discussions have been protracted — not surprising in view of the complex nature of the subject matter — the consensus finally achieved can enjoy a wide credibility for that very same reason.

We had many speakers on Eastern Europe. It is a fact, of course, that we are witnessing in Eastern Europe the most fundamental changes in European political life now for over 40 years. The peoples of Eastern Europe have taken their destiny into their own hands and what more eloquent witness to this than the presence here in Strasbourg in these days of Alexander Dubcek who will address you tomorrow.

It is for the people of these countries to decide on their future. But our Community has a special responsibility to help in whatever way we can to ensure that these changes take place peacefully. Much has been done already and I would not share the view of those who have criticized the Commission's actions. It is testimony to the strength of the Community and its role in international life that the Commission should have been given the task of coordinating the Western aid effort. I believe that it has responded magnificently to that challenge.

As to the future, Mr President, we now need to look in a coordinated and structural way at our relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Our meeting in Dublin on Saturday will take up this task. It must make a political evaluation of recent developments and look at the further reactions open to us on trade, cooperation and financial assistance. Beyond this we must begin to examine whether and what kind of new structures we need with the countries involved. Certainly, Mr President, none of this is going to be easy. It will, as I said in my programme address earlier this morning, require imagination and generosity. In the past the Community has risen to great challenges and met them. I am confident that it can meet the historic challenges now facing it.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — (GR) I thank the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers for his reply to the debate. Allow me to wish you and Irish presidency every success during your term of office.

The debate is closed.

9. Situation in Central America

PRESIDENT. — (GR) The next item is the joint debate on eight oral questions to European Political Cooperation.

- Doc. B3-505/89, by Mrs Ruiz-Giménez Aguilar and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the implementation of the Tela Agreements.
- Doc. B3-506/89, by Mr Oliva Garcia and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the demobilization of the Nicaraguan resistance.
- Doc. B3-507/89, by Mr Staes and others, on behalf of the Green Group, on the violation of human rights in El Salvador.
- Doc. B3-508/89, by Mr Staes and others, on behalf of the Green Group, on the demobilization of the Contras in Nicaragua and in the Honduras.
- Doc. B3-509/89, by Mr Suárez González and others, on behalf of the European People's Group, on the situation in Central America.
- Doc. B3-741/89, by Mr Gutiérrez Díaz and others, on behalf of the Group for the Unitarian European Left, on the demobilization of the Nicaraguan resistance in the context of the Tela Agreements.
- Doc. B3-742/89, by Mr Miranda da Silva and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the situation in El Salvador and Nicaragua.
- Doc. B3-743/89, by Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the situation in El Salvador.

RUIZ-GIMENEZ AGUILAR (LDR). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Central America is living through a momentous time. The intervention of the United States in Panama, the resurgence of the civil war in El Salvador and the prospect of elections in the next few months in the majority of the countries of the area, herald a period of uncertainty but also of hope. All this is taking place in a climate of *detente* between the East and the West. At the Malta Summit the subject of Central America was on the agenda of the two superpowers. We do not know that the outcome was, but we suspect that some kind of green light might have been given to a new interventionist climate. In these times of international upheaval we are going through, it seems particularly serious for principles of international law to be flouted. It is precisely those international principles of non-interference, non-intervention, peaceful solution, that the Presidents of the Central American area invoked at the Summit of Esquipulas and

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subsequently, which have permitted an advance towards democracy and peace.

At the last presidential summit, which took place in Costa Rica on 10 and 11 December, important agreements were reached. I want to highlight two of them: the call for an end to hostilities and the balanced demobilization of the Contras and the FMLN, forces which are supported by the two great powers and which have now come together to discuss *détente*; and secondly, the request to the United Nations to speed up the establishment and implementation of the verification process by creating *ad hoc* committees, UNOCA, ONUBEN and FIAP, and widen of their range of activity.

This is a highly significant historical precedent for the region. For the first time countries outside the area are taking part in this kind of process; specifically two Community countries are taking part in UNOCA, the United Nations Group of Observers for Central America, thus breaking down the dogma known as the Monroe Doctrine which previously governed international relations in Latin America.

The position of the Community on Central America has from the start been one of clear and firm support and cooperation for the process of democratization and pacification. Successive San José rounds and the recent signing of the Economic Cooperation Agreement to promote inter-regional trade have guaranteed this. The Community has gained a considerable measure of credibility in the region; however, the position adopted by the majority of the Community countries in the United Nations on United States intervention in Panama has been profoundly alienating. So it seems opportune to relaunch and press ahead with a Community presence and Community cooperation in the region. Taking advantage of the climate of *détente*, it is important to strengthen the dialogue with the United States and to make a joint assessment of the consequences of using force and the fears which it arouses in the region, making the peace process more difficult. It is important for the Commission and the Council to keep Parliament informed of the progress which is taking place in the verification process, now that two Community countries are participating in it. The fulfilment of the Tela agreements on demobilization and the cessation of hostilities is of special importance for the electoral processes which will be taking place in the next few months, especially in Nicaragua in February.

Finally, given the interest that this Parliament and the Community have in the creation of a Central American Parliament, and the effort we have made to make it possible, it would seem to be important, once the electoral processes in the region are concluded, to take up that initiative again. Such a Central American Parliament could be an excellent mechanism for dialogue, integration and *détente* in the region.

OLIVA GARCIA (S). — (ES) Mr President, when in October last I tabled the oral question which we are debating today, we had more than a reasonable doubt as to whether the intention existed to implement a major part of the Tela Agreements of August 1989: I refer to the demobilization of the military forces, known as 'counter-revolutionary forces' which attack Nicaragua from Honduran territory.

The great achievement of the whole Nicaraguan people was that they came to Tela with an agreement signed by the Sandinista Government itself and all the opposition political forces, condemning the aggression in their country and asking the international community for an end to the unbearable external pressure so that the people of Nicaragua might reconcile their political differences by holding general elections which would finally install parliamentary democracy in Nicaragua.

This took shape in the Tela Agreement of August 1989, between the Presidents of the Central American countries, establishing a time limit to end on 5 December during which the so-called Contras would demobilize. Having achieved its objective — the holding of elections — the Nicaraguan political opposition forgot — or the United States suggested they forget — to continue asking the international community for the end of the Contras' aggression and their demobilization. Only the Sandinista Government was talking to the outside world, trying to make it understood that it was senseless to initiate a free electoral process without fulfilling the other part of the agreement: the demobilization of those who, with the doors open in their country, do not want to participate and throw their weight behind the democratic camp. Mrs Chamorro, leader of the UNO opposition front, has indeed constantly called, in front of the international observers present in Nicaragua, for a total amnesty, something which seems logical when general elections are being held. But what Mrs Chamorro has omitted to mention is that this amnesty was provided for in the agreements signed between the Government and the opposition, and — logically — it should be granted after the demobilization of the Contras. It could not be otherwise, as it only makes sense to grant an amnesty to those who participated in the actions of the Contras when the actual aggression by the counter-revolutionary force has ceased.

Furthermore the Government of Honduras has also forgotten its commitments at Tela, or it is being incited, again by the United States, to forget them. Obstacles, more or less bureaucratic and with greater or less formal justification, began to impede the work of the International Committee charged with the demobilization and relocation of the Contras; the sole aim was to reach 5 December without fulfilling the agreement, which is what has in fact happened. This has clearly highlighted the lack of political will in Honduras to deal with the forces attacking Nicaragua from their territory, their absolute dependence on the dictates of the United States or, what is worse, their absolute

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powerlessness to deal — like a sorcerer's apprentice — with a problem that they themselves have generated.

Last October we pointed out, in tabling this question, the importance of eliminating all vestiges of violence, so that the ballot box could speak, because the importance of free and calm elections in Nicaragua for the peace of the area can escape no one.

So much, and of such importance, has happened in the area between October and today that it is now absolutely crucial for the democratic process initiated and about to be completed in Nicaragua to reach a peaceful conclusion. I refer to the unilateral ceasefire agreed a year ago by the Sandinista Government, in the face of constant aggression from the Contras; the interruption of the negotiations in El Salvador and the guerilla offensive in that country, the assassination of 6 Jesuits at the hands of Salvadoran soldiers; the invasion of Panama; the violation of the Nicaraguan diplomatic mission; the execrable assassination of our comrades Hector Oqueli and Gilda Flores; the blockade of Colombian territorial waters; the assassination by the Contras of two nuns, one of them American — but it seems that in this case she was a second-class American because her death has not bothered Mr Bush much. We therefore believe that the gravity of the situation we are describing demands an even greater effort from the European Community to ensure and guarantee the Nicaraguan electoral process, the only sure hope, in the short term, of stability in Central America. Europe must take a firm position on Nicaragua, and prevent the disgraceful support — though with many reservations — of the majority of European Governments for the Panamanian adventure being interpreted as a blank cheque by the United States for the resolution of the problems which afflict Central America and South America in its own particular way.

There must never be any question of interpreting these affirmations of ours as support for the corrupt regime of Mr Noriega who — as my good friend and colleague Jesus Cabezon said just now — has learned from good masters. We have repeatedly condemned the flouting of his country's electoral process.

The United States created the Contras, maintained the Contras, financed the Contras and, finally, as it never was very keen on Central American governments themselves solving their own problems without reference to its omnipotent will, has now decided — in spite of the agreement between the Central American Presidents — to go on financing the Contras through so-called humanitarian aid. And the United States has earmarked only 3 million dollars out of the 76 it could earmark, according to its own Congress, to international organizations charged with relocating the counter-revolutionary forces.

Furthermore, the United States finances the forces which threaten Nicaragua from Honduran territory and in addition is granting 9 million dollars to support Mrs Chamorro's electoral campaign in opposition to the Sandinistas. If Panama were not so recent, we would

be talking about aggression and serious internal interference. Now it sounds comic. So it turns out, Mr President, by a pirouette of fate, a real historical guffaw, that in the end the supporters of Somosa, the one remaining redoubt of the Contras in Nicaragua, are the guarantors of the democratic process in Nicaragua. They are, in the end, the guarantors of a liberty they constantly denied.

With so much confusion, so much unreason, such massive violations of international principles, so much jungle law going on a democratic magnifying glass is needed to set up certain electoral processes and a type of behaviour which is certainly not customary in the area; whereupon we are assailed by doubts as to whether the United States is prepared to go through with a democratic process which could be unfavourable to them.

I want to close this realistic but pessimistic review with a call for concord between Central Americans themselves. A call for permanent and continuous dialogue between the Presidents of the Central American Governments. Increasingly overt United States intervention in the zone makes dialogue daily more difficult. For those who rule the destinies of Central America the real historical challenge of our time is to overcome their differences.

MELANDRI (V). — (IT) Mr President, when we talk about 'human rights' we are talking about something that goes beyond what are very often the 'alchemic' facets of politics: we are talking about something that is part of history, that becomes flesh and blood, that becomes everyday life.

Well then, may I begin by recalling first of all the victims — all of those who, day after day, go to increase the burden of suffering which, in El Salvador, in this part of the world, becomes increasingly heavy. They are often unknown people, who only ask to be able to live in peace, to live out their own story. Simple people, accustomed to a hard life, ready even to sacrifice their lives in order to advance their country and their brothers along the road to democracy.

We in the Green Group, when tabling this question, had first of all in mind their faces, their histories and — whenever they are known to us — their names; because all too often theirs is a dumb cry, that is heard neither by the international press nor by the mass media, and is very frequently not even taken seriously by the political parties, who are committed rather to the power game than to the real welfare of the people, especially poor people.

It is a cry that is moreover spreading, and it shakes the consciences of everyone who seeks to be honest. Not least because, in this part of the world, in El Salvador, the partisans of death have lost — let us put it this way — all sense of decency, and have crushed, and continue systematically to crush, every dissentient voice, eliminating by assassination and violence those people who are working for peace.

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The dead have included trade unionists, priests, nuns and monks, members of associations that are working for human rights, even a bishop — may I remind this Assembly that this year is the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Monsignor Romero. We know their names, not least because the poor of the country remember them as their martyrs. And, in the last few days, news has reached us of a new assassination. The victim is Héctor Oqueli, Assistant General Secretary of the National Revolutionary Movement, who was arrested in Guatemala City and found dead a few days later: the squadrons of death know no frontiers.

In view of the deterioration of this situation no good is served — indeed, they only do harm — by ambiguous attitudes, the attitudes of those who pay lip service and usually denounce the assassins but, in actual fact, are on the side of the executioners. No one can claim to be on the side of human rights and at the same time support, for example, the government of Alfredo Cristiani, who is a member of the very party, Arena, that is responsible for the assassination of Monsignor Romero and many others. No one can claim to be on the side of peace in El Salvador, when in fact they are still on the side of the United States, because it is the United States that — even with the best of intentions — supports with economic aid and military advisors a government that is now discredited in the eyes of world public opinion.

In the meantime, it is the people that suffer from this state of affairs. Thousands of people are homeless; tens of thousands of refugees have fled to other countries, but ask only to be able to return to their home country. Can I recall here, for example, the refugees of Colomoncagua, which I visited about a month ago. I spent several days with them, shared with them on the one hand their hopes to be able to return to their home country and, on the other, their frustration, caused by the failure on the part of the Salvadorean government to fulfill its promise to repatriate them by last Christmas under the aegis of the International Conference on Refugees in Central America. I listened to their songs, full of nostalgia and the longing for freedom. I shared the memory, that they keep alive, of their martyrs.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, has not the time perhaps come to ask not only for declarations of principle but also concrete gestures on the part of the executive bodies of the Community? I refer in particular to the suspension of all forms of economic aid to the Salvadorean government. And has the time not come to adopt a clear stance *vis-à-vis* the United States, which is in fact supporting the Cristiani government?

Europe, which boasts of being the cradle of the culture of human rights, cannot just look on, or adopt ambiguous stances, which carry the taint of hypocrisy.

LANGER (V). — (DE) Mr President, I should like to explain the question the Greens have put down on Nicaragua. In a way it has almost become a ritual for the European Parliament to say when discussing Central

America that the peace process must be supported, but very little practical action is taken.

The crises, the destruction of the economy, the attacks by the Contras and the military interventions — most recently the quite blatant intervention in Panama — continue. Although the agreements reached by the five Central American Presidents at their summit meetings in Esquipulas, Tela and, recently, San Isidro de Coronado officially have the full support of the Council and the Foreign Ministers of the European Community, it has not gone any further than purely verbal support as far as we can see.

We would now like to hear from the Foreign Ministers, and therefore ask the President of the Council in particular, what practical steps they have taken, or intend to take now, to make a practical and active contribution to the demobilization of the Contras in Nicaragua and Honduras before the elections in Nicaragua.

We know how important the elections in Nicaragua on 25 February are. We know how much interest the international community is taking. But we also know, because the Contras themselves have said so, that they have not the slightest intention of laying down their arms before the elections. Quite the contrary in fact: encouraged by the money they have received from the United States, US\$ 30 million in the summer of last year, although the United States undertook to review the situation again in November, the Contras have — probably not without justification — counted on continued support from one very important side in the international balance of power, the United States. As we know, the US Congress decided in late November to continue giving the Contras financial support — US\$ 47 million in humanitarian assistance, it is said.

So the agreements on disarmament, pacification and *détente* are being completely disregarded. The result is, as I have said, that the Contras feel encouraged. This has led to fresh attacks, attacks on Nicaraguan territory from Honduras, attacks on civilian, economic and military targets, which have hit the civilian population hard. The murder of the nuns on the Atlantic coast is still horribly fresh in all our minds. These activities are clearly designed to delay the planned and agreed disarmament of the Contras indefinitely.

We appreciate, of course, that the US Administration has approved a modest sum of US\$ 3 million for the voluntary resettlement of the Contras and so for their return to civilian life and intends to disburse this money through the International Supervisory Commission. But this modest, conscience-salving sum for return to civilian life bears no comparison with what is being spent on military assistance.

At the same time, we hear from an authoritative source — representatives of the Contras themselves — firstly, that they intend to stay highly armed until they see what the elections bring and, secondly, that they are trying to continue their activities not only with force but also by

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legal means, by participating in the elections as part of the National Opposition Union.

So there is little point raising the finger in Europe and saying the elections in Nicaragua are suspect from the outset. We would welcome it if there were as many fair means of participating in election campaigns in many of our countries as there are in Nicaragua. Smaller political forces would then have an equal chance of showing what they stand for.

We cannot therefore continue to sit idly by while the United States treats Central America in every respect as its own backyard and sometimes, sadly, as its barrack square. After what has recently happened in Panama, where the United States decided that it did not need to abide by the rules of international law when dealing with a bandit, many people in Nicaragua and elsewhere in Central America must have the impression that, if a superpower is suddenly no longer capable of taking action, they will be left to their own devices. Europe must intervene here, and we urge the Council to take action.

SUARÉZ GONZÁLEZ (PPE). — (ES) Our group reiterates its support for the Esquipulas II accords and their corollary, Tela. But our group cannot overlook a single aspect of these accords: ceasefire by the Nicaraguan Contras, the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation and the insurgents of Guatemala; an end to the external supply of arms to the rebel forces, *all of them*: the Contras, the Front, the Guatemalan insurgents: demobilization of all irregular forces and a full programme to promote democracy. These agreements, which we have always supported, are in serious difficulties and we therefore want to ask the Ministers for Foreign Affairs meeting in political cooperation this: what initiatives have they taken or do they intend to take to ensure the fulfilment of these agreements and what substantiated information do they have on violations?

But this is a peculiar parliament where we talk a lot about what others ought to do and very little about what we should do ourselves; where, very frequently, we just agree to what suits our friends, or we take our feelings out on the United States, instead of finding ways to help everyone support the overall peace plan for Central America. And this may explain why some motions for resolutions and some questions originally referred only to the Contras. When are we going to deal with the requirement that the guerillas of Guatemala or El Salvador accept the result of the ballot box and the wishes of their fellow citizens? When are we going to condemn Nicaragua for sending arms to the Farabundo Marti Front, as denounced by Honduras and El Salvador? I ask all European politicians of *all* groups who all — it is clear to me — want peace, to make an effort to be objective and understand that our moral authority will be that much greater over there if we avoid applying money and resources in proportion to the degree of our friendship with the protagonists in these events.

I have heard a lot of shallow statements about Panama today, but I am not going to mention that subject since a debate on Panama is on the agenda for Thursday, and nor will I speak of Cuba, which is taking its time to accept the new direction of the winds of history. If we confine ourselves to the protagonists in the Esquipulas and Tela agreements, Mr President, I think it would be very useful if we took the following action.

First, we should *all* welcome the fact that Honduras has re-established a normal judiciary and let us support the new President who is taking office at the end of this month. He must not tolerate aggression by the Contras on his territory and it is his duty to assist with their demobilization under humane and dignified conditions. And we can help him.

Secondly, we should all recognize that the first indications of a will on the part of President Cristiani to establish the rule of law deserve to be given the credit of our confidence. The people of El Salvador have already given their vote of confidence through the ballot box, but many people here do not believe in his sincerity and remember his party's links with sinister incidents in the past. The Farabundo Marti Front must be persuaded to accept the democratic result, renounce violence, and integrate itself into the political life of El Salvador. I realize that the assassination of Oqueli — which I naturally repudiate unconditionally on behalf of my group and on which I stand absolutely solid with his friends in the Socialist International — presents a new difficulty; but it is just such human tragedies that we must succeed in bringing to an end, and an assassination must never be used for political ends, never! Even as Guatemala and El Salvador were initiating their investigations into the matter, the Front was already accusing certain alleged brigades with links with some group or other of responsibility, on the very day that it happened.

Third, we should recognize all the efforts that Vinicio Cerezo is making in Guatemala, in terms of respect for human rights, and we should deny the Guatemalan insurgents any support and any excuse.

Fourth, we should encourage the politicians of Costa Rica to remain resolute in their commitments within the Esquipulas Agreements, so that convenience or selfishness cannot cause them to fall into the temptation to isolate or distance themselves. There is no satisfaction in winning the Nobel Peace Prize if that prize is not actually followed by peace. And it would be inconsistent if it were Costa Rica that refuses to bring the Central American Parliament into being.

And fifth, let us all call for the Nicaraguan elections to take place in peace and equality, and for *all*, inside and outside the country, to accept the result. The Sandinistas, if they lose, must demonstrate that they are democrats and likewise if they win.

(Applause)

GUTIÉRREZ DÍAZ (GUE). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is not without a certain feeling

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of despair that I stand here again today to speak of the dramatic situation in Central America; not to weep over its dead but responsibly to put it on record that violent death has become habitual there and before we have even got over the death of Ellacuria, we are also speaking today of the death of Oqueli, the death of Gilda Flores, the death of the two nuns in Nicaragua, all within the last few months. And I feel despair, Mr President, because here, in my hands, I have a report from Maria Gabriella Tornago, a 33 year-old Italian woman, who was tortured in El Salvador and was witness to hundreds of acts of torture. No, no one must manipulate the situation in Central America, but no one can silence the crimes that have been committed, above all when the institutional power — sometimes cynically called democratic power, cynically since it ceases to be democratic power when it is used to assassinate people — is in the hands of the murderers.

Mr President, I am expressing despair because this region is going back on the hopes the Esquipulas Agreements had opened up. At this moment, the process of inter-regional integration and civil co-existence is in a state of regression and, at the same time, pressure and activity by the United States is becoming even more forceful.

In this situation it is the responsibility of the European Community not only to denounce the Government of the United States politically but also to put pressure on it in the context of EPC.

Of course, people have spoken and will speak of Panama. But the way EPC was abandoned has reduced the authority of the European Community in Central America. We had great authority because we denounced Noriega unconditionally when it was right to do so. Today we have made every effort to denounce the United States invasion, which totally violates every standard of international law. And the European Community, a Community of twelve democratic countries, cannot remain silent and still retain its authority. But we also know that the absence of peace in the area means that the good and positive results expected from the ECU 120 million intended for inter-regional trading cooperation cannot be as effective as they ought to be.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, against this background I believe the elections in Nicaragua are invested with a special significance and there is no comparison between Contra activity and that of the Farabundo Martí Liberation Front. The Tela Agreements have been invoked here, but people should also remember the existence of the San Isidro Agreements. And in the San Isidro Agreements in Costa Rica President Daniel Ortega denounced irregular confrontations in all areas, therefore he also committed himself to civil co-existence throughout the region. There is a serious commitment here, a commitment which in no way corresponds to direct or indirect aggression by the United States. And if we want San José VI in Dublin to be a step towards hope, we have a great responsibility

today to set a positive value on everything the Sandinista Government is doing, to secure an end to the pressure, to insist firmly on the immediate demobilization of the Contras so that the elections of 24 February may be democratic elections, Mr President, an advance towards coexistence, towards democracy, towards peace and towards the independence of the zone.

MIRANDA DA SILVA (CG). — (PT) Mr President, as we have said repeatedly, a settlement of the conflicts in Central America and development in the region require political solutions and dialogue and must be based on adherence to and implementation of the Esquipulas and Tela agreements. After a period in which tension in the region has heightened, the San Isidro meeting in December, reaffirming the terms of these agreements, was a welcome development.

But each and every one of the countries and political groups involved must endorse the agreements and demonstrate an unambiguous political determination to implement them. If they are to succeed, strong support is also needed from the international community, including the European Community, and there must be no interference whatsoever from outside that is not wanted by all the parties involved, or any external developments that make the dialogue and the search for peaceful solutions to the problems more difficult.

The decision to hold elections in Nicaragua in February and the Sandinista government's commitment to them are, I believe, among the most positive steps in the turbulent peace process in Central America. The decision is all the more significant and praiseworthy in view of the precarious state the country's economy is in as a result of the war there, the suspicions being voiced in some quarters about the election in an attempt to discredit it and throw doubt on its results, and in particular the failure to implement the demobilization of the Contras agreed for 5 December. On this latter point, the government of Honduras must urgently implement the agreement it has signed and demobilize the Contras immediately. It is also vital that the United States stops its humanitarian aid. Continued aid will not only continue to disrupt the peace process, it will also be an ongoing insult to the countries of the region and the agreements they have signed.

As far as the role of the United States in the regions is concerned, the delicateness, complexity and seriousness of the problems in Central America, and the fragility of the agreements and talks thus far, mean not only that the United States must refrain from any involvement, but also that the situation must be viewed in the context of the current political trend throughout the world towards the resolution of regional conflict through dialogue and diplomacy. It is the United States' duty to recognize this and to accept this new trend, which must become the routine way of resolving conflict. It must immediately stop disgraceful acts such as the recent invasion of Panama and the sending of warships to the Caribbean, which apart from anything else destabilize the whole region.

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The situation in El Salvador is very different to the one I have described in Nicaragua. Talks between the Cristiani government, the FMLN and the other elements of the opposition are the only way to achieve peace in the country and to help bring peace to the region. But there is still a lack of commitment to dialogue on the part of the government, human rights are being flouted, the opposition is being attacked and persecuted, and civilians, priests and leading members of the opposition are being killed. This situation, for which the Arena government bears a large measure of responsibility, has not only brought about the clashes we are seeing in the country, it is a flagrant breach of the spirit and the letter of the Esquipulas and Tela agreements. It is therefore multiplying and increasing the obstacles to a solution to the conflict in Central America.

Mr President, the Community must take up an active and positive stance in response to the delicate situation in Central America. Above all by providing political support and encouragement for the urgent implementation of the Esquipulas and Tela agreements. But also, and in particular, by supporting clearly and at every level everything that is done in the region to implement them, condemning just as clearly and firmly any actions that threaten them. In specific terms, the Community must provide unequivocal political and material support for the elections in Nicaragua. It must also condemn strongly the El Salvador government's lack of political will to implement the agreements and in particular the brutal attacks that have been taking place in the country, such as the murders of six Jesuit priests and more recently of the opposition leader Hector Oqueli.

The Community cannot confine its position on Central America to the tight-lipped statement issued at the Strasbourg Council. This silence will please those who are threatening peace in the region, and objectively speaking it will hinder those who are striving to bring it about.

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (ARC). — (NL) The situation in Central America is, of course, alarming, and this despite all the efforts made by President Arias, the efforts made at Esquipulas I and II, the meeting at Tela and the meeting of the Central American Presidents at San Isidro de Coronado.

The situation in El Salvador is not improving in the slightest. The repression of the popular organizations is simply growing. Last month over 160 people demonstrating in support of dialogue were picked up, and there has been no news of them since. There was the murder of the six Jesuits and two women on 15 November. We also deplore the assassination of the Social-Democratic leader Oqueli and of Gilda Flores of the Guatemalan Social-Democratic Party. This can again be put down to the despicable death squads, those extreme right-wing groups who really stand in the way of any peaceful solution.

My first question is this: have the Ministers meeting in political cooperation asked for an explanation and, if so, what was the result? I also want to say something about the Arena government: it is not taking dialogue with the FMLN seriously. Earlier agreements on such things as the handing over of the wounded through the Red Cross are being seriously violated. Only civil servants are being sent to the talks, and they have no authority to take decisions. I know that President Cristiani has shown great personal courage in bringing the murderers of the Jesuits to trial. It is not enough to track down the actual assassins of such people as Oqueli and Flores. The people that have to be found are those who plan, organize and coordinate the terror. I have it from locally confirmed sources that Oqueli was murdered at the very time when new black lists were circulated in El Salvador, black lists of leading people who are to be eliminated as quickly as possible. Only particularly strong international pressure, from us in the first place, can persuade the Arena government to change its ways.

The situation in Nicaragua is perhaps even more serious. The United States continues to bring political pressure to bear and to interfere in the area, which is completely unacceptable. The Tela Agreements actually called for the demobilization of the Contras on 5 December 1989. It would have happened but, despite this decision, despite the agreement, the United States decided to give the Contras US\$ 47 million of so-called humanitarian assistance. What has the Council done? Was a protest sent to the United States, yes or no? I have not read anything about it.

Besides El Salvador and Nicaragua, there is Guatemala, where there is again no improvement in respect for human rights. There are popular organizations in the country. They are small and powerless. We see from newspaper reports that bodies are washed ashore every day. There are human rights organizations, which are suppressed. The national conciliation committee of Esquipulas is a flop because the army will not participate in the dialogue, and the leaders of the popular organizations are molested, murdered or detained.

I have a number of specific questions to ask. First and foremost, does the European Community intend actively to condemn any intervention in the region? Does the European Community want to see an immediate end to the military assistance provided by the United States and anyone else? What has the Council done?

My next question is this: does the Council intend to make further aid to the countries of Central America conditional on respect for human rights? Has an initiative been taken? Another question: how much thought has the Council given to providing additional assistance to help solve the dreadful refugee problem? Does the Council intend to ensure the neutrality of the assistance provided by supporting the non-governmental organizations as far as possible? Do the Council

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and Commission intend to act in solidarity and do everything they can to enable the agreements to be implemented? They have — as you know — the support of the whole of the European Parliament. There have been so many discussions, embracing all the political groups. Be that as it may, human rights, everything that is happening here is opposed to any mandate we may presume to have here. We have talked so much about Central Europe. We have talked so much about the East. Let us be very correct and just as democratic where Central America is concerned. But quite clearly, the Council is doing nothing.

PRESIDENT. — I have received, with a request for an early vote, pursuant to Rule 58(5) of the Rules of Procedure, seven motions for resolutions to wind up the debate on the oral questions.¹

The vote on the request for an early vote will be taken at the end of the debate.

GEOGHEGAN-QUINN, *President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers.* — Mr President, the presidency welcomes this opportunity to outline the Twelve's approach to Central America and to Parliament's views on the issues involved. Ever since the 1983 Stuttgart European Council expressed its full support for attempts to find a prompt and negotiated solution to the Central American conflict, the Twelve have attempted to establish a number of political and economic criteria for negotiations. These include respect for the principles of non-interference, the inviolability of frontiers, the need for the establishment of democratic conditions, the strict observance of human rights and support for regional solutions. The Twelve also expressed their concern about the economic and social conditions in many parts of the region, in the light of the tensions created by deprivation.

At the first meeting between the Community and its Member States and the Central American States, the countries of the region indicated their support for the Twelve's approach. This encouraged us to continue our efforts to promote political dialogue in the region and to develop our economic and development cooperation with Central America. The cooperation agreement between the Community and the countries of Central America signed on 30 June 1986 has resulted in the allocation of considerable amounts of aid and assistance to the region. The Irish presidency looks forward to the further development of economic and technical cooperation between the Community and countries of Central America.

In the last five years, between 1985 and 1989, the Twelve have acted as a catalyst for change in Central America. They can claim to have brought the main actors of the Central American scene closer to each other for serious exchanges of views, for example, at the annual ministerial meetings as well as on the margin of

the United Nations General Assembly. We have regularly made our position clear, expressing our readiness to support any action which would aim at restoring peace in the area and reasserting our firm belief that it is essential for any country which is either linked to or has interests in the region to aid the establishment of peace and democracy in Central America and contribute towards its social and economic development. Regional governments should concentrate their efforts on promoting the renewal of dialogue and national reconciliation in the countries concerned in line with the Esquipulas and Tela Agreements.

The Twelve believe that the OAS and the UN have an important role to play in promoting a just, stable and lasting peace in the region. In their statement of 10 November 1989 the Twelve expressed their support for the Secretary-General of the United Nations and welcomed the establishment of the UN observer group on Central America, UNOCA, which by working to ensure the impartial verification of the commitments entered into by the Central American Presidents, should renew confidence in the peace process and assist in the recovery of the momentum generated by the Tela Summit.

To come to the specific points raised by honourable Members in their questions: as far as El Salvador is concerned, the Twelve on 27 November 1989 expressed their deep concern about the general deterioration of the situation in Central America and condemned the renewal of violence in El Salvador. The Twelve are particularly dismayed at the deplorable loss of a great number of innocent civilian lives. On 30 November 1989 the ambassadors of the Troika called on President Christiani, stating the Twelve's profound dismay at the assassination of six Jesuit priests and asking the Head of State to hold an inquiry into the circumstances of this barbaric act. The Troika also urged the Salvadorian authorities to make every effort to identify and punish the murderers. The Twelve were encouraged by President Christiani's forthcoming response and by the first results of the inquiry but, nonetheless, intend to continue following the issue closely to ensure that this matter is brought to an appropriate conclusion.

The case of El Salvador cannot be considered out of the context of the general conditions in Central America. For this reason the Twelve's 27 November declaration was followed up by *démarches* at the highest level in each of these Central American States, expressing our concern about the deteriorating situation and identifying the particular problems which the Twelve see as preventing resumption of the progress achieved through the Esquipulas Agreements and the Costa del Sol and Tela Summits.

This Twelve welcome the agreement reached by the Heads of State of the Central American countries in San Isidro de Coronado on 10 and 11 December 1989 aimed at resolving several serious problems of the region and notably the demobilization of the Contras. It is our belief that the time has come for all parties both within

¹ See minutes.

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and outside the area to assist the implementation of the decisions of the five presidents by refraining from actions that further complicate the situation. The Twelve will continue to support the efforts of the Central American countries to achieve peace in the region. We believe that the best way forward is for the countries principally concerned to take the initiative in relaunching the peace process.

We look forward to meeting the Central American countries in Dublin in the spring of 1990. In the meantime, we hope that dialogue will prevail over violence so that the San José meeting can mark the starting point of a new era in the relationship between the EEC and Central America.

(Applause)

SAKELLARIOU (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the answer given by the President of the Council forces me to improvise, because I am completely dissatisfied with what I have heard. Madam President of the Council, we are well aware that the Council welcomed the Esquipulas and Tela Agreements. But we were not asking whether or not it welcomed them. Our question was this: what did you do when the Contras were not disbanded on 5 December?

We do not want to know that you condemn the murder of the six Jesuits. We know that. What action did you take against the government in El Salvador, which stood by and let the murders happen? How will you now help President Alfredo Cristiani in the action he is taking against his own armed forces, which are making life difficult for him because he is trying to find the guilty parties and bring them to trial? That is what we want to know, Madam President of the Council, not what you welcome, what you consider gratifying or sad.

The Tela Agreement reached by the five Central American Presidents on 7 August of last year was a decisive step towards the pacification and democratization of the region. This agreement was made possible by the accord reached a short time before by the governments and the 21 opposition parties in Nicaragua on all the contentious issues connected with the holding of presidential, parliamentary and regional elections. The crucial point in the Tela Agreement was the provision that the Contra units stationed on Honduran territory would be disarmed and completely disbanded by 5 December.

No one who is serious, whatever his political leanings, will deny that the disbanding of the Contras is an essential requirement for the pacification and democratization of the region. Nor will anyone seriously doubt that this agreement was the outcome of a decision freely taken by the freely and democratically elected presidents of five sovereign States. Despite this, I am very sorry to say that the Contra units stationed in Honduras have yet to be disbanded — forty days before the elections in Nicaragua. They are still attacking Nicaragua from Honduras. Recently they murdered

two nuns and wounded two other Church people. They are still able to hold on there, despite the clear decision and undertaking of all the Central American Presidents and the sovereign State of Honduras, because the USA continues to provide them with generous funds.

How sovereign is the Honduran Republic? How sovereign are the five Central American Presidents? The breach of international law represented by the continuing invasion of Panama is not the first piece of evidence we have of how limited the sovereignty of the Latin American countries is. They are forced to bow to the USA's hegemonic interests. This is all happening at a time when the processes of radical change in Eastern Europe are taking place at breath-taking speed and — except in Romania — absolutely peacefully.

The demonstrations in Poland, Hungary, the GDR, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia brought together several million people, who in a few days ousted the Communist governments that had dominated those countries for more than forty years. The invasion of Panama by 26 000 US troops resulted in the death of 4 000 people, the violation of almost every international legal norm and the destruction of property valued at US\$ 1 billion. For this a petty would-be dictator, who the USA alleges was involved in drug trafficking, was captured and sent off to stand trial in the USA.

The European Community must not stand idly by and watch such flagrant examples of violations of international law, whether in Panama, Honduras or anywhere else, violations that the Member States — with the welcome exception of Spain — even encourage by the way they vote in the UN. The Foreign Ministers meeting in European political cooperation should not meet in silence but raise their voice against this flagrant violation of international law.

I should like to express my deep sorrow and pain and also my great respect for a politician, a friend who paid for his love of his country, El Salvador, and his yearning for peace and democracy, with his life in Guatemala City last Friday. The cowardly murder of Hector Oqueli and his Guatemalan Social-Democratic companion, Gilda Flores, shows how high a price has to be paid if one's goal in Central America is freedom, peace and democracy.

Many Members of this Parliament knew Hector Oqueli personally. Some of us were close friends of his. The only purpose his death could serve would be to unite us in additional efforts to help the peoples of Central America in their struggle for freedom, peace and democracy and to stand with them in solidarity.

IN THE CHAIR: MR FORMIGONI

Vice-President

GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU (PPE). — *(GR)* Mr President, the Esquipulas and Tela Agreements raised hopes in Europe for the restoration of peace in the

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region, and today's oral questions very clearly reflect the concern of the whole House over the fact that these have effectively not been implemented. There are, of course, two aspects which we generally take into account when looking at the matter. I want to concentrate on Nicaragua itself, Mr President, and I wish to say the following. The Tela Agreement was, naturally, a big bonus for the Sandinista Government in that it provided for the demobilization of the Contras. This was to have helped the Sandinistas gain wider international acceptance, bearing in mind that not all of us subscribe to the line that the people of Nicaragua overthrew Somoza for the simple purpose of putting an authoritarian regime like that of the Sandinistas in his place.

However, there is no escape from the fact that the Sandinistas accepted several commitments relating not just to the amnesty but also to the conduct of the February elections, and in particular to wider access to the State-controlled opinion-influencing mechanisms, and these have so far not been complied with. The Contras, for their part, agreed to demobilize by 18 December, after which Honduras should have taken action. That has not happened, but it does not give Nicaragua a justification for not proceeding on other matters relating not to the amnesty but to the democratization of the system. The situation is better than it was a few years ago, of course, and in fact some of the requirements for the February elections have been secured. None the less, attention has been drawn to several violations, and these relate not only to the influence exerted by the regime, the use of the police and the size of the army, but also to details such as television time and the ability of the free political parties to widen their appeal. There have been cases of material addressed to them being confiscated, for example. Certainly, with the Contras not demobilizing and the government not giving amnesties after the breakdown of the ceasefire there is a real deadlock.

I feel that the Council which, together with the European Parliament, has helped to resolve various problems in Latin America in the past which have been more acute, could play a different and more positive role. One senses that at this particular time our attention is being monopolized by Eastern Europe and that as a result we are turning away completely from situations and problems such as those currently troubling Central America.

It has to be said as well that the general situation in the region coupled with the extremely active role still being played by the United States could lead on to other problems. Even though I and my group were passionately opposed to the Noriega regime we do not approve of invasions. I must say, however, that there are those in this Parliament who were not willing to accept that Noriega was a dictator. That is worth mentioning because we ought not to label certain people as dictators while insisting that others who are close to us ideologically are not.

Mr President, after what has happened in the wider sphere, in particular in Eastern Europe, I do not believe that this is an ideological issue any more. I feel that the Council should press for the restoration of peace based firmly on democratic values, and not just for the restoration of peace as such, because peace without democracy is like living in a morgue, like the cold hand of death, and certainly nothing like the happy situation that we in Europe enjoy and wish to give to the rest of the world, without imposing it.

BERTENS (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am grateful to the Council for the answers it has given, and I am very pleased to hear that the Council is still concerned about Central America. It gives me great satisfaction to know that, at a time when all the news is about what is happening in Central Europe, we can also spend hours talking about Central America. I am also very happy to hear that so many hundreds of ecus are again being switched to Central America for economic and technical cooperation. There must, of course, be someone, or a government, there who can take the economic and social measures that benefit the people.

In December 1989 the five Central American Presidents held their sixth and, it is to be hoped, final summit conference at San Isidro de Coronado in Costa Rica. It was certainly the last meeting of its kind to be attended by the presidential quintet, which has been working for peace for four years. In six months' time three of the five will undoubtedly have been democratically pensioned off. In other words, if the San Isidro declaration is not followed up with action, the peace process will be seriously delayed, if only because of the historic role in which each new president wants to cast himself. One of the crucial aims of both the Tela conference in August 1989 and the San Isidro summit was to ensure that the elections to be held in Nicaragua on 25 February would be democratic. These elections are still at risk as a result of the activities of the Contras. In Tela it was agreed that the Contras would be demobilized, especially the 12 000 men in Honduras. Everything was to be done within 90 days. An international monitoring and support committee, the CIAV, was set up to support the plan, to monitor activities and even to work out the practical details. None of this has been done. Perhaps it was because the civil war in El Salvador flared up that something else happened, but there were also the United States' activities, of course, designed to enable President Cristiani to require the simultaneous disbanding of the FMLN in El Salvador. This policy eventually succeeded in San Isidro. Now that the stage has been reached where both the Contras and the FMLN in El Salvador will be able to make ready to disband under the supervision of the CIAV, it might be expected that the United States would reciprocate by discontinuing its aid to the Contras and also that the Nicaraguans would stop giving expression to their solidarity or sympathy with the Salvadorian resistance movement with shipments of arms. In so many words the UN observers were requested in the San Isidro declaration to take action to

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prevent shipments of arms to the FMLN and the Contras from any source. It is important in this context that UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar has also been asked to consult directly with countries which have interests in the region, a euphemism for the United States and the Soviet Union — although they have other things to worry about at the moment — and Cuba. Peace in Central America seems to be just round the corner. I am fairly optimistic. Why? Three points: President Arias — already crowned with the Nobel Prize — wants to complete his term of office as a winner; of its own volition the FMLN has sought contact with President Cristiani for a dialogue; and never has a group of UN observers enjoyed such prestige in this area. UNOCA has also tried, together with the CIAV, to bring about the demobilization of the resistance movement.

I have two questions. I want to ask the Council if reports on demobilization have already been received from UNOCA, and if so, will we be receiving them, and if not, will you urge that they be forwarded. Secondly, have you heard from the UN Secretary-General what contacts he has had with governments outside Central America?

BANDRÉS MOLET (V). — (ES) Mr President, I must indicate right away that my necessarily partial and limited speech is only going to refer to El Salvador. I think everyone will agree that El Salvador is one of the focuses, perhaps even the most important, of the conflicts in Central America. But I want to bear witness here that power in El Salvador, whatever the formal political regime may be, is held by the armed forces who depend financially on the United States of America, and also by the forces of the extreme right, the Fascists, who have been included in the Government, courtesy of Arena, President Cristiani's party.

A very important landmark in this Fascist offensive was the assassination of six Jesuits and two employees of the Catholic University of El Salvador on 16 November, assassinations which have already been referred to by other Members. I had the honour of knowing some of those Jesuits personally, of dealing with them personally, of being their friend, and today I want to pay homage here to their memory. The perpetrators were members of the armed forces — there is no other possibility — and I doubt very much if the judiciary of that country is in any position to sit in judgment on a colonel.

Another more recent sign: the assassination of Hector Oqueli, which has also been referred to by my colleagues. Earlier, on 15 April 1989, four nurses from a country hospital, including Madeleine Lagadec, were tortured and assassinated, and Madeleine was also raped, according to the forensic report. If I were to go through the list of dead and tortured here, Mr President, my speech would never end.

So the Council and Parliament must react vigorously to make the army and the present Salvadorian Govern-

ment cease this action, which is systematically sabotaging the peace process in Central America. Cristiani must be asked to negotiate, with the mediation of the Catholic Church which is willing to assist. The United States must be asked to suspend military aid and ease the path towards a negotiated solution. Member States of the Community and the Commission must be required to suspend all technical and financial aid to the Cristiani Government, as it does not democratically assure life and liberty to its citizens. And finally, Mr President, we must provide economic assistance under budgetary line 936 for the repatriation of Salvadorian refugees through the appropriate international organizations.

And so, Mr President, because we hope and pray for a negotiated peace, but peace founded on justice, in that dear land of Central America, we ask honourable Members to vote in favour of our motion for a resolution.

PERREAU DE PINNINCK DOMENECH (RDE). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as earlier speakers have already said, I want to add my name to the call to promote a re-opening of dialogue for the complete and unconditional fulfilment of the Esquipulas II and Tela agreements. This is because we are convinced that dialogue is the only possible approach to finding ways capable of producing a definitive and stable solution to the conflicts that exist in several Central American countries.

Effective measures to reduce the tension in this area must be set in motion. But they must be measures applicable to all the countries of the area, irrespective of particular circumstances, because otherwise the solutions would be partial and incongruous. So we agree with the need to demobilize the irregular forces operating in Nicaragua but, in parallel, the guerillas of the Farabundo Marti Front who operate in El Salvador and the insurgents in Guatemala must cease their activities.

We have to remember that, whatever we may think of them, the Cristiani Government in El Salvador and the Cerezo Government in Guatemala enjoy the legitimacy provided by the ballot box, because they did better than the other political parties in democratic elections. We think general demobilization is necessary to put an end to a long series of violations of human rights and violent situations which are unacceptable from any point of view, with their unpardonable sequel in terms of loss of human life.

Finally, and although it will be the subject of an urgent debate next Thursday, I want to refer briefly to the situation in Panama. We must not overlook certain facts which characterized the situation prior to the United States intervention: ex-President Noriega had arbitrarily nullified elections whose results appeared to go against him. There were, moreover, considerable grounds for suspecting the ex-President of involvement in the drug traffic. We must also recognize that the

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United States intervention, in itself foreign interference in the internal affairs of another country, has been warmly welcomed by the Panamanian people themselves.

I think we should support a re-opening of the dialogue in Central America and the fulfilment of the agreements by all the parties concerned, as the first step towards achieving a stable and effective solution which will provide a remedy in a centre of constant tension.

LEHIDEUX (DR). — (FR) Despite events in Eastern Europe, where communism is being rejected and fallen dictators are leaving the people in intolerable economic and spiritual misery, and at a time when everyone's eyes seem to be opening at last to the horrors and barbarity of communism in Eastern Europe, the media and the politicians in general seem to ignore these facts completely when they look at another part of the world. It is impossible not to recognize the central part played by Cuba in the situation in Central America. Do I need to remind you of the danger represented by the presence of two communist countries in that part of the world? Moscow has just sent Fidel Castro the most up-to-date Mig 29 fighter aircraft, which carry missiles with a range of 120 kilometres — this includes the whole of Central America and part of the United States. Cuba is also the major intermediary for the arms supplied by Moscow to the Nicaraguan government, which is deliberately flouting the Tela agreement. It has not denied the accusation by the El Salvador government that it supplied weapons to the FMLN for the large-scale offensive last November.

With regard to Nicaragua, we must welcome the free elections to be held on 25 February. But will they really be free given that the dictatorial government is giving its political opponents no access to the media or to funding? There will be no equal opportunities.

Furthermore, rallies held by the UNO candidate, Violetta Chamorro, are frequently being disrupted by the sinister 'turbas divinas' — groups armed and organized by the government to intimidate the peaceful supporters of the opposition leader. Unfortunately the European Parliament delegation will certainly not be able to give Mr Ortega any lessons in democracy. Yet again the delegation being sent is not representative of the political spectrum of democratically elected Members of Parliament.

Our group, the Group of the European Right, has been refused a place on the delegation, when it is the eighth largest of the ten groups in Parliament. We also think it is at the very least odd that the government of El Salvador is being asked to agree to talk to the Marxist-Leninist guerillas of the FMLN, while the Contras are being asked to lay down their arms unconditionally.

As Pedro Joaquim Chamorro has said, it is not in the Contras' interest to stage any military action before the election, and President Ortega's allegation concerning the murder of two nuns is quite simply grotesque and outrageous. It is not unreasonable that when the

government of El Salvador is being required to investigate in full the murder of the six priests, the government of Nicaragua should be made to do likewise. In their large-scale offensive, the El Salvador guerillas did not conceal the fact that their sole objective was to gain power. So the country was in a state of civil war. The Vatican expressly asked its priests to stay out of the conflict. One of the priests killed, Father Ignacio Elacuria, was the former teacher of the head of the FMLN, Joaquim Villa-Lobos and a kind of spiritual leader of the Marxist terrorists. He and the five other priests are supposed to have given highly effective and regular support to the insurgents. Although this affair must be cleared up, we must also decide whether the fact that they were priests was sufficient to exonerate them of violent activities. Were they guerillas or priests? And of course the Cristiani government, which the media self-righteously accuse of being on the extreme right, was elected democratically by the people of El Salvador, which also expressed its strong disapproval of the Marxist terrorists and guerillas by giving their candidate only 4% of the vote. Fidel Castro recently said socialism was the only bulwark against American imperialism. At a time when anti-American feeling is being revived by events in Panama, we must not underestimate the strength and influence of communism in the region.

PANNELLA (NI). — (IT) Mr President, I think that here we are discussing, as expert accountants or loyal friends of one side or the other, a tragedy that, with things as they are, can only continue. Once, Mr President, the joint culture of Stalinism, Fascism and latter-day Jacobin-military attitudes has given the world the myth of national independence, to which the left and right both paid tribute — this infamous myth of the death of peoples: 130, 140 dictatorial States that have made things worse for their peoples than the colonial States that preceded them — and once and so long as we continue to think that national States can be anything but a source of tragedy and violence, so long as the chancelleries of Europe do not see that it is in Europe's interest also for this attitude finally to be overcome and for a federal, federative conception of the State to be imposed that is anti-Jacobin, anti-Stalinist, anti-Communist, anti-Fascist, anti-the ethical State: until, that is, we have plurinational States with 20, 30, 50 languages and races — we shall see internal clashes, asphyxiated States in which the victors will always be, will always tend to be, on the right — those who are dirtiest and most demagogic; whilst on the left — alas! — will be those who are most desperate, because of the conditions of oppression and poverty that they represent.

But it is precisely this clash between desperation and violent solutions, which is what the history of this century offers us, that prevents us also from seeing things as they really are in Latin America. These States — Honduras, Nicaragua — are dying, before all else from myths and vested interests in their continuing as States, since that is what they are. All of Latin America,

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not only the central part, has had military dictatorships, in which the armies have never fought against other countries but always against their peoples and against democracy.

Well, it is undoubtedly painful, we shall go on witnessing this same slow, relentless pattern. Those elections will go well, they have killed that priest, they have killed this other one; and we shall jointly be the authors of those events, Mr President, for the lack of a political strategy, because we do not believe in the United States of Europe, because we are not offering them to Eastern Europe, and we are falling asleep over the certain tragedy of the national-democratic illusions that are emerging there. Since we are not federalists, since we do not believe in this, since these things are deleted, Mr President, tragedy threatens just where we have some hope.

The truth is, for example, that this reality is the reality of the narco-guerillas, the narco-dollars. And I — who have always been on the right of the American liberals where the Vietnam War is concerned, because I did not consider the problem of American injustice but the problem of the possibility of life for Cambodia and the others; and I was right, and for the same reason I appear wrong in regard to the problems of the Middle East, because I do not so much consider the problem of Israel's injustices as that of the right of the Palestinians to live in independence in the future, so as not to be reduced to the massacre to which the Syrian and all the other inhabitants of the Middle East are subjected — as I was saying, I have to say in regard to this that the Americans today, with their fight against drugs, with their just causes, with Panama, Colombia, and what they are doing in the Andes... twelve seconds, Mr President; all right, you intend being a little stricter with me. Thank you for your strictness.

CHEYSSON (S). — (FR) Mr President, eight oral questions from seven groups revealing a unanimous view within Parliament — quite remarkable. It is unfortunate that a shadow was cast by the European Right's statement attempting to justify the murder of a priest because he was a teacher in a poor region. Let us leave that aside.

There is remarkable agreement within Parliament in condemning the human rights violations in El Salvador, calling for dialogue and democracy and supporting elections in Nicaragua in as orderly a manner as possible. This of course includes the implementation of the joint plan for the demobilization, repatriation and rehousing of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance — and I quote the Tela agreements, whose implementation is unfortunately being delayed.

Parliament has stressed with a remarkable measure of agreement the value of a regional approach, stating that it is up to the countries of the region themselves to do what must be done, without outside interference. It did not say as much in the oral questions, but in the debate the House has forcefully adopted the opposite stance to

the United States, which in Central America as elsewhere has systematically tried to divide the countries and to isolate one of them — Nicaragua. It has systematically tried to use armed force to make its presence felt, by supporting local movements such as the Contras or the worst possible armed groups, such as the death squads, or by intervening directly. I shall not even mention Panama, but I would remind the House of the time when Nicaragua's territorial waters on both sides were mined — and those mines were American.

Parliament is thus playing its political role to the full. It is doing so clearly and quite remarkably. It is confirming and sharpening the line the Community has taken for years. The House will remember the first meeting between Foreign Ministers at San Croce in autumn 1984. The Twelve found themselves sitting opposite five Central American countries which if they were to talk to us all together, had to work together. This is where the idea for an economic cooperation agreement between the Community and these five countries came from. It also led to a political cooperation agreement between the Community and these five countries. This was unprecedented, and there has been no equivalent agreement since, and it imposes responsibilities on us. These have been effective. On a number of occasions we have been able to re-establish contact among the five countries when they were hardly talking to each other, usually as a result of American action. They have been effective in that they have made the five countries work together to talk to us in order to receive a full range of assistance. This is the road we should follow.

This is why the Community attached so much importance to the decision made in Esquipulas in August 1987 to elect a Central American parliament. We still hope this will be possible. The Tela agreement reinforces the point. I appeal here to Costa Rica, which has been the only country to oppose the move. But the oral questions, the debates and the resolutions Parliament is going to adopt today relate to the immediate future and the Nicaraguan election on 25 February. Yes, this must be a free election. The arrangements that have been made so far are completely satisfactory. A fact-finding mission sent recently by the Socialist Group has confirmed this. The elections must be free. We will be helping to make sure they are by means of the group of observers Parliament is sending — on which I congratulate it.

Mr President, by adopting the resolutions before it, Parliament will be recording the commitment both of the Community and of all the democratic political groups represented here.

LENZ (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, as what I wanted to say has already been said by Mr Suárez far more clearly than I could have managed, I will take this opportunity to make a few comments on the previous speakers' statements. We have been having this debate for ten years, but today I have sometimes had the impression that a significant proportion of the European Parlia-

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ment at least is about to declare war on the United States. But this is not getting us anywhere.

We should be honest. Where did the whole business start? Who has repeatedly destroyed the economic infrastructure in El Salvador for the last ten years? Who did not demobilize in El Salvador at the very moment when the point at issue was whether a Christian-Democratic or a democratic party or the Arena would win? I said to the FMLN representative who was in Parliament a few days before this election: if the hostilities do not cease, the Arena will win. And that is precisely what happened.

But none of these questions and counter-questions get us anywhere. What this Parliament is interested in is something quite different: we want to help the Central Americans to bring peace to the region at last, and accusations do not help. What we must do is find a way of explaining to them what we have been making great efforts to achieve in Europe for some years, peaceful solutions on the basis of a democratic consensus.

We must try to persuade Costa Rica to give the Central American parliament its blessing. We must try to persuade the FMLN to stop the civil war in El Salvador. We must persuade the armed forces in every country to stop violating human rights — and we must realize that the refugees have been fleeing before the armed forces by day and before the resistance groups and terrorists by night.

We must appreciate all this. This is where we must begin. That is what the European Parliament and the Council can achieve. We should change our tone somewhat here.

We should support the implementation of the conclusions drawn at the meetings of the five presidents, and this in every respect, because only a peace package that is upheld in every respect can lead to calm in the region.

We must arrange our aid so that it reaches the people, but has the political effect of enabling ways and means to be found to help the people — and the governments too. If we Europeans actually discuss this question with the USA, we may at last have found a way of escaping this *impasse*.

We are intervening. Where human rights are concerned, we have intervened throughout the world. And we will continue to do so — in Central America as elsewhere. We will do so in Panama. But please let us — and this is my appeal to the President of the Council — let us find ways of using political and economic instruments to help this region to emerge from the *impasse* at long last.

TARADASH (V). — (IT) Mr President, we have heard many right and proper speeches, and from the President of the Council we have also heard right and proper statements of principle. What I am wondering is whether this Europe, which is incapable internally of giving itself a government and giving itself a foreign policy, is capable, then, of imposing respect for its own choices, which should be the means of spreading abroad

values which, unfortunately, Europe itself is not able to translate into fact.

Naturally, none of us — I certainly not — wants to declare war on the United States, but we do want to be involved with this problem, unquestionably, in the conviction that in certain cases involvement or non-involvement are synonymous with complicity or non-complicity. And we do not wish to be accomplices in situations that create war, that create violence, that create power for the strongest and those that are most violent, no matter what their colour.

But what kind of intervention can Europe effectively guarantee, so long as it is unable to talk to the United States and tell it that it must export to Latin America whatever it has that is strong and fruitful — not a 'hostile friend' policy, that has caused so much destruction in Europe, and that we have known in recent decades?

Today the Latin American world is polluted with the so-called 'anti-drugs' policy which, in reality, is increasingly becoming a substitute for the anti-communist line. Communism was the 'evil', it was the 'empire of evil' — and very often it was. But anti-communist policy was not often a 'good' answer. Drugs and drug trafficking are today the new 'empire of evil', and they very often are. But the anti-drugs response from the United States is not a 'good' response if conducted with the instruments of policy that we have seen employed a few months ago in various Latin American countries, and a few weeks ago in Panama, and a few days ago off the shores of Colombia.

Well then, if we cannot distinguish, if we cannot indicate alternatives, in other words an effective anti-drugs policy, instead of an anti-drugs policy that only breeds war and lives on the profits of the war against drugs — profits of the war are not only economic; with the money it brings them the traffickers also build their own political empires, and UNO is expressing concern lest these political empires, which already exist in Latin America, become political empires in Western Europe also, and tomorrow in Eastern Europe — if, as I was saying, we cannot find the will to say that this policy of the United States is a policy that does not bring peace, that does not bring democracy; and that Europe must find the way to apply within its own boundaries the instruments of federation, internationalism and freedom movements that we can point to as an example to anyone who has forgotten them — including United States government policy — I think that the words that we have heard here today, fine though they may be, will unfortunately — as has often happened — remain a dead letter.

GALLE (S). — (NL) I note that a fairly broad consensus has emerged on this question. In the short time I have I will concentrate on the refugee problem in this region, torn apart by war and violence. All too often, after all, it is the ordinary man or woman, the man in the street who is the victim of the senseless violence. On the

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positive side, some 16 000 Guatemalan, Nicaraguan and Salvadorian refugees have been able to go back to their own countries under the Esquipulas and Tela Agreements. But there are still about 35 000 refugees left in Honduras alone.

I call on the Commission to open a specific credit line within the framework of the Esquipulas and Tela Agreements for the reception and reintegration of refugees throughout the Central American region. The aim should be to reach all categories of refugees. The International Conference on Central American Refugees held in Guatemala in 1989 did, after all, reveal that whole categories of refugees had not previously been included in the reception and reintegration process. The European Community should play a central role in this. It is a unique opportunity. All the institutions — the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council — must endeavour to solve the refugee problem in Central America as quickly as possible. I would also say, Mr President, that consultation and cooperation with the European and Central American non-governmental organizations is essential.

GEOGHEGAN-QUINN, *President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers*. — Mr President, I first of all express my thanks to all of the Members of Parliament who have contributed to the debate. Contrary to what the honourable Member, Mr Sakellariou, thought, I was listening very attentively indeed to his contribution and to that of others. I was glad to hear Mr Berton's comment in relation to the debate here today. I think what he said is important and perhaps bears repeating now: Lest the members of the public outside this Parliament and outside the Council and Commission might feel that all of us were preoccupied entirely with developments important as they are in Eastern Europe, it is a great indication that today we have a debate which is as important as this particular debate on Central America.

I was also very glad to be present for the contribution by a Member of this House who served the Commission and the European Community so well for so long as a Member of the Commission. I refer to the honourable Member, Mr Cheysson. I think that Parliament is privileged to have somebody who has the in-depth knowledge of an area that has been discussed here this afternoon. I would like to commend him for the excellent overview of the situation in Central America which he gave.

We in the Twelve have encouraged President Cristiani's efforts to track down the murderers of the Jesuits and indeed also in all efforts to hold discussions with the FMLN. We also would call for the early de-mobilization and resettlement of the Contras and consider that aid to the Contras should be used to that end. We would hope that free and fair elections can be held in Nicaragua and hope that the presence of observers, including those from EC countries, will be of positive benefit to that end. In particular your own observers

from the European Parliament would have a particular reference to all of the Members here today.

The Twelve have never stood passively by in regard to Central America and will not do so in the future. The countries of the region have shown their own ability to reach a common approach under very difficult circumstances, as they showed as recently as December last. The Twelve have at all times taken the position that the impulse for peace and the resolutions of the problems of the region can best come, as Mr Cheysson said, from the region itself. We stand ready to assist in every way possible this peace process and would call on the international community to do likewise. We have called on all countries to cease any interference in the internal affairs of Central America and support a democratic process in the region. We would call also for the end of hostilities and a return to the negotiation table. It is a good sign, Mr President, that we have seen in El Salvador in recent days the arrest of an army colonel and eight other members of the armed forces for the murder of the six Jesuit priests and let us not forget their cook and her 15-year old daughter as well.

As representing the Irish presidency I would confirm that we intend between now and the San José meeting in Dublin in April to intensify our contacts between the Community and Central America. A number of honourable Members mentioned EC aid to Central America and I would just like to remind Members, if that is necessary, that EC aid last year to Central America amounted to ECU 110 million. This was more per capita than the EC gave to any other region of the world and that is concrete indication, I feel, of EC commitment to support the resolution of the problems of Central America.

I referred to human rights in my initial contribution and suffice it that I should repeat now that the Twelve feel that respect for human rights is fundamental to all efforts to solve the problems of the region.

In conclusion, Mr President, we have three political instruments in Central America. Firstly, the structured dialogue that we hold with countries of the region, complemented by the constant diplomatic contact with and influence on them, secondly, cooperation, and thirdly support for the action of the United Nations and the OAS. We will make full use of all three, Mr President, in order to bring about a peaceful solution alongside progress and democracy.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — We shall not put to the vote the request for an early vote on the seven motions for resolutions to wind up the debate on the oral question on Central America.

PATTERSON (ED). — Mr President, on a point of order. I understand we are now going to put to the vote whether we should take a vote later on all seven of these resolutions. Could I have your undertaking now, because last time we got it wrong, that when we come to

PATTERSON

that vote the rules will be applied absolutely correctly and once one resolution has been adopted on any one subject, no further resolutions will be put to the vote? This is a ruling of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities. It is designed to avoid Parliament's taking contradictory positions simultaneously on a single subject. This matter of Central America is far too important for us to sound off in different directions. So, could I ask you please to give that undertaking that when we come to vote tomorrow, we shall vote on the understanding that rules are applied strictly?

PRESIDENT. — Mr Patterson, I can guarantee you, that as the chair has always done, the Rules of Procedure will be properly applied. The question you have put and which was raised previously has not yet been considered by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities. There is therefore no answer available.

SAKELLARIOU (S). — (DE) Mr President, two motions have been tabled in connection with this debate, one on Nicaragua, the other on El Salvador. All the groups have approved these two compromise motions. It is also appropriate that separate motions should be tabled because they concern different subjects.

PRESIDENT. — Thank you for that information, Mr Sakellariou.

GALLE (S), Chairman of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities. — (NL) Mr President, following on from what Mr Patterson has said about the Rules of Procedure, I would like the administration to inform the President, before we vote on Thursday, of the letters which the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities sent to the President of the European Parliament on 7 November and 20 December 1989 concerning the sequence of resolutions and votes on them.

PRESIDENT. — Yes, Mr Galle I repeat what I already said, namely that this report from the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities has not yet been delivered and that we are therefore not in a position to comply with your request. However, the enlarged Bureau which is meeting tomorrow, will probably consider the matter. It may indeed be the case that when we come to the vote the matter will already have been resolved.

I put to the vote the request for an early vote.

(Parliament approved the request)

The vote will be taken on Thursday, 18 January at 6.30 p.m.

10. Stock exchange listings

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the recommendation (Doc. A3-116/89) for a second reading, by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights, on the common position of the Council on the proposal for a directive amending Directive 80/390/EEC on the mutual recognition of stock exchange listing particulars (Doc. C3-192/89) (Rapporteur: Mr Stauffenberg)

STAUFFENBERG (PPE), rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, after the highly political debate we have just had, we now come to what most Members will undoubtedly regard as a very dry subject, which I will present very briefly.

What we have to consider is a common position of the Council on the amendment of Article 24(b) of Directive 80/390/EEC on the mutual recognition of stock exchange listing particulars. At the second October part-session Parliament approved the Commission's proposal without report pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure. The common position now before us largely conforms to the Commission's proposal and therefore to the opinion we delivered at first reading.

It provides for a prospectus to be recognized as a stock exchange prospectus in the Member States where an application for official listing has been made if two requirements are satisfied: firstly, that a prospectus had been duly drawn up and approved for securities in any Member State, and secondly, that within three months of the prospectus being approved an application has been made for these securities to be officially listed on the stock exchange of any Member State.

In its present form Article 24(b) of the directive already specifies — and this is valid law — that, if securities in another Member State form the subject of a prospectus duly drawn up and approved and if, within three months of the prospectus being approved, a simultaneous application is made in any Member State for these securities to be officially listed on the stock exchange, the prospectus is recognized as an appropriate stock exchange prospectus in that and any other Member State. I am sure that anyone who regularly speculates on the stock exchange will know exactly what this is about.

The common position now seeks to create freedom of movement in an area that is perhaps not vital to many of us but is nevertheless important for the common market — the freedom of movement of public-offer prospectuses and their recognition as stock exchange securities — and so to make it possible for such prospectuses, once they have been admitted to the stock exchange in one country, to be recognized in all the other countries without official, bureaucratic, legal or other difficulties.

On behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights I would now urge you to approve two amendments. Both attempt to make things a little clearer. One concerns the title of the directive, the aim being to give a slightly clearer indication of what it is all

STAUFFENBERG

about. The other quite simply perpetuates the committee's policy that national provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action concerning the incorporation of Community directives into national law should contain an explicit reference to the Community directive, the Community legal act, so that anyone reading and applying this act knows that, if necessary, he can invoke directly applicable provisions of Community law before the courts.

Provided that these two amendments are adopted, I urge you to approve this proposal, which undoubtedly looks very complicated. It was unanimously approved in committee. Nor can I see any particular political reason to reject it. It is designed to facilitate freedom of movement in trade in, in this instance, securities. This can only be in all our interests.

BRU PURON (S). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, just a few words to associate myself, on behalf of the Socialist Group, with the Stauffenberg report. The fact that it was approved unanimously in committee discharges me from further explanation other than the obligation to congratulate Mr von Stauffenberg for his excellent work on the subject, work which is illustrated by these two specific amendments. We will support these amendments because the first, in the very title of the directive, now clarifies its content — it would otherwise be equivocal — and because the second introduces a requirement which is useful not only for this directive, but also for any directives to be transposed into national law, that is, the obligatory reference to the Community directive so that both the legal translator and the ordinary citizen knows the origin of these changes to national legislation, knows that they arise from Community law.

Just one more comment on behalf of our group as regards the mutual recognition of the prospectuses we are discussing here: we enthusiastically support it and I might add that it is disgraceful that this mutual recognition, this equal standing of the various forms of prospectus laid down in the countries of origin, did not exist a very long time ago. The requirements laid down for a public-offer prospectus and for stock exchange listing cannot differ greatly from one State to another in legal systems as close as those of the Member States. So overlapping, piling up more and more requirements related to the legislation in the recipient State, can only obstruct trade and complicate matters, while confidence in the legislation of the State of origin of the company issuing the shares can liberalize the market and help construct the internal market. We Socialists are certainly in favour of this type of deregulation, Mr President. We are for deregulation which clarifies, lightens and facilitates, but against the type of deregulation which could favour the strong to the detriment of the weak in economic and social relations. I heard Mr von Stauffenberg say — I think it may have been a mistake in translation — that this will make speculation on the stock exchange. We do not want to encourage or support speculation on the stock ex-

change. We want the stock market to be a channel for real investment for the growth of European industry.

BRITTAN, Sir Leon, Vice-President of the Commission. — Mr President, on behalf of the Commission I should like to thank the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights and Mr von Stauffenberg for the thoroughness with which they have examined the Council's common position on this short but significant directive and I am grateful for the very clear explanation of it given this evening by Mr von Stauffenberg.

I am pleased to say that the Commission fully supports the two amendments recommended and which we think are useful improvements to the directive and confirm that they will both be taken up in the re-examined proposals that the Commission will now be making.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 5 p.m.

(The sitting was suspended at 7.05 p.m. and resumed at 9 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR CRANINHO

Vice-President

11. Takeover and other general bids

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-92/89) by Mrs Fontaine, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizen's Rights, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(88) 823 final — Doc. C3-57/89 — SYN 186) for a 13th Directive on company law concerning takeover and other general bids.

FONTAINE (PPE), rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, it is a fact that for some months now amalgamations between undertakings within our States but also with partners in other Community States has increased considerably, which we can only welcome. The forms this takes have multiplied — mergers and absorptions, majority or minority shareholdings, the creation of joint stock companies, etc. Whether they are forced amalgamations, or amalgamations of reason or convenience, in all cases this trend reflects certain basic motivations, directly related to the achievement of the large internal market. In this context, the Community institutions must of course define the appropriate legal instruments that will allow for an increase in these forms of cooperation and, of course, attenuate any risks they might involve. In this respect, incidentally, let me emphasize that the progress made is still most inadequate. I am of course alluding — as my colleagues will have understood — to the fifth and tenth directives, which have been blocked for years, and to the proposal

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for a European company which, alas, is still marking time.

Today we have to consider a very specific form of taking control, the public takeover bid and other general bids, a process which has appeared recently but which, in some countries at least, has increased considerably in scale. Of course everyone knows that the takeover bid is the brutal process by which a company acquires power over another by making an interesting acquisition bid to its holders of securities. Every State concerned, one by one, has tried to introduce a minimum of common rules for this practice by legislative means. We in our turn, ladies and gentlemen, must now consider this question, for we cannot ignore this form of restructuring European firms, which is bound to become more and more common. Let us be quite clear about this. Our task is not to encourage or facilitate takeover bids or to forbid them but to try to establish a few common rules for our Member States so as to ensure that these operations are transparent and to protect the weakest from what could become an economic jungle if we are not careful. That is the object of the proposal for a thirteenth directive before us for consideration today.

The amendments our Legal Affairs Committee is submitting to Parliament follow several basic principles of which I will describe the main ones. The field of application: your Legal Affairs Committee thinks it would be more judicious to reserve the application of the directive to companies admitted to the stock exchange. The Member States are free to go further than that.

Secondly, your Legal Affairs Committee looked at length at the question of the compulsory percentage the takeover bid must involve. The Commission proposes making it obligatory for the takeover bid to cover all the securities of the company in question. I think this obligation might be excessive and it might be better to set the limit at a proportion of two thirds, as laid down in French legislation for example. Lastly, your Legal Affairs Committee endorses the Commission's initial proposal, considering that it alone could ensure respect for equality of treatment of holders of securities.

The third principle concerns the means of defence of the company in question. Without dismissing the idea of a general meeting of shareholders during the period of the bid, and without this being able to lead to a suspension of the takeover bid — which we do not consider reasonable — we think the best solution remains a general meeting of shareholders granting authorization, prior to the bid but for a limited period, for the board to take adequate defensive measures.

The fourth principle is the transparency of the bid, transparency as regards third parties, the shareholders and the employees. Here the Commission's proposals are generally positive. Nevertheless, we wanted to give better guarantees of financial transparency and in particular to discourage where at all possible any abusive form of financing through debts. Our amendment obliges the offeror company to make a declaration

on any consequences the financing arrangements might have on the future financial situation of the company concerned.

Lastly, an area which we rightly considered at most length was that of consultation of the employees of the firms concerned. The Commission simply proposed informing them. We thought it necessary to go further, while still seeking to keep a balance. Amendment No 20, which we adopted in the Legal Affairs Committee, achieves the desired objective which is that the employees should know as precisely as possible how the takeover bid will affect their jobs. Some Members have tabled complementary amendments. I must tell them, with great regret, and without objecting to the substance, that I cannot as rapporteur endorse them all, and certainly not those which differ too much from the balanced position the Legal Affairs Committee has attempted to define. The same applies to clarifications which clearly go beyond the general framework we are seeking to establish and which risk further encumbering a procedure that is already complex.

To conclude, Mr President, let me pay tribute to the work done by the Commission and I thank it for being prepared, as usual, to tell us the fate of our amendments. Ladies and gentlemen, let me also tell you how happy I was to draw up this report with your help. Despite the necessarily technical nature of our contribution, this directive gives us another opportunity to state our resolve to make progress in the social and ethical dimension of the construction of Europe. That is our special contribution, because we are the democratic expression of our people. That is our responsibility.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — Thank you Mrs Fontaine for your work as rapporteur. I should also like to offer you my sincere congratulations on your birthday today.

(Applause)

VAYSSADE (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, so we are continuing to construct European company law and today, by regulating public takeover bids, just as some time ago when we discussed insider dealing, we are trying to put some order into the financial market and relations between companies.

Some dealings in our various countries have hit the newspaper headlines and helped give public takeover bids a bad reputation in public opinion. They seem to result in destructuring and involve job risks because of financiers who look only at the short term or see them only as operations different from production activities. I am aware that not all public takeover bids have this effect, but it is important for the Community to define the rules of the game here. Some Member States have already done so. We needed Community rules here and we welcome this directive.

We also welcome its objective, which is to introduce rules and to 'moralize' the procedure for public takeover bids. It is not, indeed, a question of preventing them as

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such, for they can play an important economic role, but of preventing them from being used for purely speculative purposes. I think that was the intention of the Commission's text.

Mrs Fontaine has just spoken of the rules set out in this directive. I want to discuss two of them, rather than repeating them all. I think that transparency is indeed essential to avoid speculation and that the measures to provide information, both to third parties and to the shareholders and employees, are important measures. In this way people will actually know why a takeover bid is made. It is also important to ensure equality of treatment, especially of shareholders. It is true that we have had much discussion about whether all or two thirds of the shares should be acquired when the bid is made. We agree with what was decided in committee and which we voted for. I know that some countries apply the two-thirds rule and that perhaps they will not entirely endorse the views of the Commission and the Legal Affairs Committee, who are both agreed on this point. But I think it is important to do so. Lastly, we think we should respect the rule on information for employees and the position of the employees in this mechanism of public takeover bids.

I want to praise the work Mrs Fontaine has done and the compromise we have reached. It is true that we have some amendments, in addition to those of the Legal Affairs Committee, and that in some areas we want to supplement the rights of employees in the company and to provide for the possibility of going back on a takeover bid if it does not comply with the objectives that were fixed or enabling the company's own workers to buy shares. Our amendments aim to achieve that end. So no one will be surprised if we uphold them and vote for them. We have agreed that on amendments Nos 39 and 40 by Mr Bru Puron we can vote by division since, on the principle of the matter, agreements are possible and we know that we disagree about the financing methods. We shall vote for all these amendments but we will agree to a vote by division. On the other hand, we will reject any amendments that do not correspond to the views of the Legal Affairs Committee and the principles it has set out. So we reject the two amendments which put the question on a regional basis, not because we do not regard regional planning as important, but because we do not think that this is really where the question of the local location of companies arises.

That, Mr President, is how we will vote. On this matter, we also want to tell the rapporteur that we agree to accept amendment No 38 instead of No 13, so there will be no problems there.

A last point, Mr President. Once the vote has been held we will have to check whether the recitals really are compatible with the articles in all the languages, for I think that at present, in some languages, there is already a distortion between Article 4 and the corresponding recital. I think that is an essential precaution, to ensure that we vote on really good texts. I hope Parliament will

take a firm line at this first reading, which will help ensure that we have good relations with the Commission at the second reading.

HERMAN (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, takeover bids are a little like languages, they can be marvellous or dreadful. They can be marvellous when people manage to recombine the factors of production in a more effective way, or dreadful if they destroy an industrial asset purely for speculative reasons.

That is why it was important to have common rules, for the present national legislations were no longer pertinent and had no meaning or effect at a time when the capital market is being standardized. So action was necessary. The Commission acted, and here I would like to thank the rapporteur for her excellent work. I did indeed need a great deal of tact to achieve a consensus within the committee. Three objectives had to be achieved, firstly, transparency, secondly equality of treatment of shareholders, thirdly, a more general objective, the preservation of industrial assets together with consultation of the workers. I think that in this area the Commission has achieved its main aim, which was to establish rules that achieved these objectives.

However, here I want to argue for one amendment. Why an amendment on the question I have just mentioned, i.e. when must a takeover bid be made? On the basis of what proportion of the capital or voting rights can a public takeover bid be made for all the shares? The rate has been fixed at 30% and it is true that if all the European stock exchanges were like the British one this would be understandable. Why? Because an analysis of the stock exchange situation in the United Kingdom and of company structure there shows that very very many companies are controlled as soon as the 30% level is reached. But in most other countries, that is far from the case. So, to make it obligatory for a takeover bid to involve all the shares simply because it attains 30% of the capital, while in many countries that proportion represents the part acquired reciprocally by those who want either cross-holdings or cooperation agreements between firms means favouring those who want to achieve amalgamations and absorptions by other means. They will try to achieve this by other means than takeover bids, by creating subsidiaries and a whole range of other activities which are not at all rational in economic terms.

That is why, in my view, the obligation to make a takeover bid should exist only where someone intends to acquire a position of absolute control, i.e. 50%. I have tabled an amendment to that effect. I hope the arguments I have just put forward very briefly will convince those who are not entirely sure about this matter and it is in that hope that I would like to conclude this brief statement and thank my colleagues and the Commission for the work they have done.

JANSSEN VAN RAAY (PPE). — (NL) On a point of order, Mr President. You erroneously referred to

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Mr Herman as the spokesman for our group. But he spoke solely to defend his amendment. I would ask it to be minuted that he is not our group spokesman.

PRESIDENT. — In fact that is what had been notified to us and that is why I said it. However, if there is a mistake the Bureau is not responsible for it.

SALEMA (LDR). — *(PT)* Mr President, very generally speaking, we welcome the proposal for a directive under discussion, particularly taking into account the two main objectives which it seeks to achieve. First, equal treatment for the various parties involved in takeovers and secondly transparency of operations while the offer is in progress. Previous speakers stressed this point and yet, I would say, as the rapporteur, Mrs Nicole Fontaine, herself points out — and she has made a broad study of the advantages and disadvantages of takeover bids and even refers to the diversity existing in this field in the various Member States — even the pursuit of those two objectives, particularly the first, is not free from difficulties. One of the main questions (dealt with in Article 4) is the obligation to launch a bid for all the securities of a company when the offeror intends to purchase the number or percentage of shares which, in addition to his own holding, will allow him to control more than 33⅓% of the voting rights of the company.

Obviously I shall not, in the short time available to me, go into all the arguments in favour of the best solution for ensuring equality of treatment of shareholders and avoiding purely speculative bids. However, I would venture to say that the system proposed by the Commission will perhaps not be the best because it seems to me to favour offerors with a greater financial capacity, which may lead to a certain paralysis of transfrontier stock and share markets and even those of the Member States themselves.

We should much prefer a compulsory, precautionary and partial bid intended to exceed the limits of a third of the votes for a blocking minority on half the votes for control of the company, but for a percentage to be fixed but which would not imply going as high as the next threshold, since the lower the percentage, the easier it is for less powerful shareholders to reach positions of control.

I stress that, as other honourable Members have pointed out, this subject has been much discussed. However, some of the proposals which were not successful in the Legal Affairs Committee were taken up again by the Assembly and we emphasize that we are inclined to support the proposals for amendments aimed at reducing the necessity for a bid to involve the whole of the securities.

I think the work of the rapporteur, Mrs Nicole Fontaine, was outstanding and I too should like to congratulate her on the way in which she managed to deal with all the questions studied in detail in the Legal Affairs Committee.

Mr President, there are many other points worth raising, and I should like at least to mention one of them: the question of the employees of an offeree company, referred to in Article 19 of the proposal for a directive. And since I cannot give you our views, as Mrs Vayssade did, on each of the proposals for amendment, I will say that we are in favour of all the proposals for amendment approved in the Legal Affairs Committee as well as those which, in our opinion, tend to strengthen the interests of the employees, not only of the offeree company but also those of the offeror.

INGLEWOOD, The Lord (ED). — Mr President, all of us who have been dealing with this matter in the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights will know of the great lengths and trouble to which Mrs Fontaine has gone in the preparation of her report. I should like to begin by paying tribute to that.

The 1992 programme has many characteristics and one of the most fundamental is the right of people and organizations, including companies, which are in one part of the Community to acquire goods and services elsewhere in it. Of course, that includes the acquisition of companies. At present the traditions, practice and legal framework within which takeovers take place in the Community are very varied and the effect of this is that it is much easier for Community companies to take over companies in some Member States than in others. This is discriminatory and unjust and it is for that reason that we are strongly in favour of a comprehensive European-wide takeover code so that all Community companies can be on equal terms in this particular market-place.

The recent history of takeovers in those countries which have a common-law jurisdiction, which includes my own, and those countries which are both within and for that matter outside the Community has shown how human ingenuity, allied to some deviousness, can contrive to twist rules which are designed to protect the legitimate interests of those involved in takeovers and turn those protections into devices allowing them to be ridden over roughshod. It is against such a background that we are anxious to ensure that the legal framework which surrounds the supervisory authority in each country gives it the flexibility always to be able to act in the interests of those it is intended to protect so long as it always functions within the general principles as proposed by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights in its Amendment No 3, which is one we most strongly welcome.

In particular, recent events in the United States and Australian courts show how an appeal to the courts can be used, not to deal with bona fide legal problems but as a tactical ploy by those with plenty of money who wish to play for time. It is for this reason that we believe that the courts should not be allowed to become an occasion to re-run the activities of the supervisory authority. Rather, they should only be a forum for legal appeals relating to the supervisory authority's activities. This is a distinction which is familiar to English lawyers and is

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also one which I understand is equally well understood in other Community countries.

This piece of legislation is one which is very important in the establishment of a single commercial market across Europe and, as such, we support the proposals as amended by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights, which, in our view, strike a good balance between the various interests involved.

BANDRÉS MOLET (V). — (ES) Mr President, I too should like to begin by thanking Mrs Fontaine for her efficient and intelligent work in drafting this report — probably a very European report, because I think it was written in the train between Paris and Brussels, on which, like Mrs Fontaine, I normally travel and see her working very assiduously.

This is an important subject, Mr President. Takeover bids are certainly a new but extremely important and interesting feature of modern commercial law. In recent years the financial world has been convulsed by them, and I would add that the interests pursued are not always perfectly legitimate.

My group therefore thinks it very appropriate for the Community to lay down rules on this important matter, thus putting the economy on a world footing and promoting the creation and structuring of the internal market within Europe itself. Like the rapporteur and the Commission, my group thinks that the purely speculative aspect must be avoided and, as Mrs Fontaine was reminding us, we must provide a moral code for this sector of economic activity, bearing in mind the ethical dimension of the building of Europe.

So, Mr President, we shall vote for the amendments tabled by the Legal Affairs Committee because they improve the transparency of transactions, they guarantee equal treatment of shareholders and above all — and you will understand that I myself and all of us have been particularly concerned about this point — because they take effective account of the interests of the workers of the companies whose shares are the subject of takeovers.

To be specific, Amendments Nos 5, 15, 16, 17 and 19 ensure that workers and unions shall be fully informed of the bid and give them the opportunity to defend their interests fully. So, in general we shall vote for the report as a whole and for those amendments, although we do still wonder whether Amendment No 2 contradicts Amendment No 8 as regards the number of shares to which the bid must relate, that is, whether it must apply to all shares or to two thirds. In any case, we believe that the offer must be addressed to all shareholders irrespective of the proportion of shares concerned.

That is the view my group will take in the vote.

BONTEMPI (GUE). — (IT) Mr President, we have no doubt that this directive constitutes an important and delicate stage in the Community process of coordinating company law and commercial law. It is certainly so because public takeover and other general bids, which

are the subject of this directive, are — as has so often been said — on the increase and becoming more common. Secondly it is so because, in as much as they are company concentration or restructuring operations, they follow the same trend as the new rules of competition which underly the construction of the single market. Moreover, it is so because — as has been said — this is a matter which is objectively complex and which has in every case been governed by very different national legislations. Lastly, it is so because the structural nature of public takeover bids is such that apart from the technical, economic and functional advantages, it is a system that also involves considerable speculative perils and risks.

So, simply on the basis of the common rules, it seems to me that the way in which the Commission has in fact acted, the way it has presented its activities to us, is an example of high quality and clear intention; and I also want to compliment the Legal Affairs Committee and the rapporteur — for I found her report very clear and, I repeat, very solid and well constructed. On that basis, let me repeat, the committee has managed to define what we in fact called for, which was an attempt to introduce a moral dimension, an attempt not to reduce the positive potential of this instrument — which is being used more widely — while taking great care to prevent any distortions.

I do not want to repeat what other speakers have already said. But I do think we should emphasize one particular point, even if others are more controversial. I must say that on the question of the amendments, we will again try very hard to maintain a rigorous approach to the interests we wish to protect, namely the parity of conditions which, in this case, and especially because of the risk of distortions — which has already been noted — must be taken very much into consideration.

One of the questions I consider central is that of transparency. I want to dwell on this aspect, without repeating what my colleagues said, because it is an essential aspect not just of this directive but also, in my view, of a concept of the construction of the single market which makes it possible — precisely through that transparency and the provision of information — for the economic process to be controlled and monitored without being constrained in a rigid system. Constraints are necessary, they are indispensable; but constraints are not always compatible — i.e. the classical administrative constraints — with economic development. But there is one constraint, rooted in the system — a social constraint if you like — which has major implications: that of transparency. And it is clear here that this transparency relates to the shareholders, i.e. to a most significant sector. And I must say that the efforts made by the Legal Affairs Committee are positive — I have seen other amendments too that have convinced me — in the sense of defining more closely the conditions for informing the less important subjects. The workers are subjects who can be passive, i.e. be the passive subjects of a process of restructuring and, in particular, they tend to be the weaker force: for their

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sake, therefore — to give them a place in this process — we must give the utmost emphasis to this aspect of transparency.

As I said, this transparency is an aspect we must always remember. So, if this directive has, as I believe, been given this reading and this direction, as well as being a joint effort, we must be very clear about this ourselves — so I am convinced — which is to say that if we are going to reform this European social dimension we are to construct, this new order, the fruit of such labours but also of a desire to lay down rules and, I repeat, put some order into these real processes, then an important principle is, I repeat, that of transparency, of responsibility, which has an interface in the economically weaker subjects in that it can enable them to assert their rights and, within their organizations, to take positive action, in full knowledge of the problems involved.

I will close here. I thought it right to stress this point because it seems to me that this kind of approach, the criterion of transparency, which I have tried to define — and I think I have done so — has not been guaranteed in every case. Very often, I repeat, amalgamations or economic integrations have the weakness of obscurity — obscurity of aims — which leads to poor general results.

FITZGERALD (RDE). — Mr President, I too wish to compliment Mrs Fontaine and, like you, wish her a Happy Birthday!

I am not so much concerned with the general content as with the form of the proposed directive. A reservation on this proposal, shared by many, is that existing systems are satisfactory and should not be unravelled or superimposed by rigid statutory rules. In seeking to promote and protect the interests of employees, shareholders and the health of the economy in general with a European code, it is essential that a high degree of flexibility and speed of response be maintained.

In 1988 three-quarters of all undertakings taken over in Europe were British companies. At least it can be said that this gives their standpoint the force of experience. Companies quoted on the Irish Stock Exchange are governed by the London-based takeover panel. The Commission completely acknowledges the effectiveness of the existing takeover panel arrangements. The argument to accommodate these principles is strong. I, too, believe that the provisions to ensure openness and transparency of dealings in takeover bids are crucial to dissuade cynical speculators and to promote the positive role that takeovers can play in strengthening the ability of companies to compete and face up to the challenges of 1992.

I want to emphasize that the requirements for consultation and disclosure to shareholders and employees are important to ensure that the takeover is not merely a mechanism for economic efficiency, but that it is developed with a social dimension and social responsibility. I favour the obligation whereby a public bid for all the shares of a company should be made

where an interest amounting to one-third of the shares is reached. I feel that without this provision the type of purely speculative bids which damage the interests not only of shareholders but of employees in the general economy will occur frequently.

Finally, I think it is necessary to include a reciprocity clause dealing with bids from non-EEC countries. It is currently much easier for non-Community enterprises with large resources and debt capacity to gain control of strategic Community enterprises than the reverse. In the case of internal EEC trans-frontier bids provision should ensure that bids for shares and control of any undertaking are not a means of limiting competition or of acquiring monopoly in any particular commodity or sector.

SIMEONI (ARC). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the increased number of takeover and other general bids we have been witnessing for several years in the Community forms part of a process of internationalization and globalization of the economy and finance which, in itself is neither a good nor a bad thing. But in practice, takeover and other general bids are a tool used in the service of a policy of concentration of capital and the powers connected with this in the hands of a few people. That policy is not innocent on the part of those conducting it or assisting it, nor is it without prejudice to the many who are subjected to it. Here I mean the employees who suddenly lose their jobs, without any hope of being given new jobs in the short term. I am also thinking of the regions, often the less-favoured ones, which, under the pretext of economic efficiency, find their production tools being wasted and which become more marginalized, and that within a Community which set itself the objective of economic and social cohesion.

Attenuating an evil does not make it better. At best one can salve one's bad conscience, should it awaken. The proposal for a directive from the Commission and Mrs Fontaine's report are perfect examples of that first truth. But the balance of forces in this Assembly being what it is, I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to relieve your consciences a little by adopting the two amendments to Articles 6 and 10 that Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza and I tabled. They both aim to introduce a control, or at the very least *a priori* transparency, by the elected regional authority, of takeover and other general bids directed against firms which carry out their activities in the territory of that region.

There has never been so much talk of regional planning in the Community as there is today and never has that concept been so meaningless, so empty of actual achievements. Give power to the regions and the regions will actively promote a more united Europe, because that Europe will be more free and cooperative. Override their rights, and the law of the strongest will prevail, with the foreseeable consequences which are injustice and revolt.

HOON (S). — Mr President, I too would like to join in the general congratulation of Mrs Fontaine on her thorough and detailed report. It is a complex and technical subject and I think it is a measure of her customary fairness that she has produced such balanced and well-thought out recommendations. I can say that with some confidence because she accepted a number of the amendments that I tabled in the Legal Affairs Committee.

Those amendments were essentially concerned with providing employees with up-to-date and detailed information about takeovers, not only those of the offeree company but also those those working for the offerer. In all of the understandable concern that we have heard this evening to ensure fairness, particularly as far as individual shareholders are concerned, I don't think it is possible to lose sight of the consequences for employees of both companies. Those consequences can be dramatic. Generally speaking, some sort of rationalization or reorganization follows a successful takeover bid. That usually means redundancy for at least some employees. With such consequences it is important that the employees and their representatives should be kept fully informed both of the terms and of the progress of the bid.

Once that is accepted, as it was accepted by I think all members of the Legal Affairs Committee and I hope will be recognized by the Commission, there remain, I believe, certain technical questions that the Commission should consider. They were touched upon by Lord Inglewood and I want to repeat them now. I am particularly concerned with how the Commission proposes to translate the principles set out in the draft directive into domestic legislation. That is not usually a matter for the Commission, but I think in this case they need to give the issue some thought, particularly as has already been mentioned in the debate on a number of occasions, because of the position of the United Kingdom's takeover panel. The overwhelming majority of contested takeover bids in the European Community take place in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Not surprisingly, therefore, the takeover panel believes that it has developed a great deal of experience and expertise in this field. That is particularly necessary given the ingenuity of those responsible for preparing takeover bids.

There is some fear that the sophistication of such parties will be deployed to defeat the principles set out in the proposed directive and that the directive will be insufficiently flexible to deal with new financial techniques in the financing of takeover bids. The takeover panel has established a reputation on the basis of a flexible case-by-case approach, and I understand that they have been led to believe by the European Commission that the directive will not necessarily undermine their work in the United Kingdom. I would be grateful if, at some stage, the Commissioner would comment upon that. How will the Commission reconcile the pragmatic approach in the United Kingdom to the rules set out in the directive? In

particular, how will the Commission deal with a problem of recourse to the courts? What happens if a party to a bid decides to launch legal proceedings during a dispute? What happens if that is done deliberately in order to frustrate the bid? The advantage of the takeover panel's approach is that it resolves these questions quickly and with the least disadvantages to the companies concerned.

Those are problems which I hope the Commission will be able to address.

CASSIDY (ED). — Mr President, I would like to add my voice to the positive chorus of praise for Mrs Fontaine. I shall certainly not be voting against this report. I would, however, like to draw the attention of the House to a rather important paragraph, paragraph 13 of the explanatory statement of the Commission's proposal. In case Members of the House do not happen to have it in front of them, I will read out the relevant extract which is as follows:

'Company law in several Member States allows companies to adopt a range of defensive measures to ensure that control of the company remains in the hands of friendly shareholders. These defensive measures are very widely used in some Member States. As a consequence, the conditions in which a takeover bid is carried out vary considerably between Member States.'

This thirteenth directive does not really deal with that fundamental problem. Indeed, I was at lunch today with a representative of one very large European multinational which has just recently taken steps to ensure that they made themselves takeover-proof. That company is Philips. I am aware that the Commission has commissioned an investigation into obstacles to takeover bids throughout the European Community. I understand that that work was carried out by a reputable firm of international consultants, but for some reason or other, their report has not yet seen the light of day. So I would like to ask the Commissioner, when he replies to this debate, if he could give us some idea of when we might see that report into obstacles to takeovers within the Community?

I ask that particularly because the United Kingdom Government also commissioned a report from another firm of reputable consultants and they have already published their report. So we are rather keen that the Commission should produce its report because plainly, to non-Britons, the Commission might seem to be a more reliable source of information than the British Government. But as 80% of takeovers take place within the United Kingdom, I think that we therefore have an interest in seeing this information published as soon as possible. Though many Members have paid tribute to the flexibility of the British market and the fact that 80% of takeovers take place in the United Kingdom, none of them has actually asked the question why that is. I will answer that question. The reason that 80% of public takeovers take place within the United Kingdom

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is that we have a free and open financial market. Surely, Mr President, that is what 1992 is all about.

VAN OTRIVE (S). — (NL) Mr President, the scale of company takeovers in the Community has shown how important it is for employees and their representatives to be informed and consulted early in the process on the social and economic repercussions which could well affect them. I am thinking specifically of the case of Interbrew, of the mergers in the non-ferrous metal sector within the Société Générale, Airbus and the like. I was quite taken aback that under these circumstances the Commission has paid scant attention in drafting this thirteenth directive on takeover and other general bids to giving employees' representatives information and the opportunity for consultation. Admittedly the Legal Affairs Committee and Mrs Fontaine have tabled amendments to some important parts of the draft, but I think they are inadequate. The draft stipulates that the supervisory authority and the management of the companies concerned should be informed before the publication of the offer document, but I think there is every reason for informing the employees' representatives as well at that same time; that is the purpose of my amendments to Article 7. Article 14 deals with the report of the companies concerned and should also, I believe, include the opinion of the employees' representatives. They should also get the opportunity to assess the offer document, with the help of experts if necessary. Their opinions should also be published just as the management report is published.

Mr President, my amendments have been tabled on the basis that the interests of the employees are much more important than those of the shareholders and that the employees' representatives should be put on an equal footing with the supervisory authority. I have learned that unfortunately the Commission does not share my view.

Finally, Article 10 of the draft directive deals with the content of the offer document. This ought to be supplemented. I believe that the offeror should indicate specific aims and plans he has for the company concerned, specifically for example the place of the firm in the company, possible restructuring, changes in status, stock exchange quotations, recruitment policy, policy of distributing dividends. In drafting my amendments I drew inspiration from the recent relevant Belgian legislation.

Mr President, I hope that my amendments will be supported by all who have the employees' interests at heart. I am thinking here especially of the representatives of the Christian workers' movement in the twelve countries of Europe.

(Applause)

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, if I add my voice to the congratulations to Mrs Fontaine, both for her birthday and on her report, then it will almost come over as a public

takeover bid. All the previous speakers have quite rightly congratulated her and I should also like to do so.

The subject before us today is extremely important for company law and I am pleased that the initial reaction to the Commission's initiative has been so favourable. We have entered a field of tension between differing interests. That is shown clearly by the multitude of amendments tabled, and by the different positions represented here in the House.

One thing is quite clear. In defining the conditions under which public takeover bids are made, we cannot upset the whole legal system of the Community or of individual Member States. That is certainly not on. For example, and I would turn straight away to Mr van Otrive, most Member States have legal provisions which guarantee company property.

This problem will be taken into account in all the questions of co-determination. You can and indeed should take employees' participation very far, but at some stage you reach the point where it affects the law on property. That oversteps legal boundaries and I do not believe that we can do that.

That is why we tried to include the point of informing employees but contain it within these boundaries. I should like to take this opportunity to repeat once more — and I say this in the light of what Mr Cassidy said, because we are still working on this problem — that we are studying the experience of the Member States very carefully. That, incidentally, was why we concentrated so much on the British experience because, as it was rightly said, most of the takeover bids of this kind have been in Great Britain and not because we have a particular penchant for British law or British practice. It is simply that Britain has had most experience and that is a fact we cannot ignore.

Of course one should be able to sell or buy an undertaking, or shares in an undertaking. That is part and parcel of a market economy, and in very many cases this kind of takeover is not at all harmful, not even for the regions involved. If an undertaking is taken over with the intention of continuing the business, then this is a guarantee for the workforce that their jobs will not be lost.

Allow me to give you a very recent example from Germany which was not admittedly in the form of a public takeover bid but which nonetheless shows how important it can be for a big company to take over a firm in trouble. The firm Nixdorf got into difficulties. Nixdorf had its main production centre, its headquarters, in Paderborn, an area which is not renowned for being one of the most developed. Siemens' takeover of Nixdorf helped to stabilize the latter and will keep jobs in that particular region.

So we should not be too ready with hasty generalizations. Equally it would be over-generalizing to say that everything in the garden here is rosy. In the United States in particular, much more than in Europe, there have been takeovers which have been made for purely

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speculative reasons, either to exploit a firm because their land was the most valuable asset, or possibly for tax purposes to be able to write off losses, or sometimes even to solve some other problems. I think, for example, that to take over a firm just to get rid of the management is a bizarre way of changing the management.

Be that as it may, our aim here is not to hinder or complicate this freedom to buy an undertaking or shares in an undertaking, nor is it to make it any easier. Our whole intention is to create the conditions which will clearly show the intentions of those involved and to create the opportunity to intervene if these intentions are contrary to the shareholders' own interests or those of the employees.

That is what we have tried to do. I can already inform you that we shall accept a large number of Parliament's amendments. They do represent improvements to our draft.

The point of this dialogue between the Commission and Parliament at this first stage of legislation is precisely so that we can call on the expertise in this House and that this dialogue can also throw up new points of view which my have been overlooked.

That is why I shall first take the amendments which we have no trouble in accepting. Apart from some clarifications on the terminology, which we think useful, the main concern is to introduce a catalogue of the general principles into the recitals of the directive. These are principles which should guide the supervisory authority in particular when authorizing individual exceptions. We think this is useful and will certainly introduce a degree of flexibility, because as long as we leave it at principles and not try to spell out details, it leaves the supervisory authority the necessary margin for manoeuvre.

We can also fully accept the proposal to include additional information in the documentation on the bid, for example firstly information on the future indebtedness of the target company. For that is precisely the point by which we can very quickly detect a purely speculative takeover, because if the target company is put into such debt by the takeover that it is no longer able to pay interest and repayments out of current business income, then the bid quite obviously has been made for speculative reasons.

In the second place useful information is also gained from the additional information on the financial situation of the offeror and on his plans to include employees of the target company in the management of it. All of this enhances transparency and provides more information on the bidder's intended plans. That is completely along the lines of the objectives of our draft directive.

Parliament drew attention quite rightly to another point. So far the draft directive makes no provision for its implementation. I agree with you that such a provision should also be included and can go along with the proposed date of 1 January 1993. Everything I am

doing is with that date in mind. My family has also become geared to it, and that is why I am happy that we can accept this date.

Parliament has also said that the scope of application of the directive should be restricted to undertakings quoted on the stock exchange. I understand that position. We are also prepared to accept this proposal, but would ask that we examine the consequences of this restriction after five years, because that may show that we have failed to include one or the other important takeover. If that were to happen we would then have to tackle this problem once more, because it is quite possible that the stock exchanges in the various Member States develop in different ways.

If we were to do that then we would also have to do something similar with the other regulations. Restricting the scope of application would mean that Article 5 would lapse, as Mrs Fontaine has already suggested. That is but a logical consequence.

The report drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights also supports us in our view that there should be an obligation for a public takeover bid covering the whole of the securities of a target company if the acquisition of these securities exceeds a specific value. What should that value be? Our text bases its calculation on the right to vote. I still think that is the most appropriate, which is why I think it rather dubious to include the criterion 'capital' as well, especially when it is linked to the right to vote, because that would mean that the right to vote is counted twice.

Two amendments have been tabled on the tasks of the supervisory authority, which we can endorse but only with a certain reservation, because the text which you propose excludes the possibility of entrusting the tasks of such a supervisory authority to private organizations if they have the relevant authority. But we think this is very important because we are working according to the principle of subsidiarity, as you know, and I believe that that is very important for public acceptance of what the Community is doing.

We should not destroy well-established structures in the Member States just because we want to implement some kind of higher logic of Community legislation, and in Great Britain there is a practice based on a private organization and even on not legally prescribed rules which works very well. Why should that be stopped only because we imagine that an authority will always work better in every case than a private organization? That is not necessarily so! There are authorities which are better than private organizations. But of course it can work the other way round, and to that extent I think that we should leave it open, or at least leave it up to the Member States to settle.

The mention of Great Britain brings me to the sensitive issue of informing the workforce of the target company. Here we can endorse only part of the amendments before us. We have already made very good progress,

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and that is why I think we can still make some improvements but not go as far as you want.

We see no need, for example, to make provision for the employees of the offering firm to have the right to be informed, and it also seems to us to be going too far to oblige the offeror to produce a calculation of the effects of the bid on the employment situation of the target company over the next two years. We are obliging him to inform the supervisory authority of how he sees the development of the employment situation. If the supervisory authority or the private organization considers that too vague, then it can either refuse the bid or lay down conditions which mean the bid has to be spelt out more clearly.

We agree on the other hand with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights that the documentation to be made available to the workers should also include the withdrawal, the revision of the bid and any competing bid, for that makes the information complete.

Allow me to dwell on a point which we want to keep at all costs — the measures which a company can use to defend itself against an unwanted takeover bid. We do not think it right to give the general assembly the power to take a prior decision on such defence measures — in other words without knowing the bid, before a specific bid has been made and without knowing the conditions attached thereto. That, in our view, is not within the power of the general assembly. The general assembly must know what bid has been made under what conditions before it can form an opinion on it. We believe that the shareholders can only be properly protected if they know the conditions proposed by the offeror before they decide on such measures, and that is why we also support amendment No 36 which provides for convening an extraordinary general assembly during the bid.

That is to be welcomed, because it means an immediate reaction can be given to the situation. It also offers the necessary speed, which we all want. And it is also in line with the declaration I already made to the Internal Market Council.

We were also unable to warm to the proposal to grant the supervisory authority the right of intervention on capital increase against or in the absence of the view of the general assembly. Somehow that just does not belong to the powers of the general assembly. It cannot be the task of an authority to do that kind of thing without an opinion or a decision from the general assembly.

The Commission is prepared to accept unreservedly Amendments Nos 1 to 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14 to 16, 19, 21, 25, 30 and 36. We also agree with the content — that was the reservation on terminology which I expressed earlier — of Amendments 17, 18 and 43. We can accept part of Amendment No 2, namely the last sentence of Article 19, paragraph 1. We must unfortunately refuse the other amendments.

The fact that we have accepted so many amendments shows that we are very grateful for the excellent work done by your Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights and in particular, of course, by the rapporteur Mrs Fontaine.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 5 p.m.

12. *Release of goods for free circulation*

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-113/89) by Mr Cassidy, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 385 final — Doc. C3-138/89 — SYN 216) for a directive amending Directive 79/695/EEC on the harmonization of procedures for the release of goods for free circulation.

CASSIDY (ED), rapporteur. — Mr President, I shall not detain the House long. The proposal is a minor matter in the context of completing the single market but, on the other hand, important for those involved in shipping things into the Community. There is a directive which has been in force since 1979 which is generally known as the free-circulation directive. It defines the procedures to be followed in all Member States when goods are imported from outside. It gives importers a choice of methods of clearing goods into their country but, unfortunately, that choice is not entirely a free one for the importer. It depends on national authorities. The Commission is therefore proposing to introduce a simplified procedure which will lead to the faster clearance of goods, because the Commission feels and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy agrees that lack of uniformity in the application of rules for the clearance of goods has serious implications for the completion of the internal market. This proposal before us today therefore amends the directive and lays down the simplified procedure which Member States must offer and the conditions that the importer must comply with to be authorized to use them.

There is only one minor amendment from the committee. The committee approves of all of the Commission's amendments except that we in the committee felt that goods imported for non-commercial purposes or goods of low value should not be submitted to the need for a written entry. The Commission was tending to leave this as permissive, using the word 'may' in English. The Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee proposed to make it rather more obligatory and therefore proposed to substitute the word 'shall'. Having said that, there is no other point with which the committee finds itself in disagreement with the Commission. I hope, therefore, that the House will be able to see its

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way to support the Commission's proposal and the amendment from the committee unanimously.

ROGALLA (S). — (DE) Mr President, first of all I must contradict the rapporteur for this is not a minor matter. This is an important issue as I shall demonstrate, and I am consoled by the fact that many important things happen at night, even the late-night discussions on customs union, which has been delayed for more than thirty years.

The customs union should have been achieved in 1958 and we are still trying to put it into place. Now the Commission has produced proposals, some of which show little imagination. The customs union is also one way of getting through to the man in the street, and here the Commission and the Member States in particular are still making very heavy weather of it. When we think of what the Council President repeated this morning about a 'Citizens' Europe', then we ought to be ashamed because we are really not with it, we are not producing the goods the man in the street wants.

What I want to do today is win allies in the Commission, since the Member States keep on disappointing us. In particular I would turn to Mrs Scrivener and ask her for a genuine pledge to do something for the citizens of Europe. We are talking here about imports from third countries and not the usual customs treatment within the Member States. But even for imports from third countries, when they are for non-commercial purposes, when they are gifts, small things which bring pleasure to people, we do not want to have to trek to the customs office. And we do not want to have to pay for the pleasure of receiving a package from abroad.

These formalities should now lapse. That is the purpose of our amendment. The Commission representative was not yet able to accept it in committee. But Parliament will stick to this amendment. If the Commission declares today that it still cannot accept it then we shall have to look for other ways of getting it through. We are fighting a battle against the windmill sails of habit. That is why this is no minor matter but a serious issue.

SCRIVENER, *Member of the Commission*. — (FR) Mr President, first of all I want to thank the rapporteur, Mr Bryan Cassidy, for his report, and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy for its positive response to the Commission proposal, which amends the directive on the harmonization of procedures for the release of goods for free circulation.

It is true, Mr Rogalla, that all this should have been regulated a long time ago. I cannot say that I share your view, but, in the end things are what they are in this fight we are conducting.

In this particular case, the directive touches on an important aspect of the functioning of the customs union. In a single market it is vital for the economic operators to have access to simplified procedures and to comparable conditions throughout the Community. The administrative environment plays a certain part in

the life of undertakings. It is one of the factors determining investment decisions. So it is in the common interest, and in that of each Member State, for trade with third countries to be based on the same simplified procedures everywhere, procedures which in any case have already been established in most of the Member States.

The Commission notes with interest that in general Parliament agrees with the approach it has adopted with a view to setting up a more homogeneous system of simplified procedures. The only amendment you have proposed at first reading is to make it obligatory to specify that a written customs declaration is unnecessary for goods imported for non-commercial purposes or goods of low value. That is in effect a very useful improvement, and the Commission accepts it. However, the amendment deletes all reference to the universal postal convention or to the cases where an import licence is necessary. In the case of the postal convention, the Community cannot ignore an obligation it has contracted at international level. In the second case, it believes it would be wiser to keep a flexible approach to imports subject to a licence.

To conclude, these two reservations apart, the one concerning the universal postal convention and the one on import licences, the Commission agrees to make it obligatory to specify that a written entry is unnecessary in the specific field of non-commercial or low-value imported goods.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 5 p.m.

13. Olive oil

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-110/89) by Mr Saridakis (Doc. A3-110/89), on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 349 final — Doc. C3-117/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2262/84 laying down special measures in respect of olive oil.

SARIDAKIS (PPE), *rapporteur*. — (GR) Mr President, Regulation (EEC) 2262/84, which was last amended by Regulation (EEC) 3880/88, provides that every Member State whose olive oil production exceeds 3000 tonnes shall, in accordance with its own legal system, establish a special agency to undertake certain controls and activities in the context of the olive oil production aid scheme.

To ensure more fully the rational and effective implementation of the Community's provisions governing the entire olive oil sector, the Commission's new proposal envisages an extension of the activities entrusted to these agencies, especially in the areas of

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consumption aid and the purchasing and public storage of olive oil by the intervention agencies.

As your rapporteur, I propose to strengthen the changes proposed by the Commission with amendments relating to the following areas:

First, the agencies should carry out objective checks, and they must therefore enjoy sufficient administrative autonomy. Consequently, the checks should be carried out by the agencies either on their own initiative, or at the request of the Member State or the Commission. The agencies will of course have to inform the Member State and the Commission about their findings.

Secondly, the checks carried out by the agencies will have to extend to all the Community's aid schemes envisaged for the olive oil purchasing sector. Besides, the agencies could monitor the extent to which the aid and the other sums envisaged by the Community's regulations have in fact been handed over by the intervention agencies to those entitled to them, under the specified conditions and within the agreed time limits.

Thirdly, on the basis of the agencies' reports and of its own information, the Commission is to draw up an annual review of the agencies' activities, which it will submit to the European Parliament and to the Council, if necessary with proposals for the improvement of the controls and sanctions envisaged.

Fourthly, to ensure independence of the controls carried out by these agencies in relation to their probable consequences, it is expedient to provide full Community financing of their real expenditure for the remainder of the period concerned, i.e. until 1 November 1992, the date on which the method of financing the expenditure in question is to be reviewed.

In short, your rapporteur's amendments are inspired by the desire to restrict the frauds that both the European Parliament, the Commission, and especially you yourself, Mr Commissioner, have emphatically decried many times and with particular sensitivity. As was also stressed by the Committee on Budgetary Control in its opinion drafted by Mr Dalsass, the risk of fraud related to production aid is particularly great because of the large number of olive cultivators, estimated to exceed one million in Italy alone. The most effective method of control is clearly that the agencies should be quite independent of the national administrations, and that in any case they should extend their activities to all Community aid schemes in the olive oil sector. Clearly, full coverage of the administrative expenses of those agencies from the common budget is the best possible guarantee of their objectivity. The cost of doing this, which is less than ECU 10 million, is very small — not even 1% of the total sum under their supervision, which will top ECU 1 500 million in 1990.

Mr President, I think we all have the political courage and will to propose to the Commission a more effective administrative mechanism, which will guarantee that the aid provided by the Community will in fact arrive

intact and in time into the hands of the producers entitled to it.

DALSASS (PPE), *draftsman for an opinion from the Committee on Budgetary Control*. — (DE) Mr President, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control I can only say that the measure being discussed today is long overdue and absolutely essential, as the rapporteur Mr Saridakis has explained.

You all know that inspection agencies were introduced to supervise production aid more closely, but that in the course of time these production subsidies have become less important as more money has been spent on consumption subsidies and intervention, so that it is more than necessary that these subsidies should also be inspected. Up until now this inspection was optional but now it is proposed that in addition to production aid consumption aid also has to be inspected.

This rule is by no means complete, because if our committee had its way we would institutionalize this inspection as of today. We would like to oblige these inspection agencies to take the initiative to carry out inspections, not just for production aid but also for consumption aid. We realize, however, that this would be somewhat complicated, because some inspection agencies are still being run in and would not yet be up to this task.

So our recommendation is that the inspection work of the agencies should be extended for the time being to cover all essential areas of the EAGGF Guarantee section, production aid, consumption aid, intervention measures and also private storage. The reason for this is that inspections of the whole sector are really effective if the quantities produced are subject to inspection right up to the moment of use in the filling plants or storage by the intervention boards. We also welcome the draft regulation because it aims at introducing a practice which has already produced good results.

At the present moment it appears impossible to introduce compulsory and systematic inspections beyond the scope of application of the regulation in all the relevant Member States, as I already said. In the long term, however, the Committee on Budgetary Control believes that compulsory inspections in all areas of this sector must be introduced by autonomous agencies, so that inspections are not left up to the whims of the relevant Member States and so that we can guarantee as equal treatment as possible in all Member States. The transfer to compulsory inspections should be made after a two-year consolidation stage. So in two years' time we should discuss it again and improve or perfect the measure if necessary.

At the request of my committee, the rapporteur included the passage that the Commission should inform Parliament by 28 February of this year of the results of the activities to date of the Italian and Greek inspection agencies and the progress achieved by the agencies to be set up in Portugal and Spain, or on any available results of inspection.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, we all know that much of the finance provided for the CAP, especially in connection with harvests, has given rise to situations of dishonesty and infringement. We, the Alliance of the Left, have no objection to the establishment of appropriate controls, especially now in the area of olive oil. However, we also think it is important to avoid the serious delays observed in payments to the growers, and the doubts, anxiety and insecurity experienced by them with regard to their payments, a matter related to the content of the regulations themselves, but also to the consequences of these doubts about the legality of the payments in question. From this standpoint we agree with the proposals put forward in particular by the rapporteur, Mr Saridakis, both concerning the administrative autonomy of the agencies and about extending the scope of their control activities to cover market support, standardization, public storage, and of course if necessary the financing of their operations from the budget of the European Communities. We think, though, that in parallel with all these measures, and in view of the debate about prices, there will have to be steady intervention by the European Parliament concerning some reduction of the restrictions that are increasingly stifling the olive growers, which we see happening yet again this year with the Commission's proposal, to satisfy the producers' demand that this injustice should be eliminated, namely that their aid is often granted on the basis of arbitrarily defined zone indexes whereas account should in fact be taken of the actual size of their production.

Mac SHARRY, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, first of all I thank Mr Saridakis for his positive approach to the Commission proposals. I found the contributions of other speakers to be very constructive. It was only to be expected because the proposal is in line with Parliament's concern for the protection of Community finances and represents one of the initiatives currently being taken by the Commission for preventing and combating fraud to the detriment of the Community budget.

As you know, the Commission's aim is to extend the scope of the olive oil agencies to include checking of the consumption aids scheme and public storage operations in addition to the production aid scheme so that olive oil remains subject to inspection by the agencies to the point where it is used in the bottling plants or taken into public storage. Effectively this means that under our proposals the agencies can check more than 90% of the expenditure in the olive oil sector. That is a significant advance and must be acceptable to all concerned.

Turning to the amendments, Amendment No 1 seeks to extend the scope of the control activities of the agencies to the disposal of olive oil produced, imported, consumed or exported and finally, to the payments made by intervention agencies. It also makes these controls by the agencies mandatory. The Commission cannot accept this amendment. We must bear in mind

that the agencies in the four olive oil producing Member States are still at different operational levels. Their activities should therefore be extended prudently and step by step in order to consolidate procedures. This can best be done in the framework of a work schedule and budget estimate approved at the beginning of each marketing year both by the Member State and the Commission. In any case, should an exceptional situation arise in which there is a risk of fraud, the agencies are already permitted to modify their programme after informing the Member State concerned and the Commission.

Concerning Amendment 1(b), according to which the olive oil agencies should check the payments made by intervention agencies in the Member States, may I say that the olive oil agencies' role is to assist the national authorities to comply with their obligations under Community regulations and to prevent and detect fraud by beneficiaries of EAGGF funds. They must not be involved in controls over national authorities. Such powers could lead to considerable friction and impair the efficiency of the agencies. These controls are performed by the Commission services and, as is well known, by the Court of Auditors.

Amendment No 2 proposes that an annual review of the agencies' activities should be submitted by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council and a detailed report be drafted by the agencies before 31 March 1990. Since last year the Commission has included a special reference to the agencies' activities in its annual financial report, drafted in accordance with Article 10 of Regulation No 729/70. I should say that the existing regulation already provides for continuous and very detailed reporting by the agencies to the Commission about their activities and the problems encountered during their checking operations. I would like to emphasize that the Commission continuously presents proposals designed to improve the checking of arrangements and the sanctions provided in the sectors concerned. I therefore accept the general idea of this amendment which will be implemented by the Commission in the most appropriate way.

Amendment No 3 proposes that the agencies' actual expenditure shall be chargeable to the general budget of the European Communities at a rate of 100% for all Member States concerned over the period up to 1 November 1992. I have to say that the Council, in accordance with the opinion of the European Parliament, at the end of 1988 adopted the existing method of financing. The 100% Community financing is envisaged only for the initial stage of establishing the agencies to cover mainly investment costs. At present this refers to the Spanish and Portuguese agencies whereas the Italian and Greek agencies are co-financed by the Community at a rate of 50%. Existing legislation provides that the method of financing all the agencies from the 1992-1993 marketing year onwards shall be decided by Council before 1 January 1992. The Commission does not consider it appropriate to re-open

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this discussion at this stage. I therefore cannot accept this amendment.

Mr President, this proposal is part of the Commission's broader policy in the fight against fraud, the strengthening of control arrangements and the imposition of sanctions in cases where a breach of Community regulations comes to light. For those reasons I recommend this proposal to the House.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 6.30 p.m.

14. Raw tobacco

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-111/89) by Mr Mottola, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 424 final — Doc. C3-159/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 727/70 on the common organization of the market in raw tobacco.

MOTTOLA (PPE), rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the draft legislative resolution concerns the amendment of Regulation (EEC) No 727/70 on the common organization of the market in the sector of raw tobacco. While noting that the aim of this proposal is to specify, for the sake of legal certainty, certain aspects of Article 12(1)(a), this Parliament cannot but agree with some of the concern expressed by producers, the processing industry and final consumers.

The Community tobacco sector, ladies and gentlemen, is going through difficult times both for the producers and the processors, which has very adverse effects both on marketing and on employment. This is due to the introduction of stabilizers, even though the Community has a 45% deficit, and to the fact that scientific research and experiments have not provided the producers with varieties in line with the EEC directive, not to speak of the current anti-smoking campaign.

What is at stake, therefore, is the interests of 250 000 firms, based mainly in Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal. The number of workers concerned is multiplied by three in the course of the various stages of processing, marketing and distribution. The Commission proposal provides that a firm that has offered tobacco for intervention for three consecutive years may only offer 15% of the production with a 10% price reduction in the following year.

The Committee on Agriculture proposed almost unanimously, with one vote against and two abstentions, to raise the number of consecutive years from 3 to 5, to raise from 15 to 20 the percentage of processed tobacco offered for intervention and to reduce the derived intervention price to 5% instead of 10%. All this is designed to enable research and experiments to be

carried out to find varieties of tobacco containing less nicotine and more aromatic substances, so that they may be included again in the EEC directive which provides that from 1992 the nicotine or tar levels in cigarettes must be reduced to 15 milligram and from 1997 to 12 milligram per cigarette.

VÁZQUEZ FOUZ (S). — (ES) Mr President, there may perhaps not be very much to say about this report because it is short and the amendment it deals with is a small one, though we should not forget that sometimes measures or decisions which we later regret slip through because they seem small. That is not the case today and there are no major problem in approving the improvement proposed by the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development to the basic regulation on the common organization of the market in raw tobacco. This is a concise report, we agree with it and there have been no amendments.

But the application and interpretation of the basic regulation may perhaps present major problems for production and producers of tobacco. We know, Mr President, that this sector depends basically on the owners of small holdings situated in less-favoured areas and that the cultivation of this crop is more or less their only recourse and there are no alternatives easily available for replacing it.

In Spain that is the position in regions such as Extremadura, Andalusia and the Canary Islands where at present they have both production and marketing problems. These problems arise both from the application of the stabilization mechanisms — which we were against at the time, and indeed I myself was the rapporteur for tobacco — and from the Commission's inflexibility in the application of this policy, laying down varieties and groups of varieties, since it does not allow conversion to other varieties in this necessary process of reconversion and adaptation to the markets and the demands of industry. Much reconversion is needed, requiring heavy investments, and the producers, as the rapporteur said, do not have the appropriate research backing, as it has not kept pace, and the future offers an insecure market with consumption likely to fall considerably.

We hope that some of these ideas, Mr President, Mr Commissioner, will be borne in mind for the price proposals for the raw tobacco sector. Since the Commissioner has always been receptive on this matter, I expect Parliament's suggestions and proposals will be accepted in the debate to be held shortly in this Assembly.

WYNN (S). — Mr President, I make this speech as a non-smoker and also as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control. I am glad to see that there are no financial implications in the report since the tobacco sector, with its budget of almost ECU 1 billion, has recently received an extra ECU 65 million in transfers. The explanatory statement in part 'B' of the report confuses me somewhat when it talks of protecting the

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health of consumers by producing new varieties. New varieties will not guarantee better health for anyone, not will they guarantee a viable future for the tobacco industry. We as a Parliament should not be encouraging the production of even more tobacco. Tobacco is already the most costly crop in the agricultural sector. While stocks of other crops are being reduced, tobacco stocks have increased to 30 000 tonnes. Hence this report.

The long-term answer is not intervention to increase stocks. What we should be doing is looking at how the industry can be restructured to help those who work in it. As has been pointed out, many thousands of people work in this sector. It is no use an anti-smoker like myself insisting that tobacco be done away with. That is an impossibility. But we should be looking at how to restructure and, for example, we should be looking into substitute crops for the producers of tobacco. The budget of the Community should be spent wisely. We do not have money to burn in that budget. Intervention in tobacco really is money going up in smoke. If I can just quote from the Commission programme for 1990, it says 'at the same time new anti-smoking proposals will be drafted to supplement existing legislation.' That, I am sure, will not aid the tobacco sector.

Mac SHARRY, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, first of all I should like to thank Mr Mottola for the constructive and positive approach that he has adopted to our proposal. I think it is well known that during the price package of 1988 the Commission proposed and the Council approved the amendment of Article 12a, (1)(a), of Regulation 727/70 on the common organization of the market in raw tobacco. This amendment states that the intervention price is to be reduced by 10% for undertakings which offer for intervention for three consecutive years a quantity of tobacco exceeding 15% of the overall quantity treated by that undertaking. As has been said, the proposal before us today concerns the simple correction of an error which was made when the text was published in 1988. Amendments to the text going beyond this simple correction should consequently not be envisaged at this stage.

As you know, the Commission has made certain proposals in relation to the tobacco regime in our price proposals for the 1990 harvest. I am not going to go into detail on those here, but we will have the opportunity, I am sure, in discussion with the parliamentary committee and with Parliament itself of dealing with these matters in the weeks ahead. These proposals also include the preparation in 1990 of a report on the functioning of the sector together with appropriate proposals. I look forward to receiving Parliament's views on these proposals during the forthcoming price-fixing debate. Some references have been made to your concerns at the present time and I understand those concerns. With regard what Mr Wynn has just been saying about the health of the Community and the query as to whether we are contradicting ourselves by, on the

one hand, supporting a tobacco regime and producers of tobacco and, on the other, dealing with matters pertaining to health, I do think that, in encouraging the different varieties, we are trying to support what might be described as varieties less harmful to the health of the Community. I have been one of the fortunate people who, over the last few years, has been in a position to kick the habit after smoking 60 cigarettes a day. I am now down to nil. I don't know whether I am healthy or not, but I have less to do with my hands during the course of the day.

Insofar as support is concerned, when the issue is raised it is no harm to put on the record that raw tobacco is an integral part of the common agricultural policy and therefore, the Community has to support the production of this commodity. As the Commission has already pointed out in reply to several parliamentary questions, the obligation to support tobacco derives from Article 39 of the EEC Treaty which aims at ensuring a fair standard of living for the tobacco producer. I think it should also be noted, as has been pointed out by some speakers here this evening, that tobacco growing is of exceptional importance to the economy of certain, mostly less-favoured regions, of the Community.

With those few words on the subject, knowing that we will be dealing more extensively with it both at committee level and here in plenary session in the weeks and months ahead, I think, for the purpose of tonight's debate, because it is of a very small and minor nature, I hope that the amendments proposed can be accepted by the House.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken Thursday at 6.30 p.m.

15. Cereals

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-109/89) by Mr Wilson, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 449 final-Doc. C3-166/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2727/75 on the common organization of the market in cereals.

WILSON (S), rapporteur. — Mr President, firstly a word of background explanation to this report. In February 1988 it was agreed that the maximum guaranteed quantity for cereals should be 160 million tonnes for the four-year period 1989 to 1992. It was also agreed that the Commission should make an annual estimate of the harvest. The importance of this estimate is critical. As Members will know, if the estimate is above 160 million tonnes, prices for the following year are automatically reduced by 3%. Also the extent to which the estimate is above 160 million tonnes, may determine the amount of reimbursement to farmers of the additional co-responsibility levy, which has already been paid.

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The Council consulted Parliament on a Commission proposal, which set out to introduce flexibility into this system. The proposal had two important dates. My original report concerned this proposal and rejected it as being too complicated, and because it would not solve the problem of administrative delays. The Council also discussed the matter and in November agreed on a new system which was in effect the system I had proposed. As a result of the Council's agreement, the Commission made a new proposal under the Article 149 (3) procedure, which is the proposal we are now discussing. The essence of this new Commission proposal is that, instead of the present system of collecting the additional supplementary levy of 3% and reimbursing it according to the final harvest estimate, it would be simpler and quicker to collect 1.5% at the beginning of the marketing year, around July, and then adjust this amount in the following year, depending on the harvest.

The Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development met on 18 and 19 December, and voted on amendments to this report. My proposed amendments were not favoured and the committee proposed an amendment abolishing the additional co-responsibility levy. The committee's view is that the additional co-responsibility levy is unnecessary and too complex. It imposes a burden on farmers which is unjustifiable. It is also felt that it leaves a huge responsibility on the Commission in having to make an estimate which has such important political and financial consequences. I believe that I have reported the situation correctly and effectively shown that Members are frustrated and want a better system.

But, Mr President, I have said in committee and I say again now, that we must deplore the fact that the Council is agreeing on important matters without waiting for Parliament's opinions. We should note too, that the Commission cooperates with the Council, as shown by the presenting to the European Parliament on 15 January this year, of a modified proposal containing the preliminary decisions taken by the Council of Ministers. I cannot deny that these proposals are sensible, but there is a correct way of doing things, and denying the European Parliament its formal rights is not the correct way.

There are serious problems in the cereal sector. We need a fundamental discussion with the Council and the Commission. This discussion is denied us, and therefore we have amendments today, tabled by Members of the Parliament, which go far beyond the scope of the regulation under discussion. The amendments adopted by the Agriculture Committee and other amendments, are a clear expression of this wish to have a fundamental debate on the problems in this sector.

Mr President, speaking now on behalf of the Socialist Group, which has granted me some of its valuable time, I want to pose the question: Will the amendments adopted by the Agriculture Committee continue to limit the production, of cereals? Surely we still want to limit production, don't we? Secondly, surely we want to help

smaller producers by exempting producers of up to 50 tonnes from the additional levy? I am sure we do want to help the smaller producer, don't we?

Thirdly, whatever happens — all Members agree, I am sure — we need a fresh new look at the cereals sector, in a spirit of cooperation between the Council, the Commission and the Parliament. We seem to be tinkering with a system which needs a radical overhaul.

Lastly, Mr President, when we give this a fresh new look, we must take into account the effects our actions will have on the poorer rural economies.

THAREAU (S). — (FR) Mr President, Mr Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, first I want to praise Mr Wilson for what he has just said, both as rapporteur and in relation to the short speaking time we gave him on behalf of the group. He proposed a great many things in the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Agriculture as a whole was not listened to by the Commission as a whole or by the Council. That was the conflict that arose in December, and we are still very marked by it today.

As coordinator for my political group I must point out that we have only been meeting since January 1984. The Socialist Group cannot accept any reasoning that would in effect turn the world markets into the determining element of how farmers' incomes are formed, either in the European Community or elsewhere in the world.

To prevent that from happening, we are in favour of adjusting the quantity and quality of production to consumption on a permanent basis. Moreover, we need a system of stabilization for cereals as for other products. Of course, demand can change from one year to another for international reasons while production, for its part, continues to change for climatic reasons, and sometimes in the opposite direction. So the control system cannot be static. It must not be too rigid, which is the situation at present. In 1989 the cereal objectives were virtually achieved, and so everyone must approve of suppressing the additional co-responsibility levy. But how can we accept a 3% fall in 1990 prices for all producers when we have virtually achieved our objective? I specifically said for *all* producers. Co-responsibility presupposes clearly specifying who is co-responsible and all our proposals as socialists stem from that word. Co-responsibility means specifying who is co-responsible. In the case of cereals, the producers in the south, with 2500 kg/hectare, will have to pay for others who reach 10 000 kg/hectare, quite apart from all the intermediate cases of course, and European policy breaks down at that point.

We cannot support an inverted solidarity which would, of course, lead for the first category to a cessation of activity, without limiting the abuses of the second. At the December part-session we had asked the Commission for a debate. Mr Mac Sharry, whom we are very fond of, was not able to be there — he was unable to come and we missed him at the debate — but his colleague refused to allow a basic debate on the cereals

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stabilizers and we were referred forward to 1992, although what we wanted was to change the content of the stabilizers before the 1990 price fixing. That is a basic issue.

The reply, as worded, was really unacceptable. Must we wait until some people reject the very principle of stabilizers? Tomorrow, when we vote, some Members of this Chamber will refuse to vote in order to break up this policy and return to international liberalism — for our part, I can say that is not our choice — while others will be against this refusal because farmers and producers are quietly disappearing because of lack of income and because they are discouraged.

The control system must be global throughout Europe, but it must also be adapted to the different situation of producers in our Community. On several occasions Parliament has already voted by a large majority to exempt the first fifty tonnes of each producer from taxes. We support these amendments, and will support them tomorrow, because we believe in their effectiveness in bringing about a better distribution of production throughout Europe and reducing inequalities. Only if these amendments are adopted in plenary tomorrow will we, our group, approve the Wilson report.

SONNEVELD (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, Mr Wilson's report ought really to be tackling a purely technical matter, namely an effective way of levying and collecting the additional co-responsibility levy on cereals in the system of stabilizers. That is what the rapporteur explained in his explanatory statement. I think that in discussing the Commission proposal we ought not to debate the system of stabilizers as such but we should limit it to the technical aspects. The majority of the Agricultural Committee, however, begged to differ.

The members of my group also support a proposal not to levy a supplementary co-responsibility levy as of the next harvest year. The main reasons for our taking this stance is that the Commission has displayed insufficient imagination in the use of this co-responsibility levy. It has not done enough to stabilize production quantities and therefore prices properly. That is the political point my group wants to make by taking this view.

But my group wants to do more than just that. My group believes that all of the cereal producers can and ought to take more responsibility for production quantities. But then the policy instruments must then give them a real opportunity of taking this responsibility seriously. That is just not possible with the present system. Whenever the Commission has ascertained that cereals production in the Community has exceeded the guaranteed maximum quantity, there has automatically been an irreversible drop in prices. There was nothing that anyone could do about that. Every year the cereal producers in Europe live in fear and trembling of exceeding the guaranteed maximum quantities. If the harvest is extra plentiful in one year, prices drop as a

policy instrument and the cereal farmers have to pay a supplementary co-responsibility levy in addition.

The farmers would consider it much fairer if prices were not to drop automatically once the Commission ascertains excessive production, but that something should be done to adjust production capacity. Prices should only be dropped if cereal farmers *en masse* were to refuse to reduce their production capacity sufficiently. That is why I have tabled some amendments on behalf of my group to establish that link. This new policy could already be introduced for the coming harvest year.

It seems likely that more farmers will take part in the set-aside scheme this coming harvest year than last year. If that happens, and the agricultural organizations will have to check that with their members, then there is no need to lower prices by 3%. The guaranteed maximum quantity will only be very slightly exceeded in the current harvest year. It is therefore highly probable that this additional use of the set-aside scheme will more than offset this slight excess. The Commission has quite rightly decided not to levy an additional co-responsibility levy for this year. If enough farmers use the set-aside scheme there will be no need to drop prices.

This link between the two issues should also be kept for the coming years. The whole concept of co-responsibility should be defined anew. An individual farmer can not appreciate his share of the overall responsibility. Under the present system the Commission spells it out by making the farmer pay. But cereal farmers should organize themselves and take upon themselves certain responsibility for the size of their production capacity. It is only if a price reduction is avoided that we can expect the producer to pay his co-responsibility levy. I invite the Commission to cooperate with the organized farmers' unions to try to define anew this related co-responsibility. The amendments which some colleagues and I have tabled on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party are aimed at this creative cooperation between the authorities and the farmers in the Community so that agriculture can be given some hope for the future through a responsible stabilizing cereals policy. The link I have shown between production quantities, prices and co-responsibility levy in the cereal sector is not aimed at undermining the agreed system of stabilizers, but at enabling it to operate effectively in a way which is acceptable to all concerned and compatible with our future international obligations.

MAHER (LDR). — Mr President, first of all I want to thank Mr Wilson for a very clear exposé of the whole situation. I have not heard as clear a presentation for some time of any report. Having said that, it is a rather messy business with the Council making decisions without consulting Parliament, and then the Commission coming back and altering its position. It is not, as the rapporteur rightly pointed out, the correct way in which to work and does not make for good relations between these institutions. However, that is a point in

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passing. I think it must be said nevertheless that the Commission has belatedly improved its proposal by taking account of a least part of what was in Mr Wilson's report originally, particularly the concept of the halving of the levy.

But what I want to say is a bit more fundamental. I had hoped that when Mr Mac Sharry took over as Commissioner after Mr Andriessen it would be time for a new look at some of these policies, particularly the cereals policy and how exactly it functioned. I had this debate previously with Mr Andriessen without any great success. He was inclined to stick to his guns because, I suppose, he was responsible for setting it up. But Mr Mac Sharry does not have any such responsibility. He did not construct the scheme. It has a lot of flaws and a lot of warts. Even at this stage, I would appeal to him to look at it more fundamentally.

In the first place, it is inherently an unfair system in the sense that the penalties are based on a global quantity, a quantity for the entire Community. At least it can be said of the milk sector with all its difficulties that the quota applies to each individual producer. Therefore you can penalize the person who is committing the crime, whereas in the case of the cereals policy you penalize people whether they commit a crime or not. That is inherently wrong. I know there are problems about system of quotas for each individual producer but we must try to see how this could be managed so that in fact, those who exceed their quantity are responsible for it and not those who do not exceed the quantity. There is an inherent injustice in that system. If for instance, as a transitional measure leading to a system applying to the individual farmer, we had a national quantity, that at least would be more fair. I am thinking, for instance, about my own country which does not produce a lot of cereals, where the climatic conditions are often not very suitable for cereal production. Sometimes the harvests are not very reliable. But just supposing the Irish cereal producers were to reduce production, and the cereal producers of the rest of the Community increased production and went over the 160 million tonnes, then the Irish producers would pay the penalty. That, Mr Mac Sharry, cannot be fair. I would appeal to you to look at this very critically.

Finally, Mr Mac Sharry, have you looked at the situation in Eastern Europe? Perhaps it is time. This situation was looked at in the context of the cereals policy, cereals being one of the best products we have for food aid. We are promising more food aid to Ethiopia and other famine-stricken areas around the world. There are also difficulties in Eastern Europe. It is very strange that at a time when all these demands are here in front of us, we are actually trying to reduce production inside the Community. We have very little surplus left any more. How can we respond?

LANE (RDE). — Mr President, I would also like to compliment Mr Wilson on his report on the common organization of the cereal sector. This report recommends a technical adjustment in the co-responsibility

levy collection system. However, it does not change the general thrust of the stabilizer system.

As a grain grower I see this bureaucratic system as difficult to operate. For instance, in September 1988 I had money deducted from my grain cheque. It was only repaid in December of 1989. Of course, I got no interest on the money. However, I would like to see a more radical approach to the grain sector which retains the stabilizer system. Whether we like it or not, it is a necessary element in preventing a collapse of grain prices.

I believe that we should take a further look at the 160 million tonnes limit. This figure does not fully reflect the damage done to European Community grain producers by imports of cereal substitutes. Secondly, in view of the run-down of stocks at EEC level, we do not have sufficient reserves to cater either for the emerging famine disasters in Ethiopia or indeed to satisfy the demands that are likely to come from Eastern Europe. This point was made by Mr Maher a few moments ago. It will take the countries of Eastern Europe at least 10 years to get their agriculture right, and we must have reserves of stocks to cater for any difficulties that may occur in the meantime. Therefore, I think that the 160 million tonne limit will have to be looked at again in that light.

We are still at the crossroads in relation to set-aside. At the December part-session I reluctantly voted in favour of the Commission proposal. I did so because of lack of a better alternative. I hope we can all put our heads together and work for a system of reducing the area of land under grain without allowing large tracts of land to grow weeds and scrub. With the developments now taking place in satellite imagers, I believe we can control the amount of land that is under grain. I would hope that we can do it on a national basis.

Finally, Commissioner, I believe we are coming close to the stage where we are getting a good solution to problems of the grain sector. I hope we can all persevere together and work together to attain that goal because at the end of the day we must have controls. If we do not have controls we will go back to world prices and European graingrowers will go out of business if that happens.

MARTINEZ (DR). — (FR) Mr President, the question before us, which appears merely technical, on the double co-responsibility levy in the cereals sector, must in fact be seen against the political background of the Uruguay Round negotiations. What is it really about? The Commission is pretending that the cereal stocks are too large, which incidentally is not correct, for less than nine million tonnes of stocks, not even 6% of annual production, is not excessive, but let us leave that aside.

The management of these overestimated stocks would be too costly. The solution is very simple for a Malthusian Commission governed solely by budgetary considerations: since the stocks cost too much, let us prevent them from appearing by preventing the farmers

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from producing them. That is what has been done, first by fixing an annual ceiling, set at 160 million tonnes, and secondly, by levying two co-responsibility taxes. One at 3%, the basic levy, the other at 3%, the additional levy in the event of the ceiling being exceeded. Moreover, as though this barefaced robbery were not enough, if this ceiling of 160 million tonnes is exceeded, prices are reduced by 3%, so that in fact the farmers are paying a tax of nearly 9%. And that is not all! This co-responsibility levy is paid in advance even if, perchance, it is not due at the end of the year. Ladies and gentlemen, it is as though a driver had to pay speeding fines on 1 January 1990 with the consolation that perhaps, on 31 December 1990, he will be reimbursed if he has driven carefully! No one would accept that. However, the farmers are to accept it. Every year they are deprived of ECU 600 million, more than FF 400 000, on the pretext of a co-responsibility levy for which, perhaps, they will not in the end be liable. In practical terms, the Commission is creating a treasury reserve of more than ECU 600 million.

So, since this abuse of Community fiscal power is after all a little gross, and sometimes virtually a financial swindle, a step back had to be taken, and that is the proposed text. Instead of an additional 3% co-responsibility levy, the rate has been cut to 1.5% and the time-scale altered. That is good. That is progress. Instead of taking away ECU 600 million only 300 million will be taken. That is all very well. There will be less to refund, the system will be less rigid, even though the technical problems have not in fact been resolved.

The refund time-scales constitute a major problem. In my country they apply to VAT for farmers who have not made the appropriate choices. Then there is the problem of the reliability of the controls. Mr Pasty spoke of that in his excellent report. The problem of the reliability of statistics is something I think Mr Wilson himself also discussed. A whole range of problems remains. That solves nothing. In fact the solutions lie elsewhere. And the solutions are not technical. Obviously, one could consider a graded system of levies, according to quantities. One could consider individualization. A moment ago our British colleague said that, after all, we have established a collective responsibility. The one who is reasonable pays for the one who is not.

The solution lies elsewhere; it is political; it can be found in the application of the Treaty of Rome. First, it provides for an agricultural levy on Community imports. Mr Lane reminded us of that. Let us apply it to the 18 million tonnes of cereal substitution products that are imported, with at least 50% of them exempt from duty. We cannot impose taxes on the European farmer's products and exempt the American farmer from taxes on the products he sells us in Europe! That is the whole problem of Europe-American relations in the Uruguay Round, that is the whole problem of equality!

Secondly, European cattle is fed with 18 million tonnes of American oil seeds and high-protein products.

However, we have 8 million tonnes too much of cereals! The solution is simple: before importing products to feed our cattle from America, let us give them our excess 8 million tonnes of cereals! And let us replace the 10 million imported tonnes which remain by raising the ceiling, which will lower the taxes.

Mr President, I can understand that we are short of budgetary resources for managing the stocks! I can understand this Community logic! But if we are short of Community resources, let us not squander these resources on the Polish, Hungarian, Romanian and other farmers! Let me remind you that the 200 million we voted for Poland would have enabled us to halve the Community tax on European farmers!

Our farmers, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, cannot pay either in order to exempt the American farmers or to finance the defeat of the Communist countries! The Treaty of Rome is based on Community preference and not Community penalization.

VAN DER WAAL (NL). — (NL) Mr President, it is still proving difficult to implement the procedures for the additional co-responsibility levy on cereals. First of all the 3% has to be paid in full, then later in the year when the cereal harvest is over and the quantities established, there may be a partial refund. This system is very cumbersome to administer and leaves those involved very uncertain about what is happening. The latest proposals from the Commission would help to simplify the system. There would be no refund at the end of the year but if necessary an adjustment to the current year would be calculated into the new price year; Mr Wilson favours this procedure and I am pleased to give him my support. This proposal apparently only deals with an accounting technique which does not reopen the whole question of a co-responsibility levy as an instrument to stabilize production. But nonetheless there seems to be a link between the application of this measure and the instrument as such. That is shown clearly in the amendments which have been tabled. This is due to the fact that the co-responsibility levy has not achieved the aim for which it was set up, namely reducing surpluses. That is not surprising, because a general measure which reduces prices for all cereal farmers in Europe when the guaranteed maximum quantity is exceeded for the whole of the EEC does little to act as an incentive to the individual cereal farmer. That undoubtedly partly explains why so few farmers have so far made use of the set-aside scheme, whereas it is also a policy instrument to stabilize production. Furthermore, it has not been aided by the fact that the set-aside scheme has been presented to the farmers with such a lack of enthusiasm and conviction by the politicians; it should surprise no one that the scheme is underused. To change the situation we should support the amendments which call on agricultural organizations to encourage reducing production by increasing the individual farmer's responsibility and which should, we hope, prevent further drops in prices. With this in mind I see no need for the amendment which calls for the abolition of the

VAN DER WAAL

additional co-responsibility levy from 1990-1991. The present regulations on stabilization would not permit that. And furthermore, it would have a detrimental effect on the amendments aimed at encouraging voluntary reduction of production. I do of course understand why this amendment to abolish the additional levy was tabled. Anyone who realizes how cereals prices have slid downwards in recent times knows that this has made life impossible for cereal farmers in some areas. It is absolutely essential that the set-aside scheme should be made an effective temporary solution, but even that on its own will not reduce production to the desired level. You must not forget that this year's figure of 160.5 million tonnes is not realistic, it is low as a result of a particularly dry summer. A harvest of around 165 million tonnes would be more normal. If we add to this the harvest increase as a result of the annual production growth of about 2%, then it becomes clear what tremendous efforts are needed to reduce the figure to under 160 million tonnes. Additional measures are unavoidable. In this context we welcome the Commission's recent proposals to intensify and use cereals in the non-food sector, because the arable farmers in Europe must somehow or other be given some hope for the future.

PASTY (RDE). — (FR) Mr President, Mr Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, the proposal to amend the directive on procedures for levying the additional co-responsibility tax on cereals only very marginally amends the provisions applicable to that sector. But this discussion, as we have seen this evening, gives us an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the actual machinery for controlling cereal production and balancing that market in the Community. We have to admit that this machinery is not entirely satisfactory and should be the subject of amending Commission proposals.

First of all, the undertakings entered into at the Brussels summit in February 1988, which formed a package in the framework of a global compromise, have not been adhered to, especially in the matter of the prospects for expanding cereal outlets in two vital sectors: animal fodder and non-food use. No concrete decision has been taken on these two matters, whether on the question of the incorporation premium or the refund for ethanol production. At the same time, exemptions from Community preference, which reduce the internal cereal outlets, have increased. After the concessions made to the United States following the accession of Spain, new tariff concessions have recently been offered to the ACP countries for sorghum and to Poland for imports of potato starch, which may compete with the starch produced from Community cereals.

This has led to an increasingly unacceptable situation for Community cereal producers and has distorted the initial object of this tax which was, may I remind you, to increase the internal outlets. We find that in this sector, the projects have gone no further than paperwork. We also consider that this co-responsibility levy has no

justification any more, except perhaps financially, at a time when the Community's present budgetary situation renders this situation quite void.

Moreover, this tax, whose real collecting procedures are difficult to control in all the Community States, is a source of distortions of competition and frauds. And we emphatically call for its suppression. The system of agro-budgetary stabilizers, which provides for an automatic price fall of 3% when the guaranteed maximum quantity has been exceeded, is sufficient unto itself and therefore makes the co-responsibility levy superfluous.

So we ask the Commission to take account of the position expressed by Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and to propose purely and simply to suppress this tax.

Mac SHARRY, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, I too would like to thank Mr Wilson for his excellent presentation and his clarity. I have listened very carefully to the contributions of all speakers. A lot of what has been said is repetition in relation to the operation of the stabilizers, which I will come back to in a moment. As is known, in September the Commission presented a report and draft proposal for amendment of the administration of the additional co-responsibility levy to the Council and Parliament. As you know, parallel discussions took place in Parliament and the Council on the Commission's proposal. In this context the presidency of the Council presented a compromise, which has been supported by all Member States. As a result of the discussions within the Council and taking into account the views expressed in Parliament, the Commission decided to amend its additional proposal. Now we have before us in Doc. COM 90/4 that proposal. This is the modified proposal which is the subject of the debate here this evening. I can agree with Mr Wilson when he talks about the procedures and having regard to the proper procedures. I have to say that they were not followed in this case. However, it should also be recognized by Parliament, bearing in mind what I have said and what Mr Wilson himself has said about the original proposal being rejected by Parliament and, in fact, in relation to how they were thinking and the amendments they put forward to the original proposal, that it is what ultimately the Council felt it could support. This has been adopted by the Commission and is now before us here for further consideration by Parliament. In this instance, even though the procedures might not have been diligently followed, the fact is that Parliament itself and its committee have been taking the lead in this particular issue.

You will recall that the stabilizers regime introduced in 1988-1989 covers a period of four marketing years ending in 1991-1992. The system therefore cannot be fundamentally amended prior to 1991, regardless of what was supposed by the honourable Member, Mr Maher, namely that, because there had been a change of Commissioner in the course of the first year of

Mac SHARRY

application of the stabilizers, this would mean that the new Commissioner was going to change the regime that was in place for four years. I think it would be wishful thinking for anybody to suggest that that is the way the Commission might operate. There is not much point in putting forward proposals for four years and then, as soon as they are partially in operation for the first year, suggesting that they should be changed just because a Commissioner has changed. Mr Van der Waal, Mr Maher, Mr Lane and others talked about the impact of the stabilizers, the impact of the basic co-responsibility levy, the additional co-responsibility levy and the price reductions. There is no doubt about it, they have had an impact. On the one hand Members have been saying that there has not been the desired result and, on the other hand, they are saying how detrimental their implementation is to farmers' incomes. The fact is that they are having an effect and, while they still leave us with a production above the maximum guaranteed quantity, they are a long way away from the amount it was estimated would have been produced, had the stabilizer regime not been introduced — forecasts set as high as 175 million tonnes. We are still producing over 160 million tonnes. That is the forecast as we have already agreed: 160.5 million tonnes for the last marketing year. There is no harm in reminding the House that our consumption here is 135 million tonnes and that still still leaves us with 25 million tonnes to dispose of on the world market. Last year it was in fact as high as 35 million tonnes, so we are in a position to provide all necessary food aid, within the limits of the budget, to whatever part of the world requires it — east, west or south. And that is the way I hope we can continue to proceed. It is only right to point out that all these matters were seen as a package, although we were late with some of the elements of that package, whether it be set-aside or non-food use. But these are items that are now coming on stream and, if we consider the successful implementation of the set-aside — though, last year it was disappointing — we see that the scheme did in fact get underway and we hope that we can make further progress this year, and still further progress with the proposal the Commission has made on non-food use.

The Commission is well aware of the administrative difficulties involved in the current implementation of the cereals stabilizers regime. The aim of the present proposal is to improve and simplify the workings of the additional co-responsibility levy in the cereals sector.

I should now like to comment on the amendments presented to the House. With regard to Amendments Nos 1 to 4 to Mr Wilson's report, these seek the abolition of the additional co-responsibility levy as and from the 1990-91 campaign period. I must point out that this would interfere with the fundamental principle of the stabilizer regime. I cannot therefore accept these amendments. For a similar reason, I cannot go along with Amendment No 12. However, I should like to point out that the Commission must re-examine this regime in 1991. In the meantime we are committed to its proper implementation. Amendments Nos 5, 6, 9, 10

and 11 go beyond the scope of the present proposal and therefore I am not in a position to accept them. As regards Amendments Nos 7 and 8 which propose to exempt producers producing less than 50 tonnes of cereals from the additional levy, I would like to draw Parliament's attention to the fact that the co-responsibility regime — basic and additional levy — is applied at the stage of sales on the market and not on production. I should also like to remind Parliament that at present small producers are exempt from the levies for 25 tonnes of cereals. Therefore the regime is very favourable to small cereals producers. In effect, these producers, who are not for the most part specialized in cereal production, consume a large part of the cereals which they produce for animal feed and sell only their surplus, which rarely exceeds 25 tonnes. These producers benefit in fact from a double exemption in the current arrangements both for the quantity directly consumed as well as the 25 tonnes sold. The current regime therefore is clearly more favourable than that proposed by Parliament. For the reasons just outlined I think it would be inappropriate to modify the current regime as proposed in these amendments.

In conclusion, I would again thank the rapporteur, Mr Wilson, for his diligent approach to this proposal and his positive contribution at all stages of the debate. In relation to small producers, I should like to emphasize that the Commission fully shares Parliament's concern in this regard. This is reflected in the overall approach we have adopted in the 1990-91 price proposals. These form part of a rural development policy and I should like to assure Parliament that we will continue to explore ways to improve the situation of small producers.

THAREAU (S). — (FR) Mr President, Mr Commissioner, a rapporteur on milk quotas, Mr Pol Marck — who is both a colleague and a friend, although he is not a member of my group — explained to us that milk quotas have changed, with 130 or more modifications in the past 5 years. How is it that in the cereal sector no modification is possible within the system of stabilizers? And I deliberately said within. We are arguing in favour of stabilizers. So, are there perhaps as many European agricultural policies as there are products? That is my question.

Mac SHARRY, Member of the Commission. — Very briefly, in response to Mr Thareau, that may be the case in relation to another regime. What we are doing here is making a slight modification. As it happens, it is, a modification that was, not initially but eventually, suggested by Parliament, and for which I compliment it again.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken on Thursday at 6.30 p.m.

(The sitting was closed at 11.40 p.m.)¹

¹ Agenda for next sitting: See minutes.

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IN THE CHAIR: MRS FONTAINE

Vice-President

(The sitting opened at 9 a.m.)

1. Approval of the minutes

PRESIDENT. — The minutes of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments?

WIJSENBEEK (LDR). — (NL) Madam President, the Verbatim Report of Proceedings for Monday contains my speech concerning the Bru Puron report, in which — at the top of page 10 — I ask the Bureau to do something about the seat. The President of our Parliament, Mr Baron Crespo, who was chatting to his neighbour, looked at that moment somewhat startled. In retrospect that is understandable, since the Spanish simultaneous interpretation spoke of 'chair' instead of 'seat' Madam President, not only in the work of our interpreters but above all in our written translations there have in recent times been very many and disturbing errors. That should be one of the matters that the Bureau has to remedy; on the other hand I put a direct question to the Bureau on Monday regarding the Bru Puron report and have not received an answer. I should like to know, Madam President — and I hope you will bring this up as soon as possible in the Bureau — whether this Parliament can finally do something about reasonable working conditions, which includes observance of the Treaty article requiring that all Community institutions have a seat. I know — I see Commissioner Bangemann, Vice-President of the Commission, is present here — that a large number of

questions regarding the seat cannot be resolved because each of the Member States lays claim to it.

Madam President, we cannot passively accept that the Community is unable to function because each of the Member States claims certain things for itself and no consultation is possible, whereas there is a Treaty obligation on the matter. Do let us be serious, especially towards our electorate.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Wijsenbeek, as regards your observation concerning the minutes, the correction you would like to see will be made.

As regards your second question, as you know this is a matter for the Council. As to the places of work, you will be aware that our Bureau has been concerned with this for a long time.

McMAHON (S). — Madam President, I would like to raise a point on the Minutes: page 12, a reference to yesterday's Question Time, Question No 8. I hope the Commission is listening because the Commission was not present yesterday during questions to the Council. The answer given then is very pertinent to what is going to be unfurled today.

Under discussion were the priorities in the social action area. We received a very generous offer from the President-in-Office, Mr Collins, that the Irish presidency would be pleased to arrange an extra meeting of the Social Affairs Council should the Commission come up with the programme and agenda. I hope that today, when President Delors, having descended from his Olympian heights, opens his Pandora's box of the work programme, he will graciously accept the offer which

McMAHON

the President-in-Office put forward during Question Time.

PRESIDENT. — We take note of your statement. I think the Commission has taken it on board.

SCHÖNHUBER (DR). — *(DE)* On a point of order: Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, on 8 January 1990 I was prevented from entering the GDR at the Potsdamer Platz border crossing point and was turned back. I wanted...

(Applause from the left)

The applause from the left-wing benches is typical of their interpretation of democracy!

As a member of the European Parliament, I wished to obtain first-hand information and to talk to the people in the GDR, particularly in view of the debate in this chamber. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the GDR wishes to become a member of the Community. In my opinion, the behaviour of the GDR authorities infringes the CSCE Agreement and is also an insult, not only to me personally, but also to the European Parliament. Madam President, I would ask you to make an official statement on this unfortunate incident.

(Applause from the benches of the Technical Group of the European Right)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Schönhuber, I can tell you that the President has received your letter of protest and that he is looking into the situation.

PANNELLA (NI). — *(FR)* Madam President, I gather that a meeting of the Bureau of Parliament has been called for 9.30. In my opinion, Madam President, there have to be limits to how far a lack of style can be taken. We are about to hear the President of the Commission present the Commission's annual programme for 1990, which is very significant.

Madam President, you know how happy I am for you to be in the Chair, but you also know that I believe that style, in common with courage, is something one cannot acquire if one has not got it. I think the President of Parliament should not be presiding over the Bureau but over the House when it is being addressed by the President of the Commission.

Secondly, Madam President, I gather that the President of the House has invited five group chairmen to lunch today for a discussion of our Parliament's problems. He is perhaps entitled to do so, but when our President discriminates against groups, when he creates his personal majority, it is unacceptable.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

You know, in Italy we had anti-Fascists who went to prison for defending the rights of Fascists along with those of others. Since you provoke me, I say that the prerogatives of a Member of the European Parliament,

whatever his views, especially if he is anti-Fascist like us, must be defended. That explains why, earlier this century, you were the first to be unable to defend democracy in Italy and you surrendered to the Nazis and others. Parliament defends itself vigorously...

(Applause)

and I am proud that people who would perhaps put us in prison if they were in the majority today are upholding the principle of democracy against your cowardly way of being arrogant and undemocratic.

It is therefore iniquitous, Madam President, that when he proposes to hold a discussion on lending Parliament fresh momentum, our President invites the chairmen of five groups of his choice instead of involving all of us, for we are all parliamentarians.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Pannella, we well understand your protests. Your remarks will, of course, be passed on to the President.

At this stage I can only tell you it is not an official luncheon.

COCHET (V). — *(FR)* Madam President, I should like to have your confirmation that this presidential lunch is being held and would ask whether the President can tell all the groups in Parliament — for there are not five but ten groups in this Parliament — what the agenda is for this reinvigoration of Parliament and what was the basis of his choice when inviting these groups rather than others.

We consider it totally discriminatory to regard certain groups as noble and representative and others as less so.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

On behalf of our group, therefore, we are asking for a written reply from the President of Parliament stating whether he represents the whole of Parliament or only part of it.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Cochet, I can only repeat what I said to Mr Pannella. Your remarks will also be passed on to the President. It would appear that no agenda has been set for the lunch and it is not official.

That is all I can say for the moment. But rest assured that your protests will be communicated to the President.

GOLLNISCH (DR). — *(FR)* If today's lunch is not an official lunch, as you say, I think yesterday's dinner was official. At yesterday's dinner the President took it upon himself to discriminate against a group, contrary to Parliament's constant practice and the prevailing rule of equity. He chose to make a choice between vice-chairmen, regardless of the protocol that we have

GOLLNISCH

adopted and which has been recognized and sanctioned by the enlarged Bureau of this Parliament.

In the case of yesterday evening's official dinner, then, there was totally inadmissible manipulation.

In conclusion, I would say that if today's lunch is not an official lunch as you say, excellent advocate for President Barón Crespo that you naturally are, we have to conclude that it is a private lunch. Now when I invite people to a private lunch, I pay the bill out of my own pocket. It would therefore be very interesting to know whether President Barón Crespo is paying for this private lunch out of his own pocket. If not, it is the European Parliament that is paying, in other words it is all Europe's voters, including the groups that have been discriminated against, that are paying the bill and therefore have the right to be represented at this lunch.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Gollnisch, I think we are going well beyond our remit. We well understand the thrust of all these observations and we shall look into whether they should be put before the enlarged Bureau. I repeat that the President will be made *au fait* with these observations.

FALCONER (S). — Madam President, while the eating habits of certain elitists in this Chamber are of some value, either for humour or for other interest, may I — or would you, perhaps, yourself — welcome Alexander Dubcek to the Chamber, as he is now being presented in the gallery above us.

(Loud and sustained applause)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Falconer, you anticipated my intention. It was, of course, my intention to warmly greet Mr Dubcek, but I was waiting for this regrettable discussion to finish.

*(The Minutes were approved)*¹

2. Presentation of the annual programme of the Commission for 1990

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the presentation by the Commission President of the annual programme of the Commission for 1990.

DELORS, President of the Commission. — (FR) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr President of the Council of Ministers — whom I thank, on behalf of the Commission, for attending the presentation of this working programme — What an astounding series of events have unfolded virtually on our doorstep since I spoke to you this time last year of the challenges facing the Community. I referred then to Mr Gorbachev's

dream of a 'common European house' and our slightly different vision of a 'European village' built around a solid house called the 'European Community'.

The Community has progressed apace since then. Its economy has strengthened further thanks to job-creating growth fed by investment. The persistence of this cycle has led to production in the Twelve rising by some 20% since 1984, 8.5 million new jobs being created and European business displaying a new-found assertiveness at home and abroad — though it could still do even more. The Community's influence has grown economically and politically. The Community is now respected, courted, held in awe.

And yet recent events in Central and Eastern Europe should make us pause for thought. Why has it taken us more than thirty years to respond tentatively, with moves towards Economic and Monetary Union, to the objective of a political Community set by the founding fathers, whereas the Germans of the East, released from former constraints, have taken no more than a few weeks to re-open the Brandenburg Gate in an act full of symbolism for the future unity of the German nation?

Why is it taking us eight years, of what we regard as intense activity, to create a single market and an organized economic and social area, while our Eastern neighbours have taken no more than a few months to discover the heady wine of liberty and democracy?

It is a striking contrast, when seen against the tremendous surge of history in the making, as nations cast aside the old régime to embrace a new era holding the promise of peace, pluralist democracy, and economic and social progress.

Today more than ever the Community is faced with challenges: the challenge presented by aims, strategy and method as the Twelve face up to their responsibilities in the East and elsewhere in Europe, in the Mediterranean and in the developing world; the challenge of reaffirming our values through our day-to-day activities; the challenge of implementing the Single Act, which remains our top priority and finds practical expression each year in the Commission's programme.

But, first and foremost, how, in a new, and shifting situation, can we not feel some anxiety and at the same time a very special hope since time is running short and events in Europe are challenging the Community to respond?

The challenge of events in Europe

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, events in Europe are challenging the Community to respond. It was in the name of freedom that millions of men and women, far from remaining resigned to servitude, took to the streets, roused from their inertia by the decline of the régimes which had governed them and the relaxation, sometimes deliberate, of the iron grip which had held them in thrall.

But let there be no mistake: the prosperity and freedom of our Community — free from hegemony, governed by

¹ Documents received — Referral to committee (changes) — Topical and urgent debates (objections): see minutes.

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the rule of law, where even the smallest country has a say — served as a lodestone, a lodestar in terms of ideals and action. Over the last few months it has not been the ambitions of politicians, but the will of the people that has made history; a will manifested with dignity and joy in some countries, in the midst of drama and bitterness in others, and above all with a collective spirit that is all the more impressive because it seems so sadly lacking in our privileged Western half of the continent, hamstrung by ridiculous quarrels rooted in nostalgic yearning for past glories.

Our admiration for the people of Central and Eastern Europe must not, however, blind us to reality. The changes under way give cause for hope, but they are also fraught with danger. As Tocqueville wrote in the aftermath of the 1848 revolution '[it] has ceased to be an adventure and is taking on the dimensions of a new era'. There is still a danger of back-tracking, of things going wrong, as is amply illustrated by differences between the people and their leaders in Leipzig and in Bucharest, not to talk of the upheavals taking place within the Soviet Union. And who can ignore the yawning gap between the determination of the people and the precariousness of their situation, between their clearly-expressed aspirations and uncertainty about the eventual outcome?

There are economic dangers, given that most of the countries of Eastern Europe are experiencing stagnant growth, low investment and high debt — particularly when compared to export earnings from trade with the rest of what used to be the Communist world. We must, of course, be wary of generalizations since situations differ in a number of respects — investment in Bulgaria, growth in Czechoslovakia and debt in Romania — and levels of development vary. And national differences are even more marked when traditions and political structures are borne in mind. But all the countries of Eastern Europe are in a difficult situation calling for new political structures and radical economic reform. Mr Andriessen will be speaking to you later today of his impressions on his recent visit.

Neither must we underestimate the political dangers facing Eastern Europe — and hence also of concern to us — in the uncharted waters leading to the free, multi-party elections scheduled for the spring, and indeed in the post-election period should political reforms fail to materialize, should economies collapse, should there be moves towards Balkanization.

The Community, too, is running enormous risks because the pace of events has fuelled the debate on European integration. I have heard it argued in some quarters that the Community, as a product of the Cold War, should die with the Cold War, completely disregarding the experience accumulated over forty years on our difficult but exciting journey to pooled sovereignty. I interpret this variously as a return to facile nationalism or a temptation to play the Metternich card. It is as if a changing world had created openings

for those driven by vanity and for would-be statesmen seeking to play yesterday's hand.

I know, too, that others are talking in terms of immediate Community membership for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as if they were ready, economically and politically, to embrace pluralist democracy and operate a market economy; as if this scenario raised no financial or institutional problems. Perhaps I should remind them that Spain and Portugal spent seven years preparing for Community membership. This goes a long way towards explaining their success and the outstanding contribution they have made to reinforcing the Community spirit.

I quote this example deliberately because it demonstrates that the Community is a unique testbed for plural democracy, that is to say, democracy exercised by a concert of nations. But we must be wary of raising unrealistic expectations. Of course, the principle is quite clear: any democratic European country is free to apply for Community membership. But, leaving aside the fact that the Community has chosen to concentrate on the improvement of present structures in preference to expansion, it all comes down to ways and means and, while we will not abandon our basic approach, the substance of practical arrangements can vary over time. The question put to every applicant for membership is simple: are you, or are you not, prepared to accept the marriage contract in its entirety, with all that it holds for the future?

But to come back to our neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe: we are duty-bound to help them as they embark on the unique experiment of moving from Communism towards a market economy — a complete reversal of the process to which so many have given so much thought, often blinded by a tendency to equate capitalism with the market economy. How can we help without being paternalistic? How can we lend our support without getting in the way? This is of course principally a matter for the countries concerned. But the Community must commit itself to solidarity, within a new framework for cooperation, which we intend to define as a matter of urgency.

Solidarity has been in evidence from the moment that the Paris Summit in mid-July asked the Commission to coordinate Western aid to Poland and Hungary. Less than two weeks later, experts from 24 countries met in Brussels to assess needs and consider what form action should take. Three meetings were held, the last — a month ago — at ministerial level. At the same time, the Community decided to send emergency food aid, which was already on its way to Poland by the beginning of September. Cooperation is taking shape, the Commission adding its ideas to those of the countries concerned so that coordination can make the entire operation more effective in terms of quality and quantity.

You can see that when there is an urgent need — for food aid and medical supplies — or when the issues involved are relatively well-defined — financial assistance, the opening-up of markets, extension of general-

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ized preferences — the response is swift. Helping these countries rebuild their economies, when the machinery of State is fast disintegrating and individual initiatives are still in their infancy, will be more difficult and will take time. There will be ups and downs. But we are ready to deal with whatever comes.

The decision taken at the Paris Summit envisaged assistance to Poland and Hungary only. Developments since then have made our task infinitely more ambitious, as the Foreign Ministers of the 24 countries have acknowledged. This will inevitably raise the issue for the Twelve — as this House is well aware — of what Community instruments and what resources are available.

To take Community instruments first. We are in the process of negotiating, or have already signed, trade and cooperation agreements with all these countries. But these agreements are now unlikely to meet *our* requirements and *their* individual and collective needs. We must therefore look beyond them to devise new forms of cooperation and provide a framework for future political cooperation between democratic States.

This could be our goal in drawing up new, revised association agreements. If the six countries so wished, these agreements could include an institutional aspect, the creation of a forum for genuine dialogue and economic and political consultation, the extension of cooperation to the technical, scientific, environmental, commercial and financial spheres; but not necessarily involving a common market, since such ill-prepared economies could not cope with one for a number of years.

This would emphasize the necessarily open-ended nature of cooperation, setting it apart from ordinary trade agreements, which, while they have their uses; merely reflect the balance of interests at a given point in time.

All this presupposes a new series of instruments. Two decisions on training and youth exchanges have already been adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the Twelve and the Commission's work on these projects is already at an advanced stage. At the General Affairs Council on 5 February, the Commission will be proposing the creation of a European training foundation, a loose arrangement for promoting exchanges, collecting information and fostering contacts, but also for guaranteeing loans and credit insurance and providing financial assistance, areas in which the new European Bank for Reconstruction and Development will have a major role to play.

It is important to remember, however, that additional financial resources will have to be found for these ambitious plans. This will lead inevitably to a revision of the financial perspective, though there can be no question of going back on budgetary discipline, which must continue to be our guiding principle. I would like to quote some figures to give you an idea of the scale of the problem. If we were to confine ourselves to extending our own internal arrangements for helping

regions lagging behind — what we call 'Objective 1 regions' — to the six countries on the road to democracy, we would need an extra ECU 14 billion a year. If we were to add European Investment Bank intervention in these same regions, another ECU 5 billion would be required. Finally, allowing for the capacity of these economies to absorb financial aid as they undergo major upheaval, our programme would have to extend over a period of five to ten years. There we have it. It might be a good idea to bear these considerations in mind during the coming months, since the Commission will be making fresh proposals under the Interinstitutional Agreement to adapt resources and instruments to the new situation. Hence a proposal to which the Commission attaches the greatest importance. In February 1988 the European Council took a historic decision to underwrite the internal solidarity and further development of the Community. Another 'February 1988', equally significant, equally historic, is needed to demonstrate our solidarity with Eastern Europe and the rest of the world.

(Applause)

Finally, I would stress that, whatever the solution found, it will be impossible from now on to separate the Community's economic role from its political one. This is one of the major lessons to be learned from developments in the East. This is why the Community must change gear when it comes to the institutional construction of Europe.

(Applause)

The Community must shoulder all its international responsibilities.

The Community's responsibilities elsewhere in the world

Given developments in the East, renewed détente and the emergence of a multipolar world, the Community and its Member States must be in a position individually and collectively to influence the course of events and the future shape of a Greater Europe so that it reflects their interests and values. This will be a crucial topic for discussion and political debate. We must tackle it head-on.

It immediately raises the German question. Rapprochement, or even reunification, of the German people is clearly a matter for the Germans themselves. But the Community has an interest too. Let me explain why. The preamble to the German Basic Law of 23 May 1949 links the principle of German reunification, on the basis of self-determination by the German people, to the issue of European unity — and may I say in passing that this text, which predates the Treaty of Rome by nine years, testifies to the perspicacity of the German leadership.

Furthermore, the Treaty of Rome itself makes reference to this issue, in the Protocol on German internal trade, in the declarations on German nationality and the status of Berlin, and in the 28 February 1957 declaration by the Bonn negotiators.

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This makes East Germany a special case. I would like to repeat clearly here today that there is a place for East Germany in the Community should it so wish, provided, as the Strasbourg European Council made quite clear, the German nation regains its unity through free self-determination, peacefully and democratically, in accordance with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, in the context of an East-West dialogue and with an eye to European integration. But the form that it will take is, I repeat, a matter for the Germans themselves.

Once this issue has been clarified, however, new light will be thrown on our relations with the rest of the world and the future shape of our continent. I propose to begin with the European Free Trade Association, though this does not mean that there is a hierarchy of countries in my mind.

In the House a year ago, I proposed to our EFTA friends that we should look into the possibility of a more structured partnership, going beyond the current association agreements based on limited, though admittedly successful, pragmatic cooperation. Since then, discussions have focused on the overall shape of future negotiations — with particular reference to the four freedoms and the corpus of Community legislation — and their precise content. It would appear, then, that the idea is gaining ground and could be reflected in a positive conclusion this year.

But I would like to be frank with these countries, as one should be with one's friends, because the crux of the current debate is the decision-making process. There will have to be some sort of osmosis between the Community and EFTA to ensure that EFTA's interests are taken into account in major Community decisions. But this process must stop short of joint decision-making, which would imply Community membership and acceptance of the marriage contract. This would serve the interests of neither party, so a delicate balance will have to be struck during the negotiations.

I have already spoken about the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

And last but not least, we must do something about the countries that I call the orphans of Europe — and let me assure you that the expression is not derogatory.

What will the outcome of this process be? Negotiations with EFTA, association contracts 'revisited' with the Central and East European countries, association contracts with the other European countries. Will it end in a grand European confederation, as suggested by President Mitterrand? This is an exciting prospect for all those who believe in the identity of Europe and in its common cultural heritage and traditions. My own view, however, is that a grand confederation will not come into being until the Community achieves political union.

(Applause)

It will be for each country to decide when the time comes.

But our responsibilities do not end there. Still on our doorstep, but this time to the South, we need to expand our relations with the countries on the shores of 'Mare Nostrum', the Mediterranean, to sustain progress already made towards democracy and, thanks to economic reform, towards growth and job creation. Down through the ages the Christian, Jewish and Muslim worlds, European and Oriental civilization, have met and mingled in the Mediterranean. We must make it our concern, firstly because of traditional trade flows and cultural and historic links, and secondly because we cannot ignore the problems in the world around us, the urgent development needs of countries faced with a steep rise in population, the environmental pressures on the sea we share, and the flashpoints of social and religious tension which are a major source of instability. The Strasbourg European Council urged us to flesh out our policy of neighbourly relations, paying particular attention to the Arab Maghreb Union. It is for the Commission to take the initiative to promote cooperation and, in so doing, to demonstrate to the world that the Community's preoccupation with events in Europe has not blinded it to its other responsibilities.

Evidence of this was provided on 15 December last, when the Community and 66 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries renewed the Lomé Convention for the third time. This basis for cooperation, whose stability, durability and predictability is rooted in binding legal commitments, reflects links going back through the centuries and elicited a special effort on the Community side. The financial resources deployed have risen by 46% in nominal terms and 25% in real terms. The ECU 12 billion set aside for the next five years may appear meagre compared with the immense needs to be met — there is little doubt that we can never be generous enough, that our economies are not sufficiently receptive to the needs of the world's disadvantaged countries. But I would stress that no other official development aid, national or international, has increased to the same extent in recent times.

The Community's awareness of its international responsibilities is also in evidence in relation to Latin America and the Gulf. To cite just one example, the Commission recently received a mandate to negotiate an economic and trade cooperation agreement with Argentina. And we are setting up a free trade area with the Gulf countries, taking care not to damage our petrochemical industry in the process. Nor should we — how could we? — forget the vast region of Asia and the Pacific, where astonishing economic progress is under way. Here, too, the Community must play an increased role against a background of newly emerging patterns of regional cooperation. Further evidence of the Community's international status is provided by heightened interest being shown in it by the United States and Japan.

On 21 May President Bush invited the Community and its Member States to become partners in the management of world affairs thanks to the globalization of EEC-US relations and the introduction of new ma-

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chinery. This offer was repeated and extended by US Secretary of State James Baker in Berlin on 12 December.

I agree that there is something ambiguous about linking transatlantic partnership with European integration as Mr Baker did. Some Member States might interpret it as a deliberate attempt to interfere in our affairs, something which would be unacceptable between two equal partners, the two pillars of the Atlantic Alliance. But it is difficult not to rejoice at the new attitudes emerging on both sides of the Atlantic, the willingness to step up cooperation and prevent our deep relationship descending to the level of disputes about pasta and hormones. When all is said and done, disputes are inevitable between the world's biggest trading powers. The bond between the Community and the United States merits another attitude of mind. The task of creating a framework for a revitalized transatlantic relationship remains and must be carried out without naivety or ambiguity. We are already working on it, and will be submitting proposals in the course of the year.

Last week I received a proposal from Prime Minister Kaifu to revitalize links between the Community and Japan. He restated Japan's willingness to shoulder its share of the world's economic and political burden — particularly vis-à-vis the countries of Eastern Europe — so great is the impact that future developments in Eastern Europe will have on world affairs. We can only welcome this approach and trust that the new structures for high-level consultation between Europe and Japan will be more effective than the old. I would repeat what I said to Mr Kaifu on this, namely that we feel very disappointed.

Our hope, then, is that the Japanese will take their new attitude to its logical conclusion. They cannot expect the West to apply the principles of openness and free trade indefinitely while these are denied to Western companies in Japan.

(Applause)

To put it plainly, there can never be genuine community between the democracies of Europe, Japan and the United States unless we accept and apply the same principles, designed to create an open economy and support multilateral trade, the lifeline of the developing countries.

Completion this year of the Uruguay Round should provide a solution to these trade issues. These negotiations will occupy an important place in the Commission's thinking and activities this year. I would sum up the Commission's position on these vital negotiations in three words: effectiveness, interdependence and fairness. Effectiveness, because we cannot afford any setbacks — international trade is the key to stronger and more balanced growth of the world economy. Interdependence, because it is impossible to treat any issue in isolation, though some would like to — progress must be made on all fronts. Fairness, because we must take account of the legitimate interests

of the developing countries and the new responsibilities of the recently-industrialized countries.

These three requirements can only be met within a multilateral framework. This means that all threats to the system must be resisted. This indeed is the Community's aim. But pursuit of that aim must be vigorous and exemplary. We must maintain the link between currency, trade and finance, the triple base for an equitable, efficient world economic order.

But all these international responsibilities to which events have constrained me to devote a large part of my intervention — it being understood that a second in February will deal more fully and in detail with the work programme — I have emphasized in order to point out that, according to the Commission, the Community will only remain a focal point if we speed up European construction.

The Community as a focal point

As you will no doubt appreciate, the Twelve have no choice but to remain a focal point, a rock of stability for the rest of the continent. This is not a role they have inherited from history but one they have earned by constant effort and resolve as the pioneers of European integration.

But this does not mean that the Community is the only European organization with a role to play. In the economic sphere there is EFTA, of course, but there is also COMECON. After undergoing radical changes, COMECON must consolidate its function, if only to keep up a flow of trade in products which cannot yet compete on the world market because of their quality. It seems that this was the conclusion reached by COMECON leaders at their meeting in Sofia despite the strong reservations expressed by some delegates about the organization. Should COMECON countries decide to embark on reforms, the Community will be prepared, at their request, to give them the benefit of its experience in economic cooperation.

Then there are the alliances which the two superpowers are resolved to retain as a source of stability, if not control, and which, to judge from certain pronouncements, are to be given new powers. And last but not least another organization offers a broad perspective: the Council of Europe. It must continue to work in the areas of cultural affairs, human rights and education and at the same time help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to rediscover their cultural roots and refamiliarize themselves with the ways of multi-party democracy.

However, that *affectio societatis* which binds countries together is clearly deepest in the Community. We must be strong if we are to be generous to others, and we must be strong if we are to have any hope of overcoming the national antagonisms which may well re-emerge in Europe.

Strengthening the Community means pressing ahead with implementation of the Single Act. I will come back

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to this point later. But this alone is no longer enough. As I said in Bruges last October: 'The pace of change is gathering momentum and we must try to keep up...

(Applause)

Only a strong, self-confident Community, a Community which is united and determined, can truly hope to control that process... For the honour of your generation and mine, I hope that in two year's time we will be able to repeat the very words which another great European, Paul-Henri Spaak, spoke at the signing of the Treaty of Rome: "This time the people of the West have not lacked daring and have not acted too late".

We need to make progress on two fronts: Economic and Monetary Union and political cooperation. In Strasbourg on 9 December, the Heads of State or Government showed the way forward. The decision to convene an Intergovernmental Conference before the end of 1990 should generate the necessary momentum to guarantee success. The political will is clearly there, but we will need time to overcome the practical difficulties.

We must therefore concentrate on stage one of Economic and Monetary Union, which involves increased cooperation on monetary policy and greater convergence of our economies. This, I must stress, is just as important a prerequisite as full and proper preparation for the Intergovernmental Conference. The success of stage one is the best way to convince the doubters. We have got to produce results. I am counting on pressure from the European Parliament to ensure that finance ministers and governors actively implement this phase.

To help with these preparations, the Commission will submit a preliminary paper in the spring on the final shape of Economic and Monetary Union, followed by a second paper on the institutional changes EMU will entail. The Commission will be playing its full part in the vital preparatory work for the Intergovernmental Conference.

This will involve looking at the issues the Conference will have to resolve. What kind of linkage should there be between the economic and the monetary aspects? What rules should be agreed and in what fields should they apply? To what extent should monetary policy be centralized? How should economic and political powers be divided between the centre and national institutions? What relationship should there be between the independent Central Bank and the political authorities responsible for general economic policy? What should the *quid pro quo* be in terms of democratic concessions? In particular, what is Parliament's role to be? And this list is by no means exhaustive.

The other way of speeding progress up is political cooperation. The style — and the tempo — of political cooperation will have to change. Of course, we welcome the initiatives taken in this sphere over the last year, first by the Spanish Presidency — on the Middle East — then by the French Presidency — on Lebanon,

relations with Eastern Europe and Euro-Arab dialogue. Considering how far foreign policy cooperation lags behind economic cooperation, these initiatives are encouraging. But, frankly, they do not go far enough.

There is clearly a risk that the economic attractions of the single market for neighbouring countries will have an adverse effect on the political identity of those who signed the Single Act and committed themselves to 'transform[ing] relations as a whole among their States into a European Union'. Some thought will therefore have to be given to the future of political cooperation.

As far as the approach is concerned, political cooperation is first and foremost, almost routinely I would say, a reaction to world events. Would it not be better to start by defining what I would call 'the shared vital interests' of the Member States, to show up the path they should follow and make it easier for them to take the initiative? The proposal I am presenting here will be very familiar to Mr Tindemans. We identify essential joint interests and open the way, not to an identical external policy, but to actions in pursuit of those essential interests.

As a first step in this direction the Twelve could perhaps mount a joint offensive at the CSCE — that other important template for Europe's future — on economic and human rights issues. They could defend a common position, show a spirit of innovation, be the driving force in an even more significant sense.

Political cooperation might then reach the level attained by economic integration. There will actually be an opportunity for putting the idea into practice this year, if Mr Gorbachev's proposal to convene a top-level meeting of CSCE participants to take stock of progress on the three baskets and open up prospects for a Greater Europe is accepted. This meeting will present an opportunity and a challenge: an opportunity because the CSCE could provide the framework for my vision of a 'European village'; a challenge because a 35-nation conference which institutionalizes a framework for peace does not necessarily complement 12-nation integration. However, the next economic conference in Bonn in March will give the Community a chance to affirm its identity and make its contribution to the CSCE process. This will be the first test.

The Community's position on these issues will be reinforced by its becoming a party to the Strasbourg Convention on Human Rights, something which we will be proposing this year.

Whether the topic is Economic and Monetary Union or political cooperation, we come back in the end to the question of institutions, because this is the only way of strengthening the Community's authority and giving it greater scope for action. I have to admit that so far — with the Single Act and in preparatory discussions on Economic and Monetary Union — I have tended to favour the pragmatic approach of putting forward an objective and suggesting a strategy, then tailoring the decision-making process to fit them.

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But when time is short a bolder approach is needed. Given the degree of commitment being asked of the Community, and the danger of the Community being diluted — if only because some countries, alarmed by developments on the continent, are being tempted to play a more national card — we need an institutional structure that can withstand the strain. I know that this House, loyal as it is to the Spinelli philosophy, is about to take an important initiative in this area. So perhaps you will allow me to contribute a few ideas to the debate you will be embarking on, which will, I trust, also involve national parliaments and governments. You can certainly rely on the Commission to make itself heard and I sincerely hope that the decision you make at the end of your deliberations will be the basis for a thoroughgoing political debate which will lead to success in our endeavours, inform the citizen and apply the necessary pressure.

(Applause)

Basically, there are three questions to be answered:

- what kind of executive?
- what form of democratic control?
- what powers?

Clearly the executive will have to be capable of carrying out its task to the full. As you know, I have always advanced two solutions to this problem: the first is that each government should designate a deputy prime minister to meet in Brussels once a week to hammer out the necessary deals; the second — yes, Mr Herman, I noted what you said — is that the Commission should be turned into a proper executive answerable for its actions. The logic followed by the authors of the Treaty of Rome and the challenges posed by the outside world demand that we back the second of these options.

The executive would, of course, have to be answerable to the democratic institutions of the future federation — more power means a personal commitment.

(Applause)

And it would be appointed democratically, the other two authorities deciding initially on a mechanism for appointing its President and since I shall no longer be here, I can only hope he will have genuine power to influence the choice of the other Members.

(Laughter)

To deal with the democratic deficit — the answer to the second question — Parliament would have to be given more powers. However, a better arrangement for democratic control will have to be devised: there must be an acknowledgement that the two reflections of the popular will — the European Parliament and national parliaments — are in partnership. This is something that we all need to think about seriously.

There will have to be consultations on this question between members of the European and national parliaments, and the concept of subsidiarity will have to be clarified and reflected in the institutional and legal

arrangements. Ours is a Community based on the rule of law, and nothing less will do, as a pledge of further progress along the path of democracy.

As for the third question — what powers? — subsidiarity, as I have just said, must be the watchword underlying any scheme for allocating responsibilities between the Community, the national authorities and the regional authorities. And in the federation of the Twelve — which will be unusual in that the central authority's primary role will be to provide impetus — the principle of subsidiarity will have to act as a constant counterweight to the natural tendency of the centre to accumulate power. At the risk of repeating myself, I will stress that this new step forward must be taken openly and with the question of who does what at Community, national and regional level clearly defined.

But in your important November debate this House also raised other questions regarding the inclusion of the social dimension, the environment, even education and culture, in the remit of the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference. My views on this have evolved somewhat and I now feel that the Conference, under a single chairman, should conduct two parallel sets of discussions, one on Economic and Monetary Union and its specific institutional aspects, the other on the remaining questions, including additional powers and political cooperation, to draw up a full blueprint for the Community of the future, even if it takes us a number of years, and to strengthen its institutional and political structure.

(Applause)

At any rate, the subject is now open for debate and I am well aware of the dangers. But I can see no better way of creating a large trading area, an area of peace and cooperation, than by pursuing to its end, without undue haste, the Community's patient task of reconciling the proper exercise of its political powers and the requirements imposed by its international responsibilities.

Making a success of the Single Act

But none of these concerns, vital though they may be, can be allowed to deflect us from our central purpose: to make the Single Act an unqualified success. Our prosperity and the Community's future role in the world depend on it. You will see therefore that it is the Commission's main priority in its programme for 1990. This is perfectly compatible with the necessary political innovation which I have just spoken of.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have decided to open two successive debates on the 1990 programme. I welcome this, since it should make for an improvement in our working relations, that is, between the European Parliament and the Commission. I hope, therefore, in the work of your committees, in the appearance of members of the Commission before those committees, we can take full account of your reflections and boost the effectiveness of our joint action, without which, as you well know, the Community cannot move ahead.

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With three years to go to the 1992 deadline, we are now well on our way. The Council has adopted almost two thirds of the 279 pieces of legislation listed in the White Paper and the Commission has presented virtually all its proposals. Indeed, such has been the zealous rivalry of successive Presidencies and the sense of responsibility of the institutions involved that some people are under the impression that our mission has been accomplished, that the single economic and social area is already practically complete. It is true that the path is clearly marked, that there is no turning back, but a good deal of political will is still required, a good deal of patience and a good deal of work. As far as the single market is concerned, the Commission will therefore be focusing on two particular areas.

The first is the free movement of persons. At a time when walls are tumbling down elsewhere, this will provide tangible proof to our citizens that they are part of a single geographical and cultural entity, that internal frontiers are a thing of the past.

(Applause)

This requires not only closer cooperation between the ministers responsible for immigration but also finalization of the conventions on the right of asylum and the crossing of external frontiers, as called for by the Strasbourg European Council. The Commission would also like to see delays in implementing the Schengen agreement overcome, to which Mr von Wogau referred yesterday, since this decision by five of the twelve Member States, far from damaging Community cohesion, will serve as a headline for the Community as a whole. My message, then, is that we need to quicken the pace.

The second area is the removal of tax frontiers. Progress here has been disappointing measured against the goals set by the Single Act. It seems to me that the engine — the alignment of VAT rates and the removal of restrictions on purchases by individuals travelling within the Community — is missing! That is the minimum target if we are to do away with the need for tax frontiers.

I do not propose to go into details of the steps to be taken this year under the single market programme. But I would like to rebut the accusations made by some that we are obsessed with deregulating the economy at a time when the staunchest defenders of this doctrine are beginning to realize the excesses of an economic system reminiscent of the fable about the fox in the hen house.

Is it deregulation to lay down Community rules for take-over bids, mergers, the European company statute, or to ban insider-trading?

Is it deregulation to harmonize tests and certification procedures, the labelling of goods, or the conditions for allowing pharmaceuticals on to the market — as part of a realistic policy for informing consumers and defending their interests?

Is it deregulation to harmonize flying time for pilots or hours at the wheel and rest periods for lorry drivers —

to avoid the social dumping and distortions of competition which might ensue?

The Commission's view has always been that liberalization and harmonization should go hand in hand. It is true that opening up markets to competition is a prerequisite for the efficient allocation of resources, but no market can operate smoothly without a regulatory framework. Often the only aim in liberalizing at national level is to help make harmonization at Community level more effective.

The Single Act is an indivisible whole. It extends beyond the single market to solidarity through economic and social cohesion, to the social dimension, to the environment and to research and monetary cooperation, which contribute to competitiveness. It implies the creation of a single economic and social area, without which the Community would be a hollow creation, devoid of vitality and political will.

1990 will be the first full year of implementation of reform of the structural policies aimed at fostering the development and adjustment of the less-developed regions. This will call for a major effort by the Commission, the Member States and the regions, acting together in a new partnership, to ensure concentration and consistency in implementing practical programmes. And the relevance of the Commission's approach, endorsed by the European Council in February 1988, will have to be judged in the light of the results. Success will depend on the diligence of national and regional authorities, the attitude of business and groups representing social interests, and the ability of the Commission to come up with fresh ideas.

The social dimension is a legitimate concern of this House — indeed it sometimes accuses the Commission of being far too timid. But I can assure you that, whatever people may think, the social dimension is central to our work. Without repeating what I said during our discussion last September, I would stress that, while devising a scheme is important (and that is done now, since at the end of the year the Commission adopted an action programme for the Social Charter), the way we go about putting it into practice is equally important: subsidiarity, partnership and gradualism will form the very basis of the Charter's implementation.

Our longstanding ambition has been a harmonious society more accessible to all, and to this end the basic pact is to build a Europe which displays solidarity, in controlled as in managed interdependence, to prevent the danger of disequilibrium.

However, just as lasting growth without social cohesion is impossible, it is also no longer acceptable to believe that anything can be achieved on the social front without action on the economic front. Renewed competitiveness and cooperation on macroeconomic policy must go hand in hand. It was the return to prosperity and sound growth rates that made it possible to create more than five million jobs between 1988 and 1990 and to bring the level of unemployment at the end

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of 1989 to below 9% of the labour force for the first time since 1982. I agree that 9% is still too high but the trend is encouraging.

Here again I must stress that we have not waited until now to make the social dimension a reality. I would ask the sceptics to count our practical achievements in 1989 alone. Leaving aside the Social Charter and the action programme, substantial progress has been made in a wide range of fields such as health and safety in the workplace (with adoption of four directives, including the framework directive), vocational training (for instance, adoption of the Eurotecnec programme), education (Lingua and Erasmus II), health (action on cancer and Aids) and combating poverty.

Our course is set. But in working towards a Europe which displays solidarity, we must be careful to avoid two pitfalls: social dumping at the expense of the more prosperous countries and the strangulation which would impose an intolerable burden on the less-advanced economies and prevent them making the most of their comparative advantages.

The Commission's concern to allow genuine solidarity to play a role without interfering with national traditions forms the very basis for its three-year action programme in line with the wishes of the European Council. The plans for 1990 are ambitious so I will mention only the most important areas, those which I promised last September would be included in the 1990 programme: atypical forms of employment, reorganization of working hours, and information and consultation of workers.

And I would not want to overlook, even if the work is going slowly, the importance of the European Company, in terms of the effective participation of workers in the workplace.

Our underlying approach is clear. We will be proposing broad provisions for these areas, avoiding too much detail, since this would obviously be inappropriate and impracticable, while having due regard to the many interlinked imperatives: promoting better living and working conditions, in line with the basic principles of the Social Charter, and making business more efficient. The two goals are not mutually exclusive. I see this very clearly, for example, in the definition of common provisions on atypical forms of employment, to counter distortions of competition for instance.

As for the practical side, you will not be surprised when I say that there will be wide-ranging consultations with both sides of industry a close cooperation with the European Parliament and its relevant committees. That is the way I have always worked, in full knowledge of the difficulties and risks, ever since relaunching the social dialogue in a speech to this House in 1985.

I am well aware that many of you believe that, whatever the limits of the Treaty, it is unacceptable that decision-making should be less effective for the social dimension than for the economic area. I share that sentiment.

(Applause)

As long ago as last September I told you that the Commission was determined to exploit the potential of the Treaty, and Articles 100a and 118a in particular, to the full. And since there is some scepticism about this I would emphasize Article 118a, the full potential of which will be considered in conjunction with the relevant committees and experts of the European Parliament with a view to removing the ambiguity between us and getting agreement on the broadest possible interpretation of these articles, in line I believe with the wishes of the majority of this Parliament.

(Applause)

Solidarity has a bearing on environment policy too, given the importance of reconciling the need to improve the quality of life and the need to ensure that economic growth is viable. Even if green issues go out of fashion one day, the Community will have to press ahead with its programme since the constant striving for a balance between man and nature is an essential element in the European tradition. That is why the European Environment Agency, which I mentioned here a year ago, will become a reality in 1990 to increase our capacity for monitoring and early detection of damage to the environment. But we must first take on board the opinion to be delivered by the European Parliament. This is why the Commission, once again favouring the regulatory approach, will be looking with the help of national experts at ways and means of ensuring that environmental legislation is properly harmonized.

But there are pitfalls here too. We must avoid striking a balance between the environment and the economy. However, we have yet to find a way of reconciling the two that holds out the prospect of a new model for development which, while still competitive, shows greater respect for the human dimension and the rhythms of nature.

(Applause)

I have already said that to be generous you have to be strong, to show solidarity you have to be competitive. But the opposite is also true. There can be no lasting economic success without equality of opportunities, social justice and the participation of everyone, workers and managing directors, academics and research technicians alike. This is what makes our policy on research and technology for 1990 to 1994, adopted on 15 December, so valuable.

It should enhance the competitiveness of European industry and promote the Community's rise to a major economic power. Do you realize, for instance, that Japanese car manufacturers spend twice as much on research as European firms?

This is why we have decided to adopt a common strategy and focus our efforts on enabling technology, the management of natural resources and the development of intellectual resources. And since, as the United States and Japan have shown, pre-competitive research is the most effective instrument of industrial policy — a term which will make some of you shudder — the

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Commission has decided to study ways of making Community industry as efficient as possible in vital sectors such as automobiles, aerospace, electronics and biotechnology. But clearly the Commission will not be naive in any proposals it makes to the Council and Parliament on commercial policy. Opening up our economy will also depend on our trading partners and on our own success in catching up in areas where we still lag behind. Here, as elsewhere, the Commission cannot afford to drop its guard.

Lastly, there can be no economic power without monetary stability. Cooperation between the Twelve guarantees monetary stability and I can only reiterate how well the European monetary system works. It accommodated the peseta without any difficulty in September and in the space of three years there has been only one slight realignment, when the lira reverted to the standard margins of fluctuation. We must welcome the courageous decisions of these two countries and their full commitment to taking part in Economic and Monetary Union. In a world beset by monetary instability, the results are there for all to see. This should be an encouragement to one particular currency of major international importance, which the Commission hopes to see joining the system in the course of the year.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, solidarity within its frontiers and solidarity beyond: the Community's ambitions for Europe and its responsibilities towards the rest of the world are enormous.

As the people of Central and Eastern Europe take their destiny in hand, throwing off the shackles of Yalta and Potsdam, I find myself regretting that *our* venture does not have more popular support. Perhaps people should think on these words of Václav Havel which are particularly pertinent today: 'political programmes cannot take shape, ... exert any real influence unless founded on civic consent'.

Today, once again, necessity demands that the Twelve increase the pace and press further along the road to integration. As the superpowers map out their vision of our continent the question is this: is Europe to be a mere spectator or is it to play an active role in shaping tomorrow's world?

If Europe is to help fashion its own history, 1990 must be a year of serious thought and political debate to identify and define the aims, structures, decision-making procedures and arrangements for democratic control in a European Union. A Community with a mission, playing a full part on the political stage in Europe and in the rest of the world, North and South alike.

History is pressing us to respond: 'Does the Community want to continue, shouldering its full responsibilities at home and abroad?' There is no doubt about the Commission's answer. It is an enthusiastic, unequivocal 'yes'. The ball is now in your court. It is up to you — and by you I mean governments, this House, the Economic and Social Committee and national Parliaments —

give a straight answer to the same question. You will be judged on the clarity and strength of your commitment. For my own part I have no doubts about a positive response from the European Parliament and its political capacity to take Europe forward.

(Loud applause)

PRESIDENT. — I thank the Commission President for the broad perspective he has outlined and I shall now open our debate by calling Mr Jean Pierre Cot, on behalf of the Socialist Group.

COT (S). — *(FR)* Madam President, I wish to start, with your leave, by acknowledging the courtesy of the Presidency of the Council. Your presence at this sitting, Mr Collins, Mrs Geoghegan Quinn, tells us that you intend to be our partners, in the full sense of the word, in our legislative work.

Mr President of the Commission, does the script need to be rewritten? That is the question the Socialist Group is asking. The agenda calls for a debate on the Commission's work programme. This is an important debate, especially so this year and for this Parliament. We have to agree on the tasks to be started and those to be completed, but we also have to make an assessment of our relations in the light of six months of varyingly easy and varyingly productive cooperation. In other words, this debate is as much about making an initial stocktaking as about opening up new perspectives. However, we do not have very much to go on. The document entitled 'Work Programme' sets out flat observations and impressive enumerations. Its points of value, its riches, if there are any, have been carefully hidden and, doubtless lacking subtlety in my analysis, I have been unable to uncover them. A cursory reading did not teach me very much, leaving me with more questions than answers. The list of texts promised in 1990 is impressive but it is not always clear what they are going to consist of, their substance is imponderable, their legal basis mysterious. How can a legislative contract in good and proper form be concluded between us? We need much more detail and there are probably going to have to be lengthy negotiations, for you see, Mr President, we take your legislative programme seriously. Apart from that, my colleagues will be asking you a few preliminary questions about social Europe, economic and monetary union, and the intergovernmental conference. As you will imagine, we shall be looking forward to your answers with keen interest.

Meanwhile, Mr President, let us talk about something else. That indeed is what you did. You chose to give us a glimpse of the future, outlining a destiny for our Community in a troubled world. I appreciated the breadth of vision, the coherence of your scheme of things, and I go along with much of what you said. I am not going to follow you into that territory today, since we have discussed these problems on several occasions, notably with President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl, and we shall be returning to some of them this afternoon. I propose to concentrate on everyday Europe

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and the conditions under which we have to operate as representatives of the European people. In other words, I am going to talk about the democratic deficit in a speech that I intend to be complementary, not contradictory, to your own.

What I understand by the democratic deficit is not the stuff of the general considerations that run through our Sunday conversations or our election campaigns. Today I want to discuss another deficit, which is getting deeper with every passing day, hampering our efforts and necessarily threatening to undermine the mutual confidence on which our relations need to be founded. Your work programme does not exist in the abstract but has been informed by the experience of past years and above all of the last six months, the first in the life of the new Parliament. On the whole, we have worked well together. But we in the Socialist Group have too often had the impression that the Commission has been getting off course, sometimes imperceptibly but always regrettably. I am going to mention a few examples, not for the pleasure of doing so, believe me, but because I think there is still time to put these mistakes right and establish our relations on a sounder, more genuine footing, more in keeping with the concept of partnership that you are fond of referring to.

First, we are asking the Commission to consult Parliament whenever it is obliged to do so under the Treaties instead of using roundabout ways of circumventing this democratic duty. For instance, the Commission used Article 90(3) for the liberalization of telecommunications. It used the Euratom Treaty for the post-Chernobyl directive when the problem at hand had to do with the free movement of foodstuffs. We are powerless to do anything about it.

Secondly, the Commission has on too many occasions chosen a legal base allowing it to avoid the cooperation procedure on, alternatively, bringing its directive up against the obstacle of Council unanimity, whereas an equally respectful interpretation of the Treaty would have allowed the problem to be dealt with by qualified majority votes in the Council and Parliament. I am pleased to note your undertaking to try to find more flexible legal bases for social legislation. We shall judge your determination to do this in the light of your performance and we suggest, although we already have your assurance on this, that you agree the appropriate base with us in good time, in other words before formulating your proposals. In this connection, we are hoping that the Court of Justice of the Communities, which currently has this matter under consideration, is going to let us bring an action before it when we dispute a choice of legal base. In doing so it would be consolidating the Community's legal foundations, of which it is justly proud but which in this instance leaves Parliament powerless when it happens to be in disagreement with the Commission.

Thirdly, we are asking the Commission to respond to our repeated requests, especially those backed by a large majority vote. We are still awaiting its proposals on

cereal stabilizers, on revision of the set-aside system, and its social economy initiatives.

Fourthly, we are asking the Commission to take over the important amendments adopted after due consideration and by large majorities of this Parliament in the cooperation procedure. It has rejected the social component of the directive on public contracts. It has rejected the amendments on the right to vote for migrant workers. It has rejected our modest proposals on the first phase of economic and monetary union. I am delighted that positions now seem to be drawing closer together. I still have a bitter memory of the devious ambiguities over the decisive amendment on television without frontiers.

Fifthly, the Commission is refusing to withdraw certain texts rejected by Parliament. One example is the post-Chernobyl directive to which I have already referred. The Commission sometimes takes dilatoriness far too far. The directive on modified starches has survived three years after being rejected by us. On other occasions the Commission has its hand forced by the Council, as in the case of the directive on benzene.

Sixthly, the Commission does deals with the Council behind our backs, if I may put it that way, negotiating an amended text on which we are given no opportunity to state an opinion. A case in point is the Environment Agency, of which we are told that we have to take it or leave it.

Seventhly, the Commission fails to inform us of modifications made to our texts or forgets to remind the Council of its duty to consult Parliament again. We would have appreciated a timely warning of the tribulations of the hapless social charter instead of solemnly deliberating on a defunct text.

Eighthly, the Commission has recently been showing an unfortunate tendency to revert to the errors of its predecessors' ways, allowing itself to be dispossessed of the right of initiative and turned into the Council's obedient secretariat. Fiscal harmonization has been taken out of its hands completely and it is allowing the Council to bring forward proposals that are far from being to your liking.

Ninthly, the Commission occasionally overlooks its obligations under the Luns-Westerterp procedure concerning the negotiation of international treaties. On the pretext that we now have a say in the conclusion of the procedure, the Commission is no longer keeping us informed of the negotiations. This is how we were presented with a *fait accompli* over the important framework agreement with the Soviet Union concluded last month. In this instance, it is true, not all the fault was on the Commission's side.

Tenthly and, you will be pleased to hear, lastly, the Commission is not taking sufficient account of the fundamental demand backed by the majority of this Parliament that the single market, economic and social cohesion, and democratization of the institutions should progress at the same pace. You will tell me it is

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not a matter of that. We only have to mend our ways. We intend to do so, we shall be doing everything in our power to do so. Our legal instruments are weak. They are not 'non-existent'. We know what can be done and what must not be done. We know our law. We know how to make haste slowly and wisely, drawing our inspiration from the isoglucose case-law. We shall make sure we link texts that must not be separated. We shall make sure our institutions make the progress necessary for the application of any international agreement that is subject to our assent. Finally, to come back to our agenda, we are determined to negotiate the legislative programme in greater detail. You gave undertakings last year, on 15 March 1989, at the time of the joint declaration on the legislative programme for that year. You spoke of simultaneous progress in the main areas. You spoke of giving legislative priority to the single market, social Europe, the environment, and monetary integration. Let us be a little more specific this year about the means of honouring these undertakings, a little more rigorous about the parliamentary calendar that honouring these undertakings is going to entail. The Council has said it wants to harmonize its calendar with ours. I welcome that.

Mr President, we parliamentarians are aware that the price of democracy is constant, daily vigilance. We are aware that democracy is necessary in order to meet our obligation under the Treaties to cooperate openly and genuinely with the other institutions.

Mr President Delors, it is because I know that you are as committed as us or anyone else to these principles that I feel obliged to draw attention to them and in a way to suggest a code of conduct between you and us, while at the same time acknowledging that there is sometimes fault on either side. In conclusion, I come back to my first question: does the script need to be rewritten? Probably. Amended? Definitely. Your answers to our questions will set the tone for our legislative cooperation, which we want to be constructive.

(Applause from the Socialist Group)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ROMEOS

Vice-President

CHANTERIE (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, Mr President of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, the second part of 1989 brought us a European revolution that signified the end of post-war history and definitively demonstrated, too, the complete failure of 40 years of communism in Eastern Europe. Many have pointed out that the dynamics of the European Community have in the past years exerted a great attraction. Perhaps we realized too little that parliamentary democracy, free elections, political pluralism and a social market economy signified a model to which millions of citizens in Eastern Europe aspired. Commission President Jacques Delors rightly devoted a

major part of his address to the developments in Eastern Europe and to the enormous challenges confronting us.

The revolution in the countries of Eastern Europe present the European Community not only with new challenges but also with new responsibilities, both at international level and in the field of Community policy. New questions that call for a new political response from the European Community. On behalf of the EPP Group, I shall highlight three political issues that are, to us, crucial and to which we expect the Commission to react positively.

First of all the EPP Group expects of the Commission more forceful action so that, as the Commission, it may hold, keep and renew the initiative. Firstly in the most difficult areas of the internal market. I would refer among other things to the abolition of tax frontiers, where we have taken a different direction than that originally intended. I would also refer to the backlog as regards the question of the free movement of persons. I would also refer to the difficulties surrounding government contracts and especially in the non-protected sectors. I would refer to the transport sector, where we are confronted with totally new situations, which will be requiring a political answer in the months immediately ahead.

We expect more forceful action from the Commission to achieve the social dimension. You have indeed, Mr President of the Commission, indicated a number of directions and we welcome the fact that you, with us, follow the direction of as many majority decisions in the Council as possible also as regards achievement of the social dimension, which must indeed — and here I agree with the chairman of the Socialist Group — proceed at the same pace as removal of the frontiers and realization of the internal market. I also refer to environmental policy, but other members of our Group will certainly dwell on this aspect.

Secondly, the EPP Group expects respect for the European Parliament's rights on the basis of the Treaties, but also for the European Parliament's democratic legitimacy. We object to the Commission's way of dealing with Parliament in a number of areas in a step-motherly fashion. I also refer, like Jean-Pierre Cot, to the agreement with the Soviet Union, which we deem a highly important agreement. I refer to similar agreements in preparation with other European countries. You spoke, Mr President of the Commission, about negotiations with the EFTA countries, I cannot recall our having discussed those negotiations in this Parliament. I read this week about Commission proposals having been put forward in Paris for setting up the European Development Bank. We have not discussed that in this Parliament either. We insist that a parliamentary democracy must be established in Eastern Europe on Western European principles, yet we forget to apply those same principles in the European Community.

Thirdly, Mr President, the EPP Group expects a pro-Parliament attitude from the Commission in prepa-

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rations for and during the intergovernmental conference. Economic and Monetary Union will undoubtedly create new powers at European level. New powers presuppose democratic control by the European Parliament, thus a strengthened role for the European Parliament's powers. In the crucial negotiations ahead, we expect the Commission to side with Parliament so that we may present a solid front in negotiations with the Council.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, 1990 could be the year of Europe. If each of the European institutions shows a strengthened political will definitely to follow the path of political unity. The EPP Group will give its full cooperation in this, also in completing the House of the European Community in the 90s, and we are quite ready for a dialogue on the political lines that you, Mr President of the Commission, have put forward.

(Applause from the centre)

GISCARD d'ESTAING (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, Mr President of the Commission, you have presented the Commission's work programme for 1990 to us. Allow me to say first of all that when we read it, our group found the Commission's working document for 1990 rather limp in view of the upheavals in Eastern Europe and in the light of this Parliament's stated resolve to accelerate the movement towards European union. Some of the proposals it contains lack precision and others lack perspective. I fully appreciate, Mr President of the Commission, that this sort of report is not written by the hand of a Chateaubriand, but you corrected this impression in your speech by putting the Commission's action into the perspective of wider ambitions for our Community. I shall therefore tell you of our reasons for disappointment and then discuss your speech.

We have several reasons for disappointment. First, the vagueness of the passage in the report on the subject of abolition of fiscal frontiers. It is stated that it is necessary to avoid the risk of having to go back on the abolition of fiscal frontiers. It is scarcely stated that these frontiers will be abolished on 1 January 1993. We are told that it will not be until 1996 that it will be possible to complete harmonization of indirect taxes, if then. I have to tell you that our group's position on this is much more categorical. Our group, along with other groups in the European Parliament I am convinced, will be proposing the national or Community measures that will make fiscal controls at frontiers illegal as from 1 January 1993. The credibility of our Community really is at stake here. Imagine the disappointment, scepticism and fury of the citizens of Europe if, come 1 January 1993, they find that the same fiscal controls are still in place at the frontiers.

Our second disappointment is with what is said in the written report about economic and monetary union. The work programme for 1990 is really extremely limited. Without reading it out, there is a very timid reference to possible development of the role of the

ECU, whereas we are going to be in the first phase of economic and monetary union and much more energetic action therefore needs to be taken on this.

Again, we find what the written report has to say about cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe very timid. It proposes no more than efficient use of the appropriation of ECU 300 million in our budget and prospects of trade negotiations with the East European countries. That falls a long way short of what is required to meet the challenge of the historic watershed we have reached. But I would say that what our group is most worried about is the absence of any reference to the absolute need for progress by our institutions. The written report makes no mention of this subject. Happily, this gap was filled by you in your speech, Mr President of the Commission. It is also the case that on the points I have mentioned, including fiscal frontiers, you were much clearer than the written text, but you addressed us as though we were the ones you were trying to convince, whereas Parliament has on numerous occasions voted all the texts and given the fullest possible demonstration of political will concerning the abolition of these frontiers.

Institutional progress is quite definitely at the centre of this Parliament's concerns. In your own words, 'urgency compels us to be bolder'. In your speech, you were coming round to the idea of two intergovernmental conferences, to run 'in parallel' as you said. I do not think it really matters very much whether they are in parallel or one after the other. What is in no doubt is that they are clearly linked. There are two very important subjects that are going to be occupying our minds during 1990, monetary affairs and the institutions, and they are separate but partly linked.

On the first of these subjects, you mentioned the issues that are going to have to be settled by the intergovernmental conference. I listened very attentively and the issues you mentioned are highly technical. On the second subject, which you incidentally defined in rather imprecise terms, we think it necessary to go much further, to make a real start on a phase of preparing a constitutional text or basic law establishing a union of the federal type. That in fact is what you say indirectly when you refer to resumption of the work that was done following the Spinelli report. Besides, the three questions you ask — what Executive, what democratic control, what competence? — are constitutional question, ladies and gentlemen. And to find answers, it is not just an intergovernmental conference that we need but, in addition, a proposal drawn up by our own Parliament and interinstitutional cooperation or an interinstitutional conference.

We are privileged today to be speaking in the presence of Mr Dubcek, and his presence has symbolic significance for me, of course, and for all of us here. In Eastern Europe the peoples have shown their leaders the way. I do not want to see the opposite happening in Western Europe, with the leaders lagging behind the aspirations of their peoples.

GISCARD d'ESTAING

You ended with a question, Mr President, when you asked 'do you want to exist?'. Our group's answer, and I think the rest of the European Parliament is with us, is that above all we want to advance.

(Loud applause from the benches of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group)

PATTERSON (ED). — Mr President, I would first of all like to congratulate the President of the Commission on his very full and clear presentation of the issues which face the Community. I also congratulate him on the programme for 1990 which I think contains just about the right amount of brimstone this time, contrary to the opinion of Mr Giscard d'Estaing. I also congratulate him on the progress which has been made recently in implementing the Single European Act. My group is particularly gratified, of course, at the progress being made in opening up the financial markets in recent weeks. I suppose I should also include the Council in these congratulations and ourselves, the European Parliament, because we too have made our contributions. Indeed the pace in the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy of which I am a member has been absolutely hectic. It is for that reason that I welcome the assurance from the President of the Commission that the pressure of legislation may start to slacken quite shortly.

In this context I was very interested that he felt it necessary to defend himself so vigorously against the charge of being obsessed with deregulation. I would commend to him the doctrine which I understand is applied by the BBC. It is the doctrine of the balance of complaints. If the number of letters coming in complaining that the BBC is part of the Conservative propaganda machine is equal to the number of letters coming in that said that the whole BBC is being infiltrated by Trotskyites, then they reckon they have got it right. I assure the President of the Commission that if he is getting complaints from over there that he is obsessed with deregulation, we are going to keep a very sharp eye on him to make sure that he is not obsessed with regulation. That is something which I think would enable him to apply the doctrine of the balance of complaints.

I should also like to say that we shall keep a close watch on the enactment at national level of the Single Act legislation. The figure of 14 directives out of 86 being implemented in all Member States is really not good enough. I see Commissioner Bangemann looking up. He too knows that it is not just a question of enacting the legislation. It is also a question of the bureaucracies in our national countries actually applying it. For that reason I am particularly glad to see that the Commission is going to run a series of seminars for national officials — presumably customs officials and others — to make certain that the message of the Single Market filters down to the people who have actually got to apply it.

Looking at the main problems which have been outlined, I want to concentrate on just two. As the

European Parliament's rapporteur on the tax package, I would emphasize again — and I see Commissioner Scrivener in her seat — that the situation is really not satisfactory in this area. The European Parliament is faced with a constitutional problem to begin with, insofar as we have been consulted on a whole series of tax proposals which have been changed out of all recognition as a result of work in the Council. Yet we still do not have the new text in front of us. We are relying entirely on documents which come off photocopiers which are very active in Brussels. It is not satisfactory, and I note that in the list of proposals that are about to come forward there are one or two revised proposals — there is one promised on alcohol and one on fuel — but there is no mention of any proposals on tobacco. I would like to know when, precisely, Parliament is going to be seised of the new tax proposals because we want to make our contribution before it is too late.

Secondly, the proposal of the Council itself, particularly on VAT, is not entirely satisfactory. Someone has described it as a car without an engine. The two engines needed have to do with the rates and the right of individuals, once they have paid tax in one country, to bring those goods into another country without being stopped by customs. The second of these rights is probably the starting motor for the first. It would be absolutely absurd if at the end of 1992, having paid tax in one country, I must still be checked at the frontier and perhaps be liable to tax in another country. There is a fundamental principle here which must be laid down from the very start. Everything else is secondary. Also, I do not like the idea of the origin principle being put off to the Greek calends. We must have a date when we move to the origin principle for VAT whenever that may be.

The second question about which I want to say something very quickly is economic and monetary union. Stage 1, as the President pointed out, is already quite well advanced. France, Spain and Italy in particular have taken courageous decisions. I echo Mr Delors' hopes that this year will see a decision by the United Kingdom Government of equal importance. On stages 2 and 3 of course, there is still some discussion. I remember very well what President Delors said to a seminar run by my group in Brussels a month or so ago. He said 'One day I will tell you my opinion of the Delors report'. Of course the Delors report was not a blueprint. It was never intended to be. It was a study by central bankers. It emphasized something on which my group is particularly keen. Although we are all agreed on the goal of economic and monetary union, there are of course many routes to it. For that reason we welcome the promise of studies this year by the Commission.

On one thing however, we are absolutely clear — and here I see that the President of the Commission and the governor of the Bundesbank and indeed the governor of the Bank of England are all united — namely that there is no economic strength without monetary stability. Whatever the final form of economic and monetary

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union, it has to be based on the independence of the banking system and the main criterion of currency stability in its operation. With those two fundamental principles agreed, we look forward to the discussions preparatory to the intergovernmental conference at the end of the year.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

CRAMON DAIBER (V). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to comment on some aspects of the Commission's work programme. However, I would first like to make a brief comment on the haze of political romanticism that has settled over Eastern Europe, in particular on the question of Community membership for the GDR. Do you really think that you can offer this anti-democratic Community to these countries who are in the throes of democratic development?

As far as the work programme is concerned, I would like to reflect on some of our experiences and so analyse the programme. I would remind you of the sorry end to the Social Charter during the December part-session. It was put to rest very quickly and now no-one cares to remember the fine words calling for social aspects to the internal market.

The situation in the countries of the Community in 1990 where social policy is concerned is one where we are fighting to maintain present achievements, with a system which is already out of date and, given economic developments, in any case merely cobbled together. I am ashamed of the poverty of the concept for a social policy as formulated by the Council, the Commission and, unfortunately, by certain sections of this Parliament, of the utter incapacity to define basic concepts for the development of a European social policy. It is not a question of applying the Dutch social system to Greece, but of initiating a reform of the social security system which would take full account of national and regional differences, but whose aim would be social emancipation, ecological responsibility and a democratization of social conditions.

However, before this can come about, before any kind of social policy can be implemented, a certain condition has to be met, i.e. acceptance of the principle of the redistribution of wealth. No-one in this Community is prepared to do this, we are all fixated on the philosophy of the internal market, which is committed to the slogan 'business first'.

There is the Commission's social action programme, the sedative that was offered to Parliament in view of the dramatic social situation. But what is its legal basis? What has happened to the promise given by the President of the Commission in September that he would do all in his power to enable decisions on social policy to be made by majority Council decisions?

We need only give a cursory glance at the programme to see that there has been no attempt to challenge the Council. Most of the proposals either cost nothing or are so vague that nothing is clear and of the total of five

irrelevant directives, three are to be formulated during 1990. What the Council will then do with them is another matter.

I would now like to turn to environmental policy. The Greens have frequently had occasion to criticize severely the total disregard of the internal market policy for environmental aspects. We have given concrete form to our demands for an ecological economic policy, for example in our proposal for an ecology tax. We shall continue our protests, particularly in view of the fact that the Commission's study on the environment, which is not to be made public, shows that the acceleration of traditional economic growth, despite the environmental measures which have been incorporated, has led to a dramatic result simply where the 'prominent' pollutants are involved.

The emission of CO₂ will increase by 20%, NO_x by 14%, SO₂ by 9%. The Commission would like to work out a plan for specific measures to reduce the production of harmful substances. In view of likely developments, however, this will again only be a white-washing operation. If no real progress is made and our proposals are not implemented, then there is not much hope for the politicians of this planet.

A further point concerns energy policy. We urgently need to abandon atomic energy and to build up slowly environmentally compatible energy supplies. But what has happened to THERMIE and the research framework programme? Originally, the Commission allocated ECU 140 million annually for a period of five years for the THERMIE programme which was to promote the use of renewable and decentralized sources of energy. The 1990 budget, however, only contains ECU 45 million for this heading. This is only the beginning.

Contrary to Parliament's wishes, the research framework programme has been allocated almost three times less for environmental research, the allocation for non-nuclear energy is twice as little, the allocations for basic academic research are three times less.

The only two headings that have been allocated marginally more are for research into the splitting of atoms and atomic fusion. There is obvious agreement between the Council and the Commission in opposition to Parliament's wishes. We see clear evidence of the influence of the French Government, who would like to prescribe their energy policy for the whole of Europe, favouring French atomic energy for the production of electricity and the European electricity grid, instead of promoting regional energy production which is more compatible with the environment.

On 15 December the Council approved the research programme incorporating massive changes and without in any way taking account of Parliament's decisions of 14 December. This decision to change everything is tantamount to contempt of Parliament. As far as energy policy is concerned, the French Council presidency, with the agreement of the Commission, has enlarged the democratic deficit on the way to an enlarged Europe.

CRAMON DAIBER

This is unacceptable and forces us to renegotiate THERMIE and the research framework programme. Parliament must exploit every opportunity to counter this process in the future and no longer cooperate on the farcical social, environmental and energy policy. We must utilize to the full the sanctions we have against the Commission, budgetary as well as political sanctions, even going as far as a vote of no confidence, where necessary.

(Applause from the benches of the Green Group in the European Parliament)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ALBER

Vice-President

COLAJANNI (GUE). — *(IT)* Mr President, Mr President of the Commission, yet again we have appreciated your ability to make a political appraisal of events, your ideas on the building of Europe and the enormous amount of work done, despite the obstacles and opposition.

On the other hand — as you yourself have said — these are not normal times, and it is essential to have a positive relationship and one of collaboration between the European Parliament and the Commission, that will make it possible for us to look in depth at the complexity of the problems, and to guard against our inadequacies. In such an exceptional situation, we must therefore make a great effort to improve relations between the Commission and the European Parliament, as other honourable Members have already said. In this connection, seeing that 1990 will already clearly be an exceptional year, additional debate on the Commission's programme would be useful, without waiting, in accordance with normal administrative practice, for the February part session, simply to vote then on the resolutions.

In your statement you raised questions of a very different nature.

We are all aware of the speed with which the situation in Eastern Europe is developing. Alongside the enormous positive progress and changes that have been made in recent months, there emerge the complexity, the difficulties and the dangers to which these new developments are exposed. You, President Delors, show that you are fully aware of them, but we must draw all the proper conclusions from them. As you said, it has only taken a very few months to open the way to democracy, but a very few months may also be all that is needed for crisis to overtake the new reforming governing groups who are guiding the transition from Stalinism to democracy.

In all the Eastern countries — without exception — a crisis is possible; in some of them, the signs are already apparent. We must be aware that, for all the defects or ambiguities that they may show, if these reforming groups should fail, nothing good could come of it. More

likely, old and also new conservative forces would emerge, accompanied by processes of nationalistic and micronationalistic disintegration and degeneration.

No one can wish this to happen and, so far, no country or responsible body has fanned the flames, although in the south of the Soviet Union there has been action by Islamic integralists and, in Central Europe, there have been certain nationalistic pressures that can be ruinous so far as the just aspirations of the German people are concerned, as well as seriously threatening the construction of Europe.

Time is really running out, and we must be aware of it: Europe's action falls short of its present responsibility to history, with which it has unexpectedly been confronted. A special awareness is necessary, and a radical change of direction in regard to the Community's action *vis-à-vis* Eastern Europe. We must immediately indicate a political and institutional perspective on which the new governing groups can straight away base themselves, and we must provide massive economic, technological and financial aid for those countries, far in excess of what has been done so far. The Community must strengthen itself, immediately, more quickly than was laid down last year when the situation was different, more quickly than the pace of government diplomacy, more quickly than the miserly stages of unification that have been envisaged, speeding up the construction of a real Parliament, a real government, a common policy in all fields, and progressively and gradually, and with the necessary help and preparation, making the Eastern countries members of the Council of Europe, of the Bank for Reconstruction and Development, of EFTA, and of new institutions that will be invented.

What the Community has done and can do so far, with its present resources and instruments, is right but totally inadequate. The membership agreements, the new instruments of training and information, the financial instruments, the revision of the budgetary perspective, which you, Mr Delors, proposed — all of this is valuable and important, and Parliament can only support it. If, however, the amounts that are necessary are what you said they are, and if — and we refer to this simply for the purposes of comparison — the Marshall Plan involved 25,000 million dollars in today's money, we shall indeed have to find other ways. The line to take is the drastic reduction of military expenditure, in the East and in the West, and I am amazed that little or nothing is said about this in the European Parliament. This is where the necessary resources can come from: a diverted source of accumulation, which can offer a margin for manoeuvre for the reforming parties in the East, and a very much greater availability of resources for Europe.

The conditions are right. Mr Scheverdnaze said in Brussels that the NATO Council's document is unprecedented, and that the United States and the Soviet Union see an agreement on conventional forces by the

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end of 1990 as realistic. For the present, however, things are still contradictory, if not totally conflicting.

With regard to conventional and nuclear armaments — 'theatre' armaments — the programmes for updating and new investment are still in force — for the new fighters, the atomic artillery, the new air-to-ground missiles, the installation of F-15s, F-16s and F-111s, and for nuclear weapons on ships and submarines in the Mediterranean. That Mediterranean about which you, President Delors, speak with intentions which we fully support, conflicts bitterly with the present state of the region, which is now the region of maximum growth of both tension and armaments in Europe. For the present, the progress that has been achieved with arms reduction in Central Europe is contradicted by the position in the Mediterranean.

It is of decisive importance in relation to Europe's role *vis-à-vis* the East and *vis-à-vis* the South of the world, for a decisive reduction in arms to be achieved by the end of this year. It is a process that cannot be delegated simply to negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. It must be an essential, strategic commitment on the part of the Community. If it is true — as President Delors rightly says — that the economic and political authority of the Community is growing, its voice must as a result carry weight in regard to disarmament and the construction of a joint security system. The European governments — as Enrico Berlinguer called for in this Chamber, at the start of the '80s — must participate and be committed in the disarmament negotiations; the people must participate and the European Parliament must participate.

We call on this Parliament to make commitment on disarmament one of the distinctive features of its work over the next year.

Another distinctive feature of the European Parliament's commitment must concern the institutional aspect of European Union. The implementation of a political union of the Community is the basis for any further construction process — the 'Common Home' and enlargement to the East, to the South and towards the Mediterranean. This is not just one chapter amongst others: we have radically to change gear and speed up political cooperation.

We note your new proposal — namely, for an intergovernmental conference with a sole presidency and two items for debate — economic and monetary union and the institutional question. This approach is closer to Mr Spinelli's thinking. But, since it cannot come solely, nor for the most part even, from diplomacy, any great institutional reform must be originated above all by this Parliament. The European Parliament must be present at the Conference on Europe's future and at the pre-Conference with its own draft, for which the support of the Commission is necessary.

We must present a new draft treaty to take to the intergovernmental Conference, and it must contain the

foundations of a real Parliament, a real government and a supranational system of law.

(Applause from the benches of the Group for the European Unitarian Left)

KILLILEA (RDE). — Mr President, it cannot be said often enough that we are the privileged witnesses to the historic movement towards democracy, pluralism and the rule of law in Eastern Europe. From their respective addresses to this Parliament yesterday and today the President of the Commission and the Council Presidency have both shown that they are deeply conscious that the consequences of the changes in Eastern Europe will have a profound effect throughout the world. It is obvious that they both consider that the Community's response to developments in Central and Eastern Europe will be of crucial importance. The Community's contributions to help resolve some of the problems of these countries will be numerous and varied. Among them will be the vital element of food aid.

In years gone by we all learned that Europe was a major food producer. We all learned of the strategic importance of the Community's food production. Then we were told that we were producing too much food that nobody wanted. The critics went on and on about mountains of this, lakes of that, and lectured us that all of that had to come to an end. In terms of Community agricultural policy the critics of course won the day. I am the first to regret it. Look at the ridiculous situation we find ourselves in at the present time. Our agricultural stocks are at an all-time low. The Community is not in a position to honour outstanding food aid commitments, let alone emergency aid. We have to purchase vast quantities of cereals and milk powder on the world market to meet the new demand created by the situation in Central and Eastern Europe.

I have always said that the strategic wealth of the European Community was not oil or petrol, not our geographical situation, nor this or that military alliance but that it most certainly was our capacity to produce food, with all its vital implications. At present we have snookered ourselves and have ended up in a ludicrous and disgraceful situation. Consequently, I would say to the Commission that the food problems facing in particular Eastern Europe will not be resolved in a month, a year or even a decade. I therefore invite the Commission to take another hard look at the existing Community mechanisms for producing cereals, dairy products and beef in particular. The Community must recover its vital role in producing food in excess of our own needs. It saddens me to see that, for practically every product where the EEC has reduced production in recent years, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia are all increasing theirs at the same rate. The Community's own statistics are proof of this.

In conclusion, therefore, I call on the Commission to initiate new agricultural proposals starting from this year and for a period of not less than five years, when the situation will be reviewed, which would allow EEC

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farmers to increase their production in some suitably controlled way. Need I remind you that it is our farmers alone who have made all the sacrifices for many years? Do we have the political will and courage to admit that we did get it wrong in relation to some aspects of the common agricultural policy?

(Applause from the Group of the European Democratic Alliance)

BLOT (DR). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr President of the Commission told us that it was in the name of liberty that millions of men and women took to the streets in Eastern and Central Europe. That is true, but it is only part of the story. It was also in the name of nationhood that millions of men and women took to the streets in Eastern and Central Europe. This is particularly clear in the case of the Baltic countries or East Germany, but it is actually true of all these countries

The word nation, I realize, was hardly spoken during your hour-long speech, and that is what I and my group find most worrying. Was the European Community the model that these people were looking to when they rebelled? Very frankly, I do not think so. I think the motivations were love of country and love of fundamental freedoms. You said that the peoples had taken action in the East but are not taking action in the West. On that subject, I would agree with the very apposite comment that Mr Valéry Giscard d'Estaing made when he said that in the East the peoples were ahead of their leaders and he was afraid that the same could not be said of the West.

It is not a matter of being afraid of this, since it is a fact that we are facing the same problem in the West: there is a difference in priorities between the grass roots, the peoples, and the European Establishment, between the European peoples who are increasingly determined to preserve their identity, who see that their security is under threat, and an Establishment which refuses to acknowledge the existence of problems of this kind and continues to administer economic or diplomatic affairs according to the old Keynesian formulas of years ago.

On the subject of international relations, I was surprised that you had nothing to say in your speech about the great threat of the future hanging over the whole of Europe, which is of course Islamic fundamentalism. You said that the Mediterranean had often been a place of meetings. That is true and it is an excellent thing. But we must not forget that it has also been the scene of bloody conflicts. The example of Lebanon is there to remind us, although we forget it all too often in the European institutions. I am afraid we might make the same mistake as in the 19th century when everyone apart from a few people like Clemenceau failed to notice the rise of Bolshevism, or later when no-one noticed the rise of Hitler, apart from a few historians like Bainville. And now there is the danger of failure to understand the rise of a form of fundamentalism that poses an extremely dangerous threat to our security.

Nor was there anything in your speech about the attempts to regain power in Eastern Europe. Mr Jaruzelski, the military dictator, is still there in Poland. In Romania, as we know, power is in the hands of Mr Ceausescu's former friends. As for East Germany, Mr Gysi has never made any secret of his communist convictions. He recently tried to reinstate the security services in his country and saw fit to prevent the arrival on East German soil of one of the Members of our Parliament, and that after all was an insult to the European Parliament. I therefore see the international situation as extremely worrying. All these problems should have been dealt with in your presentation on international policy.

As for the decision-making process, you always say that the Community is going to do this, the Community is going to do that. My own impression is that the Romans were more modest than you, Mr President of the Commission, since they always said *Senatus populusque romanus*. The Senate and the Roman people. I think it would be preferable in future if it became European usage to speak of the Community and the nations jointly taking their decisions.

In what you had to say in your speech about institutional change, there was something very positive to which I wish to draw attention, namely reference to the principle of subsidiarity. You were right about that, Mr President of the Commission. I agree that it is not going to be possible to move Europe forward until such time as we have a clear division of areas of competence between the nations and the Community, based on application of the principle of subsidiarity. But that of course will entail revision of the Treaties. From this point of view, I think it would be a good idea for the intergovernmental conference not to limit its agenda to economic and monetary union but to address this problem of defining areas of competence as well.

On the subjects to which you paid particular attention, abolition of fiscal frontiers and free movement of persons, I would just say a word about the movement of persons. It is scandalous the way the European institutions have been dragging their feet over European rules on the right of asylum and immigration policy. There has never been any willingness to tackle the problem of immigration, although it is one of the most serious problems now facing the whole of Europe.

Democracy? A great deal needs to be done to restore democracy in Europe because as matters stand neither the Council nor the Commission, nor yet this Parliament is genuinely democratic. The Council because it represents States many of which have electoral systems that exclude whole sections of public opinion. The Commission because it is made up of unelected officials. And Parliament because it is dominated by two large political groups.

In conclusion, I should like to say that we are in danger of getting a century behindhand. It has to be seen that the national tide is rising, as has been demonstrated by the election result at Dreux and the demonstrations in

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Leipzig. History goes in cycles. The 18th century was universalist, and the 20th too, but I think the 21st will be the century of nations, and I believe, Mr President, that we need to blend the concepts of nationhood and liberty. Only by doing that can you build Europe on realistic foundations.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

PIQUET (CG). — (FR) Mr President of the Commission, I have only a few brief comments to make, since two of my colleagues will be asking you specific questions.

You said that the movement in Europe is a summons to the Community. That is absolutely right Mr President, but are the Commission and the Member States really answering this summons? To our East, the peoples are proclaiming their determination to take their destiny in hand, and we welcome that. But in responding to it, the Community must respect their right to choose, and in particular it must enable them to achieve real economic and social development along the lines that they themselves choose and define. That will be the criterion — and no other — according to which we are going to judge the activities of the newly set up bank. But already, it seems to me, we are hearing too many people in the Community, some of them in the Commission, who want to dictate to these countries how they should go about pursuing their development.

Turning now to internal Community affairs, Mr President, the peoples of our countries have fundamentally the same aspirations: assumption of responsibility for their own destinies and affirmation of their absolute sovereignty. In my view, far from meeting these aspirations, the drift into neo-liberalism in the Community is increasing the power over the economy enjoyed by the owners of capital and big business, and in too many cases it is their interests that would be served by the social measures of which you spoke, as I understand them, as becomes clear when they are examined in terms of their practical influence on the circumstances of workers. Top priority ought to be given to social development, both in view of the needs of our peoples, the workers, and because it is essential to economic development and control over its progress. Where are the measures that would give workers real participation in the making of economic and social decisions and strategy? How, for instance, is it possible to reconcile your call for a social Europe with such directives put out by the Commission as those on the statute for the European company, which would enable employers to take shelter from French or German legislation on works councils or worker participation?

So let us take care — and this is my conclusion, Mr President — to make sure that the disparity between words and action does not get any wider. The real lesson of the historic events we are witnessing is that peoples everywhere are determined to take charge of their own destinies. Without them, without the workers

of our countries, nothing of lasting value can be built in the Community or in each of our countries.

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (ARC). — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I wish briefly to make a few remarks about the Commission's statement. We shall anyway have plenty of time to discuss it in the February debate and there will be further debate within the committees and the groups.

First and foremost, the statement sounds optimistic. Mr Delors emphasized the Community's prosperity, he quoted figures such as increased production of more than 20% and the creation of 8.5 million new jobs. But what is happening with the growing Fourth World, the hundreds of thousands of people living on the edge of society in the very greatest poverty? Do we not have a real responsibility here too? Those 8.5 million new jobs seem very nice, but what interests me is how that increase is divided up between full-time and part-time jobs. For flexibility in the working process can create more insecurity.

Second aspect. Very much attention has been devoted to the recent events in the Eastern bloc. Certainly, measures must also be taken to raise the level of economic cooperation between East and West. We must ensure that the six East-bloc countries do not exchange their former subservience to the Soviet Union for economic dependence on the European Community. So the necessary aid to the Central European countries must not be at the expense of our own peripheral regions or our cooperation with Third World countries. On that I have not really learnt very much. As regards developments in the East-bloc countries, we also raise a number of security aspects. What about the neutral or non-aligned countries in Europe that belong to no alliance? Respect for that neutrality must be guaranteed and must serve as a guide for the development of a new and defensive security model.

Final aspect: the institutional framework. Mr Delors rightly broached the subject, on the one hand of the composition of the Executive, on the other of the lack of democratic control. The Council is still too powerful, while Parliament lacks legislative powers; this must be given attention. I feel there has been something of a let-up in the democratization process and that a whole step forward needs to be taken, namely the direct participation of the regions in the European Community's decision-making. It is inadmissible that you should soon be elaborating programmes, both social and regional, with no direct contribution from the regions. I hope to be able to return to this discussion in February, but then on a more extensive scale.

(Applause from the European Parliament's Rainbow Group)

PANNELLA (NI). — (FR) Mr President, Mr President of the Commission, in the criticisms we have heard and in the tone adopted today by the Socialist Group, much has been new and interesting. That said, Mr President of

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the Commission, I think we can be very forgiving of the Commission where we find deficiencies because — and I take it upon myself to make this point — there is heart and love in your approach to Europe. The same cannot be said of those who were criticizing you this morning.

And since love is a path to knowledge, let us take it. My first question, Mr President, has to do with your reference to the 'method of integration' and democracy. I think we would do well to make a very small adjustment to these terms. It is the method of democracy that we need to master, the objective envisaged being close to integration. And if we do not learn the method of democracy, I do not think it is going to be possible for us to leave non-democracy behind us and conceive a fully perfected form of democracy, a State and a society founded on the rule of law, as you too are fond of saying.

To my second point. Mr Giscard d'Estaing has just been speaking about this. I think there is a simplicity that we can learn, since thanks to your example the Commission is showing heart and working to put things into clearer perspective, as is plain for all to see.

Mr President, what you are proposing to us are ideas and research. In that case I would say to you that it is time the Commission started thinking about a constitution for Europe, as Mr Giscard d'Estaing was saying. But that constitution must come from Parliament, not from an intergovernmental conference. I think that is a choice you can make. It is a political choice. It is something that will really put the Council to the test.

I would like you to lose no time in saying that the Commission agrees. The treaty, the constitution, the draft, is something that Parliament must get on with, and very soon. The time for being sensible and cautious is past, and it is now time for action.

(Applause)

SALISCH (S). — *(DE)* Mr Presidents, ladies and gentlemen, It will be obvious to everyone by now that the Community is clearly neglecting social policy. Neither the political will of the Council of Ministers nor of the Commission has been enough to counteract this development. The European Parliament — and not least the Socialist Group — is fighting for a different dimension to the internal market that is of more than a purely mercantile nature.

The Commission's presentation of its work programme for 1990 is the start of a decisive phase in our discussion on the social aspects of the European process of integration. The Commission will have to come clean: either it wants to force through a social dimension to the internal market in cooperation with Parliament or it wants to hide behind the stubbornness of the Council of Ministers — who are always stubborn when it comes to social matters. If they choose the second alternative then they will have to reckon with a new opponent, i.e. Parliament.

In view of the breath-taking speed of historical development in Europe at the moment, the EEC is the obvious focal point for these developments, offering a model of voluntary regional confederation. The form of society that we have to offer is of the utmost importance. A balance of interests in the Community must include the safeguarding of basic social rights and the protection and creation of the right to self-determination at all levels and in all areas of society.

It is more than irritating to recall the disregard for social questions in the Community during the eighties. Sooner or later saturation point is reached. The hopes that working people placed in a social charter, in the Commission's action and work programme have been dashed. The social charter was full of fine words but in real terms is meaningless. At the moment, the social action programme offers nothing in the way of specific measures or timetable. The social part of the work programme may have the correct priorities, but not enough — as far as women are concerned, there are no changes at all!

Above all, there are no real practical details on how these measures can be implemented. We are being offered a new mirage of the social dimensions unless, Mr Delors, we can believe what you said last September and if you keep the promise you gave today of doing all in your power to put forward a legal basis for the legislation on social matters, which will allow decisions to be taken on the basis of a majority vote. This Parliament can no longer put up with discussing draft legislation when we know quite well that it will fail to overcome the barrier of the unanimous vote. My group is getting sick and tired of fulfilling this figleaf function.

(Applause from the left)

You should not be afraid of opposing the Council of Ministers. I know you are nervous of proceedings before the European Court of Justice. So what? That would separate the wheat from the chaff and the people of Europe would see who is really trying to deprive them of their social security. The outcome of the discussion on the social dimensions of the Treaties is still wide open.

I feel you have laid yourself open to criticism here. The Commission could have put this matter to the legal test long ago. It did not do so, it did not want to do so. If this were to change, who in this Parliament would not be pleased? If it should then be shown that the provisions we gained with the Single Act are not clear and precise enough to guarantee social progress then, but only then, do we need new contractual agreements.

We could mobilize the people to achieve this, but not for an obscure game of cat and mouse. Not until the Single Act proves to be inadequate will there be any convincing reasons for the approaching government conference to be given a mandate that goes beyond economic and monetary union. If the Commission refuses to face up to this problem in its 1990 work programme then it can no longer be Parliament's partner and will lose the confidence of Parliament.

SALISCH

The Socialist Group calls for directives on national minimum incomes, European regulation of the number of working hours, on protection against dismissal, on a ban on unprotected employment contracts, on compliance with local social and wage agreements, on the introduction of advisory committees in supra-national concerns, to name the most important measures we are calling for: They must be implemented on a legal basis that permits majority decisions. These are the elements of our concept of a social internal market. Of course, we are still open to discussion on this, but only as far as the timetable and the way these measures can be implemented. The measures themselves, President Delors, are not open to discussion.

(Applause from the left)

IODICE (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, the debate on the Commission's programme, enhanced by President Delors' speech, provides Parliament with an opportunity to reaffirm the political value of the building of the Community. By the single Act the twelve countries have shown their desire to move towards economic and monetary union, which now is more than a prospect because the first results are already evident, with the first steps towards the internal market, within a framework of economic and social cohesion.

The profound changes in Central and Eastern Europe, far from producing any slowing down or uncertainty, confirm once again the grounds for integration and point to new, special opportunities for collaboration between the Community and the Eastern countries that are on the road to freedom. And this year is truly decisive, both in terms of its own tasks in preparing for the 1993 deadline and in regard to the new responsibility for implementing this stage, with the absolute need to promote development and democracy in the rest of Europe. With President Delors, we have to acknowledge that the completion of the internal market, the aim of the area without frontiers and the opening to the East would produce possible and undoubtedly positive results if political cooperation in applying the Single Act fully could develop to the full its potential, which is today greatly increased.

Hence the need for a completely revised budgetary policy so far as financial appropriations are concerned, and the reform of the institutions, to enable the Community to make full use of its wealth of solidarity in the changes that are taking place.

In the meantime the Commission, albeit with allowance being made for the difficulties that are in its way, has a fundamental, irreplaceable role so far as the dismantling once and for all of the barriers between the various economies is concerned. In this connection all its power is needed in order to check, as the President has declared his readiness to do, the harmonization between Member States during the stage of preparing for the single market. In this Parliament will collaborate, with proposals and criticisms, so that integration can take place in accordance with the overriding need for balance

between weak and strong areas, and as a guarantee for the social area within the Community, so as to make it, as he said, more resolute and stronger in the exercise of extra-Community solidarity.

Parliament has supplied a decisive impetus for a Community foreign policy, for new powers and responsibilities in the field of foreign relations. It therefore hopes to be associated in this field in the immediate future, in accordance with the programmes that have now been set out, in accordance with the assent procedures. In this transitional stage, history calls with firmness and determination on the Community to strengthen all its institutional bodies, the better to respond to the pressing needs of Europe as a whole.

(Applause)

CALVO ORTEGA (LDR). — *(ES)* Mr President, I should like to make the briefest possible reference to essential aspects of the work programme we are debating. The principle of competition requires both the free movement of funds and the right of freedom of establishment, otherwise there can be no full and effective reallocation of funds. New procedures for the control of national aids and probably for an improved definition of those aids are also appropriate in view of the increasing subtlety of techniques and the increased number of authorities granting them.

But Europe does not consist merely of internal competition and external competitiveness; it also entails social cohesion, an objective which we have not sufficiently achieved and on which the Commission's programme seems to us scanty and limited. And it must also be a new society with greater participation, so that the people play a greater part in sharing responsibilities and decision-making powers. To achieve this greater participation in all planning, whether at the level of the company, the professions or the workforce, the Community must make greater progress in the great social budgets of the present day: quality and availability of education, more up-to-date vocational training to meet the requirements of the labour market, preferential financial treatment for those willing to accept economic responsibility for themselves, techniques for showing young people how to create employment for themselves, and so on. In brief, there must be progress in the political, legal and economic machinery allowing citizens a greater say in their own future.

Europe must be a medium for discipline and competitiveness, but it must also be a blueprint for sensitivity to those who are not competitive, that is, to persons and groups who, for reasons beyond their control, are unable to compete. Otherwise we shall be creating, rather than a Community proper, a conglomeration of countries and interests. It is clear that we have machinery for solidarity and it is also clear that in his speech the President of the Commission showed a sensitivity which we did not find in his document. But it

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is doubtful whether those policies for solidarity are any more than a mere token as compared with the enormous needs of peoples and regions.

JEPSEN (ED). — (DK) Mr President, the Commission's dynamism is not the only thing to find expression in the Commission President's incredibly committed presentation of the work programme. It emerges also from the content of the work programme that 1990 is viewed as a year decisive in many ways for the EC and for developments in Europe, indeed in the whole world. The democratic progress taking place now in Eastern Europe calls for a response from the EC, but the EC itself needs to be strengthened if it is to cope with the task of supporting and managing developments in those countries. We need to have our mutual economic and political relations strengthened in order to constitute the authority required so as really to acquire influence over the future shape of Eastern Europe. The tender shoots of democracy it has been possible to create are now dependent on our ability to give them the nourishment needed for survival and growth. The Commission President has even said that we must act more rapidly than is perhaps our custom. This applies to ourselves, thus within the EC, it applies to our relationship to Eastern Europe and it also applies to EFTA.

So I do not wish to miss this opportunity of urging the Commission to put forward as quickly as possible the proposal for a negotiating brief in respect of the EFTA countries. EFTA is a very important part of our outward cooperation and agreements with EFTA are also significant for our future agreements with the countries of Eastern Europe.

Good and substantial agreements must be concluded with EFTA. But there must be no doubt about the fact that they are third countries and cannot gain influence over decisions before they are members of the EC. The aim must therefore be that these countries become full members of the Community. For me there is no doubt that the present international détente must make membership easier even for EFTA countries that, for considerations of neutrality, were unable to join but which otherwise are very well equipped for EC membership.

Finally, the Commission President is very attached to the idea of setting up an environmental agency. I can assure him that location of such an agency in Denmark would provide the best possible conditions for a smoothly functioning EC institution. Denmark has the expertise, thanks to a tradition of many years regarding environmental legislation; just as important, we have the requisite network to form the foundations needed for such an agency's existence.

CHABERT (RDE). — (FR) Mr President, our group is struck by the contrast, to which you drew attention, between the rate at which we in the West are building Europe and the explosion of pressure for democracy in virtually all the East European countries, whose nations

have reclaimed their identity and their freedom in a matter of months, although it has to be admitted that their hold on them is as yet tenuous, it would seem.

The situation is full of hope, but not without danger. This is an added reason for the promptest action to develop a new European architecture, since if we fail to do this we run the risk that the Europe of nations will revert to being the Europe of nationalisms, a threat to peace and security. If we want to maintain the balance in Europe while at the same time offering a practical framework for new forms of financial, economic and cultural cooperation with the East European countries, we must proceed apace with unification of our countries in all areas, especially monetary union. Additional resources to accompany a European external policy are also essential in our view.

Our group is amenable to the idea of carrying out a study on a programme to be sustained over a long period, as long as this is done more coherently. Anticipating an increase in the proportion of our countries' collective gross domestic product for the purpose of implementing such a policy does not seem unreasonable to us, but on condition, once again, that more careful thought is given to the legal base for the cooperation agreements to be 'revisited', as you put it, and proper parliamentary control can be exercised over the content and application of these agreements. We do feel that a European initiative would be far preferable to strictly bilateral agreements, which would be conducive to damaging competition between our States.

In an altogether different register, Mr President, may I comment on a specific point in the Commission's work programme for 1990? Given the time available to me, it will have to be the only point. Our group is disappointed by the weakness of the part of the programme concerning the European rail network. Developing a modern, efficient, reliable and non-polluting infrastructure of the TGV type to facilitate exchange between people living everywhere in our Community ought to be one of the main planks of the European programme for the years ahead.

PRESIDENT. — Pursuant to Rule 104(1) I now propose that we close the debate.

(Parliament agreed to the proposal)

*(The sitting was suspended at 12 noon and resumed at 3 p.m.)*¹

¹ *Formal sitting — Presentation of the Sakharov Prize to Alexander Dubcek: see Annex.*

IN THE CHAIR: SIR FRED CATHERWOOD

Vice-President

EWING (ARC). — I gave notice of this point of order on the allocation of speaking time. It is obviously difficult for all groups, but in small groups it is particularly difficult. We were allotted a certain number of minutes. We agreed with the other groups that five of our precious minutes should go to the debate following the Commission statement. As you are aware, that debate was cut short while there were still 16 speakers on the list, by a vote of Parliament called without any warning or consultation with the groups. Hence our Mr Christensen, a Danish Member, who sat all morning waiting to speak, was not called although we still had two and a half minutes left.

My suggestion is that if a debate is cut short without any real consultation the speaking time allotted to a group for that debate should be carried over to some other debate.

PRESIDENT. — Mrs Ewing, what I would suggest is that we have a look to see if there is a topic on which you can speak later in view of the fact that you devoted so much of your speaking time to that one debate and lost it. On the other hand, I must point out to you that nobody can guarantee it, so all you can hope for, I think, is the goodwill of the Chair.

The fact of the matter is that a lot of people lost their speaking time, but maybe not quite such a high proportion of it as you did.

COT (S). — (FR) Mr President, like Mrs Ewing, but from a slightly different angle, I wish to comment on the end of our debate this morning, which we voted to close. I appreciate the reasons for this, since this afternoon we have Vice-President Andriessen's statement on the programme for Eastern Europe and an important debate, and at midday we had to attend the presentation of the Sakharov Prize to Mr Dubcek.

I am therefore not disputing the change in the situation, but have to say that when we voted on closing the debate, which we considered necessary, I had understood, along with my group, that President Delors was going to reply, which was absolutely necessary since we, as I imagine you remember, had asked a number of specific questions. It was important to get replies from the Commission to inform the deliberations of our political groups and the parliamentary committees, which are now going to examine the Commission's work programme so that we can complete our deliberations, come to conclusions and vote our resolution at our February part-session.

We now find ourselves in a politically embarrassing position, both we and the Commission, since we are not in possession of those elements that we need in order to continue our political debate. President Delors was available this morning but is not this afternoon, and I can think of no solution, since replies to these questions

obviously have to come from the President of the Commission. But I have to say that this makes matters extremely difficult for me, and for the whole of my group. I am clear in my mind, along with all our colleagues, as to how we are going to have to carry on from this morning's debate in the absence of answers to various questions. The deliberations we are going to have, both in the groups and in the committees, are going to be provisional and incomplete, as it were, since they will not have been informed by answers from President Delors on behalf of the Commission.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Cot, your comments will be passed on to the Commission. I have no doubt that the enlarged Bureau, in looking at the next part-session, will try to ensure that the Commission is in a position to reply to all the questions that we have asked in this part-session. Although as you say, President Delors is not here, that message will certainly be passed on to him.

3. *Commission statement on Eastern Europe*

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the statement by the Commission of the European Communities on Eastern Europe.

ANDRIESEN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (NL) Mr President, Mr Dubcek, who is today present in this House to receive the Sakharov Prize, is a living example of the courage and perseverance shown by the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe to set in train a process of democratization and it is also an indication of the role the Community can play in supporting the peaceful transition of these countries to systems of government and democracy based on political and economic freedom. During my recent visit to Prague, Sofia and Bucarest, where I had talks at the highest existing political levels as also with the democratic forces of the opposition, which will no doubt form the government of tomorrow, I was deeply impressed by the speed at which changes are taking place and by the profound desire of my partners in discussion for their countries to play a greater part in developments in Europe and in the open international economic system. The democratic forces opposing the present governments generally want more time to get themselves organized. They want better access to the media. They want adequate funds from sources in their respective countries. These forces sometimes expressed their concern about whether elections will be honest. They sometimes brought up the question of international supervision. If formal requests should be forthcoming on these points, the European Community's institutions, the European Parliament in particular, ought to be ready to make an appropriate response.

At this decisive moment in Europe's history, the Community must show its solidarity with these countries. Most of COMECON's members believe that COMECON does not afford a usable framework for trade and cooperation. During the COMECON meet-

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ing in Sofia on 9 January, the general preference seemed to be for a fundamental restructuring of the organization, with all unequal conditions concerning trade with the USSR being abolished and with each country being allowed to arrange its trade relations bilaterally on the basis of comparative advantages and normal competition. In view of these wishes, resources must be generated so as to link up our neighbour countries in Central and Eastern Europe with the broader network which the Community and EFTA are now trying to develop. A first step in this context is constituted by the set of trade and cooperation agreements about which we are now completing or else just starting negotiations. As soon as the first generation of agreements has been fully completed, the Community should make a positive response to the desire shown for closer ties with the Community in the form of an association. Commission President Delors has already spoken about that this morning.

Association agreements with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe should contain all elements relating to trade, cooperation and financial assistance, attuned to each country's needs and possibilities and its progress along the road to an open political and economic system. As regards trade relations, such agreements should be oriented to the realization of free trade when the conditions for this are fulfilled. As democracy and economic freedom take root, these agreements can be implemented in a flexible manner as is already the case with the accelerated dismantling of quantitative restrictions in respect of Poland and Hungary. The Community, its neighbour countries and all States that share its fundamental values have a joint interest in ensuring that the reforms in Eastern Europe not only do not fail but are indeed a real success. Well, that calls for further financial efforts by the Community to support the economic restructuring in Central and Eastern Europe. It has in fact turned out that, for instance in the case of Poland and Hungary, the European Community's financing works as a catalyst for the provision of contributions from other sources, so you could say that an extra cumulative effect occurs. In the Commission's opinion, the Community must provide itself with suitable multiyear budgetary instruments so as to be able to respond adequately to the needs and requests of its neighbour countries. The Community already has a set of flexible instruments that can contribute to stabilization and reform, the European Investment Bank will in the next three years finance investments in Poland and Hungary amounting to no less than ECU 1 billion with 200 million coming from the ECSC. Hungary is receiving an adjustment loan of ECU 1 billion. The European Parliament plays a key role in the assurance of the financing of the Community's contribution to the coordinated assistance to Poland and Hungary in the amount of ECU 300 million. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Foundation for Vocational Training and the university exchange programme will also make contributions. However, with a view to the new requests for support from our partners in Central and

Eastern Europe, these instruments need to be reinforced and, in areas such as export credits and promotion and protection of investments, new Community policy instruments need to be developed.

Mr President, the winter has begun and the Community needs quickly to be ready to respond to urgent requests from Poland and Romania for food aid. Such aid can alleviate immediate needs and also contributes to restructuring inasmuch as it releases funds for investment. Within the Group of 24, requests from the Czechoslovakian, Bulgarian and Romanian authorities for expansion of coordinated aid to their countries should be given favourable consideration. In accordance with the statement made by the Ministers of the Group of 24 on 13 December last, the Commission will propose schemes for closer cooperation to ensure that the efforts made by the 24 in the countries concerned are fully effective. Extension of the activity of the 24 to other countries in Eastern Europe makes coordination all the more essential. Greater coordination will also be required of the Community in the context of the Helsinki process. Mr President, all this means a very heavy agenda for the European Community in the coming weeks and months, an agenda in respect of which, certainly when it comes to elaborating association agreements, the Commission will gladly involve the European Parliament to the full. We are in a good position to help put an end to the division of Europe. We are in a good position to assist our neighbour countries in their efforts to institute systems based on fundamental values to which we are all attached and which have made such an essential contribution to the positive developments here in Western Europe. I can only hope, Mr President, that the Parliament, Commission and Council will together be able to respond swiftly, effectively and, if necessary, abundantly to this new challenge.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — Thank you, Mr Andriessen, I am glad your voice held up and we hope you will be better soon.

JENSEN (S). — *(DK)* Mr President, I think it is right that we follow the principle that it is Europe that first and foremost helps Europe, and I should like to wish the Commissioner success with the work he has taken upon himself. I also hope of course that the Commissioner will enjoy good health when he performs the work that has been laid upon the Commission's shoulders.

I believe we should be quite certain about what conditions the Commission lays down for the agreements entered into with the countries of Eastern Europe. There is some confusion. From certain persons in the Commission we learn that countries will receive help only if they develop a completely free market economy: others in the Commission say this is not a requirement. When we concluded framework agreements with COMECON, we did so with communist countries and with the intention that they should be able to get help from us even if they continued to have a highly regulated

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national economy. That is one point that I should like to have cleared up.

Next, I must say thank you for the nice words about the Commission gladly cooperating with Parliament, but we should like to know exactly how the European Parliament can be involved in discussions on the new agreements and also on new forms of association with countries in Central and Eastern Europe. I think it important there should be an open debate on these matters, not least out of consideration for the people in the countries of Eastern Europe, who will have to live with the new agreements.

In connection with your journey, it has been suggested in the last week that it was easier to help some countries that did not really need help than to inform Members of the European Parliament or the West European public that no help would be given. I think it important that the Commission should dare quite openly to say that there are cases where warm blankets are not needed and cases where there is need for help. That they should dare say this to the European public and the European Parliament.

You also spoke of conditions for election campaigns. I believe there is reason for us to be very concerned about those groups that were formerly in opposition and that are still in that position to a certain extent today, and that we should ensure they enjoy reasonable conditions for participating in the elections shortly to take place in Central and Eastern Europe. We must also help with the introduction of parliamentarianism into countries of Eastern Europe and help individual parliaments, both in our national parliaments and in the European Parliament. There is for instance work ahead in the drawing up of electoral laws and observing the elections. I should like to know, Mr Commissioner, if you have any proposals for how we, as the European Parliament, can go in and help in this respect. The whole point is to ensure properly conducted elections in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

HABSBURG (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, I would particularly like to thank the Commissioner for his statement, while at the same time I would like to comment on a few points that are not entirely clear.

I understood the Commissioner to say that the democratic parties will raise election campaign funds within their own countries. Mr Commissioner, you know very well that the democratic parties have no money at all, as assets worth thousands of millions were stolen by the communists. If we fail to ensure that there is financial balance between the political parties these elections will be a farce, irrespective of any new election laws, as there is such a huge degree of imbalance as far as financing is concerned.

The following point must also not be forgotten: for forty years, even before the association was set up, COMECON has totally falsified economic structures in Central and Eastern Europe. It will not be possible to reverse this process overnight. At the present time 50%

of Hungarian exports go to the Soviet Union, whereas forty years ago this figure was less than 5%. These figures clearly demonstrate that a restructuring process has taken place that must be stopped.

Mr Commissioner, you made no mention of the possibility of Community membership for the GDR in the future. There are two concepts that are mutually exclusive: GDR and democracy. If the people of East Germany are given the free vote this will lead to German reunification. If this does not happen, the GDR will survive as a separate State. Finally, I would point out that there is a genuine crisis of confidence between this Parliament and the Commission. The way the Commission behaved over the trade agreement with the Soviet Union was not the best way of restoring this confidence. I seriously urge the Commission to bear in mind the responsibilities it has towards Parliament. If confidence is to be restored then the Commission will have to be more accommodating to Parliament than it has been up to now.

(Applause from the centre)

DE GLERCQ (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, Mr Commissioner, we listened to your statement with excitement and I think I can say that we can of course readily agree with the broad lines of it. I have already concentrated my exposition on relations between the European Community and Central and Eastern Europe — that was yesterday, in connection with the Irish presidency's statement. So I shall not repeat what I said then, though I should like to refer *inter alia* to two matters I touched on at that time.

1990, which has just begun, will require a special, extra effort from the European Community. Both to achieve our first priority, namely the completion of the internal market and the further monetary, economic and political integration of the European Communities, and to manifest our involvement with what is happening in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. We noted that Vice-President Andriessen insisted that the existing network of trade and cooperation agreements with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe be further extended and added to, if possible through certain forms of association. We fully concur with this viewpoint.

I think we are also agreed that no uniform blueprint can be drawn up for our policy regarding Central and Eastern Europe. Such a dirigistic notion must be rejected, for the citizens of the communist countries are hostile to any form of centralized planning. Moreover, the situation differs in all those countries, both economically and politically. It differs so greatly that, for each one of them, specially adapted economic, technological and financial aid is needed. We must therefore — and I hope we are agreed on this — aim at a Community policy and a differentiated policy as regards our relations with Central and Eastern Europe. A policy that is continually adjusted to the specific needs and expectations of the people in those countries. To be able

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to meet those specific needs, we must of course adopt a flexible attitude, provide for the necessary policy instruments and set aside the necessary budgetary resources, also the necessary supplementary budgetary resources.

In conclusion I should like to give one example. Romania is not alone, but Romania is an urgent case. Now that the Romanians have fortunately found the road back to political freedom and economic liberation, we have to help them and their pressing needs must be alleviated. Even though food aid was quickly organized within the Member States, that country still has an enormous shortage of primary foodstuffs, particularly meat, cereals, vegetable oil, butter, rice, milk powder, tinned meat, baby food. Aid must be given urgently, either donated or provided on preferential terms: on credit or at low interest rates. I wish to strongly urge the Commission to take the requisite measures before the end of this month, including the despatch, in one of the forms just mentioned, of 30, 40 or 50 thousand tonnes of meat. It is through concrete acts, Mr President, that we shall show our solidarity and show that our policy for economic and political stability in Central and Eastern Europe is seriously meant.

(Applause)

MOORHOUSE (ED). — Mr President, I am going to limit myself to the economic aspects of cooperation with the countries of Eastern Europe since political cooperation was a main theme of the debate yesterday on the programme of the Irish presidency.

First, since I am sure I am thought to be a critic of the Commission in this area, let me thank Commissioner Andriessen for volunteering his statement today and for the magnificent effort of the Commission in putting together the G24 crash programme of economic assistance to Poland and Hungary. This House has from the very beginning been more than ready to support the Commission's proposals. But it has also to be said that many of us feel we are being unduly rushed into a decision about, for instance, the proposed medium-term financial assistance programme for Hungary. No doubt there is ample justification for the Commission's proposal but it should not be assumed by the Commission that on a future occasion we would be prepared to grant its every wish. We reserve the right to keep a close eye on the performance of the Commission and on the recipients and to call for regular and meaningful reports.

Mr President, there is concern in my group and elsewhere that Council officials are inclined to be contemptuous, to put it mildly, and to treat us as a rubber stamp for these activities and many others. I have reason to believe that it has not passed unnoticed by the Council of Ministers itself. However, the immediate task — and here I take up the point made by Mr von Habsburg — is for the Commission to re-establish its credentials in this field with the Parliament since, manifestly, the bond of trust we used to enjoy

under previous Commissioners has been seriously put at risk. I can also say that to some extent one is very much reassured by the Commissioner's statement today.

AGLIETTA (V). — *(IT)* Mr President, Mr Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, I think that the events and developments that are taking place in Eastern Europe emphasize to our Community, to all of us and to our Parliament, the need for an answer to the questions reaching us from these countries, to the hopes that have been and are being expressed with these changes, and to the risks that certainly exist along this new road, which are there for us all to see.

And if what these countries are looking for, their fundamental wish, can be summed up in the hope expressed by President Dubcek in this Chamber this morning — the hope of being able to find, together, the best solutions for the future of Europe, a Europe with the will and ability to tackle and overcome the new and old problems of disparity, inequality and discrimination, with respect above all for human and political rights and with attention to the problems of hunger, health and the deterioration of environmental resources — it is true, on the other hand, that the Community's answer must also, if not before all else, be political, and it cannot be limited simply to the provision of aid or purely economic assistance, without running the risk of exposing itself to the temptation to make, and the danger of making, these countries the economic periphery of Western Europe, exporting to them a pattern of development of production, consumption and living which has shown itself in our own countries to have severe limitations.

In the resolution presented by our Group we are trying to provide food for thought along these lines, and also to indicate a few areas of joint East-West initiative and attention, for cooperation with these countries: economic cooperation, of course, but cooperation that is designed also to strengthen a process of cultural integration, dialogue and exchange of information that can provide real support for the democratic processes that are taking place, whilst fully respecting the independence of these peoples. With regard to Romania, for example, I learned when talking with people who had been to Romania and had contacts there, that there was a great demand for information material, books, newspapers — anything that could help one's thinking about democracy and what its mechanisms are — in addition, of course, to food and medical aid. I think, moreover, that the health situation is at present in a very bad way.

Without wishing to summarize here all the points in our resolution I will only emphasize, on the one hand, something that now seems to me to be accepted, which is the need for a new conference on European security and cooperation, as an instrument for the re-design and construction of what is called the 'Common European Home'. But there is also the need to devise a permanent link between the freely elected Parliaments, as a stable instrument of collaboration and parliamentary political

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exchange. We also believe that there is one field in which, from now on, research and action can be on a joint basis, and that is the field of ecological and social rehabilitation, which certainly cannot be tackled within the narrow borders of individual Member States, but must increasingly be a matter for supranational initiatives and commitment. I think, therefore, and I will limit what I have to say to these few points for consideration, that events in the East require us to speed up the process of democratization of our institutions, without which any possible development of Europe in the direction of a federation of peoples, races and regions must be excluded. We believe that the concept of a federalist Europe can and must be the road to follow as an alternative to the old pattern of military blocs, or the nationalistic illusions of the national States or the races with which they are identified.

We consider that, above all else, it is the duty of our Parliament to provide the driving force along these lines.

NAPOLITANO (GUE). — (IT) Mr Commissioner, the subject that we are again discussing is one that commits and concerns every one of us. I must tell you that we are also concerned, Mr Andriessen, about a certain approach that still falls far short of what is urgently needed.

I do not intend to dwell now on the big political problem, to which President Delors referred this morning, of the wider institutional framework which should be the setting for new economic cooperation between East and West, namely the problem of the development of the Helsinki process, the problem of the development of our integration process in the Europe of the Twelve and the development of new forms of association between our Community and the Central and Eastern European countries.

I would like, instead, to say a few words on the more specific problem regarding the instruments for economic cooperation with the Eastern European countries and, above all, the problem of resources.

With regard to these instruments, new ones have been created or announced, which is something that is very important — the new European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and a Foundation for vocational training. These are nevertheless decisions and ideas that must be further clarified and given concrete form. And in the meantime I would ask you, Mr Andriessen — I have not quite understood how things stand — whether the Group of Twenty-four coordinated by the European Commission has or has not already decided to extend its commitment on Poland and Hungary to include the other Central and Eastern European countries.

But the most thorny and most worrying aspect is undoubtedly the question of resources. This morning, Mr Giscard d'Estaing stigmatized — and, I think, rightly — as 'derisory', the figure of ECU 300 million which the Community work programme indicated as being the Community budget allocation. Now you,

Mr Andriessen, referred to the figures relating to other commitments already entered into, and the catalysing effect that Community decisions can have. But we feel and emphasize the need for a considerable improvement where the mobilization of financial resources in the Community budget is concerned. It might, perhaps, be necessary to start — and I would suggest that the Commission consider the possibility of undertaking this task — with the quantification of all the commitments that are being entered into *vis-à-vis* the Central and Eastern European countries — including those at a national level — by the Member States of the Community. So far as Italy is concerned, we have proposed that there should be an *ad hoc* fund for cooperation between Italy and the Eastern countries, not least because we should not like resources to be diverted to cooperation with the Eastern countries and deducted from cooperation with the countries of the South. In the Italian parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs the Italian Foreign Minister proposed, — Mr Andriessen, pay attention for one moment! — in order to avoid our giving to the East by taking away from the South, that the resources to be allocated altogether to the East and the South be raised to 1 per cent of the gross national product of the Member States of the Community. I think that this is the line we should be following in regard to the mobilization of financial resources, which is indispensable if we are to translate into concrete action the guidelines that we are now adopting.

LANE (RDE). — Mr President, it was refreshing to listen to President Dubcek this morning. Twenty years ago he was considered by the then authorities in Eastern Europe to be a traitor.

Most people welcome the initiatives taken by Mr Gorbachev over the last few years. Few of us, however, could have anticipated the follow-on to these moves in Eastern Europe. For over forty years Eastern European countries, most of whom experienced freedom and democracy for centuries, found themselves oppressed under the Communist totalitarian system, while those of us on the outside deplored and condemned this system. People power was able to overthrow the hardliners who operated the system. I would now like to make three points. Firstly, having visited Eastern Europe a decade ago and following a return visit to East Germany last week, during which I met opposition spokespersons from Eastern Germany, and subsequently here in Parliament yesterday from Estonia, I am convinced that the European Community has a moral obligation to help our fellow Europeans in the East. We must insist of course that opposition parties have a free hand in the forthcoming elections. In East Germany, for instance, the parties under the banner of New Forum do not enjoy all the freedom required to fight an election, especially as regards fund-raising and newspaper publishing. We in the West must give moral and practical support where possible to these opposition parties.

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Secondly, after many years of collective farming, the system has been a total failure. A move to private ownership has already been initiated, but this will not come easily. The ravages of the Communist collective farming system will take many years to repair. These countries must immediately embark upon a programme of research, development and extension services. The farmers themselves must be helped to use their own initiative to increase productivity. I compliment Commissioner Ray Mac Sharry on his initiative on behalf of the Commission in Poland last week. I propose that the ECU 1.8 million saved in the agricultural budget in 1989 be used to promote agricultural initiatives in Eastern Europe in 1990.

My final point is that the Bank for Reconstruction and Development has a major role to play in reconstructing industry, services and infrastructure. These funds should be used to foster a market-led economy. Private enterprise must be supported. I believe we must attach the above conditionality to our loans. There is no point in lending funds to regimes that change their leaders in order to placate opposition, but who do not change their fundamental policies.

SCHÖNHUBER (DR). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to comment on the political aspects which the Commissioner did not deal with in great detail.

Following recent dramatic events, Stalinism may have abdicated in Central and Eastern Europe, but communism has not. With the aid of the West, two statesmen have survived recent events in Eastern Europe: Gorbachev and Jaruzelski, both of whom were arch-communists until recently. Now they are both declared reformers, one in the Soviet Union, the other in Poland. They are the guardians of the new face of communism which has dug itself in both in the GDR and in many other Eastern bloc countries in its former position or — like the wolf in the fable — has eaten chalk in order to escape the justified anger of the people who have been groaning under the tyranny of the Communist yoke for years.

Even the European Parliament that has always been keen to condemn Latin American Fascists, was eager to shut its eyes to the tyranny on its own doorstep. The astonishing changes in Central and Eastern Europe have created a rash of 'turncoats' in West Europe too, some of whom can still be found in this House. May I remind you, ladies and gentlemen, of how Mr Klepsch, Christian Democrat that he is, spoke very approvingly of Ceaucescu in September 1988, although he would strongly deny this now. He reminds me of the shameless behaviour of leading West German politicians, who queued up in Leipzig to pay their respects to that arch political criminal Honecker. Even the socialist majority in this parliament did not remember the tortured people of Eastern Europe until they took to the barricades. Is their sympathy for socialism with a human face really so genuine?

The human face of this socialism will have to be more in evidence than it has been up to now. I have always been opposed to the view that the Germanic race is the saviour of the world. I am also sure, however, that Euro-socialism is not a universal remedy. Is the *perestroika* introduced by Mr Gorbachev and his friends enough to create sufficient confidence in Central and Eastern Europe that generous economic aid can be justified? I do not want to be misunderstood: we are in favour of immediate aid to overcome serious shortfalls in supplies for the population. It is our humanitarian duty to help! However, how is a contractual community between West Germany and the GDR to be realized if the East Berlin authorities prevent European parliamentarians from entering their country, thereby infringing the CSCE and other international agreements?

Before the West can grant effective economic aid, there must be a clear commitment to democracy, to free elections, to the rule of law and to a social market-led economy. Speaking as a German, there is only *one* solution to this problem — reunification now. Whether our friends like it or not, the spirit of Yalta must be overcome.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, we have listened carefully to Commissioner Andriessen's speech, which in its introduction at least, related the increasing depth of the development of economic aid from the Community to the political and economic conditions prevailing in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

To show interest in the real promotion of democratization procedures is right and acceptable to us all, but to regard those countries as satellites, as countries in which the Community will strive to exploit the power vacuum of international importance that has appeared would, I think, be very negative; an approach which would create mistrust in all the popular and youth movements which have contributed to the democratization of those countries, and reservations concerning their relations with their Western European neighbours. From this point of view I think the Commission should show great prudence and restraint in the way it intervenes in all those procedures, and should remain apart from matters which ought to constitute internal problems for each of those countries. That was my first point.

The second point I would like to raise is an important matter which the Commissioner did not mention, namely that there now exists a mechanism which is a residue of the cold war, and which creates a substantial obstacle to the development of relations between East and West: the Coordinating Committee, known to us as COCOM. Naturally, I would ask the Vice-President of the Commission to take up a position on this subject and not give us the same answer that we received from the Council's President-in-Office yesterday, namely that the European Community is not a member of

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COCOM. I think that since the European Community, in particular the Commission, are globally negotiating trade and economic relations between the Community and the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, it cannot ignore or fail to adopt a position, or even refer the matter of COCOM back to the Member States. I think it should adopt a clear position in line with the interests of our countries but also with the demands of industry and heavy industry in the Community, which is calling for direct restriction and substantial exemption from that body, whose very existence is now without purpose.

A third and final point I want to raise, is that there is now competition between the South and the East in relation both to Community and other finance, but mainly in relation to the investment of private capital. I think that various proposals exist, and Mr Napolitano mentioned some of them. It would be possible for no such competition to exist or be expressed, but I think what is important is for the Commission, in its contacts with Eastern and Central European countries, to pay particular attention to how it can contribute to ensuring that the Community's less developed countries can play a substantial role in the new perspectives for trade and economic relations that are opening up.

PIERMONT (ARC). — (DE) Mr President, as soon as this House starts discussing Eastern Europe, I am reminded of Kaiser Wilhelm's statement on the outbreak of the first world war: 'There are no political parties any more, only Germans'. This Parliament does not appear to recognize the existence of political parties any more and is lost in a flood of enthusiasm at the sight of an Eastern Europe that is economically ruined and disintegrating politically. The veil has been lifted: after forty years there is finally an opportunity of reacquiring these countries for capitalism. A striking example of this is the negotiating mandate for the Commission which was given a large majority by the European Parliament on Monday for medium-term financial aid for Hungary. It was made very clear that the main priority was to support Hungary's change of political direction. The Community's conditions are to be coordinated with those of the IMF and the World Bank. The loan is to be paid out in instalments, so that from time to time checks can be made to see if trainee Hungary has done all its homework properly and punctually.

I am sure that the growing numbers of Hungarian jobless registered by the authorities who will fall further and further below the poverty line as a result of rationalizations, factory closures, 'realistic' prices and subsidy cuts will be only too grateful to the EEC, IMF and World Bank. It was reported yesterday in *Le Monde* that Bulgaria, for example, is to be helped in the same way. And what is the result of all this? Countries with low wage rates, totally dependent on infusions from the Community and the IMF, right on our doorstep in Eastern Europe, with a claim to a common cultural heritage. Unfortunately, the countries of the third world

cannot compete with such advantages. Fears of being completely neglected are daily voiced in Africa.

But are the sorcerer's apprentices in the Commission, in the economies, governments and media of the Member States equally able to rid themselves of the spirits they may not have called up, but that they have encouraged with such enthusiasm? Those who have so readily welcomed all the demonstrations *there* for their implied or open anti-communist or anti-Soviet character are not really interested in liberating the population but in the territorial expansion of the Western economic system. Demonstrations *here* directed against their power are greeted at best with disregard or condemnation or even police brutality.

The answer must be no. André Fontaine, editor of *Le Monde*, sees in the former 'Eastern Bloc' the danger of national, civil and religious wars, of the revival of Stalinism, military dictatorships, a huge resurgence of extreme right-wing opinions, the questioning of present borders, illusions of expanded dominions. He is further concerned that the flames of these revolutionary fires will sooner or later spread to West Europe. Fontaine's only mistake is that he voices these fears solely for the future, whereas the questioning of present borders and illusions of expanded dominions have already occurred, in West Germany. The Republicans are openly calling for reunification within the borders of 1937 and the West German chancellor is not taking a clear stand on this for fear of losing votes, despite being urged to do so from many sides. Not only the Polish borders are being called into question, but also those of the USSR.

There are publishers such as the Karto + Grafik who issue maps setting out such claims. And airlines, such as the Berliner Flug Ring, have been prepared to distribute this material to their passengers. I would remind you of my resolution on this. But even a new reunification of the two German States within their present borders would realign powers in favour of German hegemony in West Europe or Europe as a whole, and bring illusions of expanded dominions closer to realization thanks to the strength of the D-Mark. Does the German right to self-determination give them a right to domination? No, for 'self-determination' is a weapon of colonized and dependent people against their suppressors. Neither West Germany nor the GDR is a colonized country.

Reunification or a new unification is only inevitable if we do not make this clear distinction, if we regard it as 'inevitable'. There is a movement in West Germany, supported by various shades of opinion, to set up a committee, possibly on a European level, against reunification. It is high time this was done.

Heinrich Heine wrote some 150 years ago: 'If my thoughts turn to Germany at night, I can no longer sleep'. When he wrote this he had already turned his back on Germany and was living in exile in France. His words are once again all too topical.

McCUBBIN (S). — Mr President, I should like to thank Mr Andriessen for his statement. If there is one thing we

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need, it is more immediate and accurate information of what is actually happening in Eastern Europe. I believe that the breathtaking speed of events in Eastern Europe has taken everyone by surprise. Just a matter of months ago, during my election campaign, I remember stating that my vision of Europe was of a Europe of neither east nor west. Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined the dramatic changes which have taken place. I do not subscribe to any theory that there was in some way a plan for these changes. What I do believe is that the clear and unequivocal message from President Gorbachev, through his domestic policy of *glasnost*, released forces that had been building up in Eastern Europe for years. We in the West have been caught on the hop with the speed of events and the very necessary role of the European Community in being able to respond on behalf of the majority of Western Europe has been a welcome illustration of the strength that comes from unity of purpose.

The fact that the European Parliament's delegation to Romania and Bulgaria has been constituted just this week further illustrates the way that events have been driving us along. Who would have believed in November that Romania and Bulgaria would change so dramatically or that the changes would come in such tragically different ways? I know it is the intention of the members of our parliamentary delegation to make up for lost time and to make all the essential links with the peoples of these countries in order that we may help them secure the freedoms that, in Romania in particular, they have paid so dearly for. In the case of Bulgaria, Mr Zhivkov just left office one day and the new administration took over. There can be little doubt that the old guard saw the writing on the wall and, in particular, that there would be no support from Moscow. Romania was a different case altogether. The Ceaucescus were never going to relinquish power voluntarily. Parliament must salute the courageous stand of those brave Romanians who stood up against the violence of the *Securitate*. Included among them is the general who refused to fire on the crowds in Timisoara and, as was the way under the Ceaucescus, he was officially claimed to be a victim of suicide. Both these countries need to be aware that aid will be conditional — as it always is with the European Community — on democratic progress and their record on human rights.

What we must remember, however, is that we are to some extent responsible for the situation in Eastern Europe. It has been all too easy for totalitarian regimes in the East to use the threat from the West as their excuse for repressive policies. If we wish to really help the East, we must continue to reduce tension by not modernizing our nuclear arsenal and by reducing military spending. This will create a mammoth problem for East and West, namely the conversion of defence industries to peaceful uses and the revision of COCOM. Today General Christo-Dobrev, the Bulgarian Chief of Staff, stated that within five years 85% of his country's military production would be converted to civilian use.

The aid we should be offering is a similar gesture and ought to reduce further the tension which has been mainly responsible for the Cold War and its consequences.

IN THE CHAIR: MR MARTIN

Vice-President

SCHLEE (DR). — (DE) Mr President, to correct the false impression given, I would like to make it clear to Parliament that what our colleague said on Germany's legal status contravenes the West German basic law, the agreements on Germany between the authorities that are solely responsible for Germany as well as current international law. It is essential to make it clear to Parliament that these statements have no legal basis and are completely false in their implications.

(Applause from the Technical Group of the European Right)

PRESIDENT. — You have now read that point into the record.

PENDERS (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, I feel obliged here to sound rather a contrary note. The Commission has been the object of quite some criticism today, so I should like to begin by heartily thanking the Commission for its work.

I think that, in the last months since the World Summit in Paris in July, extremely hard and inventive work has been done. In certain areas I believe the Commission has even performed brilliantly. The Commission has managed to put together packages varying from country to country and with a different balance of components; trade, cooperation, financial aid differentiated according to country and each time weighted differently. I find that tremendously smart and useful, because you are able to retain a sort of overall view and that coincides with that historic term: the second generation agreements, namely the forms of association. I presume that in each case those forms of association agreement will take Article 238 as their legal basis. I know a lot has been said in the past about the Luns/Westerterp procedure and about whether Parliament has been adequately informed. I presume that the new agreements, forms of association, will be based on Article 238, so that Parliament's approval will be needed. It is going to cost us all a lot of money, so be it, and I want to stress that it is sound to evaluate and check what is being done with the money. Not for reasons of accountancy but simply because we can see that various structures and bureaucracies are so deep-rooted in those countries, from sheer habit or a wish to sabotage or whatever, that it is not certain at all that the money will be properly spent. The money must be used for more than just meeting foreign debts. There is a need for investment, particularly, I hope, in training schemes.

PENDERS

I know there has been discussion in this Parliament about whether the European Parliament should make funds available to democratic parties in the countries of Eastern Europe to enable them firstly to organize themselves and, secondly, to hold elections. Those people know nothing and possess nothing. Now I do not care how exactly we do it, through a fund or not, from group to group or from Parliament to other bodies. For me that is not important. But, at all events, it must be done before the elections. There are some who say: we'll do it only after the elections. That is no use to those people: they need to be able to make photocopies *now*, they need to print their newspapers *now*, they need to put forward their programmes *now*. That is why I consider it important that it should be done *now*.

(Applause)

LAMASSOURE (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, apart from looking to us for food aid and financial, commercial and technical aid, the countries that have returned to the fold of free nations are going to ask us a much more redoubtable question: can we join your family? This means that, in our debates among ourselves, we can no longer avoid discussing the geographical limits of our Community and the architecture for Europe as a whole over the next twenty years.

There are three possible views on this. The first calls for a single organization encompassing the whole of Europe and the USSR. This is Mr Gorbachev's common home or President Mitterrand's confederation. This view ignores the fact that, in human history, the only thing that is irreversible is geography. Four-fifths not only of the USSR but of Russia itself is in Asia. That means that a common home with the USSR would not be European or that a European home including the Soviet Union is an impossibility.

The second view is implicit in much of what we hear from Members of this Parliament or spokesmen for our governments. I call it the fruit-picking approach. Being ripe fruit, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and so on can be expected to fall one after the other into the basket of our Community. Beware! When we meet men of the calibre of Alexander Dubcek, as we did this morning, or of a Lech Walesa, we should think before we speak to them. We should think before we lie to them.

Full membership of the federal union, the political union, that we want to build will not be possible for these countries for a long time, for reasons having to do with the backwardness of their economies, with the state of public opinion in our own countries, and with the interests of superpowers, which the USSR, even if it becomes democratic, will not fail to assert when the time comes. Hence the third approach, which incidentally seems compatible with what we heard this morning from President Delors, who spoke of revisiting, reviewing the association agreements.

Rather than the fruit-picking approach, let us propose another, which I shall call the transplantation approach. What we would propose to the countries with yearnings

for the model offered by the European Community would not be entry but creation of their own community, imitation of ours with their neighbours: establish your own Central European community, set up your own internal market of a respectable size immediately, instead of five small markets, create a common convertible currency immediately, learn to work together and rise above national chauvinisms, minority feuds, and false inevitabilities of history. We can help you to make speedy progress over twenty years along the road we have travelled, and then Europe will have not one but three homes: our federation of Western Europe, the Central European community, and the Soviet Union, which is going to have to work out its own form of federalism.

That is the kind of debate we should now be having, and then we should draw the necessary conclusions about organization of our system of aid and cooperation.

McMILLAN-SCOTT (ED). — Mr President, the European Community is giving and loaning billions of ecus but not one ecu to sustain democracy. Elections take place this year in five Eastern European countries. The earliest is on 25 March in Hungary. Neither the opposition nor their coordinating organizations have the resources to fight these elections. Today I received a telefax from Civic Forum in Prague, the organization which brought President Dubcek back to his seat. It asks the European Parliament to provide a range of essential equipment, I am passing this fax to our President.

The US Congress has a fund for democracy. The European Parliament must rise to the needs of the democratic process by creating its own fund. We can work out the details later. In the vote tomorrow night, all of us, from all parties, must demonstrate that we believe in the democracy people in the East have fought and died for. The European democracy fund is not an intergovernmental proposal it comes from parliamentarians to parliamentarians. It is essential if we are to help the democratic groups to get their message across to the electors.

(Applause)

NIANIAS (RDE). — (GR) Mr President, allow me once more to set out a few general ideas on the problems we are facing. As we know, the road towards democratization of the Eastern European countries is strewn not with rose petals, but with very many difficulties. Democratic procedures may indeed be established, but they will allow the powers that have held authority until now to remain predominant. It is easy to understand what I mean. The peoples of Eastern Europe are facing two problems, firstly the political and secondly the economic. And all our information, both official and unofficial, shows that the first of these, the political problem, must be solved urgently. That is everywhere the strategy of the new parties developing in those countries. However, the picture is not a happy one. They have no resources, nor the means to project and proclaim their political message, their ideas and their

NIANIAS

programmes. The picture is disappointing and dangerous for democracy. Consequently, we ourselves must reinforce the conditions for a correct and democratic presentation of political contrasts, so that the voice of all popular opinions may be heard and what the peoples want for their countries can be put into practice. The political problem is just as great as the economic one, and the Community therefore has a twofold duty, to support not just the economy but also democracy, according to the will of those peoples themselves. And in that connection I see no plans or activities. If our policy in the face of the effort those nations are making to restore democracy is neglected or fails, then our economic policy will most likely strengthen or pass into the hands of those who brought about the economic ruin of our brother European peoples. But I must now ask: do you see any clear model of an economic policy that we should adopt? I do not. Are we to have a common European policy, or will there be mixed bipartite reactions to the crisis in the East, the political and the economic crisis, with the result that the problems will grow worse? Consequently, I think it useful to point out that unless we establish a firm model of some all-European economic policy which we will all respect, this very desire of ours to support the Eastern nations may turn out to be fruitless and may perhaps even generate internal division within our own European unity.

PRESIDENT. — I have received 17 motions for resolutions with a request for an early vote to wind up the debate on Eastern Europe.¹

The vote on the request for an early vote will be taken at the end of this debate.

MUSCARDINI (NI). — *(IT)* Mr President, the people of Eastern Europe are today rediscovering freedom and, with political freedom, economic freedom also.

The Community must immediately lay down precise rules — a code of behaviour — to make it clear to everyone, whether European or not, that any economic colonization of the Eastern European countries — which, after the elimination of Soviet political subjection, would cause economic dependence — is unacceptable.

The European Parliament must promote any initiative designed to avoid the imposition of development patterns on the East, which would anyway do more harm than good.

Economic progress and industrial growth cannot disregard respect for the environment, which is the sole guarantee of life for future generations. Nor can any alteration of the cultural identity of the Eastern countries be accepted. Precise political commitments are necessary on the part of those who engage in the political life of the Eastern countries and, in exchange for our help, we must call for a free relationship with the

mass media, which is an irreplaceable instrument for dialogue with the population. President Dubcek himself did not talk today about communism, but about Stalinism.

We do not want to engage now — not least because of the short time at our disposal — in dialectic sophisms, but we would like to remind this Assembly that the communist totalitarian regimes have reduced the Eastern European countries to this situation, without its even being possible today to say that a situation of tranquillity and security has been reached.

That is why it is necessary, from the political standpoint, that we should be absolutely clear.

For this reason we, the Movimento sociale italiano, stress again, here also, the need for the reunification of Germany. Europe will only really exist when the German people are reunited, and when the Germans themselves learn also to respect those territories that are not German. We must look towards a united Germany, as also to free elections in all the Eastern European countries. What Gorbachev has called the 'Common Home' cannot have Grade A or Grade B tenants, only legitimate joint owners who must learn together to live, work and grow together.

(Applause from the benches of the Technical Group of the European Right).

DESAMA (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, Mr Commissioner, I wish to consider an aspect that has scarcely been touched upon so far, and that is the problem of the East European countries' foreign debt.

As you know, the East European countries' foreign debt stands at about US\$ 180 billion, which is clearly a very large sum. The situation is far from being as bad as in the Third World, but this debt is a very heavy burden to bear for countries facing the task of getting their economies off the ground and regenerating their growth.

There is no gainsaying the fact that solving the foreign debt problem is one of the key aspects of the financial aid arrangements that are going to have to be made for the East European countries. What we are worried about is not the disease itself so much as the identity of the physician that has yet again been put in charge of treating it. I refer of course to the International Monetary Fund. There are a lot of things that can be said about the IMF, not least that it has a monetarist approach which is gradually coming to be universally regarded as anachronistic and outmoded after so many failures, but it is also the IMF that has literally ravaged black Africa, it is also the IMF that, by setting unacceptable conditions, has progressively undermined the few democratic States in Central and South America. Do we really want to see a similar situation developing in Eastern Europe?

You might well say that I am taking an apocalyptic view. Far from it. You only have to look at what is happening now in Poland. It is admittedly the East

¹ See Minutes.

DESAMA

European country with the heaviest debt burden, but the people's spring has turned into the iciest of freezes in social conditions, which have deteriorated to an extent never before seen by the Polish people. Liberty must not become synonymous with poverty, or the fragile plant of democracy will not survive.

Clearly, it is not going to be easy to solve the debt problem. One cannot wave a wand and produce solutions. But we all know that there are alternatives to the IMF's solutions. It seems to me that instead of flanking the IMF's measures, in other words transferring the financial aid we are granting the East European countries to the coffers of private banks, the Commission should give thought to a new and original solution to the debt problem that we can tell it about, and then make the IMF come round to its way of thinking. What is the point of being the world's leading trading power and doubtless economic power as well if we are just a colossus with feet of clay, if we are incapable of making our voice heard by international institutions, some of which are admittedly hard of hearing?

That, Mr Commissioner, is what I had to say to you today in this debate on Eastern Europe. For all the political speeches about democracy, freedom and the future architecture of Europe, there are financial realities that can shatter dreams. One does not build democracy and freedom on the sand of a social desert.

JEPSEN (ED). — (DK) Mr President, aid to Eastern Europe is necessary. All — and I stress all — human beings recognize this necessity, and therefore everyone should be given the opportunity to make a personal contribution, big or small, to fellow-human beings who, after many years of subjugation, can now begin to breathe freely.

I would therefore propose that the Community issue a special charity stamp that can be stuck on letters and other correspondence and that would be sold through the national PTT offices of Member States. I would suggest that the stamps be sold for ECU 0.25 each, so that four could be bought for ECU 1. At all events, it is a sum of money such that everyone can participate, and for that reason everyone would wish to participate. The profits from such sales could suitably be used for training purposes and for measures to improve the environment, and in this way every citizen in Europe can take part in making a contribution to democracy and freedom for the East-European peoples. I hope these suggestions will be received with enthusiasm by both Commission and Parliament's Members so that this idea may receive a broad measure of support.

PIERROS (PPE). — (GR) Mr President, we must take it for granted that the Community's future physiognomy will depend greatly on its success in incorporating the Eastern European countries into a credible economic and political framework, based on the principles of free economy and the multi-party system. We must recognise that some important steps have been taken in that direction, particularly with the financial aid mentioned

by Mr Andriessen. However, I think it essential to make the following comments.

First, we should as soon as possible plan and put into practice enduring forms of technological, economic and entrepreneurial cooperation such that the progress of the Eastern European countries towards modernization becomes definitive and secure. Those countries have greater need of permanent structural changes and less of philanthropy. They need modern economic and political management, and less temporary relief.

Secondly, in the light of the Community's interest in Eastern Europe, we must review our financial contribution, not on the basis of micro-political criteria nor under the pressure exerted by the logic of financial discipline, but with the fundamental aim of contributing effectively to the reconstruction of the Eastern European countries. Our basic position is that our political and economic aspirations should determine the size of the Community's expenditure, and not the other way round.

Thirdly, in that context and at the same time, the Community's role in relation to the less developed Member States ought to be re-examined. The economic and political orientation of the Community towards Eastern Europe should under no circumstances act to the cost of economic and social cohesion. On the contrary, we must intensify our efforts and if needs be develop new and stronger compensatory programmes to the benefit of the Mediterranean Member States, within the framework of a quantitatively and qualitatively upgraded Mediterranean policy.

GUILLAUME (RDE). — (FR) Mr President, listening this morning to the part of the speech by the President of the Commission devoted to aid for Poland, I could not help noticing the discrepancy between words and action. Granted, the intentions are good and the amounts of money involved are not inconsiderable. But the methods and procedures used and the forms of action envisaged are ill-matched to the real needs.

The agricultural sector is an excellent example. I do not know whether the Polish authorities are satisfied with what the EEC is offering, but I am sure the Polish farmers are not. They are not protesting against the food aid, which is essential, but bad management has caused a slump in prices by disrupting the market, while at the same time the farmers' production costs have increased tenfold since 1 January. There is therefore a real disincentive to produce. Rural *Solidarnosc* is not asking for *ad hoc* aid but integrated agricultural development programmes covering the whole industry, from production to processing, including an agricultural bank and training for farmers.

The Polish farmers want to be treated as responsible partners, not as beneficiaries of handouts. This is not possible under the Community procedures, Mr Commissioner, or at least not yet.

My question is an inconvenient one, and I apologize for that, but I know there is no freedom without bread.

GUILLAUME

There is a direct link between the definitive establishment of freedom in Eastern Europe and the disappearance of queues of housewives outside food shops. A policy wedding support for the development of Polish farming to Community food aid is absolutely necessary. And the Community agricultural policy must shed its inflexibility. Is it not obvious that the European policy on reducing production and set-aside needs to be suspended for a year or two — I am not saying it needs to be changed — until the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Romanians and the rest are capable of producing enough bread to feed their peoples?

Yesterday morning the Irish Presidency quoted Lincoln's saying that a new situation called for new ideas and action. Mr President, I look forward to the realization of this fine ambition, this fine resolution.

PANNELLA (NI). — (FR) Mr President, I am not going to pretend to be addressing the Commission. What I have to say is for Parliament. The Community, largely because of the position adopted by Parliament, was responsible for the enormous, painful and perhaps tragic failure in Yugoslavia. When we pretended to believe what we knew was false in the case of our countries, that political and economic markets are possible to live in and viable in this age, we said with calculated hypocrisy to Yugoslavia: 'but of course, stay non-aligned, stay independent'.

The Yugoslav government was an example, in Europe, of harsh antiworker severity. It did what the World Bank told it to do, it did what we told it to do. The result is bankruptcy, and we stand accused. Mr Guillaume, do you really believe that the farmers in Eastern and Central Europe need aid for their agriculture? For decades I have heard you say that it was aid to agriculture that had driven the farmers off the land! The problem is really elsewhere.

The problem is whether this country is a State founded on the rule of law, even the rule of economic law. That is what the State needs. If our financial aid is *ad hoc* and humanitarian, that is well and good, but if we aid national democratic States holding out no viable prospect of having a market economy, of establishing the rule of law, States with two or more ethnic groups, with all the friction that brings, we are going to precipitate destabilization of those States, in some cases worse than what we have seen in Yugoslavia. Eastern Europe needs States and societies founded on the rule of law, with penal codes built around respect.

But since we are already finding it so difficult to live in our real democracy — you have only to watch the spectacle offered by the Presidency of our Parliament, not the Presidencies of sittings, to watch how the groups are commanded in this House, with no scope for Members to represent their consciences and their votes, but just the ideologies of faceless bureaucrats, not even living ideologies — if that is the situation, I do not think we are in any position to take it out on the Commission. At best it can only provide decent humanitarian aid here

and there, whereas the historic problem, the tragic problem, is how to save Yugoslavia from bankruptcy when Eastern and Central Europe are crying out for freedom, modernity and democracy, Mr President, and that means certainty as to the law and then well-being.

CÁMARA MARTÍNEZ (S). — (ES) Mr President, Mr Vice-President of the Commission, ladies and gentlemen, I listened with close attention to Mr Andriessen's statement and I take careful note of the results of his visit and the conclusions of his report. Nevertheless, I think it is very important that certain ideas and anxieties should be placed on record, in particular about one of the three countries visited: Romania.

I must make it clear that of all the countries of the East which are entering upon a profound institutional and social crisis, Romania is the last so far to get rid of an iron dictatorship and is the one which has had the bloodiest revolution with the greatest violation of human rights; it is the country which needs the most institutional, technical and economic support because of its historic isolation. It is also the country with the least clear view of its democratic future and is finding it most difficult — with a poorly organized opposition — to prepare for a multi-party election in the near future.

So it seems important that we in this Parliament, a singularly democratic forum and the temple of free speech, should express our great pleasure and satisfaction at the Romanian people's initial step towards returning to democracy, at the urgent humanitarian aid which the Commission is offering them, at the wishes of the present Romanian leaders to normalize their relations with the European Community and at their adopting without reservations the final Vienna document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I am also, Mr President, extremely worried about the referendum fixed for the 28th of this month in Romania which may restore the death penalty in a country which has suffered so much, and which may set it on an unpredictable course of dangerous revanchism with human rights once again trampled underfoot. We therefore call upon the Commission to intercede politely for the final abolition of the death penalty and to work out urgently with the new leaders a plan for institutional, technical and economic support which will allow the Romanians to recover the level of prosperity and democracy of other European countries, all, of course, on the basis of what Mr Delors outlined this morning. But it must not be a question of economic support only.

May I finally, Mr President, point out to the Commission's representative certain questions and unknown factors to which a fair and appropriate answer will have to be found for all the countries of the East and their leaders with our specific, effective and non-protectionist aid, and all in frenzied times in which change is the only stable thing. What kind of society do they want to

CÁMARA MARTÍNEZ

create, and how? How can growing religious and xenophobic fanaticism be democratically absorbed and neutralized? How can we guarantee and support firm and transparent electoral procedures without allowing any extremism to take advantage of their inexperience and confusion? How is a new economic system to be established, guaranteeing distribution and access to basic necessities? How can we help them towards a market economy, though always one with a human face? How, in short, can we build upon the positive aspects of the crisis in their socialism for matters such as peace, solidarity and world awareness?

PEIJS (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, these are emotional times. There seems to be movement at last even in the orthodox Marxist fortress of Albania. In Eastern Europe the Commission has done a huge amount of work. We see that the link between the Community and the countries of Eastern Europe consists of three elements: trade, cooperation and financial aid. This morning Mr Delors mentioned the amount: ECU 19 billion, an impressive sum, a golden link. Our aim in the Community is to liberalize trade relations. That is possible only if all trading partners observe the same principle. That applies to Japan. In time that will of course apply to Eastern Europe as well. There will be true liberalization of trade between likeminded partners only if the markets of Eastern Europe are open also to the West, if the currencies of Eastern Europe are convertible. If their economies are based on a system of free private enterprises, if prices are based on real cost-price calculations, if there is a monetary and credit policy and if property is guaranteed so that European firms can safely invest. The Commissioner has himself already mentioned this. It is towards this that our cooperation must be directed.

The Commissioner also expressed his intention to involve Parliament in the forthcoming association agreements with the countries of Eastern Europe. We should much like to know when that is to happen. We were not happy — to put it mildly — with the procedure concerning the agreement with the Soviet Union. In Eastern Europe, Mr President, the changes will be far-reaching but also time-consuming.

Success is essential, said Mr Andriessen. Will the people of Eastern Europe have enough patience? What impression did the Commissioner gain of this on his travels in Eastern Europe? It is typical of Marxism that, once the economic foundations collapse, the ideological and political edifice resting on it and indissolubly connected with it is destroyed. To replace that, the three elements mentioned will not be enough. To that end, the European Fund for Democracy proposed by certain groups could be of inestimable value to the people of Eastern Europe.

LARONI (S). — (IT) Mr President, we come to this debate faced with a scenario thick with events and made absolute by the emotion of this morning's meeting with President Dubcek. And I think that, on this occasion, it

might also perhaps have been appropriate — I say this in passing — to remember a figure who, only yesterday was rehabilitated in Czechoslovakia: I refer to Jan Palach.

It is not possible, however, with so little time available, to make a complete analysis of events that are so unsettling, and the outcome of which is still unpredictable. I shall therefore limit what I have to say to a few points, referring in particular to the situation in Romania and Yugoslavia.

I consider that the dramatic nature of events in Romania, that came to a climax in the festive period, should have deserved more emphatic attention on the part of this Parliament, if only because of the thousands of victims that were the price for the reopening of a minimal democratic dialectic. This is a sadly anomalous fact against the background of the upheavals in Eastern Europe.

Now, the absence of a political culture centring on the rules of democracy, and the recurrent attempts of the governing groups hastily to change the label without very much changing the substance, make it necessary, in my view, for the Europe of the Twelve to play an active part in order to guarantee, in this most delicate transitional stage, respect — not merely formal — for democratic rules. From this standpoint, fixing the elections for April appears to be rushing things to such an extent that no authentic expression of the people's will is possible. In any case, it would be a good thing if, in agreement with the Romanian authorities, this Parliament could act as a guarantor, by sending a special commission; and in the same way I think I have now to repeat the proposal and the indication — very right and very pertinent — put forward by Mr Camara, on the desirability of an initiative from both the Community and Parliament, in regard to the referendum of the 28th on the death penalty, confirming a line that this Parliament has always held to very strictly.

With regard to the Yugoslavian situation, I think we must repeat the indication and concern expressed by President Mitterrand in this Chamber: I think that the particular character of the political systems, the gravity of the economic crisis and inflation, the institutional characteristics and the way in which these have been arrived at in recent history must lead us to adopt an attitude that — despite justifications to the contrary — is less bureaucratic in regard to the implementation of economic aid on a decisive scale. I think furthermore that the Community must make instruments available for a more structured relationship with this country, adopting a new approach, with new ideas, in contrast to the customary line followed hitherto. Such an attitude will be the best justification for calling with firmness for the respect of human rights in Kosovo in particular and, today, on the occasion of the Azem Vllasi trial.

This morning, President Delors drew a very good picture of the choral role of the Eastern European peoples in building a new phase in history, and he also

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did not hide the pitfalls and dangers of regression, that this situation holds.

A great sense of responsibility is necessary, therefore, together with a dose or two of realism. In addition to this, just as the Community is preparing global instruments for aid in the economic and political fields, so it becomes inevitable that the European Parliament must define a similar strategy so as to enable it to be, as it must be, an authoritative body with which to deal, not simply an extempore showcase for events that are exciting, but need well-thought-out political management.

(Applause from the Left)

ANDRIESEN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (NL) Mr President, as recently as 20 December last year, the Commission and Council decided to impose specific and heavier sanctions on the then government and the policies of that government in Romania. A few days later we were delighted to find that we needed to revise our policy. Things are moving so fast at present in Eastern Europe that we do not know today to what new developments we must respond tomorrow. While that is gratifying, it is also difficult for a Commission that is supposed to react swiftly, to keep itself informed and, if possible, propose measures. It is also difficult for Parliament, which does not sit every day and does not have the possibility of following important events closely and putting forward concrete ideas. It is also difficult for a Council of Ministers to arrive at suitable decisions.

Against this background, I can understand the criticisms voiced in the debate this afternoon against the Commission. I understand the reproach that we have not yet elaborated a large-scale plan, that we have not yet visualized a model, that everything is not yet perfectly coordinated. I fully understand that, yet I would ask understanding for the fact that no one in the world so far is able to react faster to this situation than the European Community and the Commission. I am not asking credit for this but I do ask that the fact be acknowledged. We are there to be criticized and Parliament is there to be critical, that is all part of the game, no problem. But I do wish to say, basing myself on the facts, that within a day-and-a-half of the dramatic events in Romania the European Community's first aid was on the spot.

(Applause)

Why do I say that, Mr President? Not because I feel myself slighted by the criticism, but because I believe that, given the speed of developments there, one is hardly in a position to elaborate a comprehensive policy able to look months ahead. But we have not been idle. We have negotiated agreements. We have proposals in front of us today for resuming negotiations with certain countries or for continuing them on a more extensive scale.

There are specific ideas about proposals for extending aid given by the 24 to countries such as Czechoslovakia

and Bulgaria. Yugoslavia was on the list as long ago as 13 December. Romania not yet. Yet it is clear that Romania must be put on the list. Those proposals will be made very shortly. And that will be the crucial moment, when we shall see whether the spontaneous political declaration can be followed by an equally spontaneous political action in the shape of making available sufficient funds for projects to help these countries in their development. But it is not just a question of money. It would be a serious error to imagine that the only help we can offer, or even the most important help, is money. Many countries do not even ask for it — they ask for quite different things. They ask for training, private investment, access to our markets. Are we agreeable to this? Will we be prepared shortly to allow those countries, in so far as they are able to compete, onto our markets, even when highly sensitive sectors are concerned, and that at a time when perhaps our own products are not selling so very well? Those will be the questions confronting us in the Commission, in Parliament and also in the Council of Ministers. The Commission is ready to make concrete proposals. I can only hope that those who will at last be having shortly to take the decisions will be prepared to translate those decisions at political level into policy.

Mr President, those were a few remarks of a general nature. I shall now come to a fairly large number of specific observations.

First, the question whether we must go into action now or whether we must wait until the whole situation has become rather more fixed. I have to tell you that, after my visit to almost all the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, my conclusion is that action should be taken now, even though all the conditions are not yet present for a perfect implementation of that action. Action now seems to me the sole political imperative at the moment. It has been asked whether the population there is sufficiently patient. Mr President, the population is impatient! It has been said here: no revolution without bread. Perhaps that is a little too facile, but it is clear that the first necessities of life need to be satisfied, and not only that. I also think that political signals must be emitted from Western Europe that we are already to link our fate with that of these countries in a clear-cut agreement and with the prospect of an association, about which I shall shortly say more. Action now. Conditions for that action? Yes indeed, particularly as regards respect of human rights, as regards further development of democracy, as regards respect of all human rights including those of minorities, as I heavily emphasized to the authorities in Bulgaria. As regards the question of economic conditions, I take a rather different view. To my mind, economic aid to these countries is pointless if their economy is not oriented more to market principles. You could almost say that that condition need not be explicitly stated, having been implicitly agreed. And it would be pointless to furnish aid if it did not fall on good soil, on a sound infrastructure. In that respect I do not think the problem is so thorny. To make them economic satellites of

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Western Europe is not the idea, nor is it — not in my view anyway — the idea to impose our economic model, as it were, upon these countries. We can safely admit to the faults in our own system, which we do not necessarily have to export to others.

I wish to say something about the elections. Are there guarantees for fair elections? I said in the beginning that I had spoken with several members of the opposition, that there were questions and doubts and that I could very well imagine — certainly if it were requested — that an effort would be made to introduce measures to guarantee that the election were fair and square. But that is not only a question of formal conditions; material possibilities are also involved. We have to note that the opposition groups — particularly in certain countries — are in an extremely difficult position in that respect. So I can very well understand that here in this House you talk and think about possible ways of lending adequate assistance to allow the elections to proceed as fairly as possible. The question is: should that be done quickly or a bit later? A great debate is going on in those countries. The dilemma is clear. If we act too quickly, the opposition has not got established; if we act too slowly, too much may be wrongly consolidated. I think that in general reasonably fast elections would be the best solution, if basic conditions can be met for equal opportunities.

Mr President, it has been asked whether the 24 have taken a decision to extend the aid programme. There is no decision yet. But there is political readiness for such, expressed in a communiqué issued after the Ministers' meeting in Brussels on 13 December, if the conditions are met. I believe conditions have been met in a number of countries, which makes possible a proposal to think along those lines. So we shall make that proposal.

Comecon. On average, 70% of the trade of the countries concerned is within that framework. It does not in fact differ terribly much from the European Community. But the European Community's example makes it clear that, without a transitional period, we cannot replace such an institution from one day to another. It has got to be reformed and that is what all the countries want, though they disagree quite considerably as to the degree and the manner in which that ought to be done.

Can we quantify the requisite means? I have here with me — and it is available, if required, to the European Parliament — a survey of all the commitments entered into in respect of these countries up to 10 January. The aid we decide on now or will decide on for these countries cannot be seen as a substitute for priorities we have established elsewhere. I know there are anxieties in some quarters about this. It has been expressed today in this House. That cannot and will not be the Commission's intention with its proposals. This is a new priority that stands alongside and not instead of priorities to which we have committed ourselves earlier. Control of expenditure? Yes. We shall keep checks on expenditure as well as possible and devise instruments

for the purpose. But I would ask your understanding for the fact that, in tumultuous times such as these, the odd hitch may occur.

I shall not today go deeply into all the economic, trade, debt and other such problems. We discussed them earlier and we shall certainly have a chance later on to return to them in connection with more specific matters. But I do wish to come back to one important point, namely that of the association agreement, on which many honourable Members have spoken. It has been asked whether the agreement is to be concluded on the basis of Article 238 and whether Parliament will truly have a real say in things. When I talk about an association agreement, I mean an agreement under Article 238 of the Treaty. That means that for Parliament all rights are guaranteed that are laid down in the treaty procedure, plus all commitments entered into in the course of the years by Luns, Westerterp and anyone else. So Parliament need have no doubts about that. Perhaps the criticisms voiced on this point have arisen because, given the speed of developments, measures have sometimes been taken that could not be submitted or explained in advance. I am, Mr President, very willing in the coming period — I said it at the start and I repeat it now — to consult very clearly and carefully with the committees concerned about further developments in the hope that, in this way, the suspicion may be removed that we are trying to settle matters outside Parliament. It has never been my intention to do that, as Parliament well knows, and it would certainly not be my intention at a time when we need all political commitments to arrive at an optimal situation for these countries.

I should like to conclude with this remark: that which is taking place in Central and Eastern Europe in an historic event. I hope that the institutions in Europe and the free world will be ready and able to respond to this historic challenge in a manner that will also take on historic significance.

MOORHOUSE (ED). — Mr President, I would like to ask a question of the Commissioner. One appreciates very much indeed his statement. A significant feature was his reference to proposed association agreements. Of course, we are all familiar with the meaning of such a term, but, at the same time, will what he is talking about apply to the agreements which are at present in the pipeline? I refer to the proposed agreements with the GDR, with Bulgaria no doubt, with Romania, Czechoslovakia, and even the present agreement with the Soviet Union which is still before the House. May we have a precise answer to this question which I think concerns Members throughout the House?

ANDRIESEN, *Vice-President of the Commission.* — (NL) Mr President, I should like to try here to give a very clear answer.

The association agreement about which I spoke is a different type of agreement from that on which negotiations are proceeding at present. That is in itself

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of course a point on which one can debate extensively. I am quite prepared to do so in the committee. But, in the Commission's opinion, the agreements we have now concluded are not agreements that meet the criteria that association agreements have always had to meet in the past. That means that, in the Commission's view, these agreements are to be applied in the manner customary for this kind of agreement. I should be quite happy to speak to the European Parliament and give an exposition on the content of these agreements, immediately if that is possible in accordance with the procedures in committee. On this point the Commission is in no way favouring a development that would be detrimental to the position acquired in the past by Parliament with the Commission's cooperation.

PRESIDENT. — We now come to the vote on the request for an early vote on the 17 motions for resolutions to wind up the debate on Eastern Europe.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

The vote on these texts will be taken tomorrow at 6.30 p.m.

IN THE CHAIR: MRS PERY

Vice-President

PRESIDENT. — We now come to the votes.

4. Votes (Single Act)

Report (Doc. A3-95/89) by Mr Bru Puron, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities, on the amendment of Rule 37(5) of the Rules of Procedure concerning the drawing up of reports in cases where the power of decision has been delegated to a committee.

(The President asked for a check and noted that there was a qualified majority)

JANSSEN VAN RAAJ (PPE). — *(NL)* Madam President, just like Mr Hänsch, I have asked to speak on a specific procedural matter in consequence of what I did last time. I wrote a letter about this to the President, Mr Baron Crespo, and received a very friendly reply. Seeing that Wednesday afternoons between 5 and 7 o'clock represent one of Parliament's sacrosanct periods, I asked the President, if when drawing up the agenda, he would consider not beginning with the proposals under the cooperation procedure which immediately require 260 votes, but with the other proposals that are only being given a first reading.

I put this last time to my British colleague and I put it again, through you, as a procedural matter. Would you please examine whether, on the most important afternoon of the week — Wednesday at 5 o'clock — we could not begin with the vote on the proposals that do

not require 260 votes? If you would do that, I should be extremely grateful to you.

(The President called for a further check by electronic vote)

FALCONER (S). — Madam President, it is incredible that you take two speeches from the floor and when someone wishes to reply, you then ignore him. This Parliament is seeking additional powers. I argued this with Mr Janssen Van Raay once before. It is Parliament that has got to discipline itself. At five o'clock Members should know that votes are taking place on the Single Act. It is their responsibility to be here. If they cannot be here then they do not deserve more power.

(Applause)

I put it to you, Madam President, that in future you proceed directly to the vote and rule them out as time-wasting.

PRESIDENT. — I would point out, Mr Falconer, that I did not take up Mr Janssen van Raay's proposal. I simply made another check. Your intervention was therefore out of place.

(Parliament adopted the decision)

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Report (Doc. A3-117/89) by Mr Janssen van Raay, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities, on the amendment of Rules 86 and 87 of the Rules of Procedure as regards the temporary exclusion of Members

Explanations of vote

VECCHI (GUE). — *(IT)* Madam President, the Group for the European Unitarian Left will vote in favour of Mr Janssen van Raay's report, and hence in favour of the alterations to Rules 86 and 87 of our Rules of Procedure, that have been proposed and adopted. The excellent work done by the rapporteur, together with a fruitful discussion in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, made it possible for that committee to reach unanimous agreement on a form of words to make the regulations contained in those Rules clearer and more effective — because that is what it is about. It must be remembered that proposals designed to toughen the disciplinary sanctions against honourable Members of this Parliament were not adopted, and we think that that was right.

In reality, the alterations contained in Mr Janssen van Raay's report help very substantially to remove any ambiguity as to the procedures to be followed for temporary exclusion from the Chamber and for censuring a Member, making crystal clear duties, responsibilities and rights, and defining in this way a mechanism that is both effective and fair.

VECCHI

It is surprising, therefore, in the light of these considerations that, in Monday's debate, some honourable Members should have seen in the van Raay Report — which, may I recall, was adopted unanimously in Committee — a desire to suppress freedom or, at all events, regulations of a repressive character. That is not the case, and I hope that more careful examination both of the text and of the facts will lead to a wide understanding of this subject.

For these reasons, Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, we declare our support for this report.

GOLLNISCH (DR). — (FR) We are going to abstain on the text as a whole although we voted for some parts of it. The rapporteur did an excellent job refusing to give in to the constantly repressive pressure from the Socialist Group, whose Chairman makes a regular practice of encouraging repeated breaches of this Parliament's Rules of Procedure and its customs.

Who exactly are the people who infringe the Rules and ignore our customs? Was it not only yesterday that an interim group chairman was unilaterally excluded from an official dinner attended by Mr Dubcek? Was that because he, in common with other German colleagues incidentally, was on the wrong side in the last world war? But so were a lot of others! As for us, we are prepared to overlook the fact that from 1947 to 1968 Mr Dubcek was a zealous servant of communism!

Parliament sets out to defend freedom and human rights, but not the right to freedom of movement of one of its Members, a German wishing to visit another part of Germany. Parliament sets out to defend human rights, but it regards a man of the Right as subhuman. Parliament speaks of democracy, but it presumes to discriminate between elected representatives of the European peoples, as it did yesterday, for the entertainment organized by our President, and again yesterday with the leadership of the Swiss delegation. This Parliament claims to campaign against dictatorships, but only when they are on their last legs. And the people who only recently were making pacts with communism, who have kept the colour red as their symbol, proudly on display in their office this morning, are now trying to repress the only intellectual movement which has never made pacts in any shape or form with the dictatorships in Eastern Europe.

(Applause)

PANNELLA (NI). — (FR) It is true that the anti-parliamentary proposals that had been made were rejected by the committee and the rapporteur. It is therefore true that we have not been presented with a scandalous text that it would have been shameful for any parliament to adopt.

I am nevertheless going to vote against this decision, in common with the Right, and my reason for doing so is to make the point that, as far as style is concerned, it is bad taste on a really unique scale that we should adopt the principle that it is not to be the Quaestors, people of

our own rank, who deal with a Member called to order and excluded from the Chamber by the President, that it is not to be the uniformed staff, but the Parliament's administration, with security staff, virtually policemen, albeit internal.

Madam President, a vote in favour of this is in my view a vote in favour of degrading the style of our Parliament. It is antiparliamentary that it should be the administration and the Secretary-General who have to take responsibility for removing a Member from the Chamber, rather than the Quaestors, that it should be police rather than the uniformed staff, who were actually invented for that purpose, to perform the tasks that we want to assign to them. So I am voting against.

Oh yes, we are going to have bouncers. You will call for them on the right and your over there will serve them.

WIJSENBECK (LDR). — (NL) Madam President, my Group has decided to abstain from voting. As we explained in the debate yesterday, this text is unworthy of Parliament's Rules of Procedure. In the first place it contains something completely obvious: that the Secretary-General shall carry out the instructions of the President and of the Members of Parliament. It should simply not be necessary for that to be included in Rules of Procedure.

In the second place the texts creak in every joint and, if we change Article 87, I predict on the strength of many years' experience that the first time — and I hope it never happens — that we have to work with that rule a new explanation will have to be formulated, because, as it will now appear in the Rules of Procedure, it is obscure, incorrect and unworthy.

Madam President, my Group is therefore abstaining.

(Parliament approved the decision)

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Recommendation for the second reading without debate (Doc. A3-101/89) by Mr La Pergola, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the common position of the Council (C3-193/89 — SYN 197) on the proposal concerning the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Republic of Austria on a programme planned to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (SCIENCE)

Recommendation for the second reading without debate (Doc. A3-105/89) by Mr La Pergola, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the common position of the Council (C3-197/89 — SYN 203) on the common position of the Council on the proposal for a decision concerning the conclusion of a Cooperation Agreement between the European Eco-

conomic Community and the Swiss Confederation on a programme planned to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (SCIENCE)

Recommendation for the second reading without debate (Doc. A3-104/89) by Mr La Pergola on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the common position of the Council (C3-196/89 — SYN 202) on the common position of the Council on the proposal for a decision concerning the conclusion of a cooperation agreement between the European Economic Community and the Kingdom of Sweden on a programme planned to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (SCIENCE)

Recommendation for the second reading without debate (Doc. A3-103/89) by Mr La Pergola, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the common position of the Council (C3-195/89 — SYN 196) on the proposal concerning the conclusion of a cooperation agreement between the European Economic Community and the Kingdom of Norway on a programme planned to stimulate international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (SCIENCE)

Recommendation for the second reading without debate (Doc. A3-102/89) by Mr La Pergola, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the common position of the Council (C3-194/89 — SYN 201) on the common position of the Council on the proposal for a decision concerning the conclusion of a cooperation agreement between the European Economic Community and the Republic of Finland on a programme planned to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (SCIENCE)

(The President declared the five common positions approved)

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Recommendation for the second reading (Doc. A3-116/89) by Mr Stauffenberg, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights, on the common position of the Council with a view to the adoption of a directive amending Directive 80/390/EEC on the mutual recognition of stock exchange listing particulars

(Parliament approved the common position as amended)

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Report (Doc. A3-92/89) by Mrs Fontaine, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(88) 823 final — Doc. C3-57/89 — SYN 186) for a 13th Council Directive on company law concerning takeover and other general bids

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

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Report (Doc. A3-113/89) by Mr Cassidy, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 385 final — Doc. C3-138/89) on the harmonization of procedures for the release of goods from free circulation

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

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Joint resolution ¹ on the situation in Central America

Explanations of vote

CABEZÓN ALONSO (S), *in writing*. — (ES) On 21 December 1989 the Spanish press photographer Juan Antonio Rodríguez was killed in Panama, machine-gunned in cold blood from an armoured vehicle by North American soldiers.

This journalist was doing his job as the special correspondent of a Spanish newspaper and before being killed by shots fired by the North American soldiers he identified himself, according to witnesses, as a reporter.

This death of a newspaperman can only be described as brutal and constitutes a most serious violation of human rights without any possible excuse or justification.

The United States Government has not yet given an adequate explanation of the facts; it must carry out a thorough investigation and put those responsible for this death on trial.

I should like these lines to be a personal tribute to a fine man and a great professional: Juan Antonio Rodríguez.

PONS GRAU (S), *in writing*. — (ES) Although I support the resolution tabled by Mr Oliva and others, I am most concerned about present Central American problems.

¹ Tabled by Mr Sakellariou and Mr Oliva Garcia, on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mrs Lenz, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Bertens, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, Mr Newton Dunn, on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr Gutiérrez Díaz and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, replacing motions for resolutions Docs. B3-75/90, B3-78/90, B3-79/90 and B3-81/90 with a new text.

PONS GRAU

The delay in the plan to disarm the Nicaraguan Contras is only possible as a result of lack of political will on the part of the United States, which is still sending the counter-revolutionary movement 'humanitarian aid' which is converted, in practice, into camouflaged war aid.

The military intervention in Panama, although it is against a dictatorship, has infringed basic rules of international law, with many civilian deaths, destruction of property and harassment of embassies. This approach — invading and occupying a sovereign State just when *détente* is in full swing in Eastern Europe — puts us back in an era we had thought past and gone.

The strange movements of a large battle fleet in Caribbean waters off the coasts of Nicaragua and Colombia and the incomprehensible inactivity, if not consent, of Community Europe increase our pessimism.

In El Salvador the faint hope held out by President Cristiani, following international pressure, of trying the murderers of the Jesuits and the civilian staff of the UCA is finally extinguished with the murders of Gilda Flores and Héctor Queli.

Héctor Queli was a true man of peace, cultured, sensible and deeply and bravely committed to a just and peaceful solution of the serious problems of his country. The murderers were not only intent upon killing the man but putting an end to the negotiations. We call upon the European Community to exert the maximum pressure for the arrest, trial and punishment of the guilty in order to prevent a repetition of these savage acts which threaten the future of the peoples of Central America.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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5. Energy technology in Europe (THERMIE)

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the second report (Doc. A3-114/89) by Mr Seligman, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 121 final and 121 final 2 — Doc. C3-72/89) for a regulation concerning the promotion of energy technology in Europe.

SELIGMAN (ED), rapporteur. — Madam President, what I am going to discuss is an unusual constitutional position, which I believe is without precedent. It raises the whole question of cooperation between Parliament and the Commission. Members may wonder why we are being asked to vote a second time on the THERMIE proposal, which is a proposal for a regulation concerning the promotion of non-nuclear energy technology.

During the debate at the sitting of 22 November the Commission stated that it accepted certain amendments, rejected others and also wanted to change the wording of some others. Parliament then voted in

favour of the proposal. Some days later the chairman of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology received a note from Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha which rejected important Amendments Nos 5 and 6, which he had accepted originally. This virtually nullified Parliament's vote and it was decided that Parliament should be given the opportunity to vote again on THERMIE.

In my opinion, the reasons given for rejecting Amendments Nos 5 and 6 are not acceptable. Our Amendment No 5 states that THERMIE may be jeopardized by inadequate finance in the financial perspective. This is true. Only ECU 45 million have been allocated for 1990, in a five-year programme of ECU 700 million (ECU 140 million a year average). Parliament cannot accept that situation. Then Amendment No 6, which calls for additional staff for THERMIE, is based on the clear recommendation of the official evaluation report by Mr Caprioglio which states quite clearly: 'Twelve project officers in DGXVII is clearly insufficient to oversee such a large number of projects. The situation is becoming steadily more acute; Madam President, why do we go to the expense of having expensive evaluation reports by experts if the Commission either does not read them or ignores them?'

There are other amendments which I also feel should not have been rejected by the Commission, but I will not go into detail now. For these reasons I shall propose that the report is sent back to committee under Rule 40, for further discussion with the Commission. If, however, the Commissioner shows signs of being prepared to have a meeting to compromise on some of these amendments and meet us half way, I would be prepared to consider recommending acceptance of the report after such a meeting. It is vital that adequate finance for THERMIE is available in 1990, 1991 and 1992 in the financial perspective. If the Commissioner will fight against the Council for this, Parliament will support him, but if not it is Parliament's duty to reject what it regards at present as an inadequate proposal which will not rectify the failures of previous similar programmes.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Seligman, if I understood you correctly, what you are asking for, at this stage of the debate, is referral back to committee?

SELIGMAN (ED). — No, Madam Chairman. I am saying that if the Commission are prepared to have discussions with us, and to meet us half way on some of the amendments which they have rejected, I will not ask for referral to committee. I leave that decision until tomorrow night, when we vote.

ADAM (S). — Madam President, the Socialist Group supports the approach Mr Seligman has just outlined. We believe that the case for the amendments which Parliament previously approved is a very strong one for the following reasons. The demand for energy is increasing and especially the demand for electricity. If we simply sit back and accept this and take no action,

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there will be an increase in harmful gases and in the emission of the greenhouse gases. Yet we know that the technology exists to make more rational use of all our energy. Instead, investment in energy efficiency is falling behind. Worse still, the efficiency, for example, of new cars coming onto the market and of new domestic appliances appears to have flattened out. We have had no substantial improvement since 1984. Yet despite low energy prices, the Community demonstration programmes have continued to attract good projects. Every year some 500 projects are being submitted. Because of the financial limit, we are only able to accept a third of them. At least 50% more could be spent every year if the money was available. The THERMIE programme brings together all the new action and the means of applying more rational use of energy in the non-nuclear field. Originally the Commission proposed a five-year programme which would have 140 million units of account available each year. This compared with 120 million units of account under the old programme — so there was a small but welcome increase. But we cannot maintain this financial level under the existing financial perspective of the Interinstitutional Agreement.

Community investment this year will be at about half the level of last year. That is not a serious response to the need to tackle the environmental problems of energy production and use. Even if we take all the money available under the increase in Category 4 expenditure next year, we will still not be back to our previous level of expenditure. Why cannot the Commission therefore accept the amendments which recognize these limitations? Why cannot the Commission also accept what the evaluation reports say, namely that more staff are needed if we are going to run the programmes efficiently? Furthermore, why cannot the Commission accept that a carbon dioxide rating should be applied to the evaluation of these projects? This is all we are asking for. There is no real disagreement between us on this issue. Some acknowledgement of this by the Commission this evening would allow the Socialist Group to support the report and the Community to indicate its seriousness of purpose in this matter.

LARIVE (LDR). — (NL) Madam President. In the November part-session, the European Parliament underlined the importance of the Commission's proposal for promoting technological development in the energy field in Europe. At a time of increasing energy consumption, serious negative environmental effects from energy production and consumption, and of efforts to achieve more efficient energy use, I hardly need to repeat that today. But it is all the more shocking to note that the Commission refuses on the most important points to adopt the European Parliament's standpoint.

It first accepts two vital amendments, to which, after the vote, it then returns. If insufficient funds are earmarked for the programme, Commissioner Bangemann, the programme becomes ludicrous and evaluations show

that, if the programme is to be properly executed, more staff are necessary. A serious problem, also for our Parliament's implementation of its right to deliver an opinion, is the fact that the Council, internally, is working from a completely different text. So once again it turns out that the Commission is quite indifferent to our opinion and has already published the first announcement of the programme, whereas, on the other hand, the Commission regularly urges the Committee on Energy for instance to make great haste in bringing out its opinion. This happened, to my disgust, with the important framework programme, for example. But what is the use of our good will, if the Commission pays no heed to it anyway? Love cannot remain for ever a one-sided affair.

If again today the Commission is unwilling to fall in with the European Parliament's wishes, we have no choice but to refer back the Seligman report, and I fervently hope, Mr Commissioner, that that will not be necessary. My Group warns the Commission that, if its attitude towards us, towards the European Parliament, does not change, referral back to committee may well become a more frequent occurrence.

BETTINI (V). — (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I consider that the contempt that the Executive shows for Parliament's decisions is a phenomenon that should alarm us. Instead, it does not seem as though this Parliament wants to wake up, apart from a few references made by Mrs Larive a moment ago. Perhaps lethargy suits it, perhaps this place is a parking area for anyone who wants to cultivate, with this as a starting point, his own local, regional and constituency interests. We are here because we ought to be building at least an embryo Europe. Well then, take the question of the THERMIE programme — and, as Mrs Larive has just said, the framework programme for scientific research also bears this out: every decision we make is denied, reduced, cancelled, further aggravating that democratic deficit that exists in relations between Parliament and the Executive. It is we, the Parliament, that are the sufferers.

But let us look at the figures. After Parliament's decision on the framework programme, the appropriations for the universities disappeared — which was the work of the Executive: and there was a reduction in the appropriations for the environment and for alternative energy sources, and increases only for the safety of nuclear fission — in the sense of being certain of being able to continue doing it — and an increase only in controlled nuclear fusion.

In the THERMIE programme, for which provision was made for a financial total of ECU 700 million, and where the quality of Parliament's vote was evident in the allocation of the funds, the Executive intervenes by slashing everything and only providing for appropriations half the previous size. The Commission did not accept the most telling environmental points of our work.

BETTINI

We Greens have voted in the past against THERMIE and the framework programme. But now we can only agree with the Seligman proposal. We consider therefore that the report should be referred back to committee. We do not very much trust the Commissioner, and consider that it is time for a confrontation — if that is what is needed — between Parliament and the Executive, to clarify who we are and what we want to do, and who they are and what they want from us. Our credibility is involved, our role: and even with these small steps we come nearer to the aim of giving Parliament a real role, for which my country — Italy — voted in favour at the referendum in June 1989.

(Applause)

BLANEY (ARC). — Madam President, I just want to say that Mr Seligman's report is one which appeals to me quite a bit. I have not been in this Parliament for more than five years but during those five-years I have detected a lessening of enthusiasm for energy technology, for the development of alternative and renewable energy and for non-nuclear energy. The approach of the rapporteur here this evening, despite the treatment by the Commission, is more than reasonable and I certainly would favour any improvements on what has been done. As I believe the Seligman report and the amendments would help, I shall certainly support them in whatever way I can.

CARDOSO E CUNHA, *Member of the Commission*. — (PT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to say that I allowed a regrettable error to creep into the debate on 22 November last as regards the Commission's position on two proposed alterations, Nos 5 and 6.

Although in my speech I said that the Commission was opposed to various amendments, in my final summing up I said that the Commission could accept Amendments Nos 1 to 9. As a result and owing to a mistake in numbering, Amendments Nos 5 and 6 were wrongly included in that list. I am grateful to the Assembly for allowing me the opportunity to correct this error and naturally I offer the Commission's apologies for any misunderstandings which may have arisen.

I should like to explain briefly the reason which led the Commission to reject these two amendments. Amendment Nos 5 relates to the allocation of budgetary appropriations for the proposed programme. I think Parliament knows that the Commission announced its intention to review the financial perspectives, provided, of course that the Commission takes account of the needs of the Thermie programme. Since your proposal for an amendment does not fit in with the item of financial support laid down by the Commission in that proposal, namely ECU 700 million for the five-year period, it cannot be accepted. I must take this opportunity to dispel any doubt about the Commission's commitment to promoting this programme and developing research and technological information with regard to alternative energy sources or the need of

energy efficiency or economy. The Commission is preparing specific programmes and I think it would be unfair if Parliament failed to recognize or accept that.

Amendment No 6 (which the Commission is also unable to accept, for reasons which I shall explain) relates to the allocation of staff. Parliament must be aware that it is the Commission's general policy never to request specific staff increases for specific tasks. The Commission does not have vast resources of staff and for the purposes of personnel management it distributes them among the various departments according to priorities and availability having regard to any staff increases authorized by budgetary decisions. Of course the Commission has plans — I think interesting ones — relating to human resources to make it possible always to manage this programme efficiently.

Mr Adam thought there was a need to strengthen the items for energy efficiency and alternative sources of energy and I can confirm the Commission's interest in these two items; revision of the budgetary perspectives, because of problems of strict discipline as regards the resources which Parliament, as the budgetary authority, puts at the Commission's disposal, is under way or has been announced. I think Parliament will be the first of the institutions to understand the Commission's anxiety not to infringe or alter the inter-institutional agreement. For reasons of integrity the Commission cannot, before the revision of the financial perspectives has begun, show itself dissatisfied in anticipation at the final result.

To sum up and to remove any misunderstanding, the Commission, bearing in mind Mr Seligman's second report and for the reasons expressed in my statement of 22 November in this Assembly and in the letter which I sent on 6 December last to the President of the European Parliament, confirms that it can accept proposed Amendments Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 14, 25, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33 and 38. Mr Seligman's suggestion for additional meetings with me or my staff is naturally accepted with pleasure. I am personally at the disposal of Parliament, of the appropriate committee and of honourable Members for any further information they may require on this matter.

I have taken advantage of this incident, which has made it necessary for the report to be presented to Parliament a second time, to give further consideration to some of the proposed amendments, and trying in advance to meet Mr Seligman half way, as he suggested, I can say that as there are no basic objections the Commission can also accept Amendments Nos 10, 18, 21, 30, 34 and 41. However, as I have just said, I am at honourable Members' disposal for additional work on this subject. I feel encouraged by the positive approach which Parliament has always taken to the proposal for technological alterations and improvements to the Community's energy programmes and I am sure that with the adoption of Parliament's opinion this very important programme will soon be approved.

IN THE CHAIR: MR GALLAND

Vice-President

SELIGMAN (ED), *rapporteur*. — I thank the Commissioner for his remarks and would ask him if he is prepared to see certain members of the committee tomorrow morning at say 10 a.m., before the final vote. Will the Commissioner be here?

CARDOSO E CUNHA, *Member of the Commission*. — (PT) Yes, I shall be very pleased to be present at 10 tomorrow morning.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will take place at 6.30 p.m. tomorrow.

6. Question Time

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the second part of Question Time (Doc. B3-20/90). Today we are taking questions to the Commission. Mr Moorhouse, do you wish to raise a point of order?

MOORHOUSE (ED). — Mr President, I put down a question to the Commission three or four weeks ago concerning the diary of one of the Commissioners. For some extraordinary reason this question is not on the agenda.

May I have your assurance that there is no particular reason why this question should be suppressed? If such a reason exists or if there is any query about the question, I would expect to have a communication from the presidency. I have not heard anything at all.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Moorhouse, according to the information I have been given, we have not received your question.

MOORHOUSE (ED). — May I have your assurance, Mr President, that this will be subject of a full investigation because I have every reason to believe that the question was delivered. I realize that there may be a political element in this but, nevertheless, it is important that there should be a clear understanding that a Member is informed whether or not his question is in order.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Moorhouse, I do not think for one moment that I could be told your question was not received and that this was a pretext for not putting it on the agenda, the motive being political. I just cannot believe that. This would be to question the integrity of our staff, which I cannot accept.

What we will do, Mr Moorhouse, is try to find out whether your question has got lost. If it cannot be found I shall ask the Question Time service to contact you so that you can send them a copy and then, of course, in the

usual way, if it is not admissible you will be duly notified.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 41 by Mr Köhler (H-595/89):

Subject: Trade and cooperation agreement between the EC and the GDR

The Commission intends, as instructed by the Council, to enter into negotiations on a trade and cooperation agreement between the EC and the GDR.

Will the Commission, in view of the great significance of this agreement for the further economic development of the GDR and the declaration by the European Council at the Strasbourg summit of 8 and 9 December 1989 on Central and Eastern Europe, select for future procedure a legal base that requires the involvement of the European Parliament *before* the agreement is signed, or does it intend to conclude the agreement on the basis of Article 235 of the Treaty and hence notify Parliament only *afterwards*.

ANDRIESEN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (NL) It has in recent years become the custom that, whenever the Commission makes proposals for a directive for negotiations or agreements with third countries, the legal basis is filled in at the moment when the content of the negotiation directive is established, seeing that the content can of course be important for the choice of legal basis. That procedure will also be followed by the Commission in the case of the negotiation directive for East Germany. That is the first remark I wish to make.

The second is that, in the past, not only by virtue of what the Treaty states about the European Parliament's involvement in negotiations with third countries, but also by reason of the practices that have developed, such as the Stuttgart Declaration, the Luns-Westerterp procedure, depending on the nature of the agreements informal consultations have in the meantime taken place at set times between the Commission and the relevant committees of the European Parliament. Clearly, in the present case, those procedures will be fully respected. As the Commissioner responsible for these negotiations, in view of the specific situation in Central and Eastern Europe, I shall be happy to optimize, as it were, existing practices in this sphere and keep Parliament as fully, as intensively informed as possible. At the end of this afternoon's debate, this same problem was brought up and I told the House very emphatically that the second generation of agreements about which the Commission President spoke this morning and which I myself mentioned this afternoon, that is to say association agreements with third countries in Central and Eastern Europe, will be association agreements under Article 238 of the Treaty, whereby the special position acquired by the European Parliament in this Treaty text will of course be respected. In this way I believe it possible to combine

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existing practices with the best possible coordination of thought and action as between Parliament and Commission. I hope that that will satisfy the honourable Member who put the question.

KÖHLER, Heinz (S). — (DE) Mr President, first of all I would like to ask the Bureau in future to ensure that it is always quite clear which Köhler has been given the floor. I do not wish to be placed on a par with my namesake from the Republican Party.

Mr Commissioner, my question: during the debate this afternoon you answered most of my points, but I have a few comments to make. Should we not be taking a different approach to the trade and cooperation agreements with the GDR? President Delors has already pointed out this afternoon that the GDR is a special case. We already have the protocol on internal German trade. There are developments that, via contractual relations with West Germany, could integrate the GDR even more into the Community. I feel that Parliament must be more closely involved than is normally the case.

ANDRIESEN. — (NL) I believe what the honourable Member says is correct. Clearly, relations with the GDR are different from those with other countries and I feel that they make it justifiable for coordination to be geared to that specific situation. I further propose to ensure personally that that coordination is effected.

TITLEY (S). — As Mr Andriessen is now answering a question, may I put my supplementary to him directly, namely is not our insistence that Eastern European countries such as the GDR should move towards a market economy endangering the social structure by ensuring that we throw out the baby with the bath water and is it right for us to be pushing free-market economics at countries which may not be able to cope with them? Secondly, is this not, in fact, undue interference in the internal affairs of a country? We are attempting to help Eastern European countries to find the democratic system and the economic system which they desire and if we go too far in insisting on free-market economics we are undermining that principle.

ANDRIESEN. — (NL) I can well imagine that when a given economic system shows itself to be bankrupt, and that is, I believe, the case with the economies in Central and Eastern Europe, there can be a certain suspiciousness: how will they develop in a better direction? We could hold a long debate on this, but I do not want to say too much about it. I would just make a couple of remarks.

The first is that, when visiting the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, I repeatedly asked: what is your own vision of the future economy of your country? And the reply was frequently: well, we must of course undertake reforms but we want a socialist market economy. And then I would ask: what do you mean by that? I must say that the answer was not usually very precise. They evidently know what they do not want

any more, but I do not think they know too well what they do want. I should add that Mrs Luft in East Germany did indeed come forward with some ideas. My personal view is — I state this clearly, as I did in this afternoon's debate — that it is not for us to impose our model on others. At the same time, if their models are not basically changed towards a market economy, our economic aid will not help. So it is not so much a conditionality in the formal sense, but it is a material conditionality elicited by the matter itself, namely that without a fundamental change in the system economic aid will not help. What the implications will be for the social structure I do not know, but I am not sure whether our social structure is not preferable to social structures likely to be found in those countries.

DESSYLAS (CG). — (GR) Mr Commissioner, can you assure us that the fact that the EEC's investment plans have been reoriented towards the Eastern countries will not have negative consequences for the EEC's less developed countries, such as Greece? In other words, that there will be no widening of existing inequalities between outlying countries such as Greece, and other, more developed countries? Can you also assure us that all the resources earmarked for the IMP's and for regional development plans will be made available in full to countries such as Greece, Portugal and Ireland?

ANDRIESEN. — (NL) I cannot help feeling that we have moved very far away from the original question, but if you allow this supplementary question, Mr President, I am prepared to answer it.

There are two aspects to this matter. The first is that we must add a new priority to our Community objective. That is to elaborate the form of our solidarity with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. For that we need a multi-year plan and a multi-year budgetary endowment, but that is a priority that is an addition to what we decided in the past, it is not a replacement. In that respect, my answer to what you have said is therefore a categorical denial: it will not be at the expense of cohesion in the European Community. A different matter is the fact that, if we are serious about our solidarity with these countries, we shall sooner or later have to liberalize our trade relations with them. That means that we must give them greater access to our markets. We are already doing that *de facto* with Hungary and Poland. That will obviously have an effect on the market. I am not saying specifically for those areas in the Community that qualify for structural aid programmes, but it will definitely have an effect on this Community. The reverse is also true of course. I wish to stress this aspect in my answer, since I believe it is a good thing that we should realize at an early date that solidarity costs, or at least may cost, something.

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, there will be no more supplementaries to this question. Let me explain. Question Time has now been going on for 21 minutes and we have only had two questions. Commissioner

PRESIDENT

Andriessen's comments a moment ago are perfectly justified.

Might I just draw Commissioner Bangemann's attention to one point, concerning relations with Parliament. If we wish to keep alive the spirit of Question Time, both the institution concerned and Members must respect that spirit. The institution must take care to see that its answers are concise and to the point and Members, for their part, must confine their supplementaries to the subject matter of the principal question. This is quite obviously not the case and I must warn you that I shall be stricter with future questions.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 42 by Mr Seligman (H-445/89):

Subject: Hard currency electricity sales for Hungary

Hungary is understood to be studying investment in the construction of a Candu nuclear reactor in order to satisfy indigenous electricity needs and to repay the hard currency debt on the capital invested in the plant through electricity sales to Member States.

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure the transit of electricity generated in Hungary to Member States?

CARDOSO E CUNHA, Member of the Commission. — (PT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Commission is aware of the need for economic restructuring in Hungary, particularly after recent political events and their wish to establish closer relations with the European Community. The Community, for its part, is collaborating to a considerable extent with Hungary both bilaterally through the cooperation agreement and through its participation and leadership role in the Phare programme.

Electricity supply in Hungary is heavily dependent — to the extent of almost 30%. The imports needed to satisfy its domestic consumption requirements come almost exclusively from the Soviet Union. Besides, the modest increase expected in domestic demand will inevitably bring the risk of power cuts, so that it will be necessary to increase either imports or production capacity. It would be preferable to increase production capacity, but then there are difficulties in obtaining the necessary investment capital. There are no direct links between Hungary and the European Community for transmission of electricity, which may be carried out only across Austria, which is not a member of our Community, although its electricity network is connected with that of the EEC countries. Good relations between the Hungarian electricity distributing undertakings and Community undertakings may still lead to the building of power stations in Hungary and the possibility of exchanges of electricity between Hungary and the Community through Austria. Obviously it is for the Hungarians to set their own priorities for satisfying their own demand for electricity and selling electricity to other countries, including future trade with the Community.

The Commission is ready to supply technical assistance and financial support within the limits of the network of existing cooperation programmes and agreements in order to promote the development of the Hungarian electricity sector.

SELIGMAN (ED). — I would like to thank the Commissioner for that full reply. I understand that the Austrian Government which is basically anti-nuclear and has banned its own nuclear plant, is making difficulties in handling the proposed Hungarian nuclear electricity in transit to the European market.

Will the Commissioner, therefore, discuss this matter with the Austrian Government and make sure that no hindrance is placed on the transit of electricity from the new Hungarian plant to the European Community?

CARDOSO E CUNHA. — (PT) Within the framework of the economic relations between the Community and Austria and provided that it corresponded to the wish of the Hungarian authorities, I think there would be no objection to this point's being included in the agenda for debate.

TITLEY (S). — The Commissioner referred to the agreements with Hungary and we will be debating an agreement with Hungary later this week. One of the conditions which the Community is putting on these agreements is that countries like Hungary should move rapidly towards a market economy.

Could I ask the Commissioner, first, how far do we expect these countries to go along the road to a market economy? Do we expect them to throw out all their social provisions — which run the risk of creating a situation where we help make their social conditions worse and not better? Secondly, is this condition not an interference in the internal affairs of Eastern European countries, because surely our help is meant to aid in them establishing the democratic and economic system they desire? Is not the Community guilty of undue interference in the affairs of Eastern European States?

CARDOSO E CUNHA. — (PT) I think the Honourable Member's point falls quite outside the scope of Mr Seligman's question, and since his remarks are clearly within the sphere of responsibility of my colleague Mr Vice-President Andriessen who, moreover, is present, I leave it to him to give any reply to your question.

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, Commissioner, we must have some discipline in Question Time. We are supposed to be taking supplementaries, not different questions on the same subject. I therefore entirely endorse your comments. If our colleague wants an answer on the subject he has raised, he may pose another question in another Question Time.

PRESIDENT. — As they deal with the same subject, the following questions will be taken together:

PRESIDENT

Question No 43 by Mrs Banotti (H-588/89):

Subject: Cambodia

Following the Parliament's declaration of 23 November can the Commission please inform me what progress has been made towards sending a fact-finding mission to Cambodia as called for by the Parliament and whether the EC is prepared to provide immediate development aid to Cambodia?

and Question No 44 by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (H-454/89):

Subject: The situation in Cambodia

Not long ago we received a cry for help from Haing S. Ngor, well known from his role in 'The Killing Fields', who said that Cambodia is now a country with millions of orphans, millions of handicapped people and millions of widows, where the situation has never been as bad as it is now.

What is the Commission intending to do to prevent that country's further decline into inhumanity?

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Ladies and gentlemen, the Commission, within the framework of Political Cooperation, is following the problem of Cambodia very closely and has expressed on various occasions its support for the attempts by the various parties to arrive at a comprehensive political solution such as those which are being, or have been, arrived at under the ægis of the United Nations in Paris.

The Commission is fully aware of the sufferings of the Cambodian people and will therefore continue its humanitarian aid through non-governmental organizations both inside Cambodia and to the refugees abroad. During 1988 the Commission, at the instigation of Mr Commissioner Claude Cheysson, substantially increased its humanitarian aid, mainly for improving the supply and treatment of water and for medical services. To give you an idea, this aid amounted to ECU 2.8 million in 1988 as against ECU 167 000 for 1987. And these projects, which are being executed on a multi-annual basis — and at those levels — were also continued in 1989. In that year the Community contributed between ECU 500 000 and 600 000 to the projects of the non-governmental organizations. Only last Friday, the 12th, I received a visit in Brussels from the President of Doctors without Frontiers and Doctors of the World to hear the latest information about the situation on the spot. Accordingly I can inform Honourable Members that in the near future we shall be financing important projects such as the restoration of the biggest hospital in Phnom Penh. The Commission has also indicated its willingness to take part in programmes for the voluntary return and reintegration of Cambodian refugees, under the supervision of an international organization and subject to agreements between the governments concerned. The Commission therefore remains ready to assist the people of Cambodia in their efforts to rebuild the country in pursuance of the political agreement reached on the day

before the Vietnamese Government's announcement of the withdrawal of its forces from Cambodia. The Commission will support all the programmes which have just been discussed at the Paris Peace Conference, which ended yesterday on an optimistic note as regards the active role which the UN is to play in the future, with the Khmer Rouge playing a restricted role. The Commission has always insisted that its considerable aid in kind to the refugees must not find its way to the camps of the Khmer Rouge. The same applies to other Commission programmes in refugee camps.

Finally I should like to inform Honourable Members that next week I myself am expecting to visit some of these camps on the border with Thailand, where I shall be able to assess all these problems on the spot myself.

BANOTTI (PPE). — I am quite gratified by the list given by the Commissioner. It is certainly much more comprehensive than what we have had in the past. Notwithstanding the fact that we have improved our help to Cambodia, my question refers specifically to a fact-finding mission from the Commission. I stress this because I was informed that we would not be able to give anything but humanitarian aid to Cambodia until there had been an official fact-finding mission by the Commission. That was the first requirement. Could the Commissioner tell us if he is proposing to send a fact-finding mission not just to the camps on the border — where I am very happy to hear he is going himself — but also within the country itself? Otherwise it will remain completely isolated as it has been for the past ten years.

MATUTES. — (ES) I think it was made quite clear that there was no reason to fear that this aid might be limited and I therefore want to give all the details of the case.

A fact-finding mission within the country is not envisaged for the moment, but it is not excluded. I thought it appropriate at this juncture to visit the camps myself and on the basis of what I see and of the information I am constantly receiving from various sources, but in particular from such reputable organizations as Doctors without Frontiers and Doctors of the World, I shall take the relevant decisions with regard to any fact-finding mission.

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (ARC). — (NL) I should like first and foremost to thank the Commissioner very warmly for his very extensive and highly encouraging answer. My question is whether, in connection with his visit, he will also be taking up contact with countries of the region with which we do in fact have rather good agreements. I refer to the ASEAN countries. Do we have a Community strategy there, yes or no?

MATUTES. — (ES) Next week I shall have the opportunity to visit the Philippines, where there are also refugee camps, and Thailand, where in fact the main Cambodian refugee camps are located in the region of the Cambodian frontier. I shall therefore be able to

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consider possible increases in aid to these countries and the possibility of political actions and decisions which may make Community aid more effective and which at the same time may free the Cambodian refugees from pressure and from the excessive influence which the Khmer Rouge at present exert over them, particularly in certain border camps.

NEWENS (S). — On a day when some Members of Parliament have expressed dissatisfaction at the extent to which the Commission is prepared to work with and give proper weight to decisions taken by Parliament, may I ask directly whether the Commission accepts the terms of the resolution which was adopted by Parliament on 23 November and what reservations it has about that particular resolution?

In view of the fact that forces belonging to the coalition in which the Khmer Rouge are a dominant factor are advancing fast, is there not a case for sending a fact-finding mission, as asked for by Mrs Banotti, immediately in order that we can step up aid there? Otherwise, the situation may have so deteriorated that it will be too late.

MATUTES. — (ES) I welcome the good sense and the goodwill reflected in that question, but I am absolutely convinced that in view of the organizations through which the Commission is channelling its aid, there is no doubt about its appropriate and effective distribution.

With regard to the Cambodian internal military problem, I believe it is better tackled not so much by a fact-finding mission as by the resolutions agreed to by the members of the United Nations Security Council who, in their recent meeting in Paris, issued a communiqué seeking to strengthen the role of the United Nations and to ensure that free democratic elections are held without any kind of pressure from outside so that the Cambodian people may freely express their will in conditions of security and with the resources made available. These are in fact the UN Security Council's own missions and not those of the Commission, which for the moment is sending its aid through the most appropriate channels and in the most effective possible way. To seek to interrupt this aid now on the basis of the results of a fact-finding mission would not help to solve the problems but would make them worse, in view of their urgency.

COX (LDR). — I would like to ask the Commissioner whether, in the course of his visit to the camps, he will make enquiries about persistent reports that UN food aid is finding its way not to refugees, but to the Khmer Rouge and whether he will report on the matter to this House on his return?

MATUTES. — (ES) I said before that the purpose of my visit to the refugee camps was to check all these questions personally, but I think I have already replied previously to that specific question.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 45 by Mr Romeos (H-574/89):

Subject: Community aid for the resettlement in Greece of refugees from the Black Sea area

Greece is facing serious difficulties in resettling and caring for the steadily increasing flow of refugees from the Black Sea area of the Soviet Union.

Does the Commission intend to provide special emergency aid from the relevant Community fund to support the refugee resettlement programmes?

What overall strategy does the Commission have for tackling the problem of refugees from the States of Central and Eastern Europe in the long term?

PAPANDREOU (GR), *Member of the Commission*. — Indeed, the Commission is aware of the problems raised by the increasing inflow of refugees from the Pontian region of the Soviet Union into Greece. In 1989 about 7 000 people of Greek origin migrated to Greece from that region, and according to estimates by the refugee organizations in Pontus it is expected that the total number of such people who wish to emigrate to Greece over the coming 4 to 5 years may amount to 15 000 per year. It is true that the plan for a Community support scheme agreed with Greece does not include action on behalf of this category of immigrants because the problem arose after the agreement concerning the submission of the plan. However, we are in touch with the Greek authorities with a view to defining a global approach to the problem, always of course within the limits of the restricted financial possibilities open to us, and we know that the Greek administration is now looking into the situation of refugees, in relation to their standard of living, to the level of education and training that they offer, and to their need for employment. If the Greek Government requests it, the Commission can finance a study on the status of those refugees and the possibility of absorbing them into Greek society, as it has already done for refugees to the Federal German Republic.

As regards the second part of your question, there is a serious problem in the Federal German Republic because there are many hundreds of thousands of migrants from Eastern countries and the Federal Republic has included in the Community's support scheme programmes that provide for the intervention of the European Social Fund for those migrants during the period 1990-92. Of course, the programmes in question do not discriminate, but it is envisaged that a large proportion of the European Social Fund that has been approved for the Federal German Republic will include action on behalf of refugees from Eastern countries, and of course, in consultation with the German Government, that framework can if necessary be re-examined.

ROMEOS (S). — (GR) I thank the Commissioner. His answer was fairly detailed, but not entirely satisfactory. I will add to the figures she gave that the refugees who have already arrived number not 9 000, but already

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some 15 000. The rate will indeed be that quoted, perhaps 15 000 each year, so we are talking about a number which is especially significant for a country facing our well known problems, and it is consequently quite clear that the problem of such a large number of refugees is not one that Greece can deal with alone, nor even with the share of the Social Fund to which it is entitled, as you mentioned in connection with Germany which perhaps does not have the same problems that Greece has. I must point out, and in any case we had a previous discussion with Mr Andriessen, that when the Community very rightly shows its solidarity towards the countries of Eastern and Central Europe in facing their economic problems, it should display analogous solidarity towards Community countries with problems generated by the changes in those countries. Consequently, I would like an answer about whether the Community is to set up any special programme for the professional and social absorption of those refugees.

PAPANDREOU (GR). — I recognize the problem. The figures I gave refer to the day when we obtained them. The problem is getting worse owing to the situation in the Soviet Union, and may well become worse still. However, I should point out that the money available from all the funds has already been distributed to the Member States. There is a small reserve used for Community initiatives resulting from proposals either by the Commission or by the Member States. We are in touch with the Greek Government, and are considering financing a study to examine the problem, but not to deal with it.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) The answer was indeed a full one, and revealed the interest shown. Yet, one question remains. Why does the Commissioner say that from that reserve fund, which is in any case small, it is for a start under consideration to give something, following a request by the Greek Government, to finance a study? But what study? It is the Greek Government which is supposed to submit a study, a programme. Thereafter, the question is whether the reserve will be used and whether, since an unforeseen situation has arisen — it is not a natural disaster, but is somewhat analogous to one — it might be possible to provide an extraordinary sum over and above the reserve in question. The problem exists, the Greek Government will make the relevant submission, and it follows that we ought to 'pay up'.

PAPANDREOU (GR). — I said that the Commission is disposed to finance a study since the Greek Government wants to carry out a more specific investigation of the specific needs of those people, as regards either training or job finding. We have not had the proposal yet. We are in touch with the Greek Government and will try to do what we can. Similar problems are being faced by other countries, such as West Germany. We have some margin, but very little. The money available for Community initiatives is very little. Already much of it

has been used up by Common initiatives but when we receive specific proposals we will try to help.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 46 by Mr Anastassopoulos (H-573/89):

Subject: Small number of Greek officials in Grades A3 to A1

How does the Commission explain the fact that, contrary to Article 27 of the Staff Regulations of Officials, which provides for geographical balance to be maintained in filling posts, in Grade 3 and above there seem to be far fewer Commission officials from Greece than from Belgium, a country with a similar population, and the same number as Denmark and Ireland, countries with less than half the population of Greece?

How does it explain the fact that the number of posts given to Greek officials is comparatively smaller?

CARDOSO E CUNHA, Member of the Commission. — (PT) The recruitment of Community officials must naturally have regard to a very broad geographical base, that of the Community.

As the Honourable Member knows, the European Staff Regulations do not lay down any quotas and I think it would be a bad solution to set out on that road. However, the Commission naturally gives special attention to preserving the best possible geographical balance for filling posts in the Commission.

In the particular case of Greece it is natural that the published figures should be comparable either with slightly smaller but older member countries such as Ireland or Denmark, or alternatively with a more recent member country of identical population, such as Portugal.

I have here the latest figures published for this month — January 1990 — and I see that the numbers of Greek officials in Grades A 1, A 2 and A 3 are at present in perfect balance with those of Danish officials — you are right when you say it is a smaller country — and also with those of Portuguese officials, or with some slight advantage as Portugal has the same population. However, if the Honourable Member checks the total number of Grade A posts he will find that of those four countries Greece appears clearly in the lead with 178 Grade A officials as against 131 Portuguese, 119 Irish and only 92 Danish. He is right to make the comparison with Belgium, which traditionally has a greater percentage owing to the fact that many Community departments are in fact located in Belgium. With regard to the level of duties performed by Greek officials, I must say that the Greek staff occupy positions of equal importance to those of other nationalities: a Greek Director-General has charge of the Directorate-General for Energy and there are Greek officials of Grades A 2 and A 3 in nearly all the directorates-general, particularly in departments dealing with very important 'dossiers' such as social affairs, agriculture, regional policy and coordination of structural Funds.

CARDOSO E CUNHA

This does not mean that the Commission considers the problem closed and naturally it will take the Honourable Member's question as a cue to continue to pay attention to geographical distribution. And now there are methods, namely an active policy in the sphere of recruitment, to correct any imbalances which may appear in the course of time.

The new scheme for appointment of staff in intermediate grades, in force for a year past, should also in time tend to increase the number of Greek officials at that level.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ROMEOS

Vice-President

ANASTASSOPOULOS (PPE). — (GR) I would like to thank the Commissioner for his comments, but let me remark that they do not cover the issue. I do not want to go into detailed comparisons, because in any case I don't have the time. I note that it is established that the staffing, as is in any case evident from the tables the Commissioner showed us, is numerically much smaller for Greece when account is taken of the geographical criteria and the balance to which he referred. I note the Commissioner's promise that he will try to correct the imbalances. When I say that relatively limited responsibilities have been assigned to senior officials from Greece, I mean that out of the 24 senior Greek officials whom he himself mentioned in his answer, six or seven are merely used as advisers but have no specific duties. How then can he maintain that they have areas of responsibility?

CARDOSO E CUNHA. — (PT) I can understand that there may be some general or specific dissatisfaction on a problem such as the Honourable Member mentions, but I must absolutely reject any idea that in the division of responsibilities within the Commission there is any intention or any special concern to favour or prejudice one nationality to the advantage or disadvantage of others. Some Greek officials, just like any other nationality, are of the highest quality (naturally not all, as with any other nationality) and promotion is naturally by way of selection. Greece, through having acceded more recently than some other Community States, may possibly not yet have attained a balance.

I ask the Honourable Member to be good enough to reflect and to accept that we take scrupulous care to maintain this respect and this equilibrium. Both my staff and I are constantly at your disposal to keep this problem under review and to attempt if necessary at recruitment level to correct any existing imbalance. The Commission's intention is to strike a geographical balance and all the Honourable Member's efforts will certainly be in line with ours.

NIANIAS (RDE). — (GR) I would like to inform the Commissioner that in Directorate-General XXIII,

which was only established at the beginning of January 1989, two Greek staff members were serving as Heads of Division. Now, neither is any longer in post. One was transferred, the other became an adviser, and I wonder why those two Greek officials, who are extremely competent as is well known at least in many circles, were treated in this unusual way. I don't want the Commissioner to tell me that it was because there were two staff members at the same address, because there are another two of the same nationality at the same address. Consequently, I ask him how he can explain this unusual treatment of the two staff members in question?

CARDOSO E CUNHA. — (PT) I do not think we can deal with individual cases in this Assembly. However, a reference has just been made to cases in a directorate-general for which I am responsible and in those circumstances I am quite able to reply.

There is no truth in what has been said. The officials are both in Directorate-General XXIII. What I said, basically in reply to the original question by Mr Anastassopoulos, was that the Commission will make neither any negative discrimination nor any positive discrimination. In other words, all the officials deserving promotion on grounds of merit will be promoted; the officials who are not worthy of promotion will not receive it, whether they are Greek, Portuguese or of any other nationality. I think it is quite improper to be raising individual questions in the context of a debate in Parliament. My conscience is completely clear: various Greek officials work with me and I have the highest opinion of some of them. Individual cases such as those mentioned cannot in any way make a rule.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 47 by Mr Galland (H-538/89):

Subject: Improvement of road safety in Europe

To promote road safety and the rationalization of certain technical standards employed by European car manufacturers, does the Commission not think that speed limits on roads and motorways in the Twelve should be harmonized as a matter of urgency?

VAN MIERT, *Member of the Commission*. — (FR) In the communication on speed limits that it submitted to the Council in January 1987, the Commission concluded that it was necessary for the Community to adopt a directive setting legal speed limits, taking account of constraints relating to road safety, the environment and energy consumption. Moreover, this communication was in line with the concern expressed by the European Parliament in its resolution of 18 February 1986 taking the view that adoption of Community rules on speed limits was a measure indispensable for promotion of road safety. Following up that communication, the Commission submitted a proposal on commercial vehicles to the Council on

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11 January 1989. The Commission saw this proposal as a way of giving priority to speed limits for this category of vehicle, bearing in mind the special risks created by heavy goods vehicles when driven too fast. The Economic and Social Committee has since given its opinion on this proposal and the European Parliament's Committee on Transport is examining it, but has not yet delivered its opinion. I think there will be an opportunity to discuss it here next month.

I have to tell you that views in the Council of Ministers differ very widely on this, some Member States being of the opinion that the Community has no competence in this area. The countries concerned are Germany, the United Kingdom and Denmark. So there is a minority on the Council of Ministers able to block discussion of road safety issues, and Parliament must appreciate that. I find it regrettable. We try to bring this issue up time and again, given that our legal staff and the Council's Legal Service are of the opinion that the Community definitely does have competence.

I end by saying that if Germany, for instance, is taking a hostile view on Community competence, it is mainly because of the problem of speed limits. That is the fact of the matter, the position that the Commission finds itself in, but we are still aiming to get the Council to discuss the proposal that we currently have on the table, on your table and the Council's.

GALLAND (LDR). — (FR) Mr Commissioner, thank you for your very specific answer.

One comment: in your January 1987 draft, you referred to the environment, energy conservation and road safety as criteria. You did not include distortion of competition among the criteria you mentioned. But when we find that two Community countries, Germany and the United Kingdom for instance, are not in favour of the draft, there are clearly factors involved that have to do with distortion of competition, bearing in mind the types of vehicle they produce, which are put at an advantage by the lack of harmonization of speed limits.

That is why I think it would be a good idea for you to add this factor, which is manifestly a problem, as all motor manufacturers are aware.

A specific question: do Germany, the United Kingdom and Denmark take a different point of view on commercial vehicles and private vehicles? You produced a draft on commercial vehicles, but you could have done the same for private vehicles. Are these countries taking a different view on harmonization of speed limits for private vehicles and, if so, why, because this is becoming incomprehensible?

VAN MIERT. — (FR) The position taken by the Member States in question concerns our proposal on commercial vehicles. But there is no doubt that if they are opposed to that, they are bound to be opposed, perhaps even more determinedly, to one on private vehicles.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 48 by Mrs Caroline Jackson (H-541/89):

Subject: Conditions in Greek abattoirs

In view of widespread concern in the Community at the appalling conditions in Greek abattoirs, can the Commission state whether it has made, or can make, any funds available both to improve standards, particularly in smaller municipal abattoirs, and to help train abattoir workers in more humane techniques, or is it the case that the Greek authorities are failing to make use of the Community funds that might be available?

Mac SHARRY, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, in the context of the credits for Regulation 355/77 which concerns aid for the processing and marketing of agricultural products, aids can be awarded for improvement or construction of slaughterhouses and, more specifically, for the improvement of sanitary conditions in slaughterhouses. The projects have to be included in a specific programme for the meat sector or, in the future, in a sector plan as foreseen in the proposed new regulation actually submitted to the Council. These aids must have as a consequence the rationalization of the particular sector. They cannot be awarded to all slaughterhouses, but only to those where there is an economic justification, taking into account the minimum slaughtering capacity and a development plan. For the period from 1983 to 1989 an amount of 4.6 billion drachmas has been awarded to 15 slaughterhouses in Greece, including three small municipal abattoirs. Community funds are available for the training of slaughterhouse workers under the European Social Fund. An amount of 124 m drachmas has been awarded to Greece for this purpose. Finally, it cannot be claimed that the Greek authorities are failing to make use of the Community funds that are available although there has been some delay in the implementation of projects which have already been approved. There can be no doubt that this Community aid will lead to an improvement in the standards and killing techniques in Greek abattoirs.

IN THE CHAIR: MR GALLAND

Vice-President

JACKSON, Caroline (ED). — I am grateful for that optimistic reply, but can the Commissioner confirm the evidence provided by the Greek Animal Welfare Fund that many Greek abattoirs are not at this point able to comply with what is known as the pre-slaughter stunning directive? Does he not agree that he may have to spend an awful lot more billion drachmas if the Greek abattoirs are to be able to comply with the new slaughterhouse directive that he will soon be bringing forward?

Mac SHARRY. — I would like to say to the honourable Member that while it may sound optimistic, the reply was factual as well and we do hope that it does have the desired result and that it will enable slaughterhouses in Greece to comply with existing standards and any improved standards that are brought forward.

In relation to the so-called stunning directive the Commission has recently raised this matter with the Greek authorities. Those authorities have taken steps to remedy the situation and have indicated their willingness to institute legal proceedings where appropriate. The Commission's veterinary inspectorate already carries out on-the-spot checks in all Member States in slaughterhouses which are engaged in intra-Community trade. Any infringements of Community legislation concerning pre-slaughter stunning or slaughterhouse facilities are brought to the attention of the appropriate national authorities who are responsible for ensuring compliance with Community law. We shall take every step so far as we are concerned to ensure that is done in relation to the inspections that are carried out by the Commission staff.

DESSYLAS (CG). — (*GR*) I would like to refer to the deeper essence of the problem, by asking the Commissioner why, in his opinion, is there such delay and lack of progress in the special sector programme for the building of 21 large modern abattoirs in Greece? Is it because of high inflation, the escalation of initial building costs and the total level of finance required? Or because the plan is under overall review? Or due to lack of co-financing by the Greek authorities? Due to a lack of appropriate studies, or for other reasons, and if so, what reasons?

Mac SHARRY. — I have already said in reply that we have supported investment in 15 slaughterhouses including three municipal ones to the extent of 4.6 billion drachmas over the last six years. That does not mean that every single drachma has been spent or that all the works approved have taken place. There has been some delay in the implementation of plans and projects that have already been approved. We would hope that all of this money can be spent and there is no doubt whatsoever that it will make an enormous improvement in the conditions that exist in the abattoirs and slaughterhouses in Greece.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 49 by Mr Cox (H-542/89):

Subject: Monitoring of structural Funds expenditure in Ireland

In the light of the recently published Community support framework for Ireland can the Commission explain how the on-going monitoring process is supposed to work at sub-regional level, who is likely to be involved in this process and whether any role is envisaged for local Community development groups?

MILLAN, Member of the Commission. — The Community support framework for Ireland provides that the existing working group and advisory group in every sub-region will be merged to form a review committee to be regularly informed and consulted concerning the implementation of operational measures in, or significantly affecting, the sub-region concerned. The review committees will be composed of representatives of the authorities and other bodies which constitute the working and advisory groups appointed by the Irish Government in 1988. A wide range of local interests will be represented on the review committee in every sub-region. It should be possible for other bodies such as local community development groups to communicate their views to the review committee on matters relating to the implementation of measures to be aided under the Community support framework.

COX (LDR). — I would like to thank the Commissioner for his response which is very much in keeping with what has been published in the Community support framework. As a supplementary question I would like to draw the Commissioner's attention to Article 4(1) of the Council Regulation No 2052/88 on the structural Funds which talks about Community operations being established through close consultations between the Commission, Member States, and the competent authorities at national, regional, local and other levels and says that each party would be involved in a partnership which would cover the preparation, financing, monitoring and assessment operations. He talks in his reply about the consultation regarding implementation. Could I put it to the Commissioner that this falls short of both the letter and the spirit of Article 4(1) and ask for his response to that?

MILLAN. — In all the discussions that I had with the government in Ireland and in other Member States, of course, from the Commission point of view we fully respected both the letter and the spirit of the regulations. In the case of Ireland it is well-known that there was a point at which there were differences of view between the Commission and the Irish Government. But I do have to say that the government's view has moved, I think quite significantly, and we now have an arrangement which I hope will be effective. Rather than argue about what may have happened in the past, the important thing now is to try to make the arrangements which have been agreed, and which are included in the Community support framework, work effectively.

McMAHON (S). — Is the Commissioner aware of the considerable unrest in the voluntary sector in the Republic of Ireland about the lack of consultation by the Irish Government? Is he also aware that the lack of the proper regional strategy and division of Ireland into proper regions makes it extremely difficult to plan EEC assistance?

MILLAN. — I cannot quite accept that as an accurate representation of the present position. As I have said,

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there has been quite a significant movement in this area. Obviously I want voluntary groups and others to be involved wherever that is appropriate. But there are limits to what can be done by way of formal committees in every kind of organization being represented. As I said in my original answer, it will be possible for voluntary groups to make their views known to the review committees. I hope that these review committees will be willing to listen to views from any kind of legitimate local interest. The important thing now is to get the implementation of the operational programmes going and see how this system works. Incidentally, on that I would say that the Irish Government has confirmed to me that there will be a sub-regional breakdown of the expenditure under the operational programme. So we are making some very significant progress in this whole area.

LANE (RDE). — I compliment the Commissioner on his reply and on his general commitment to regional policy and interest in regional policy development in Ireland. I am sure he is well aware of the good work done by the Shannon Development Company. This company has full responsibility for all regional industrial development and tourism in the mid-west area. This is a truly regional instrument for channelling structural Funds and for monitoring their uses. My concern is that the Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr Des O'Malley, prior to the June 1989 election, expressed a view that this company should have its overseas section removed. This would have a devastating effect in the area. In view of the Commission's commitment to regional policy, would he convey to Mr O'Malley, the Minister concerned, the views expressed in this House and our need to retain that regional instrument?

MILLAN. — On the particular point of the range of responsibilities of that organization, this is an internal matter for the Irish Government and no doubt the honourable gentlemen will have conveyed his views directly to the government on this matter. I do not think I can comment on that. It is outside my area of competence.

BANOTTI (PPE). — Due note being taken of the Commissioner's request not to rake over the past, could he perhaps tell us if the Commission has any intention of monitoring who will actually be on the review committees and will the voluntary organizations be entitled as of right to sit on these review committees?

MILLAN. — The composition of the review committees will be a matter for the government but the honourable lady will know that on the working groups, for example, there were representatives of government departments, State agencies, city and county managers. On the advisory groups there were representatives of industry, trade unions, farmers, milk suppliers, cooperative organizations, young farmers' associations and a whole variety of other bodies, including of course

elected members of local authorities. Therefore there will be a wide representation but on the detail of it, if I might suggest to the honourable lady, she might like to take that matter up with Ministers direct. There will certainly now be a regional involvement in the monitoring of the Community support framework and I am sure that is widely welcomed.

PRESIDENT. — As the author is not present, Question No 50 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 51 by Mrs Ewing (H-547/89):

Subject: Hague preference figures for the UK quota of North Sea haddock and cod

Will the Commission confirm what figures were given for the UK quota for North Sea haddock and cod species in the supporting documents for the Hague preference Council Resolutions of 1976?

MARÍN, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — (ES) The resolution of the Council of Ministers of 3 November 1976 to which Mrs Ewing refers, in particular its Annex No 7, makes no reference to figures of any kind. It is therefore hard for me to tell her what figure was allotted to the United Kingdom simply because that decision, unless I am mistaken, does not contain any figures.

EWING (ARC). — Figures were given in the supporting documents but, leaving them aside, may I ask the Commissioner to bear in mind that the Hague preference emphasized the importance of giving special consideration to areas that were dependent on fishing and had no other alternatives. In view of the situation besetting the Scottish fleet, which is the second fleet of Europe, where half the fleet will be off the sea by the summer — and this is one of the major social catastrophes in the history of this Community — has the Commissioner tried to persuade the British Government to introduce lay-up and/or decommissioning schemes? I know there has been some reference to that by the Commissioner from articles I have read. Can he use his influence with the British Government, as we are facing a real social disaster in areas with no alternative employment?

MARÍN. — (FR) Mr President, I reply in French because the text is in French. I find no figures in the Council of Ministers' 1976 resolution. It is true that the Council of Ministers stated that 'the Council agrees that, in the course of applying the common fisheries policy, it is also important to take account of the vital needs of these populations' and, in this regard, the Council of Ministers paid very close attention to vital needs.

I am very sorry, I cannot answer a question that has never been raised in the Council of Ministers. Perhaps there has been a mistake.

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

McMAHON (S). — Would the Commissioner be prepared to publish the scientific evidence on which his recent round of quota cuts for haddock and cod in the North Sea was based? Secondly, would he be prepared to discuss with his colleagues in the Commission measures to help these very hard-hit areas, particularly in the north east of Scotland, whose livelihood depends on fishing?

MARIN. — (ES) After Mr McMahon's question I think I understand the problem. I think there is some confusion. You are referring not to the 1976 decision but, I imagine, to the decision on the sharing of the total allowable catch and quota adopted at the last Council of Ministers where, of course, the decision taken at the 1976 Council of Ministers was taken into account. But that is another question.

I confirm that the Commission has in fact made very specific proposals with a view to reducing catches in the North Sea. That was done on the basis of scientific reports which we received from the Institute in Copenhagen, which made it clear that the situation for certain North Sea fish stocks, particularly as regards haddock and cod, were truly alarming.

Consequently the Hague preferences, like other preferences in the common fisheries policy, can be implemented to the extent to which there are resources in the sea. To put it another way, if stocks are exhausted little by little because there is too much fishing, it is impossible to maintain any kind of preference for anything, simply because the fish will have ceased to exist. So I confirm that our intention is to operate a very restrictive policy in the matter of conservation of species.

Secondly I confirm that there is in fact a structural regulation in which those regions of the Community, as was the case with Scotland, which may have been affected — and I confirm what Mrs Ewing has said — are entitled to seek the relevant compensation and aid from the Community. That is not a special case for Scotland; it is a structural regulation which applies to the whole European Community.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 52 by Mr Musso (H-551/89):

Subject: Integrated Mediterranean programmes for Corsica

What progress has been made in the implementation of the IMP for Corsica and, in particular, what appropriations have been allocated and actually utilized for the first stage?

MILLAN, Member of the Commission. — The integrated Mediterranean programme for Corsica, which was approved by the Commission on 15 July 1987, consists of two parts. The first covers the period from 1986 to 1988 and the second, which was approved in July 1989, covers the period from 1989 to 1992. The IMP includes five subprogrammes costing a total of

ECU 109.1 million for the first phase and ECU 99.3 million for the second phase. Community assistance amounts to ECU 39.9 million for the first phase and ECU 37.2 million for the second phase.

At a meeting of the monitoring committee in Ajaccio on 13 November last, the authorities responsible for the management of the programme reported on progress made on each subprogramme in terms of the rate at which commitments have been made and taken up. The implementation rate in terms of commitments for the first phase of the IMP as a whole stands at 90%, with a payment rate of 59%. In terms of Community funding this represented at the time of the last monitoring committee meeting a commitment rate of 88% and a payment rate of 55%.

MUSSO (RDE). — (FR) I thank the Commission for its answer. I note that 59% of the payment appropriations have been taken up, because commitments have no significance at this stage, when we are talking about a first phase that ended some years ago.

My supplementary question is this: what has become of the unspent appropriations? And why have they not been spent?

MILLAN. — It is not true, of course, that commitments are of no significance because unless you get the commitment in the first place, you cannot subsequently get the payment. Obviously, I would like the payment rates in all these cases of IMPs to be taken up in accordance with the original programme, as rapidly as possible. There is no question of the money having been lost. The money is still available. I would say that the performance in this particular IMP is just about average for the IMPs as a whole.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 53 by Mr Arbeloa Muru (H-556/89):

Subject: Application of the extradition treaties

Is it not true that one of the best ways of combating international terrorism, crime and drug-trafficking is to ensure that the extradition treaties between the Member States are strictly applied and to sign and ratify the relevant international agreements? What steps are being taken in this field? What proposals have been drawn up?

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission is also of the view that strict application of the extradition treaties between the Member States and the ratification of the relevant international agreements is one of the best ways of combating international terrorism, crime and drug-trafficking.

In its White Paper on the completion of the internal market, the Commission defines the coordination of extradition regulations between Member States as an accompanying measure to the abolition of personal checks at internal Community borders. In its communi-

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cation to the Council the Commission has made its present position clear, i.e. that it would be of great assistance to this essential coordination if all Member States were to accept the European extradition agreements concluded by the Council of Europe in 1957, as well as the two additional protocols of 1975 and 1978 and were to discuss any reservations they may have with each other. We welcome the 1989 agreement by the Member States which has simplified the process for extradition requests.

At the present time, the Commission does not intend to propose Community regulations for this area. We do not entirely exclude the possibility, but we wish to await events. Moreover, all Member States have ratified the 1978 Council of Europe agreement on combating terrorism, on the basis of which terrorists can be extradited between Member States. The Member States have entrusted the Trevi Group with this task. The Commission is not represented in the Trevi Group and questions on this subject must be directed to the Council.

PRESIDENT. — As the authors are not present, Questions Nos 54, 55, 56 and 57 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 58 by Mr Titley (H-568/89):

Subject: Social clause and GATT

Is the Commission pressing for the principle of a social clause to be adopted within GATT? Such a social clause would link the protection of workers' rights.

If so — what progress has been made?

If not — how does the Commission believe we can protect the position of workers in the Third World and avoid social dumping especially after 1992?

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) We have already made considerable progress in the GATT negotiations and one of the aims of this round of GATT negotiations was a social clause which was to prevent international distortion of competition. Negotiations are not yet complete but we think that with the support of the developing countries — we have supported the developing countries in their aims — we will be able to reach appropriate agreement on this subject that is very important for them.

This is a subject that we are handling in the same way in the Community. On the one hand we must prevent social dumping, but on the other hand developing countries must also have a fair opportunity of competing internationally.

TITLEY (S). — Mr President, obviously the Commissioner is in a slightly difficult position as somebody else is meant to be answering my question. My concern

in relation to the social clause is that the information I have received, notably from a United States congressman, suggests that the European Community is less than committed to the concept of the social clause, and that unless we push very heavily for the social clause, it will be possible for multinational companies, particularly in Central and South America, to take advantage of inferior working conditions and poor labour relations to gain major cost advantages in the 1990s. I believe it is vital that the Commission should make a major effort to ensure that we secure this social clause.

BANGEMANN. — (DE) Mr President, the Commission is, as you know, a collegial body. We share our wisdom equally, so that I have no difficulty in standing in for Mr Andriessen — ah, there he is now ...

(Laughter)

ANDRIESEN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (NL) I am of course grateful to my colleague Mr Bangemann for dealing with the first part of the answer and, as far as I am concerned, he could take over the second part too, seeing that our knowledge and wisdom within the Commission is equally shared. For my part let me just confirm that we set great store by the social dimension being given its true place within international trade. We have supported action within GATT, we have had to note that this was seen in GATT, particularly by developing countries, as disguised attempts at protectionism. We continue to use our efforts to further this cause. If it cannot be done within GATT, then within the international labour agreement, but we find that a world trade system that lacks a clear, sound social status for the workers is not a world trade system with which we can declare ourselves in agreement.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 59 by Mr Raffarin (H-569/89):

Subject: Strategic development study for the Atlantic regions

At the meeting of the Community's regional planning ministers in Nantes on 24 November 1989, the Commission approved the financing of a strategic development study for the Atlantic regions.

Can the Commission state what it sees as the aims, budget, arrangements and timetable for this study?

MILLAN, Member of the Commission. — The Commission can confirm that in accordance with the provisions of Article 10 of the new Regional Fund Regulation, it has agreed to finance the study referred to by the Honourable Member. The principal object of this study will be to assess the impact of the internal market on those regions from Scotland to the Canary Islands which form the outer western boundary of the Community and which, as a consequence, face similar problems. An additional object is to promote cooperation between these regions. The timetable and the

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

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budget have not yet been finalized, but this information will be sent to the Honourable Member once it is available.

RAFFARIN (LDR). — (FR) I would like the Commissioner to know that I was delighted to hear his answer to this question. It shows that the Commission is carrying on with this initiative in favour of the Atlantic regions, following up the meeting of Ministers held in Nantes at the end of last year. This is the first sign that serious thought is being given to the Atlantic.

I consider this important, Mr Commissioner, for two reasons. The first of these is that it is necessary for the Atlantic to get a number of projects, development projects, under way. We have a number in the field of communications, but others are needed, notably in the areas of training and technology transfer. So this study is important, so that projects can be got under way. It is also important for the Commission to respond to this formidable mobilization of the regions, the towns and all districts, from Glasgow to Seville.

MILLAN. — I can confirm that, as the honourable gentleman has said, this matter was raised during the informal meeting of Ministers in Nantes last November and I have also had other representations about it. I think we have responded positively to the request to be involved in this study and we shall see what the results of that study are. I know there are many of these regions that attach very considerable importance to this.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 60 by Mr Zeller (H-571/89):

Subject: Expansion of the European high-speed-train network

Is the Commission planning to link the French TGV-EST project, connecting Paris and Strasbourg with the German ICE, and to extend it to Mulhouse and Basle, as a priority measure under the Community scheme to support transport infrastructure?

If so, when, and under what conditions, will the Commission provide funding to support this project which is of European interest?

VAN MIERT, Member of the Commission. — (FR) First of all, I thank Mr Zeller for having asked me this question, for it gives me the opportunity to say that the TGV-EST is indeed included in the possible plan, the master plan for high-speed rail travel that the Commission has submitted to the Council. At the last Council meeting, in December, it was decided to set up a working group made up of representatives of railway operators, national administrations and other interested parties to draw up an overall plan based on our draft, the agreed deadline for this being the end of the year.

Secondly, regarding the financial aspect, the unfortunate fact, as you know, is that the Commission has only very limited resources at its disposal, ECU

60 million, and it was thanks to the European Parliament that we got that. Last year a third of this little budget was devoted to a TGV project, but that was the TGV-NORD. Nevertheless, as you know, the TGV is included among our seven priority objectives for infrastructure funding. For that to come to fruition, the Community will need to be given greater scope, Mr President, and we are hoping that, in the discussions on the financial perspective, we can manage to have this adopted as a priority. It is of course the case that a project such as the TGV-EST *would* be eligible, I emphasize *would* be eligible to receive support, if appropriate. But that depends on a lot of things, as I have just explained.

ZELLER (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, thank you for calling my question. I shall be very brief, not to take advantage of your kindness.

I just wanted to point out how worthwhile it would be for the Community to make a financial contribution to this project. It is an eminently European project. The TGV-EST is manifestly European since one of the towns on the route would be Strasbourg, and it would also be going along the right bank of the Rhine and to northern Switzerland. I think it will be useful for the Commission to look at the possibility of allocating some funding, from 1991, since no money will be needed before then, to this obviously worthwhile project.

I thank the Commissioner for his willingness to give attention to this project as of now. I shall be making it my business to ensure that it does not slip Parliament's mind.

VAN MIERT. — (FR) I think Mr Zeller has made an additional comment. Once again, while not forgetting various things that are going to have to be decided on in the future, it is doubtless true that an integrated TGV network across the Community and even beyond the Community has to be regarded as a priority.

There are obviously going to be missing links, there are going to be sections of track that will not be profitable in themselves, and the Community ought to be able to give a helping hand. That is our philosophy. We are going to campaign for it, and we are counting on the European Parliament to give us all the support we need.

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, I am obliged to stop Question Time at this point, but I would just like to make a general point. Mr Langer, who has been present, throughout the sitting, has not been able to put his question. Why? Because in an hour and a half we have taken 15 questions, which makes six minutes per question. This is not in the spirit of Question Time and I appeal both to Members and to the Commission to make a special effort at the next Question Time to be more brief so that we can take a larger number of questions.

ZELLER (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, could you not suggest to the Bureau that a limited speaking time be

ZELLER

allowed, for instance three minutes for each Member? I think that would be a question of propriety.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Zeller, Members' speaking time is limited to 30 seconds. Generous as I am, I allow up to 45-50 seconds and then I wield my gavel. We have too many supplementaries that have nothing to do with the principal question and it is up to Members to show self-discipline.

Mr Vice-President in charge of relations with Parliament, we also have Commissioners who, no doubt with the best intentions, answer at greater length than can be accommodated by Question Time.

BANGEMANN, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, I too have of course thought about doing my best and the Commission is going to do its best to give answers that are short and sufficiently clear, but the answer is generally a little longer than the question. I am going to give thought to a method of allocating speaking time. Perhaps we could take the number of Honourable Members and the number of Commissioners present as the basis for allocating time?

(Laughter)

PRESIDENT. — The former chairman of the Liberal Group, who knows all the ins and outs of this Parliament, does not need me to tell him that the number of Members is largely made up for by the quality of Members present.

You are quite right, Commissioner, the answer is naturally longer than the question, but it must not be too much longer.

DESSYLAS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, to make Parliament's democratic control more substantial and deeper and to protect its rights, might it not be better to extend the time available for questions to the Commission? Because verbosity, from what I can see as a regular attendee at question time, is characteristic mainly of the answers given by Commissioners. Perhaps the time available for questions to the Council and to Political Cooperation ought also to be extended. In particular, though, question time to the Commission should be at least two hours long in my opinion.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Dessylas, I quite understand. The only possible solution, which I shall propose to the Bureau, is that — being bound by an agenda which provides for an hour and a half of Question Time and then a quarter of an hour for the Commission communication on action taken, the Commission should be able to intervene. If it is brief, and the Members in their turn are brief, it might be possible to extend Question Time, providing there are no interventions of up to 10 or 15 minutes, to go on until 8 p.m. If we were to do this now, we would still have five minutes, and, at the present rate, one question.

I shall pass on this proposal to the Bureau. You will appreciate, as things stand, that my business right now is to observe the Rules in their present form.^{1 2}

(The sitting closed at 7.55 p.m.)

¹ Action taken on the opinions of Parliament: see Annex.

² Agenda for the next sitting: see minutes.

ANNEX I

**ACTION TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO OPINIONS ON COMMISSION
PROPOSALS DELIVERED BY PARLIAMENT AT THE NOVEMBER AND
DECEMBER PART-SESSIONS**

As agreed with Parliament's Bureau the Commission reports on the action it takes in response to Parliament's amendments to its proposals and on disaster aid. This report covers opinions delivered by Parliament at the November and December part-sessions.

The opinions adopted by Parliament in November and referred to in the report dated 5 December 1989 (SP(89) 1828) are dealt with here only if new factors have emerged in the meantime. This report also refers to various reports adopted at earlier part-sessions, which have led to the Commission amending its original proposals.

A. COOPERATION PROCEDURE

1. First reading

1.1. Commission proposals to which Parliament adopted amendments that have been partially or totally accepted by the Commission

(a) The Commission has amended its original proposals as a result of the opinions delivered by Parliament in the following reports:

- *Report by Mr Megahy*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-72/89)
on the proposal relating to: Right of residence for employees and self-employed persons who have ceased their occupational activity

(COM(89) 275 final — SYN 200)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 11 December 1989, p. 52, 12 December 1989, p. 133

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 52

Amended Commission proposal COM(89) 675 final — SYN 200, transmitted to the Council on 21 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Estgen*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-77/89)
on the proposal relating to: Right of residence for students

(COM(89) 275 final — SYN 199)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 11 December 1989, p. 21, 12 December 1989, p. 133

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 59

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 675 final — SYN 199, transmitted to the Council on 21 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Lafuente Lopez*, adopted on 25 May 1989 (PE A2-108/89)
on the proposal relating to: annual accounts and consolidated accounts

(COM(88) 292 final — SYN 158)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 24 May 1989, p. 142

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 25 May 1989, Part II, p. 104

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 561 final — SYN 158, transmitted to the Council on 4 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Rothley*, adopted on 25 October 1989 (PE A3-56/89) on the proposal relating to: civil liability resulting from the use of motor vehicles

(COM(88) 644 final — SYN 165)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 23 October 1989, p. 29

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 25 October 1989, Part II, p. 22

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 625 final — SYN 165, transmitted to the Council on 6 December 1989

- (b) The Commission is preparing an amendment to its original proposal which will take account of the amendments its accepted during the debate on the following reports:

- *Report by Mr Seal*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-81/89) on the proposal relating to: frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of Pan-European land-based public radio paging in the Community

(COM(89) 166 final — SYN 193)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 12 December 1989, p. 147

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 63

- 1.2. *Commission proposals to which Parliament proposed amendments that the Commission is not able to accept*

None

- 1.3. *Commission proposals to which Parliament did not request formal amendments*

None

- 2. Second reading

- 2.1. *Commission proposals to which Parliament adopted amendments*

- (a) The Commission has sent the Council re-examined proposals as a result of the opinion given by Parliament on the following:

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 11 October 1989 (PE A3-40/89)

on the Council's common position on: payment of customs debt

(COM(82) 861 final — Amended proposal: COM(84) 198 final — SYN 25)
(Report by Lord Inglewood)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 10 October 1989, p. 48

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 11 October 1989, Part II, p. 15

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 590 final — SYN 25, transmitted to the Council on 13 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 11 October 1989 (PE A3-3/89)

on the Council's common position on: consumer credit

(COM(89) 201 final — Amended proposal: COM(89) 271 final — SYN 132)

(Report by Mr Hoon)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 10 October 1989, p. 50

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 11 October 1989, Part II, p. 18

Re-examined Commission proposal COM(89) 592 final — SYN 132, transmitted to the Council on 4 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 11 October 1989 (PE 83-43/89)

on the Council's common position on: Twelfth Directive on company law concerning single-member limited liability companies

(COM(88) 101 final — Amended proposal: COM(89) 193 final — SYN 135)

(Report by Mr Garcia Amigo)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 10 October 1989, p. 53

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 11 October 1989, Part II, p. 22

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 591 final — SYN 135, transmitted to the Council on 4 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 13 September 1989 (PE A3-8/89)

concerning the common position of the Council on: roll-over protection structures mounted in front of agricultural tractors

(COM(88) 629 final — SYN 164)

(Report by Mr Beumer)

Commission position at debate: The Commission rejected all the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 September 1989, p. 160

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 September 1989, Part II, p. 39

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 582 final — SYN 164, transmitted to the Council on 6 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 13 September 1989 (PE A3-9/89)

concerning the common position of the Council on: rear-mounted protection structures for agricultural tractors

(COM(88) 626 final — SYN 163)

(Report by Mr Beumer)

Commission position at debate: The Commission rejected all the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 September 1989, p. 160

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 September 1989, Part II, p. 40

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 582 final — SYN 163, transmitted to the Council on 6 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading*, adopted on 13 September 1989 (PE A3-7/89)

concerning the common position of the Council on: roll-over protection structures for agricultural tractors

(COM(88) 630 final — SYN 167)

(Report by Mr Beumer)

Commission position at debate: The Commission rejected all the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 September 1989, p. 160

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 September 1989, Part II, p. 38

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 582 final — SYN 167, transmitted to the Council on 6 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading,* adopted on 22 November 1989 (PE A3-74/89)

on the Council's common position on: pursuit of the business of credit institutions

(COM(89) 715 final — Amended proposal: COM(89) 190 final — SYN 120)

(Report by Mr Saridakis)

Commission position at debate: The Commission rejected all the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 20 November 1989, p. 13

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 22 November 1989, Part II, p. 22

Re-examined Commission proposal: (COM(89) 621 final — SYN 120, transmitted to the Council on 8 December 1989

- *Recommendation for the second reading,* adopted on 25 October 1989 (PE 83-42/89)

on the Council's common position on: personal protective equipment

(COM(88) 157 final — Amendment proposal: COM(89) 177 final — SYN 134)

(Report by Mr Mattina)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 23 October 1989, p. 20

Text of decision adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 25 October 1989, Part II, p. 1

Re-examined Commission proposal: COM(89) 586 final — SYN 134, transmitted to the Council on 4 December 1989

- (b) The Commission is preparing a re-examined proposal as a result of Parliament's opinion on the following proposals:

None

2.2. *Commission proposals to which Parliament did not request formal amendments*

None

B. CONSULTATION PROCEDURE REQUIRING ONE READING ONLY

1. *Commission proposals to which Parliament adopted amendments that have been partially or totally accepted by the Commission*

- (a) The Commission has amended its original proposals as a result of the opinions delivered by Parliament in the following reports:

- *Report by Mr Price,* adopted on 12 October 1989 (PE A3-28/89)

on the proposal relating to: scrutiny by Member States of transactions forming part of the EAGGF Guarantee Section financing system

(COM(89) 290 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 12 October 1989, p. 212

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 12 October 1989, Part II, p. 26

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 623 final, transmitted to the Council on 18 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Van Ouirve*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-89/89) on the proposal relating to: Right of residence

(COM(89) 275 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 11 December 1989, p. 21, 12 December 1989, p. 133

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 45

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 675 final, transmitted to the Council on 21 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Gomes*, adopted on 14 December 1989 (PE A3-83/89)

on the proposal relating to: French overseas departments — Poseidon programme and dock dues

(COM(88) 730 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 14 December 1989, p. 281

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 14 December 1989, Part II, pp. 98 and 108

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 677 final, transmitted to the Council on 21 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Lalor*, adopted on 23 May 1989 (PE A2-66/89)

on the proposal on the maximum permitted blood alcohol concentration for vehicle drivers

(COM(88) 707 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted all the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 22 May 1989, p. 26

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 23 May 1989, Part II, p. 29

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 640 final, transmitted to the Council on 8 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Coimbra Martins*, adopted on 24 November 1989 (PE A3-63/89)

on the proposal relating to: the Erasmus programme

(COM(89) 235 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 23 November 1989, p. 303

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 24 November 1989, Part II, p. 33

Amended Commission proposal: COM(89) 639 final, transmitted to the Council on 8 December 1989

- (a1) The Commission defended orally before the Council the amendments which it had accepted during the debates on the following reports:

- *Report by Mr Chiabrando*, adopted on 14 December 1989 (PE A3-85/89)

on the proposal relating to: Framework programme of Community activities in the field of research and technological development (1990-94)

(COM(89) 397 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 12 December 1989, p. 137

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 14 December 1989, Part II, p. 64

Discussed by the Council: 15-16 December 1989

(a2) The Commission defended orally before the Council the amendments which it had accepted during the debates on the following reports; the Council adopted the directives, regulations and decisions concerned on the dates shown:

- *Report by Mrs Junker*, adopted on 14 December 1989 (PE A3-90/89)
on the proposal relating to: Economic aid to Hungary and Poland
(COM(89) 538 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 December 1989, p. 195, 14 December 1989, p. 270

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 14 December 1989, Part II, p. 72

Adopted by the Council: 18-19 December 1989

- *Report by Mrs Junker*, adopted on 14 December 1989 (PE A3-91/89)
on the proposal relating to: Reduction in import levies on certain agricultural produce from developing countries
(COM(89) 554 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 December 1989, p. 195, 14 December 1989, p. 270

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 14 December 1989, Part II, p. 74

Adopted by the Council: 18-19 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Visser*, adopted on 20 January 1989 (PE A2-331/88)
on the proposal relating to: Vocational training for drivers of vehicles carrying dangerous goods by road
(COM(89) 339 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 20 January 1989, p. 344

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 20 January 1989, Part II, p. 36

Adopted by the Council: 4-5 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Deprez*, adopted on 24 November 1989 (PE A3-71/89)
on the proposal relating to: the Eurotecnet II programme
(COM(89) 355 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 23 November 1989, p. 298

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 24 November 1989, Part II, p. 23

Adopted by the Council: 18-19 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Badenes*, adopted on 26 May 1989 (PE A2-84/89)
on the proposal relating to: noise emissions from civil aeroplanes
(COM(88) 662 final)

Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 25 May 1989, p. 303

Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 26 May 1989, Part II, p. 229

Adopted by the Council: 4-5 December 1989

- *Report by Mr Thareau*, adopted on 27 October 1989 (PE A3-51/89)
on the proposal relating to: production structures in agriculture and marketing of agricultural and silviculture products
(COM(89) 91 final)
Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 26 October 1989, p. 235
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 27 October 1989, Part II, pp. 20 and 29

Adopted by the Council: 11-12 December 1989

- (b) The Commission is preparing an amendment to its original proposal which will take account of the amendments it accepted during the debate on the following reports:
 - *Report by Mr Seal*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-80/89)
on the proposal relating to: Coordinated introduction of pan-European land-based public radio paging
(COM(89) 166 final)
Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 12 December 1989, p. 147
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 67
 - *Report by Mrs Hoff*, adopted on 14 December 1989 (PE A3-79/89)
on the proposal relating to: Administrative simplification in favour of small and medium-sized enterprises
(COM(89) 259 final)
Commission position at debate: The Commission accepted some of the amendments. Verbatim report of proceedings, 14 December 1989, p. 278
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 14 December 1989, Part II, p. 77
- 2. *Commission proposals to which Parliament proposed amendments that the Commission has not been able to accept*
 - *Report by Mr Tomlinson* adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-93/89)
on the proposal relating to: Decision empowering the Commission to indemnify the EIB against losses under loans for projects in Hungary and Poland
(SEC(89) 1643 final)
Commission position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 December 1989, p. 152
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 38
 - *Report by Mr Ortiz Climent*, adopted on 15 December 1989 (PE A2-98/89)
on the proposal relating to: Special measures to encourage the processing of mandarins, satsumas, clementines and oranges
(COM(89) 464 final)
Commission position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 15 December 1989, p. 321
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 15 December 1989, Part II, p. 22

- 3. *Commission proposals to which Parliament did not request formal amendments*

- *Report by Mr Siso Cruellas*, adopted on 15 December 1989 (PE A3-99/89) on the proposal relating to: trade electronic data interchange using the communications networks (TEDIS)
(COM(89) 482 final)
Commission position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 15 December 1989, p. 324
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 15 December 1989, Part II, p. 23

C. PROPOSALS COVERED BY THE BUDGETARY PROCEDURE

- *Report by Mr Tomlinson*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-96/89) on the proposal relating to: Draft general budget of the European Communities for 1990 — Section III (Commission)
Commission position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 December 1989, p. 152
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 29
 - *Report by Mrs Theato*, adopted on 13 December 1989 (PE A3-97/89) on the proposal relating to: Draft general budget of the European Communities for 1990 — Sections I, II, IV and V (Parliament, Council, Economic and Social Committee, Court of Justice and Court of Auditors)
Commission position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 13 December 1989, p. 152
Text of resolution adopted by Parliament: Minutes of 13 December 1989, Part II, p. 32
- Parliament gave favourable opinions on the following proposals, using the procedure omitting both report and debate*
- Proposal relating to: Amendment of Regulation (EEC) No 4007/87 in respect of Spain adopted on 15 December 1989
(COM(89) 479 final)
 - Proposal relating to: Conservation of fishery resources adopted on 15 December 1989
(COM(89) 562 final)

D. PARTICULARS OF EMERGENCY AID GRANTED BY THE
COMMISSION IN DECEMBER 1989

(a) Intra-Community emergency aid

Country/ Recipient	Amount (ECU)	Grounds	Adminis- tered by	Date of Decision
Portugal France Spain United Kingdom	1 200 000 (300 000 each)	Rainstorms	Governments	20.12.1989

(b) Aid to non-member countries

1. Financial aid

Country/ Recipient	Amount (ECU)	Grounds	Adminis- tered by	Date of Decision
Ethiopia	10 000 000	Famine	JRP ¹ CRDA ² RRC ³ LICROSS ⁴	14.12.1989
Ethiopia	650 000	Famine	Belgian MSF Dutch MSF	22.12.1989
Romania	1 000 000	Situation and developments	ICRC German Red Cross French Red Cross Méd. du Monde Dutch MSF	22.12.1989
Romania	5 500 000	Situation and developments	German Red Cross Italian Red Cross Méd du Monde Dutch MSF Belgian Caritas Villages roumains	24.12.1989

2. Food aid

Country/ Recipient	Amount	Grounds	Adminis- tered by	Date of Decision
Ethiopia	44 000 t cereals 900 t milk powder	Drought and famine	RRC ³ NGOs	6.12.1989
UNHCR	10 158 t cereals	Refugee camps in Senegal and Malawi	UNHCR	28.12.1989

¹ Joint Relief Partnership

² Christian Relief Development Association

³ Relief and Rehabilitation Commission

⁴ League of International Red Cross Societies

ANNEX II

FORMAL SITTING — PRESENTATION OF THE SAKHAROV PRIZE

IN THE CHAIR: MR BARON CRESPO

President

(The formal sitting opened at 12 noon)

PRESIDENT. — I shall now ask the Secretary-General to read out a statement on the award of the Sakharov Prize

VINCI, Secretary-General of the European Parliament. — Mr President, further to the resolution adopted by Parliament on 13 December 1985, the enlarged Bureau, by decision of 6 July 1988, instituted a Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought. The prize is intended to honour commitments, activities or achievements in the following sectors: the development of East-West relations with respect to the Helsinki Final Act and, in particular, cooperation in humanitarian and other fields, protection of the freedom of scientific inquiry, the defence of human rights and respect for international law, government practice in relation to constitutional law.

The Political Affairs Committee, by letter of 9 November 1989, forwarded the list of candidates for the Sakharov Prize to the enlarged Bureau which, at its meeting of 22 November 1989, decided by secret ballot to award the Sakharov Prize for 1989 to Mr Alexander Dubcek. This decision of the enlarged Bureau was announced to Parliament at its sitting on 22 November 1989.

(Loud and sustained applause)

PRESIDENT. — Mr Dubcek, ladies and gentlemen, when peoples decide to speak freely, their societies march firmly forward towards justice and democracy. While silence favours oppressors, speech points the way to respect and dignity.

To the ongoing dialogue which has been taking place among the peoples of western Europe since 1950 has now been added a torrent of renewal and revolutionary change in other European countries. History, in its onward flow, nonetheless leaves on the present the indelible stamp of all truly enduring truths.

When we decided to honour Andrei Sakharov by giving his name to this prize, he was still living in internal exile. When the enlarged Bureau decided to award the prize to Alexander Dubcek, the latter was living, ignored and reviled by the authorities of his country, in his native Slovakia.

In recent months we have witnessed, with hope in our hearts, the profound political and social changes taking place in central and eastern Europe.

Prior to the terrible events in Romania and the subsequent popular uprising which put an end to the Ceausescu dictatorship, we had all hoped that the peaceful wave of change could spread throughout eastern Europe without bloodshed. Now we are very mindful of the fact that the new situation brings with it new responsibilities for all Europeans, and especially for the European Community.

Parliament has always been active in the defence of human rights and in condemning violations thereof throughout the world, and especially in those European countries under Soviet influence.

Allow me now, here where in the past we have strongly condemned the arbitrary detention and persecution of the writer, Vaclav Havel, to warmly salute President Havel and convey to him our heartfelt good wishes for the success of his mission and peace and wellbeing for Czechoslovakia.

Although, Mr Dubcek, this is the first time most of us have actually had the opportunity of meeting you, I am sure that for many of us it is though we are greeting an old friend who has

PRESIDENT

been with us over the last 20 years and who is inextricably bound up with our youthful memories.

When your country was so brutally invaded in 1968, you were as old as I am now. That summer we, the young people of Europe, shared in our millions the frustration and disappointment of the Czechoslovak people, watching with a deep sorrow and sense of impotence as the abuse of strength and unreason barred the road to hope and democracy.

Before entering on political office, Mr Dubcek, you were a modest farmer, but above all an active fighter against the Nazi occupying forces. You subsequently studied law and led your country to what came to be known as the 'Prague Spring'. In 1970 you once again became a simple citizen.

Since then, what solitude and silence must have accompanied your meditations in the forests of Bratislava! But believe me, there are times when silence speaks louder than millions of words of empty political propaganda.

Parliament's decision to award you the Sakharov Prize was taken in the same week that witnessed your re-appearance, addressing the crowds and claiming once again an active role in the political life of your country.

Just as in 1968 we were deeply moved by the sight of tanks in the streets of Prague, in November, I can assure you, we watched with astonishment, but full of hope and joy, as you once again stood before a cheering crowd in St. Wenceslas Square, putting paid with your words to a hopeless system and a corrupt and inefficient political class.

Now, as you did then, you support a peaceful transition to a new democratic order in which human rights are respected. I should like, on behalf of this House, to say to the President of the Czechoslovakian National Assembly, and to all his fellow citizens who are following this ceremony in their homes, that in awarding this prize we wish to send our affectionate greetings to the entire Czechoslovak people and to mark our heartfelt remembrance of those who gave up their lives in the fight for freedom and democracy.

Mr Dubcek, ladies and gentlemen, in November, when the award of the prize was announced, Andrei Sakharov himself expressed an interest in being present at the award ceremony. Subsequently, fearing that the award would be made in December and that he might not be able to attend, he wrote a message to be read out on this occasion. No one could then foresee that, sadly, his absence was to be permanent. His words, however, remain.

It is now, Mr Dubcek, my honour and privilege, as President of the European Parliament, to read the message which Andrei Sakharov wrote on 10 December 1989 and which his widow recently forwarded to me.

'It is with joy that I heard of the award of a prize to Alexander Dubcek, one of the principal leaders of the "Prague Spring".

At that time, 20 years ago, his friends and enemies alike clearly understood the significance of the events in Czechoslovakia.

His enemies saw a huge threat to the positions of power they commanded, to their privileges, to their whole administrative and coercive, in essence, Stalinist system. They responded to 2,000 words with thousands of tanks, thus dropping their mask in front of the whole world.

His friends remembered for ever the tragedy and heroism of that August in Czechoslovakia, and the shame felt for their country, whose honour some reckless individuals tried to defend on 25 August in Red Square.

1968 influenced my own destiny. The spring brought hope; it encouraged me to work on my "Reflections". August destroyed my illusions and spurred my public activity. The same was true for many of my friends. The handful of Soviet dissidents drew from the Prague Spring the strength they needed to carry on a tough battle for many years, with *glasnost* their only weapon.

One cannot help thinking of the years of stagnation which followed the storm of 68 without bitterness. But the fire was smouldering underneath the ashes.

I am convinced that the "breath of freedom" which the Czechs and Slovaks enjoyed when Dubcek was their leader was a prologue to the peaceful revolutions now taking place in Eastern Europe and in Czechoslovakia itself. Again they are setting us an example! And again their enemies are afraid!

PRESIDENT

I congratulate Alexander Dubcek with all my heart, I admire his perseverance and wish him strength, health and success. To him and all our friends in our stricken countries!
10 December 1989, signed Andrei Sakharov'

(Loud and sustained applause)

DUBCEK, *President of the Federal Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia* ¹. — Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, there are times in all our lives which we are destined never to forget. This is such a moment for me.

I spring from a people which began to build a State in the seventh century. When, in the ninth century and on the territory of the Greater Moravian Empire, Constantine and Methodius preached to the East the doctrine of tolerance and love of one's neighbour, they created the conditions for the mutual enrichment of the civilizations then extant and for the gradual development of a unique and intensely humane European culture.

These were the values invoked by George of Podebrady, King of Bohemia, when, in the second half of the fifteenth century, he sought to found the first European union. The same spirit animated Jan Amos Komensky, known as Comenius, the teacher of nations, who held that no nation should take arms against another. And, later, the work of Tomas G. Masaryk and Milan Rastislav Stefanik pointed towards a more just organization of Europe in which States, peoples and individuals would be richer and freer.

I owed it to myself to recall these pages of our history. When you took the decision to award me the Sakharov Prize, I was still a citizen deprived of his human rights. Since then, events in our country have developed at a vertiginous speed. The people of Czechoslovakia, as if wishing to make up for lost time, remembered its finest traditions and took its destiny into its own hands.

True to the humanistic and democratic traditions of earlier generations of Czechs and Slovaks, it set about the task of finding solutions to the problems confronting it with the methods which are characteristically its own. In doing so, it contributed, however modestly, to the creation of a community spirit in the Europe of today and tomorrow. It is for this reason that now, as I receive the Sakharov Prize, my thoughts are for those who have earned the right to the renewal and change currently taking place.

Even during the most difficult moments of their history, the nations which make up my country have never ceased to feel that they are part of humanity's great struggle for freedom. Right up to the present day, our history has been marked by the struggle for truth and the conviction that truth will be victorious, as well as a profoundly democratic spirit and the struggle for social justice.

The recent changes in Czechoslovakia, with its situated at the point where East and West meet, have contributed to the creation of a new situation in Europe. If together we could now find a solution which would enable our old and sorely tried continent to embark on an era of fruitful coexistence — an area which would mark a qualitative leap in the history of European civilization — we would no doubt be meeting a great need.

The changes taking place in our country offer Czechoslovakian politics the chance to contribute to this process by initiatives of its own which would allow all those European countries which so desire to pool their interests. The changes in Czechoslovakia have in particular shown that Europe is a living organism, bound together by the common history and destiny of its peoples and by the aspirations of the upcoming generations towards freedom and a better life. These changes have also demonstrated that barriers, whatever their nature, are an anomaly and that Europeans wish to live in a climate of understanding, unity and cooperation.

I and my friends wish to play an active part in developing relations in Europe.

Allow me to take advantage of the opportunity given to me today to make some remarks which I hope will help to clarify our approach to the development which we are currently living through.

The events now taking place in Czechoslovakia have their roots in the period which has come to be known as the Prague Spring. This was a movement whose programme

¹ Mr Dubcek's speech was delivered in Slovak.

DUBCEK

represented the first consistent attempt in Czechoslovakia to transcend the system of government bequeathed by Stalinism. The Prague Spring, with its programme of reform, profoundly shook the neo-Stalinist system and should, by its very nature, have led to the development in our country of a pluralist and democratic system.

It was no coincidence that this movement was born in Czechoslovakia. Between the wars Czechoslovakia was, from an economic, cultural and social point of view, one of the advanced countries of Europe. The process of reform in Czechoslovakia would no doubt have developed into a democratic system. However, the neo-Stalinist government of Brezhnev deemed developments in Czechoslovakia to be unacceptable. That is why they put an end to them via military force.

The Prague Spring was, it is true, crushed by this intervention. However, the ideals of freedom, sovereignty and social justice remained alive.

The people of Czechoslovakia, and in particular the younger generation, have embarked on a struggle to achieve a multifarious renewal of Czechoslovakian society in conditions which have now been entirely transformed. There are links between 1900 and today's revolutionary changes, but there are also differences between that movement and the one which we see today. In 20 years Europe and the world have changed, with major changes in the system of production, a general development of science and culture and major social progress in western Europe.

The politics of the countries of eastern Europe took no account of these changes in western Europe. The fact that they ignored them led progressively to general stagnation and to growing tension and discontent among the populations of the countries of eastern Europe. That was the main cause of the recent revolutionary changes.

Nonetheless, the true values of democratic and socialist movements still have, and will continue to have in the future, something to say to us, for we cannot shut our eyes to the paradoxes of the contemporary developed world. The most characteristic feature of the latter is the enormous inequality in the way in which it meets people's needs.

But there are also other problems which have not so far been resolved — those relating to food, health and the environment which are now coming to the fore. In his efforts to master nature and achieve ever greater prosperity, Man has reached the point where the success of his efforts has led to the devastation of nature's productive capacity and where this success is threatening the very basis of his existence. Moreover, funds are still being devoted to the manufacture of instruments capable of destroying humanity.

Contemporary developments in the world at large, in Europe and in my own country, ladies and gentlemen, are promising and fill us with hope. Let us do all that we can to ensure that these developments in Czechoslovakia and Europe are irreversible. Let us find ways, and do all in our power, to strengthen those tendencies which unite the peoples of Europe rather than those which still divide them. Let us together bend our efforts to finding the best possible solutions — those capable of placing the future of Europe on a secure foundation.

I wish, ladies and gentlemen, to take advantage of today's great event to state that all our programmes and declarations, all our invocations of order and the aspirations of the people must find embodiment in law. In my new role as the President of the Czechoslovakian parliament, it is my intention to seek to ensure that all international pacts and agreements on civil rights, from the UN Charter, through the Helsinki Final Act to the CSCE in Vienna, are incorporated into Czechoslovakian law.

We are going to act in such a way as to ensure that the democratic process for which various civic initiatives, groups, individuals and our two nations have worked are rendered irreversible.

It is for me a great honour that the prize awarded to me last November by the European Parliament bears the name of a great humanist, democrat and, above all, man — the unforgettable Andrei Sakharov. Mrs Bonner has said that Andrei Sakharov was a happy man. He was a man in advance of his time. His call for priority to be given to universal interests and for rapprochement within Europe are for us a constant source of inspiration.

I and my helpers will do all in our power to ensure that Czechoslovakia is at the centre of Europe not merely in a geographical sense, but culturally, scientifically and politically. I shall be more than happy to do all that I can to ensure that there is the same distance between Prague and Paris, London, Moscow, Rome, Madrid, Stockholm and other cities.

DUBCEK

By virtue of its revolutionary movement Czechoslovakia has opened its arms to Europe and the world. That is why I declare, from this podium of the European Parliament, that all citizens of Europe and the world are welcome in Czechoslovakia, without distinctions based on the colour of their skin, the languages which they speak or their political and religious convictions.

It is my hope that the Prague Spring will sound forth, in 1990 and all the years yet to come, to the tune of the great symphony of Europe's common spirit.

Thank you.

(Loud and sustained applause)

(The formal sitting closed at 12.30 p.m.)

ANNEX III

QUESTION TIME

I. Questions to the council

Question No 4, by Mrs Pollack (H-539/89)

Subject; Visa requirements of Schengen countries

Will the Council ask the Schengen countries to make available to the Parliament as soon as possible the newly-agreed minimum list of non-EC countries whose citizens will require a visa to enter these countries — plus the further list of visa requirements imposed by France?

Answer

Since the Schengen Agreement is outside the European Community framework, the Council is unable to respond to the honourable Member's request.

* * *

Question No 5, by Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza (H-544/89)

Subject: Regionalization of the Community

What practical measures has the Council adopted in order to implement the European Parliament's resolution of 18 November 1988 on the regionalization of the Community?

Does the Council not think that the strengthening of the Community's powers should be accompanied by a parallel process of political, economic and cultural decentralization at national level?

Answer

Several points made in the resolution to which the honourable Member refers were covered in the four Council regulations implementing reform of the structural Funds. They include, for instance, the increase in resources allocated to the structural Funds, additionality, the integrated approach and partnership.

The Council has not, however, received any proposal from the Commission as a follow-up to the resolution on Community regional policy and the role of the regions, which was adopted by the European Parliament at its sitting on 18 November 1988.

The territorial distribution of powers within each Member State is a matter solely for the State itself.

* * *

Question No 15, by Mr McCartin (H-615/89)

Subject: Harmonization of VAT rates

Agreement on the harmonization of VAT rates is needed immediately if Member States are to have sufficient time to adjust their rates gradually so that a truly common market can be established from 31 December 1992. Does the Council believe it can act in time to prevent a collapse of the 1992 programme?

Answer

The French Presidency's conclusions at the ECOFIN Council session of 18 December last state that Member States agreed as of now, in respect of the period up to 1 January 1993,

- to maintain their standard VAT rate within the band of 14 to 20 percent where it is already within that band,
- and, where the standard VAT rate is outside the band, that any change in the rate would be towards that band.

The French Presidency also noted in its conclusions that Member States undertook to seek agreement before the end of 1991 on:

- the rate band or minimum rate to be applied for the standard rate of VAT,
- the scope and levels of reduced VAT rates to be applied from 1993,
- the continuation of zero-rating on certain products.

The Council considers on this basis that there will be no delay on VAT grounds in bringing the single market into being.

* * *

Question No 16, by Mr Cushnahan (H-617/89)

Subject: Access to information on the environment

Does the Council believe that in democratic societies the citizens have the right to obtain comprehensive information on their environment and if so will it adopt without further delay the proposed directive on access to information on the environment?

Answer

The answer to the question is 'yes': the Council has already demonstrated its commitment to improving public access to information on the environment, particularly in its resolution of 19 October 1987 on the fourth action programme on the environment. This is proved by the fact that provisions along these lines are contained in certain acts on environmental matters adopted by the Council.

With regard to the proposal referred to by the honourable Member, at the close of its policy debate on 28 November 1989, the Council reaffirmed its agreement with the objective of the proposal and clearly indicated its intention of continuing discussions so that it can be adopted soon.

* * *

Question No 17, by Mr Valverde López (H-3/90)

Subject: Equal access for citizens of the European Community to information relating to Community law

The Official Journal of the European Communities contains legal provisions which are directly binding on both Member States and their citizens and which involve rights as well as obligations. In order to ensure that all citizens of the Community have equal access to information regarding Community law the Member States should take the necessary steps to ensure that the *Official Journal of the European Communities* is made available in libraries and other local bodies.

Would the Council state what is the position with regard to this problem in each of the Member States and what measures it intends to take to remedy the existing dearth of information for citizens of the Community, involving as it does an infringement of fundamental rights?

Answer

The Community ensures that the texts which it adopts are circulated as widely as possible via the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

The Council is also aware of the efforts made by all Member States to ensure that Community texts receive maximum publicity.

In this connection the Council would point out that the Commission has sponsored a system of depository libraries and European documentation centres covering all regions of the Community. These bodies receive Community publications free of charge.

If local organizations wish to provide further information on Community legislation in general, they can contact the Commission Information Office in each Member State.

* * *

Question No 18, by Mr Christiansen (H-4/90)

Subject: Statute for the European Company

The 1977 EEC Directive¹ on the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of businesses is of great importance in underwriting European employees' acquired rights under social and labour legislation. Much uncertainty has however arisen over the relationship between this directive and the Commission's new proposal for a Statute for the European Company.

In particular there is no basis for assessing the implications for European employees of the increasing internationalization of European undertakings, or how the various Member States have incorporated the 1977 directive into their national legislation. Article 9 of the Directive (77/187/EEC) provided for a report on the subject. The Commission has now had over 10 years to draw up that report. Why has it not produced one, and what has the Council done about this failure on the part of the Commission?

Answer

It is for the Commission to explain, as necessary, why it has not submitted a report. The last part of the question does not apply.

As I said in my programme address, the Irish Presidency regards the European Company Statute as the most significant proposal in the important field of company law. We look forward to making progress in Council on this proposal.

* * *

Question No 19, by Mr Blaney (H-8/90)

Subject: Compensation for the transport costs of outlying regions, in the context of the single market.

Is the Council aware that for outlying areas such as Ireland, Scotland, Greece or Portugal the burden of transport costs will aggravate the disadvantages they will suffer as a result of the creation of a single market, and will it request the Commission to table proposals for an appropriate system of permanent compensation to offset this burden?

Answer

The Council is aware of the problems which the peripheral regions of the Community face, and this is one of the reasons for the emphasis on transport infrastructure in the Regional Fund.

In addition, when the Council adopted on 22 December 1989 its Resolution on trans-European networks it stated that special attention should be given to peripheral areas.

Should the Commission make any proposals along the lines advocated by the Honourable Member, the Council would carefully examine them.

* * *

Question No 20, by Mr De Rossa (H-10/90)

Subject: EC nuclear inspectorate

Will the Council state whether it intends to establish a transnational EC nuclear inspectorate with powers to inspect nuclear power stations of Member States and ensure that they comply with European safety standards.

¹ OJ L 61 of 5 March 1977, p. 26.

Answer

In this field the Council could not act without a Commission proposal. No such proposal has been received or announced.

My Government would welcome appropriate proposals for the establishment of a nuclear inspectorate under the Euratom Treaty from the Commission.

* * *

Question No 21 by Mrs Ewing (H-344/89)

Subject: Discrimination against men in retirement age

In reply to my Written Question No 1787/88¹ to the Commission on the subject of discrimination against men, who cannot retire until they are 65 while women can retire at 60, I was informed that to end this discrimination the Commission had submitted a proposal for a directive to the Council on 27 October 1987 which would include measures to ensure that men and women would receive equal treatment in respect of the age at which they retire.

Has this proposal been discussed yet by the Council and, if so, what is the current situation?

Answer

The Council has examined the proposal for a directive referred to by the honourable Member on several occasions and latterly at its session on 12 June 1989, without however being able to reach agreement.

Therefore it is unfortunately not possible for the Irish Presidency to forecast when substantial progress will be possible.

* * *

Question No 22, by Mr Arbeloa Muru (H-382/89)

Subject: National and Community development policies

It is difficult for the developing countries to accept the idea of the Community as a single unit for the purposes of trade policy if we each continue to adopt an independent line on food aid and the debt problem, and in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Should the challenge of 1992 not make us reflect on these points as well, despite the fact that, technically, they have no bearing on the completion of the internal market?

Answer

In contrast to common commercial policy, responsibility for development policy does not belong exclusively to the Community. That being said, Community development policy has expanded considerably over the years. In addition to the many autonomous instruments which it implements, the Community maintains a vast network of contractual relations with practically all the Third-World States. It therefore takes its position on the international stage as the main interlocutor of the developing world.

One of the concerns of the Community and the Member States is to ensure close coordination of their respective actions and those of other donors, in particular the World Bank. This is reflected in the growing number of instances of co-financing and is in answer to a desire for effective action and mobilization of resources. The Commission plays a central role in this respect.

The same is true of emergency aid and food aid, where most operations are implemented in close cooperation with the Member States and other donors.

As for the debt problem, the Member States, with the Commission's support, have played an active role in international bodies with the aim of working out a concerted international strategy, particularly with regard to the poorest countries. The guidelines adopted at the

¹ OJ C 262 of 16 October 1989, p. 20.

Toronto economic summit in June 1988 basically represent the views of the Twelve on this subject.

The ACP States have recognized the positive role played by the Twelve and the specific measures taken by the various Member States concerned.

In conclusion, I do not think one can say that the Member States act separately in the various areas mentioned by the honourable Member. However, I am entirely of his opinion that completion of the internal market and progress towards European Union should lead Europe more and more to speak with one voice on the international stage.

* * *

Question No 23, by Mr Telkämpfer (H-519/89)

Subject: Tax relief for arms

I understand that the Council is presently discussing tax relief for the imports of, *inter alia*, flame-throwers, tanks, military satellites, laser weapons and weapons for nuclear, biological and chemical warfare.

Does the Council not consider that it would better serve peace in Europe if exemption from taxes and duties were granted to ecologically produced food, for example rather than to weapons? What political and legal justification does the Council see for tax discrimination against civil goods, e.g. food, *vis-à-vis* military goods which serve only to destroy human life?

Answer

Suspensions of customs duties on products are considered by the Council on the basis of proposals from the Commission. So far, however, the Commission has not referred any proposals to the Council concerning exemption from duties and taxes for ecologically produced food.

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II. Questions to the Foreign Ministers

Question No 28, by Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza (H-545/89)

Subject: Situation in the Baltic Republics

In view of the recent decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union to grant economic independence to the three Baltic Republics, do the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation envisage taking some kind of action with a view to assisting them?

Answer

The Twelve follow with great attention developments in the Baltic Republics, including their moves to secure a greater degree of political and economic autonomy. While the Twelve have no plans at present to provide assistance specifically to these Republics, individual Member States have undertaken numerous projects and joint ventures which foster economic cooperation with these areas.

* * *

Question No 29, by Mrs Santos (H-575/89)

Subject: Agreement between Indonesia and Australia on oilfield development in East Timor

Yesterday, on board a Boeing 707 the Indonesian and Australian Ministers of Foreign Trade signed an agreement prepared a number of years ago concerning the development of oilfields in East Timor, whose deposits are estimated at more than one billion barrels. This agreement clearly constitutes a violation of international law since it concerns East Timor, a non-autonomous territory which the UN considers as coming under Portugal's administrative authority.

A number of protests took place on the day on which this illegal act was committed, notably the repudiation signed by 19 organizations from various parts of the world supporting East Timor and the appeal by the Committee for the Rights of the Indigenous People of East Timor calling on the Portuguese Government to request the opinion of the Hague Tribunal on the validity of the agreement.

In view of the gravity of this situation, will the Ministers meeting in political cooperation agree to help oppose this violation by taking all the necessary emergency measures open to them?

Answer

The issue to which the honourable Member refers has not been addressed by Ministers meeting in the framework of political cooperation.

Portugal informed its partners of the steps it was taking in reaction to the agreement, which it considers as a serious violation of international law, and of its position concerning the defence of the rights of the East Timorese people in this issue.

The honourable Member would recall that the Twelve's position concerning East Timor was referred to in the report on progress towards European union as regards European political cooperation, of December 1989:

* * *

Question No 31, by Mr McMahon (H-20/90)

Subject: El Salvador

Have the Ministers meeting in political cooperation had the opportunity to state the outcome of the December meeting of the leaders of Central America and do they foresee any further developments of the peace process in Central America?

Answer

The December meeting of the Heads of State of the Central American countries which resulted in the San Isidro-de-Coronado agreement aimed at resolving several serious problems of the region and notably the demobilization of the Contras has met with the Twelve's approval.

Noting the firm rejection of any resort to the use force and the reaffirmation of support for processes of democracy and pluralism, the European Community and its Member States consider that this step confirms the will of the countries of Central America to define, themselves, solutions capable of re-establishing dialogue and negotiation and of restoring peace, efforts which the Community has consistently supported.

It is now up to all of the parties, both within and outside the region, to refrain from taking positions which would form an obstacle to the implementation of the decisions taken by the five Presidents.

The above-mentioned agreement adds to the number of instruments which could ensure the success of the peace process generally and of the San Jose VI meeting more specifically.

* * *

Question No 32, by Mrs Pollack (H-540/89)

Subject: Tropical Rainforests

What influence can the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation have on the United Nations Tropical Forest Action Plan (TFAP), to ensure better management of forests and reforestation of degraded lands?

Answer

The subject to which the honourable Member refers, although it is not specifically discussed in the framework of European political cooperation, is given very considerable attention by the Community. The honourable Member will recall that it was mentioned in the conclusions of the European Council in Madrid in June of last year. Detailed studies are in progress in the Council.

The Irish Presidency would wish to acknowledge the appositeness of the honourable Member's question. Global environmental issues are an increasingly important part of inter-State relations and must find their place in an overall view of international relations. To give one example, I will be ready at next month's EC-ASEAN Ministerial meeting to hear any view of the authorities of the host country, Malaysia, on this issue which is of pressing national concern to them. As the Taoiseach Mr Haughey has stated on a number of occasions, one of the priorities of the Irish Presidency is to further define a common approach to environmental issues in which their international dimension will be fully taken into account.

* * *

Question No 33, by Mrs Dury (H-543-89)

Subject: Reply by the Foreign Ministers to oral question No 148/89 on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Since the Foreign Ministers meeting in European political cooperation failed to answer my earlier question, I am obliged to table it again.

Do the Foreign Ministers meeting in European political cooperation intend to take steps to ensure that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is ratified quickly and in a uniform manner in all the Member States?

Answer

Subsequent to the submission of question No 148/89 the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly of the United Nations, a development which the Twelve welcome. As regards signature, ratification or accession to the Convention, this is a matter for individual Member States in accordance with their national procedures. A coordinated Twelve approach to ratification has not been discussed within the framework of European political cooperation.

* * *

Question No 34, by Mr Nianias (H-559/89)

Subject: The liberation of Famagusta in Cyprus

Mr Vassiliou, President of the Republic of Cyprus, speaking recently on the subject of his forthcoming talks with the UN Secretary-General and the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council, stated that the liberation of Famagusta would constitute a significant step towards a solution to the Cyprus problem, since it would create a climate of confidence and promote economic cooperation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. What steps do the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation intend to take to support this initiative at a time when there is an irresistible movement towards reconciliation and *détente* and the overcoming of divisions in Europe?

Answer

The honourable Member will be aware that the European Council of Strasbourg has urgently asked all parties to the Cyprus conflict not to miss the present opportunity for a just and lasting settlement that will safeguard the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

In this spirit, the Twelve are willing to cooperate with the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in encouraging any positive step likely to create and foster the necessary climate of confidence and cooperation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and to end the tragic division of the island of Cyprus.

* * *

Question No 35, by Mr Pasmazoglou (H-267/89)

Subject: The looting of objects forming part of the Christian cultural heritage of Northern Cyprus

On 3 August 1989 a court in Indianapolis (Southern Indiana) ruled in favour of the Government and Church of Cyprus and ordered that four mosaics from the Church of Kanakaria which had been illegally exported from the island be returned to the Church of Cyprus. These mosaics had been stolen in 1979 and were found in the possession of an art dealer in Southern Indiana.

Will the Foreign Ministers say what action they have taken on the proposal contained in the resolution by Mr Coste-Floret adopted by the European Parliament on 20 May 1988¹ that UNESCO should be entrusted with the task of protecting the Christian and Hellenic cultural heritage in the occupied part of the island?

Answer

Aware of the Coste-Floret resolution dated 20 May 1988, the Twelve reiterate their firm stance that the cultural heritage in general ought to be duly protected. May I take this opportunity of paying tribute to the late Mr Coste-Floret, that respected Parliamentarian, European, and citizen of this city of Strasbourg. The position of the Twelve certainly applies to the Christian and Hellenic patrimony of the Northern part of the isle of Cyprus; the Twelve would wish to encourage initiatives by specialized UN bodies such as UNESCO to go ahead with a mission of preserving this precious heritage.

* * *

Question No 36, by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (H-562-89)

Subject: Human rights in Turkey

The report on Turkey 'Torture and unfair trial of political prisoners' again features accounts of systematic torturing during police interrogations of political prisoners.

There are also on this occasion reports of torture in military and civilian prisons. Nor can those accused always expect a trial worthy of the name.

Will the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation inform me as to what reaction to this report they have made known, or intend to make known, to the Turkish authorities?

Answer

The Twelve continue to monitor very closely the question of human rights in Turkey. Accordingly, the Turkish authorities are well aware of the special importance the Twelve attach to the strict respect and implementation by Turkey of the whole range of engagements which this country has freely subscribed to by its adhesion to international conventions in the field of human rights.

* * *

Question No 37, by Mr Ephremidis (H-580/89)

Subject: Torture and assassination carried out by the military government of the Sudan

According to the Amnesty International report published at the beginning of December 1989, the military government of the Sudan is continuing to torture and assassinate villagers and detainees in its operations in the south of the country.

So far the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation have merely expressed their concern for human rights in the Sudan and the Community has failed to take any specific and effective measures; is this the best way of protecting the thousands of innocent persons in the Sudan whose very lives are at risk?

¹ Doc. A2-317/87, OJ C 167 of 27 June 1988, p. 146.

Answer

I thank the honourable Member for this opportunity to inform the European Parliament on the action taken by the Twelve in Sudan.

The Twelve, in their statement of 10 November 1989, deplored the resumption of fighting in the South and the resulting suffering and loss of life and called for respect for human rights in Sudan, in particular for displaced persons, prisoners of war and other persons in detention.

In addition the Twelve have carried out a number of urgent *démarches* to the Sudanese authorities — the most recent on 5 and 14 December 1989 — on the need to ensure that relief supplies are speedily delivered by air to the affected populations.

The Twelve will continue to impress upon the Sudanese authorities the need to respect human rights.

* * *

Question No 38, by Mr Romeos (H-599-89)

Subject: Verification of reductions and withdrawal of conventional weapons

The conventions on disarmament and the reduction of conventional forces in Europe provide for the withdrawal of considerable quantities of conventional weaponry.

How do the Ministers meeting in political cooperation propose to approach this problem given that verification of withdrawal is considered essential on both security and economic grounds?

Answer

The Twelve have on many occasions explained to the European Parliament their commonly held views on problems concerning disarmament and arms control in Europe. The question posed by the honourable Member concerning verification of reductions and withdrawals of conventional weapons in Europe does not fall within the competence of European political cooperation and has not been discussed by the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation.

* * *

Question No 39, by Mr Cooney (H-616-89)

Subject: European political cooperation: Submarines

Will the Foreign Ministers meeting in European political cooperation raise for discussion within the organs for political cooperation the subject of an approach by them to naval powers whose submarines make passage through the Irish sea with a view to requesting such powers to order their submarines to make a passage on the surface thereby obviating the danger of collision with fishing vessels and pleasure craft?

Answer

While the Twelve are aware of the problem in the domain of maritime safety to which the honourable Members refers, it is not under discussion in the framework of European political cooperation.

* * *

Question No 40, by Mr Wynn (H-17/90)

Subject: Human rights — Tibet

On 27 June 1989 at a meeting in Madrid the European Council made a declaration on China which, in the circumstances, applies to Tibet.

On 14 September 1989 the UK Government issued permits to GEC Marconi to sell radar equipment for China's fighter planes.

Is this not a direct contravention of the Council declaration?

In the same declaration the European Council agreed to raise the issue of human rights in the international forums and to ask for admittance of independent observers to attend the trials

and to visit the prisons. No evidence is forthcoming that this has been done in such places as the UN. Lhasa Radio reported that at a mass rally on 30 November the People's court sentenced 11 Tibetan men for distributing counter-revolutionary propaganda and other purely political offences which mainly concerned mimeographing leaflets in support of Tibetan independence. Five received sentences of over 17 years.

Is the European Council aware that these trials were taking place and what formal requests in international forums were made for independent observers to attend them?

Answer

The Twelve have fully conformed with the decision taken by the European Council to raise the issue of human rights in China in the appropriate international forums. I would draw the attention of the honourable Member in particular to the statement made by my predecessor, Mr Dumas, to the UN General Assembly.

The Twelve closely monitor the human rights situation in Tibet, and in 1989, before the events of 4 June, had made a *démarche* to the Chinese authorities on human rights aspects of the situation there.

The Chinese authorities are fully aware of the Twelve's position that respect for human rights is an integral part of the development of relations between States.

The specific question of the sale of radar equipment has not been addressed by Ministers meeting in the framework of European political cooperation but Member States continue of course to be bound by the commitments undertaken in the Madrid declaration.

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III. Questions to the Commission

Question No 50, by Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza (H-546/89)

Subject: Relations between the Commission and territorial entities other than nation States

Last year the Commission signed a financial cooperation agreement with Baden-Württemberg in connection with aid for a technical training centre in Lima (Peru). This was the first time that the Commission had been directly associated with a German *Land* in a development project.

Does the Commission intend to carry on encouraging direct relations of this kind with other subnational territorial entities and to extend them to other areas of cooperation?

Does the Commission not agree that the information offices of such territorial entities (*Länder*, autonomous communities, etc.) in Brussels are destined to play an important part in encouraging this kind of cooperation?

Answer

The project for technical assistance and the supply of training material to the higher technical institute in Lima (Peru) is the first undertaken in collaboration with a German *Land* (Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs, Small Businesses and Technology).

The Commission is keen to develop cooperation projects (economic cooperation and development or humanitarian aid) with developing countries with the support of Member States' regional or government bodies. Co-financing by the Member States can play a complementary or even a leading role in action undertaken by the Commission. In both cases the schemes which the Commission implements will be those outlined under the various budget headings on Community aid.

The information offices of the various local authorities have an important role to play by virtue of their knowledge of regional opportunities and their daily relations with various departments. It is to be hoped that the example provided by Baden-Württemberg will be followed by other instances of this kind of collaboration.

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Question No 54, by Mr Jackson (H-557/89)

Subject: Teachers in France

Qualified teachers from other Member States are apparently prohibited from employment as State teachers in France owing to the definition of State teachers as civil servants, and the requirement that all civil servants must be French citizens.

This has prevented one of my constituents from obtaining a teaching job in France.

Will the Commission state whether this prohibition is legal under EC law, and if so, the implications of the 1992 programme for this state of affairs?

Answer

The French provisions, to which the honourable Member refers, are contrary to Article 48(4) of the EEC Treaty and Regulation 1612/68 as interpreted by the European Court of Justice in Cases 149/79 (Judgments of 17.12.1980 and 26.5.1982), 66/85 (Judgment of 3.7.1986) and 33/88 (Judgment of 30.5.1989).

The Commission is aware of the French situation, and it has already drawn the attention of the French authorities to this matter as regards recruitment in primary and secondary education with a view to bringing the situation into line with Community law.

The Commission has undertaken general action *vis-à-vis* France and other Member States in order to eliminate nationality requirements from the conditions which are normally imposed on applicants for certain posts in the public service.

This action must be seen in relation to the implementation of other Community policies in other areas (e.g. Science Programme, Erasmus Programme etc...) and in relation to the completion of a genuine internal market by 1992 and the construction of a People's Europe.

This general action would provide an adequate solution to the particular case mentioned in the question. As regards this case, it would be helpful for the Commission's services to receive detailed information in order to establish a formal complaint.

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Question No 51, by Mr Schmid (H-558/89)

Subject: Community subsidies for the firm 'Südvieh/Südfleisch'

According to press reports investigations are currently being conducted by the public prosecutor's office into the German firm of 'Südvieh/Südfleisch' on the grounds of subsidy fraud involving EAGGF funds. What are the projects and amounts of subsidy involved, how many of the firm's projects have been subsidized to date and for what amount, and how will the Commission proceed further in this matter?

Answer

EAGGF Guidance Section investment aids under Regulations 17/64 and 355/77 have been given on a total of 14 occasions for different plants belonging to these firms, over the years since 1969. The total value of the aids granted is 16.6 million DM.

The Commission is aware of press reports that the firm Südfleisch has a dispute with the Bavarian Administration over aids given by a local authority for investments in plants at Nördlingen and Cham. No Community aids are involved in this dispute. However, I am in a position to inform you that my services are currently enquiring into this matter and have written to the German authorities requesting further information. In the event of there being a problem, such as a non-notified State aid (as under Article 92.1 of the Treaty), then the Commission will of course follow the required procedures in this regard.

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Question No 56, by Mr Wynn (H-565/89)

Subject: Sale of British Rover

The controller and Auditor General of H.M. Government has brought to the attention of the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, details of the sale of the Rover Group to British Aerospace.

The Department of Trade and Industry indicate that details of the sale could seriously undermine the competitive position of the Rover Group and British Aerospace in international markets.

Can the Commission state if this is so?

Will the Commission also confirm or deny that the Department of Trade and Industry kept hidden from the Commission details of £38 million given to British Aerospace to buy Rover, and, if this is confirmed, does it consider it to an unfair subsidy and what action does it intend to take?

Answer

The Commission is not aware of the indications by DTI that details of the sale could seriously undermine the position of the Rover Group and British Aerospace in international markets, and cannot therefore comment on this statement.

As regards the additional concessions which, according to the controller and Auditor General of H.M. Government, were granted to British Aerospace in relation to Rover Group's sale, I would like to inform the honourable Member that the Commission is currently investigating the matter and has requested the UK authorities to provide the Commission with all relevant documents and information.

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Question No 57, by Mr Nianias (H-567/89)

Subject: Infrastructure projects in Greece

The European Community has made substantial cuts in the appropriations for major infrastructure projects in Greece. The cuts affect the Achelous project, the motorway programme (Athens-Thessalonika, Gevgeli and Athens, Corinth and Patras) the Athens Metro, the airport at Spata and the link between Riou and Antirriou.

Can the Commission explain the reasons for these cuts and their size in relation to the amounts requested?

How does the Commission intend to ensure that these measures, which are so important to the development of the Greek economy, are given immediate support?

Answer

The Commission is aware of the importance that Greece attaches to the major infrastructure projects to which the honourable Member refers. In the discussion with the Greek authorities in the context of the Community Support Framework for Greece, the Commission has underlined the high priority it assigns to the construction of modern infrastructure networks over the period concerned (1989/93).

No final decision has yet been taken on the levels of Community support for the projects mentioned. This remains a matter for discussion and agreement between the Commission and the Greek authorities. I am pleased to be able to tell the honourable Member that negotiations on the Community Support Framework resumed before Christmas and that I am hopeful that they will be completed very soon.

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Question No 61, by Mr Langer (H-572/89)

Subject: Increased traffic density in Alpine valleys caused by the Austrian ban on night-time transit

Over the last few days, more than 3000 citizens of the Alta Val d'Isarco (Wipptal) have been manifesting their extreme concern at the prospect of their valley being transformed into an enormous parking lot and a source of massive pollution as a result of the restrictions imposed by Austria on heavy goods vehicles, to come into effect on 1 December 1989. Can the Commission say what measures will be taken to guarantee acceptable flows of heavy goods vehicles affected by the above restrictions into and out of the Member States concerned to the north and south of Austrian (and Swiss) Territory?

Answer

While fully understanding the concern of the local people, the Commission does not feel that the Alta Val d'Isarco (Wipptal) has become an enormous parking lot and a source of massive pollution.

As forecast in the Commission's written reply to the honourable Member's identical written question, the first indications after the introduction of the Austrian ban on night driving from 1 December 1989 are that people's fears have not become reality.

The Austrian authorities have in fact allowed a certain number of exemptions to this ban. These cover primarily:

- transport of milk, perishable foodstuffs, live animals, newspapers and magazines;
- trucks with reduced noise levels;
- transport to or from a rail freight link.

These exemptions mean that between 200 and 280 trucks transit the Brenner Pass each night.

A number of other trucks — between 130 and 150, according to the International Road Transport Union — now cross Austria by rail instead of using the motorway. It also appears that an unknown number of vehicles operating between Italy and northwest Europe now travel through France and Switzerland instead of Austria.

Furthermore, the Commission would like to point out that it has no powers to regulate road traffic in the Community. Responsibility in this area lies with the Member States.

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Question No 62, by Mr McCartin (H-576/89)

Subject: Fisheries protection

Is the Commission satisfied with the level of facilities and equipment available to the Member States for the protection of fish stocks in Community waters? Is the Commission satisfied that the facilities available are being used in an efficient and effective manner?

Answer

1. The Commission is of the opinion that in general the level of facilities and equipment available to the Member States for the protection of fish stocks in Community waters is inadequate. It was for this reason that the Council adopted Decision 87/278/EEC for all Member States and 87/279/EEC for Portugal enabling a Community financial contribution to be made towards expenditure incurred by the Member States in this field. A further important decision (89/631/EEC of 27 November 1989) has now been adopted by the Council which provides for Community financial aid to the Member States of ECU 110 million over five years. The Commission hopes that Member States will use this opportunity to the full to improve their surveillance and control facilities.
2. In so far as the use of the existing facilities is concerned, although it is difficult to generalize, the Commission feels that there is considerable room for improvement. In order to encourage more efficient and effective use of surveillance equipment provision has been made in the recent Council decision for the Commission to give consideration to Member States' performance in the area of fisheries surveillance and control when examining their requests for financial aid under the decision. Notwithstanding this, the Commission recognizes that control at sea is a costly and time-consuming task; it is therefore presently examining ways in which it may be rendered more effective, for example through the development of automatic surveillance systems. Under Council Decision 87/279/EEC the Portuguese authorities have embarked on an experiment with an automatic surveillance system which the Commission is following with interest. The Commission hopes that the Council decision recently adopted will encourage more initiatives of this type.

* * *

Question No 63, by Mr Stevenson (H-578/89)

Subject: Cooperation between the European Community and Pakistan

In the 12 months since the restoration of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan, at the end of 1988, what steps has the Commission taken to strengthen its relations with Pakistan both under the Cooperation Agreement and through development assistance?

Answer

Following the accession of Ms Bhutto's government to power in November 1988 the Commission has sought to strengthen its relations with Pakistan through the various means at its disposal and to provide such support as lay within its resources to the newly elected government.

In March 1989 a meeting of the sub-commission of the EC-Pakistan Joint Commission was held in Islamabad to review the various aspects of our mutual relationship and in particular to review progress on the many projects which are outstanding.

The Member of the Commission responsible for North-South relations has received the Ambassador of Pakistan on numerous occasions and has expressed his intention of visiting that country at a mutually convenient date.

* * *

Question No 64, by Mr Saridakis (H-579/89)

Subject: Export subsidies for citrus fruits

The Commission recently reduced export subsidies for citrus fruits, notably in respect of the countries of Eastern Europe.

However, it has been noted that vast quantities of concentrated citrus fruit juice are being imported freely and without restriction from third countries and dumped on the market.

The amount of fresh produce represented by this imported juice far exceeds total Community citrus fruit production.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to deal with this situation which is severely affecting the incomes of Community citrus fruit producers?

Answer

In fixing the refunds for citrus fruit for 1989/90 the Commission's aim was not systematically to reduce the refund rates but rather to simplify the arrangements and approximate the rates for the various varieties and destinations. The rates have been calculated so as to enable products to be disposed of on third country markets.

The large volume of imports of concentrated juice from non-member countries is not a new phenomenon. It is due to the fact that the Community is far from self-sufficient in juice. As regards the price of imported juices, the industry has never formally lodged a complaint with the Commission against dumping.

The Community has taken several new measures to assist the processing industry. From 1989/90 onwards the aid for processing oranges into juice is to be granted for all varieties withdrawn from the market, and the minimum price paid to growers is to be aligned to the withdrawal price.

Furthermore, the Council has introduced similar aid for processing mandarins into juice, and clementines and satsumas into juice and segments in syrup. It has also decided to modify the method of calculation of processing aid to take account of raw materials prices in non-member countries. A processing aid scheme also exists for lemons.

These measures are intended to facilitate disposals to the processing industry and to enable it to remain competitive.

* * *

Question No 65, by Mr Ephremidis (H-582/89)

Subject: Trade union rights for police

In the light of the Social Charter adopted at the Strasbourg Summit and the right of all workers to belong to a trade union, does the Commission not think that police officers should be free to join a trade union in all the Member States and that the persecution of police trade unionists should be stopped wherever it occurs?

Answer

Article 14 of the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights for workers, as adopted by eleven Member States during the European Council of 8/9 December 1989 held in Strasbourg, lays down that the internal legal order of the Member States shall determine under which conditions and to what extent the rights provided for in Articles 11 to 13 (on freedom of association and collective bargaining) apply to the armed forces, the police and the civil service.

In its communication concerning its action programme relating to the implementation of the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights for workers (COM(89) 568 final of 29 November 1989) the Commission also recognizes that responsibility for the implementation of the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining rests with the Member States in accordance with their national traditions and policies.

This is in line with Articles 11 and 13 of the Charter which recognize the right of both workers and employers to set up freely professional and trade union organizations and states that any employer or worker is free to join or not to join these organizations without being penalized.

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Question No 66, by Mr Alavanos (H-584/89)

Subject: Measures to tackle the problems in the Greek psychiatric sector

In the light of the substantial delays in making use of Community resources and the problems experienced by State psychiatric institutions in Greece, particularly in Leros and Dafni, what concrete measures has the Commission taken in collaboration with the Greek authorities to formulate and accelerate programmes to tackle this issue?

Answer

The devising and acceleration of plans relating to Greek psychiatric hospitals is a matter for the Greek authorities. The role of the Commission in the context of Regulation (EEC) No 815/84 ('Exceptional financial support for Greece in the social field') consists, apart from approving projects presented by the Greek authorities, in assisting Greece on the technical level with the implementation of its psychiatric reform programme. Amongst other things, this programme provides for concrete measures to improve the situation of psychiatric hospitals.

With the aid of experts, the Commission has therefore drawn up a number of recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the measures provided for in the programme and has invited offers from the public authorities and non-governmental organizations of other Member States to train Greek psychiatric workers and for the sending of teams of foreign professionals to Greek psychiatric institutions, particularly those in Leros and Dafni.

In view of the delays which have occurred in the implementation of the projects and other measures, the Greek authorities are engaged in an overall revision of their programme. The Commission has also offered its technical assistance for this purpose.

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Question No 67, by Mrs Mayer (H-586/89)

Subject: Storage of toxic products

The Salins du Midi company, which operates a rock salt mine in the district of Varangeville in the department of Meurthe-et-Moselle, has decided to redirect its activities towards the

storage of highly toxic products, a development which has aroused strong feelings in this district and in neighbouring areas.

The project will involve the import of waste from other EEC countries, notably the Federal Republic of Germany.

Is the Commission aware of these plans and are there any Community rules governing this kind of activity?

Answer

In accordance with Article 9 of Council Directive 78/319/EEC on toxic and dangerous waste, ¹ installations which store toxic and dangerous waste must obtain a permit from the competent authorities. This permit covers in particular the type and quantity of waste, the technical requirements and the precautions to be taken. Installations of this kind are also subject to the provisions of Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. ²

Storage in salt mines is a method which, by virtue of the stability of saline structures, provides reliable guarantees for the protection of the environment. This solution is limited to dangerous solid waste which is not inflammable, explosive or unstable and for which there are at present no adequate methods of recycling or treatment.

There is presently only one installation of this kind available in Europe. It is located in Germany and takes industrial waste from various countries in the Community.

The plan by the Salins du Midi company — for which, as far as the Commission is aware, there has not yet been any application for the permit referred to above — should make it possible, if a permit were granted, to minimize the movement of dangerous waste of this kind across Europe. This is in line with the principles which the Commission outlined in its September 1989 communication to the Council and Parliament regarding a European strategy for the management of waste. These principles call in particular for the disposal of waste in the nearest suitable installations. In the case of specific solutions such as storage in salt mines — for which there are very few geologically suitable sites in Europe — the concept of 'nearness' covers large areas comprising several regions across national frontiers. Inter-regional collaboration is vital in such cases.

* * *

Question No 68, by Mr Arias Cañete (H-589/89)

Subject: Implementation of structural Fund appropriations

Can the Commission say to what extent the appropriations for the structural Funds were used up in 1989, specifying the amounts allocated to each objective?

In view of experience acquired in the implementation of the structural Funds in 1989, does the Commission consider that the distribution of the structural Funds shown in the budget for 1990 will facilitate the best possible allocation to each objective, or will it be necessary to transfer appropriations between Funds during 1990?

Answer

On 31 December 1989 the commitments of each of the structural Funds came to more than 99% of the appropriations available for 1989. EAGGF appropriations had been utilized to an extent of 99.8% (ECU 1 463 million, ERDF appropriations to an extent of 99% (ECU 4 666 million) and ESF appropriations to an extent of 99.7% (ECU 3 512 million).

In accordance with the provisions of the financial regulation and the inter-institutional agreement, the appropriations which have not been utilized will be carried over and/or reincorporated in future budgets.

The commitments indicated for each Fund also cover multiannual projects or schemes which were adopted before the review of the structural Funds was undertaken.

¹ OJ L 84 of 31 March 1978, p. 43.

² OJ L 175 of 5 July 1985, p. 40.

With regard to the implementation of the various objectives which were introduced as a result of the 1989 reform of the Funds, the Commission has promised to carry out by 15 February 1990 an assessment of the effects of the various Community support frameworks on the breakdown of the objectives outlined in the 1990 budget. In connection with this, it will also assess the implementation of individual objectives for 1989. The findings of this analysis will be forwarded to the budgetary authority so that suitable adjustments may be proposed if necessary to the 1990 budget. The Commission will comply with this promise.

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Question No 69, by Mr Gasòliba i Böhm (H-590/89)

Subject: Special edition of *Eurobarometer* devoted to racism and xenophobia

Can the Commission say why it has not distributed, as is usual with its publications, the special edition of *Eurobarometer* dedicated to racism and xenophobia, in view of the fact that it is the result of a joint declaration adopted also by the European Parliament?

Answer

The special edition of *Eurobarometer* entitled 'Racism and Xenophobia' was presented to the press jointly by the Commission and Parliament in Strasbourg on 21 November 1989.

Copies in all the Community languages for the Members of Parliament, the political groups and Parliament's external services were made available to the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Information in Strasbourg in good time, i.e. two days before the press conference.

* * *

Question No 70, by Sir Jack Stewart-Clark (H-591/89)

Subject: Drugs

Now that the European Council is at last seized of the increasing urgency of the drugs situation in the European Community and has decided to set up a coordinating Drugs Council with a representative Minister from each Member State, what action is the Commission taking to coordinate its own actions in the drugs sphere and how does it intend to link its work to that of the Council?

In answering this Question, will the Commission also state which representatives and which DGs are responsible for each section of the drugs problem and assure Parliament that no area is being left unattended?

Answer

The Commission shares the honourable Member's satisfaction at the importance attached by the European Council to the establishment of a coordinated Community response to the problem of drugs. To this end the Heads of State or Government have endorsed the setting up of a Group of Drugs Coordinators — not a 'Drugs Council', but something more along the lines of the Rhodes Group of Coordinators tasked with coordinating work on the abolition of internal frontiers control. Member States and the Commission are at liberty to decide the level of their drugs coordinators, some choosing political figures, others senior officials. The important requirement is that the person concerned should have the necessary authority within his own administration to coordinate the work, which often involves a large number of different Ministries and agencies.

For its part the Commission has nominated Vice-President Bangemann as its Drugs Coordinator. He therefore participated in the first two meetings of the newly established group on 1 December 1989 and 11 January 1990, along with the appointed Coordinators from the Twelve Member States, and will coordinate the Commission's internal work on drugs. In this aspect of his work he will be assisted by an interservice group comprising representatives of the following Commission services:

Secretariat General — Coordination; link with abolition of internal frontier control

Legal Service — Legal aspects

- DG.I and DG.VIII — International and development aspects
 DG.III — Internal market aspects
 DG.V — Prevention, health and rehabilitation aspects
 DG.XV — Money laundering aspects
 DG.XXI — Customs aspects and precursors.

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Question No 71, by Mr de Montesquiou Fezensac (H-593/89)

Subject: Future of goose and duck breeding in the French department of Gers

Under agreements between the EEC and the countries of Eastern Europe which come into force on 1 January 1990, it is quite clear that tariff concessions have been granted to Hungary and Poland in respect of the following goods:

- 3 000 tonnes of duck (or some one and a half million birds)
- 25 000 tonnes of goose (or some five million birds).

By way of illustration, goose and duck production in the department of Gers totals 200 000 and 1 200 000 birds respectively. The direct effect of these agreements has been to cause a drop of one third in the price of duck and a fall from FF 300 to FF 200 in the price of goose.

Given that the import market price is lower than the domestic market price, can the Commission say whether there is not good reason to open anti-dumping proceedings?

Answer

We all agree that the Community together with other industrialized countries should provide assistance to the countries in Eastern Europe to implement the political and economic restructuring they have started.

One of the main factors to promote economic development in those countries is to help to increase their export earnings via better access to the Community markets.

For agricultural products, a number of concessions have therefore been made to Poland and Hungary regarding amongst others a 50% reduction of levies for the import of 3 000 t of ducks and 25 000 t of geese. These concessions are incorporated into the System of Generalized Preferences which has been extended to Poland and Hungary because of their grave economic situation. The products mentioned are those for which both countries together account for 95% of all Community imports.

Considering the situation of the Community duck and geese markets, it is the view of the Commission that these concessions will in fact contribute to improve the export earnings of Poland and Hungary, while no harmful effects are likely to occur for EEC goose producers. Such effects are expected to be limited in the case of duck producers.

The application of general anti-dumping procedures is not appropriate in this sector, because the common market organization for poultrymeat already provides for a specific instrument in cases of low price imports. This consists of applying, in addition to the variable levy, so-called supplementary amounts to be fixed by the Commission when the offer prices from third countries are below the sluice-gate price. This instrument is not affected by the recent agreements with Poland and Hungary, but is not used as long as offer prices are at or above the sluice-gate price. I would like to assure Parliament that the Commission will continue to monitor the situation very carefully.

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Question No 72, by Mr Elliott (H-594/89)

Subject: ESF payments

Is the Commission aware that the delay in making ESF payments is imposing enormous financial burdens on NGOs, especially in the UK, where they have to borrow money at very high interest rates?

Answer

The Commission is well aware of the financial problems that can be caused by delays in payments, particularly to voluntary organizations.

However in view of the large number of payments (over 10 000 for 1988 operations) the Commission has not been able to ensure rapid treatment of all of them. The situation has been aggravated by the fact that the majority of claims for payment arrived in Brussels towards the end of October, a situation which the Commission each year asks the Member States to avoid, but not with any great success.

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Question No 73, by Mr Adam (H-596/89)

Subject: STRIDE

Could the Commission indicate to what extent the STRIDE Programme will be open to regions within Objective 2?

As the Commission is aware boosting research and technical development is of major importance to regenerating declining industrial areas, it is therefore of great concern that Objective 2 regions have a respectable share of the Community's STRIDE Programme.

Answer

The Commission shares the honourable Member's view on the importance of research and technological development for the regeneration of declining industrial areas. Accordingly, a significant research and technological development component has been built into most of the Community support frameworks for the Objective 2 regions. In addition, the Commission decided on 22 November to adopt the principle of a Community initiative, STRIDE, with a budget of about ECU 400 million.

It is not possible to say at this stage what proportion of the funds will go to Objective 2 regions.

* * *

Question No 74, by Mr Harrison (H-597/89)

Subject: ENVIREG

Would the Commission clarify the position of Objective 2 regions in the proposed Community initiative Programme ENVIREG?

Many of the coastal environmental problems that ENVIREG seeks to overcome are as prevalent on numerous British coasts (a number of which fall within Objective 2) as they are on the Mediterranean coast and similarly are as detrimental to the tourist economies of the resorts on British coasts. It would therefore appear unfair and inappropriate if the Commission decided to concentrate funding on the Mediterranean coast alone.

Answer

Like the other Community initiatives financed by the structural Funds, ENVIREG can only apply to regions which are eligible for assistance from those Funds. The intention is to concentrate ENVIREG operations in Objective 1 regions and in the case of the Mediterranean coastal areas, regions eligible under Objectives 2 and 5b. The reason for this is that to avoid spreading funds too thinly, assistance must be concentrated in those areas where the vulnerability of the ecosystem and the pressure from tourism and industry give rise to particular concern about the environment.

However, the Commission does not underestimate the importance of environmental problems in the Objective 2 regions and the Community Support Frameworks for these regions include important elements of environmental improvement.

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Question No 75, by Mr Monnier-Besombes (H-598/89)

Subject: Threatened development of fruit growing in La Crau, an area of priority interest (Directive 79/409/EEC)

La Crau is an area of special importance for the conservation of wild birds in the European Community under Council Directive 79/409/EEC.¹

How, then, does the Commission view pressure from fruit growers in this sensitive area? If the Commission finds such pressure undesirable and at variance with the directive, does it propose to take urgent steps, in particular by making representations to the French Ministers for the Environment or even referring the matter to the European Court of Justice, to ensure immediate and effective protection of the land under threat?

Answer

The Commission is fully aware of the ecological value of La Crau, the second most threatened area of priority interest according to a study in 1983.

The Commission has initiated a long-term plan for the conservation of this area. An initial scheme has been launched under Council Regulation (EEC) No 2242/87 on action by the Community relating to the environment.² On 23 November 1988 the Commission decided to grant a subsidy of ECU 388 000 towards the purchase by WWF France of an area of 150 hectares which represents the central core of the zone around which the overall plan to safeguard La Crau may be developed.

This initiative has been followed by a second phase involving management contracts designed to maintain the traditional grazing activities of La Crau, i.e. the sheep farming which enables the natural balance of the whole area to be maintained. ECU 1 million was allocated to this second phase on 23 November 1989.

The Commission is currently looking at the procedures whereby the measures contained in Article 19 of Regulation No 797/85 could eventually be applied in place of the conservation measures which were adopted under the environment regulation.

Lastly, pressure by the Commission was successful in persuading the French authorities to redraw the planned route of motorway A54 so that it caused less damage to the area of La Crau.

* * *

Question No 76, by Mr Hangoiti Llaguno (H-600/89)

Subject: Disappearance of Community frontiers near Irún

The disappearance of internal Community frontiers by 1993 is the goal which the Community has set itself. This will, however, constitute a major problem for those who live in border areas such as Irún.

What economic measures does the Commission plan to take to support conversion of the customs sector and frontier towns, so as to ensure that towns such as Irún do not suffer unemployment levels three or four times higher than the Community average in 1993?

Answer

The Commission has already had occasion to express its concern, as the single market approaches, for the fears of those whose work is connected with the various checks and formalities which are carried out at the Community's internal borders.

While it is true that from 1993 forwarding activities will focus on trade with third countries as a result of the abolition of intra-Community checks, the profession should nevertheless be able to play a full part in the expected development of trade within the EEC by virtue of a wider range of trade-related services. By adapting their infrastructure, frontier towns such as Irún could play a part in this development.

¹ OJ L 103 of 25 April 1979, p. 1.

² OJ L 207 of 29 July 1987, p. 8.

In the specific case of Spain and Portugal, the Commission has noted with interest the conclusions of the conference which was organized in Barcelona on 15 and 16 September 1989 by the Catalan Federation of Transport, Communications and Shipping and the Portuguese trade union of customs and forwarding agents. This was an example of the numerous activities undertaken by those involved in the profession with the aim of providing a coordinated and structured definition of their work in the light of the single market. The Commission is willing to look at specific requests from professional organizations at Community level and to provide financing in the frontier areas in question. Schemes of this kind should be geared to retraining customs agents by providing suitable vocational training and to reconverting jobs connected with border formalities.

These schemes will be undertaken either as part of the arrangements under the structural Funds for Community initiatives or under Article 10 of the ERDF regulation on border cooperation.

* * *

Question No 77, by Mr McMahon (H-601/89)

Subject: Bathing water directive

Can the Commission inform the House what arrangements it has made with individual Member States regarding the results of the monitoring of bathing waters for the 1989 season? Has the Commission advised any Member States to disregard any of the parameters laid down in the directive?

Answer

In compliance with Article 13 of Directive 76/160/EEC concerning the quality of bathing water, the Member States must submit a comprehensive report to the Commission showing the results of the monitoring of bathing water for each season. No results for the 1989 season have as yet been received, but these should be submitted early in 1990.

With regard to which parameters are monitored, the Commission has not made any arrangement with Member States that would disregard any parameter as laid down in the directive.

The Commission is taking measures to enforce full compliance with the directive in all Member States. This includes the evaluation of all the imperative parameters.

* * *

Question No 78, by Mr Bandrés Molet (H-603/89)

Subject: Environmental impact assessment

The Commission has granted Spain a total of PTA 127 billion under the structural Funds to finance the country's Regional Development Plan. There has been a public outcry by various social, ecological and other groups against the adverse effect which the projects in question may have on the environment. Among the projects are the construction of a number of high-speed rail links (TGV), the creation of eucalyptus plantations in Galicia and Andalusia, urban development along the coast, open-cast mines, 92 new dams, river-channelling projects and many others. In the light of all the above, and of Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on environmental impact assessment, can the Commission give details of projects forming part of Spain's Regional Development Plan which are to be financed by the Community and does the Commission know which environmental impact studies must be carried out, under Community legislation, in respect of these projects?

Answer

On 31 October 1989, under the partnership arrangements contained in the regulations reforming the structural Funds, the Commission adopted the Community Support Framework (CSF) for the Spanish regions covered by Objective 1. The CSF covers action in the following development areas:

- opening up;
- industry, craft trades and services to firms;

- tourism;
- agricultural and rural development;
- support infrastructure for economic activities;
- optimization of human resources;
- technical assistance, monitoring, information.

The Spanish CSF for the areas covered by Objective 2 has not yet been approved. An agreement in principle nevertheless exists between the Commission's departments and the Spanish authorities with regard to the specific reconversion priorities:

- creation and development of productive activities;
- protection and improvement of the environment;
- support for research, development and training facilities;
- improvement of communications networks;
- technical assistance.

Negotiations with the Member States have also resulted in a definition of the principles which should govern the consideration of environmental policy in the context of this Community financing scheme.

The actual text of the CSF therefore insists that operations which are carried out under the CSF itself must comply with Community legislation on the environment.

Furthermore, it has been clearly stated that in the event of any shortcomings in implementing this legislation priority will have to be given to operations which during the validity of the CSF ensure that the objectives of the legislation are fulfilled, inasmuch as it is linked to the regional development which is planned.

There is also a requirement to provide the Commission with the environmental information without which such an objective can never be attained. The Commission is convinced that the collection of this information will make a positive contribution to providing a better guide for support applications and will enable the applications to be dealt with more speedily.

As far as the projects mentioned by the honourable Member are concerned, the Commission would like to point out that the Community's new regional policy — which is based on programmes drawn up by the Member States — is to be carried out in the form of operational programmes devised in compliance with the objectives of the CSF.

The Commission does not therefore have at present detailed knowledge of all the individual projects which might be carried out as part of these programmes.

It is nevertheless obvious that where appropriate these projects will be subject to a preliminary and suitable examination to assess their impact on the environment, in accordance with Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.¹

If necessary, the Commission will ask for a non-technical summary of the impact study and the results of consultations with the national authorities for the environment and with the general public involved, and this information will be a very important factor in the Commission's assessment of the merit of the projects.

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Question No 79, by Mr Cusnahan (H-604/89)

Subject: Rural Development Information Centres

Has the Commission received a proposal from the Irish authorities for the establishment of 100 Rural Development Centres? Are such Centres eligible for Community aid? How will the Commission ensure that any such centres will not simply replace existing services?

¹ OJ L 175 of 5 July 1985, p. 40.

Answer

The honourable Member is no doubt referring to the Commission's intention to propose the establishment of a network of information centres on rural development and agricultural markets, as announced in its document on guidelines for rural development actions linked to the functioning of agricultural markets which was communicated to the European Parliament in October last year. A pilot scheme of seven centres (of which one is located in Galway, Ireland) is already in operation, following an idea that was launched in the 1988 Commission's report on the 'Future of rural society'. The new centres are to be based in existing organizations with good contacts in the rural development context. The Community would provide documentation, access to databases, staff training and start-up aid, together with a contribution to the cost of operation. The initial aim is to set up some 100 centres. No request has been received from the Irish authorities but, when the scheme has been agreed, it would naturally be the intention that some of the centres would be in Ireland and any requests will be considered by the Commission in accordance with the relevant procedures. A formal proposal for a Council decision following the guidelines agreed by the Commission in October is now being prepared by the Commission services.

* * *

Question No 80, by Mr Howell (H-606/89)

Subject: Lead in animal feed

What action is the Commission considering to prevent a repetition of the lead in animal feed incident which has caused considerable disruption to the dairy industry in the UK and Holland? In particular is the Commission considering the extension to animal feeds of the early warning system for notifying Member States about contaminated food?

What progress is being made on the Commission proposal on the labelling of compound feedingstuffs, recalling that the European Parliament gave its opinion on Commission proposal (88) 303? ¹

Answer

On the first part of this question, on the lead contamination incident, the Commission is to propose to the Council a strengthening of the rapid exchange of information system currently applying to animal feed materials.

Council Directive 74/63/EEC on undesirable substances and products in animal nutrition provides for the rapid exchange of information between Member States and the Commission in cases of intra-Community trade in contaminated raw materials. However, at present, the system covers only raw materials, and only two particular contaminants. The Commission is re-examining the system with a view to extending it to cover feedingstuffs themselves, and all the undesirable substances listed in the directive, including lead. For now, a strengthened system will operate under a 'gentleman's agreement' made between the Member States.

On the second part of this question, on the Commission proposal on the labelling of compound feedingstuffs, the Commission adopted all the amendments proposed by the Parliament. I am disappointed to report that the Council has not agreed to the proposal. The essential problem is whether manufacturers of farm feeds should be allowed to supplement the obligatory ingredient declaration by declaring additionally the amounts of each ingredient. The argument against is that there are currently no analytical methods available across the Community for checking such declarations.

* * *

Question No 81, by Mrs Izquierdo Rojo (H-608/89)

Subject: The European Community and its Mediterranean policy

Having regard to the Community's preferential relations with the Mediterranean countries, can the Commission guarantee that the Community will continue to give priority to its Mediterranean policy?

¹ OJ C 12 of 16 January 1989.

Answer

On 17 November 1989 the Commission sent the Council a communication in which it proposed the broad lines of the overall strategy which the Community should adopt in its relations with third countries in the Mediterranean. In its conclusion the Commission asked the Council to endorse the principle of a fresh Mediterranean policy.

Following this communication, the European Council included among its conclusions adopted in Strasbourg on 10 December 1989 the view that relations with the Mediterranean countries should be further developed and should support them in their effort towards cooperation with Europe, regional integration and economic development. To this end the European Council asked the Council, in the light of the communication from the Commission, to adapt the arrangements contained in existing agreements with a view to introducing resources and procedures for cooperation which were best suited to the type of relations which must be developed between the Community and these countries.

The technical work involved in achieving this objective has just been begun by the Council's working party on the Mediterranean, in which the Commission plays an active part.

* * *

Question No 82, by Mrs Garcia Arias (H-609/89)

Subject: Report on safety in coal mines

When does the Commission intend to submit the report on safety in coal mines requested by the European Parliament on 14 March 1985?

Answer

Following the Simon Colliery disaster and the two resolutions of the European Parliament of 14 March 1985, the Commission of the European Communities asked the Safety and Health Commission for Mining and Other Extractive Industries (SHCMOEI) to re-examine subjects related to safety in mines. The SHCMOEI carried out a series of studies by experts working together in groups. The report on this extensive work under the title 'Measures to reduce the explosion and fire risk in auxiliary ventilated workings and to improve the protection of personnel in the event of explosion and fire' was finally adopted by the SHCMOEI on 20 December 1989. It will be submitted to Parliament by the Commission during the first half of 1990.

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Question No 83, by Mrs Dury (H-611/89)

Subject: Community action against the cot death syndrome

The cot death syndrome is the most frequent cause of mortality in the first years of life. Are the Commission's services taking practical steps to deal with this public health problem? If so, in what way? If not, why not?

Answer

The Commission is fully aware of the concern among Members of Parliament about sudden infant death syndrome and has taken into account the recent questions on this subject, in particular those of Mrs Andrews and Mrs Giannakou-Koutsikou.

The Commission has examined the problem and connected information from some Member States. It is closely following scientific progress regarding this syndrome. In this respect it also maintains close contacts with the WHO as well as with the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (UK). Without ignoring the importance of this matter, the Commission does not however intend to take particular measures in this field.

* * *

Question No 84, by Mrs Martin (H-612/89)

Subject: New non-food outlets

Could the Commission say why, in its statement on the use of agricultural products in the non-food sector, it refers to proposals covering cereals only? Why have not all products potentially usable by industry, such as beet or Jerusalem artichokes, been included?

Answer

The proposal for non-food use of set-aside land, by being available to all cereals, is a new option for over 34 million hectares of cereal growing land and for well over 2 million farmers. To add sugar beets, for example, which cover less than 2 million hectares, and which in any case are grown in rotation with cereals, could do little, if anything, to increase the scheme's coverage.

In agriculture, practically every product and crop has a distinct and different support regime, for good agronomic and market management reasons. It is a consequence of this diversity of regimes that cereals, as well as offering the greatest coverage, are actually the only crop suited to a non-food set-aside scheme at present. In the future, newly developed crops for fibre production, for example, may also be considered. But first, it has to be demonstrated that it is economically, technically and environmentally proper to produce these new crops on arable land.

Cereals are a crop with prices supported by export and by intervention. Sugarbeets are a crop supported by quotas and a high degree of protection. Oilseeds are a crop with a deficiency payment system. In such circumstances, it can hardly be surprising that an industrial set-aside suits one of them better than the others.

* * *

Question No 85, by Mr Balfe (H-613/89)

Subject: Steroid drug treatment

Is the Commission aware that concern has been expressed about the use of steroid drugs in medical treatment?

Is the Commission prepared to collect comparative data or sponsor research in order to gather information at Community level about the use of steroid drugs and their side effects?

Answer

The Commission is aware that concern has been expressed from time to time about steroid drugs. These have been on the market for decades for the treatment of a wide variety of diseases ranging from tumours to hormone imbalance and from hypersensitivity reactions through autoimmune diseases to degenerative conditions; additional uses include birth control. Before registration for clinical use is granted, each of the many steroid preparations in use must have been approved at national level according to criteria of quality, efficacy and safety.

Steroids can have known side-effects, which are taken into consideration during the registration procedure; sometimes accidents can occur due to non-appropriate use. For these reasons Member States have set up post-marketing surveillance systems, as well as control mechanisms for drug abuse, e.g. when steroids are used for enhancement of sports performance.

All Member States and industrialized countries have introduced monitoring systems to cover any side-effects of registered drugs — pharmacovigilance — and prompt exchanges of information generally take place not only between the national authorities mentioned above but also between them and those in, for example, the USA (Food and Drug Administration). The European Community Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products and related committees, which work in close cooperation with the relevant authorities, ensure that a coherent approach is maintained to such problems.

The EC has a Medical and Health Research Programme which works mainly through concerted research actions and which concentrates in part on some particularly sensitive and important areas, including cancer and AIDS. This programme will be pursued in a revised

and expanded form under the third Framework Programme (1990-1994), which lays particular emphasis on the European 'added value' of the research activities concerned.

In the medical context, these will particularly address 'harmonized methodological and protocol studies in epidemiological, biological and clinical research', the development and assessment of prophylactic and therapeutic methods' and 'pre-competitive research into ways and forms of administering medicines'. As soon as the Framework Programme has been adopted, the Commission will submit proposals for implementing specific programmes. The European Parliament will examine, and could amend, all these proposals according to the Cooperation Procedure provided for in Article 130 of the Single European Act. Work on steroids might be included in this particular new programme if the medical, political and social authorities concerned advise that this area is one which deserves priority.

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Question No 86, by Mrs Giannakou-Koutsikou (H-614/89)

Subject: Intergovernmental agreement on the right of asylum

The conclusions of the European Council meeting in Strasbourg clearly highlight the need for the Twelve to conclude an intergovernmental agreement on the right of asylum before the end of 1990, a matter now being discussed by the Council's Working Group on Immigration.

What are the Commission's views on this subject given that the White Paper makes provision for it to submit a proposal for a regulation, and how does it intend to defend the European Parliament's right to 'cooperate' in this area in future?

Answer

For the purpose of this question, it is important to distinguish between asylum and refugee policy in its widest and most general sense, and the particular aspects of it which are directly related to the abolition of internal frontier controls. Although the humanitarian inspiration which, I am sure, underlies this House's general approach to asylum questions is one which the Commission shares — and to which its frequent actions to provide emergency and other aid bears witness — it is the more particular aspects, which are most relevant to the question of possible new legislation in this area. The Commission has therefore looked at this question in the context of establishing an area without internal frontiers by 31 December 1992, in accordance with the timetable set out in the Single European Act.

It is true that the Commission, in its June 1985 White Paper on the completion of the internal market, expressed the view that a directive on asylum would be the appropriate means of taking the essential steps in this area. In discussion with Member States, however, the alternative route for an intergovernmental convention found more widespread favour. Since the Commission's concern was to achieve the objectives of the Single Act and therefore to encourage progress on the substance, rather than involvement in unproductive arguments over disputed Community competence, the Commission explained in its Communication to the Council of 7 December 1988 (COM(88) 640) that, without prejudice to questions of competence, it was willing to see whether the necessary solutions could be found through intergovernmental cooperation. In that Communication the Commission took the view, shared by Member States, that for the purposes of abolishing frontier controls by 31 December 1992, the essential need was for rules to determine which Member State should be responsible for dealing with an asylum request, and also to cover movement between Member States of recognized refugees. The Commission also accepted that the drawing up of such rules could, for the time being, be left to an intergovernmental agreement among the Member States, but without prejudice to the question of Community competence. Work on a draft Convention to this effect began in the summer of 1989.

The European Council, meeting in Strasbourg, on 8 and 9 December 1989, stressed the importance of work on the Convention being completed as soon as possible and no later than the end of 1990. The Commission welcomes this political impetus from the European Council and believes that agreement on this Convention would represent the kind of pragmatic progress, identified in the abovementioned Commission Communication, which is required if the timetable set out in the Single European Act is to be adhered to. The Commission would hope that the European Parliament, whose consistent support for the objectives of the SEA is most welcome, would agree.

I recognize that one consequence of the choice of an intergovernmental agreement is that the democratic control of the Convention will be conducted through ratification by national Parliaments rather than by the European Parliament. The Commission will therefore continue to encourage the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to make periodic reports to the European Parliament so long as this area is dealt with in the forum of the *ad hoc* Immigration Group. In this context, it welcomes the fact that the French Presidency was represented at Ministerial level before the Legal Affairs Committee of the Parliament, and would also draw the House's attention to the public declaration by Immigration Ministers on 15 December about their work in this area and the principles on which it is based.

* * *

Question No 87, by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti (H-1/90)

Subject: European network of health data on drug abuse

Can the Commission say what action it has taken in connection with the tasks assigned to it in the Council resolution of 16 May 1989¹ concerning a European network of health data on drug abuse?

Answer

The Commission was invited by Resolution of the Health Council of 16 May 1989 concerning a European network of health data on drug abuse to carry out specific work in this area in cooperation with the Council of Europe (Pompidou Group) and WHO and to present a report to Council indicating any initiatives to be taken in this field.

The Conclusions of the Health Council of 13 November 1989 on the implementation of coordinated measures for preventing drug addiction confirmed the importance of this subject.

The Commission has already started exploratory studies in this context. A first meeting of national experts will take place in mid-February. After this meeting the Commission will decide what further action should be taken.

* * *

Question No 88, by Mr Christiansen (H-5/90)

Subject: Statute for the European Company

The 1977 EEC Directive² on the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of businesses is of great importance in underwriting European employees' acquired rights under social and labour legislation. Much uncertainty has however arisen over the relationship between this directive and the Commission's new proposals for a Statute for the European Company.

In particular there is no basis for assessing the implication for European employees of the increasing internationalization of European undertakings, or how the various Member States have incorporated the 1977 directive into their national legislation. Article 9 of the Directive (77/187/EEC) provided for a report on the subject. The Commission has now had over 10 years to draw up that report. Why has it not produced one, and what plans does it have for doing so?

Answer

As the honourable Member of the House states in his oral question, Article 9 of the Directive 77/187/EEC relating to the safeguarding of employee's rights in the event of transfer of undertakings imposes upon the Commission the obligation of drawing up a report on the application of the directive for submission to the Council. Accordingly the Commission, after getting the relevant information from the Member States, prepared a preliminary draft report which was finished in 1982.

The exclusion of Greece from the report, due to the lack of sufficient information at the time, and the later accession of Spain and Portugal, advised the Commission to delay the

¹ OJ C 185 of 22 July 1989.

² OJ L 61 of 5 March 1977, p. 26.

publication of the report until the legal situation concerning Greece, Spain and Portugal was examined.

That having been done, a comprehensive report has been prepared. The Commission will proceed to its submission to the Council during 1990.

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Question No 89, by Mrs Rawlings (H-7/90)

Subject: *Varroa jacobsoni* and the threat to beekeeping

The parasite *Varroa jacobsoni* poses a grave threat to the livelihoods of European beekeepers. Until recently its spread has been contained.

However, research in the United States has unearthed evidence that this parasite is present on the hitherto unsuspected *Apis bombus*.

Does the Commission have any evidence of this, and if so what measures are being taken to protect beekeepers against this latest threat — especially those in the United Kingdom who have so far successfully kept their honeybee colonies uncontaminated?

Answer

The Commission's attention has been drawn by researchers in the Community, currently working intensively on varroasis, in some instances with the help of Community financing, to the risk of bumblebees (species *Apis bombus*) acting as carriers of the parasite *Varroa jacobsoni*. Nevertheless, the precise practical implications of the U.S. research to which the honourable Member refers still leave some room for conjecture.

In particular, the U.S. findings have as yet not been confirmed in the Community. Furthermore, the distinction has to be made between bumblebees in the wild state, over which no control for the moment appears either possible or desirable, and the situation which may arise with the development of artificial rearing of these insects.

Of late efforts to rear bumblebees artificially on a commercial scale have been stepped up on account of their effectiveness as a specialized pollinator of certain cash crops, especially fruit and vegetables. The potential economic value of such production is significant, given the demonstrated increase in yields which can be achieved. At the moment we gather that demand for bumblebees, especially from glasshouse producers, actually exceeds supply and the few available colonies fetch a substantial price.

The Commission is of course also well aware that varroasis is endemic in the Community other than, as far as is known from on-going diagnostic programmes, in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The Community is involved in financing both efforts to control varroasis and also relevant research.

Trade in bees is covered by a proposal which we have just sent to the Council laying down animal health requirements for the placing on the market of animals and products of animal origin not covered in this respect by specific Community rules. Varroasis figures in the proposal as a compulsorily notifiable disease of bees, and future commercially-bred bumblebees, being also of the species *Apies*, would not be exempt.

My services take the whole matter of varroasis seriously and are in close touch with the situation in the Member States.

* * *

Question No 90, by Mrs Vayssade (H-9/90)

Subject: Trade in organs

In reply to my question (H-303/89 — Doc. B 3-217/89) on trade in organs, the Commission said that it was studying possible action to be taken at Community level.

Has the Commission investigated reports published in the European press since then, according to which British surgeons have transplanted organs — in this case kidneys — purchased from Anatolian peasants?

When will the Commission tell the European Parliament the results of the studies it has carried out on this subject?

Answer

The Commission is aware of the press reports that British surgeons have allegedly purchased kidneys from Turkish peasants. These facts, if proven, would disclose a breach of United Kingdom criminal law (*inter alia*, the Human Organ Transplants Act 1989) and would therefore be a matter for the competent authorities of that State.

A copy of the results of the studies which the Commission is undertaking into the legal, ethical and health-related aspects of organ transplantations will be sent to the Honourable Member of Parliament as soon as they are available.

* * *

Question No 91, by Mr de Rossa (H-12/90)

Subject: Environmental directives

Can the Commission detail the number of directives relating to the environment which have been introduced in the last and current Parliament and the extent to which each Member State has complied with these, and the number of derogations which each Member State has sought?

Answer

It is difficult to state precisely the extent to which a Member State has fulfilled its obligations under a directive, given that the answer varies from one article of a directive to another.

When the directive allows derogations for Member States, the latter are not necessarily obliged to obtain prior agreement from the Commission for such a derogation.

The Commission would refer the honourable Member to the various reports on monitoring the application of Community law which it has submitted to Parliament annually since 1983.¹

Question No 92, by Mrs Pollack (H-13/90)

Subject: Levels of ozone

Levels of ozone in Europe have regularly exceeded World Health Organization guidelines this year, and public concern about the health hazard — particularly to the elderly and those with respiratory illnesses — is growing. Does the Commission intend to formulate proposals for an air quality standard for ambient ozone?

Answer

The Commission shares the honourable Member's concern about the ozone levels in the atmosphere.

Measurements of the ozone concentration in the environment are still fragmentary but do show that the recommendations of WHO in particular on safe ozone levels are frequently exceeded, especially in photochemical pollution incidents.

In view of this finding, the Commission is at present drawing up Community legislation setting air quality targets in respect of ozone.

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Question No 93, by Mr White (H-15/90)

Subject: World developments

Will the Commission state:

— Whether, how many and which proposed internal market directives, have been identified as having an impact on developing countries;

¹ 1st report: COM(84) 181 final, 11 April 1984
 2nd report: COM(85) 149 final, 13 May 1985
 3rd report: OJ C 220, 1 September 1986
 4th report: OJ C 338, 16 December 1987
 5th report: OJ C 310, 5 December 1988
 6th report: COM(89) 411 final (to be published end January 1990).

— Whether any special attention is given to the impact on the least developed countries?

Answer

The Commission has taken no specific steps to assess the possible impact on its partners of each of the internal decisions taken with a view to completing the single market, which, moreover, is a broad process whose results require, similarly, to be assessed in a broad context.

That does not mean that the Commission is insensitive to the concerns reflected in the honourable Member's question. It is certainly the case that the developing countries, and more especially those which are least advanced, need to be given special attention. The cooperation agreements which have been signed with the majority of these countries provide the appropriate context for dealing with matters of common interest. These agreements, moreover, make substantial financial resources available to these countries, part of which can be devoted to adjustment measures. It has been agreed at both the Council of Ministers and the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly to initiate studies to secure a better understanding of the effects of the single market.

In addition, the new Lome Convention signed on 15 December 1989 also contains a number of provisions enabling the interests of the ACP countries to be taken into account, via the consultation procedures, in the context of any measures taken by the Community.

It should, moreover, be borne in mind that the Commission has embarked on a major information exercise, in particular by placing the INFO 92 database at the disposal of its partners. This database is open to all interested parties and contains information, updated on a daily basis, on all proposals. The Commission, moreover, has from the outset adopted an open-handed approach to requests for information, even very detailed ones, from the Community's partners. The Commission departments have participated in a number of seminars and other activities in the developing countries.

More specific forms of cooperation, for example in the field of standardization, are currently in prospect. It is the Commission's intention to develop activities of this kind so as to afford better access for the developing countries to the Community market.

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Question No 94, by Mrs Jensen (H-16/90)

Subject: Zarnowiec nuclear power station

What information does the Commission have on the nuclear power station under construction at Zarnowiec in Poland, and is it true that its site is geologically so unstable that part of the concrete foundations has already cracked?

Are any Community funds or expertise supporting the Polish nuclear power industry?

Answer

Poland is building four PWR reactors, each generating 465 Mw, at Zarnowiec. The first two facilities should be operational in 1992. The reactor system is being supplied by Skodaexport of Prague.

According to information obtained by the Commission from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the relevant government department in Poland has confirmed that one and a half years ago there were rumours concerning the appearance of cracks in the foundations of this nuclear installation. The Polish authorities looked at the matter and concluded that the stability of the structure was not jeopardized either by the quality of the concrete or the characteristics of the site.

With regard to the matter of financial aid or expertise made available to the nuclear industry in Poland, the Commission can confirm that hitherto there has not been any kind of cooperation in this field between the Community and Poland.

In a general context, cooperation on energy may be included as part of the agreement on trade and cooperation between the Community and Poland.

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Question No 95, by Mr Newton Dunn (H-337/89)

Subject: Management of the water resources of the Danube

Following Parliamentary approval of the Convention between the Community, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria on the Management of the Water Resources of the Danube, what plans has the Commission to involve Hungary and Czechoslovakia in cooperative management of the Water Resources of the Danube?

Answer

The Commission considers it would be desirable and appropriate for all the Danube basin countries to participate in the definition and implementation of management and protection measures for the river.

However, the convention on cooperative management of the water resources of the Danube basin concluded by the Community, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria has no provision for the accession of other countries.

Therefore, if Hungary, Czechoslovakia or any other countries concerned expressed interest in participating in the measures taken under the convention, the Community would need to consider with the other contracting parties the form that such participation might take.

It should also be pointed out that the Republic of Austria is a contracting party to the convention on navigation on the Danube concluded in 1948 by the USSR, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, the Ukraine, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Although the main purpose of that convention is to ensure freedom of navigation on the Danube, matters relating to the protection of the river against pollution have also been touched on in its implementation.

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Question No 96, by Mr Hughes (H-350/89)

Subject: Chlorine-free and/or recycled paper

To what extent does the Commission use chlorine-free and/or recycled paper for its own publications and stationery requirements? Does it have any plans to extend such use and does it plan to put forward proposals to encourage the use of chlorine-free and recycled paper in the Community?

Answer

All paper for office use is chlorine free. The honourable Member targets without doubt the use of chlorine in the production process.

The information from the Commission's supplier suggests that the answer is no. But, whereas in earlier years all pulp was bleached using chlorine, the paper pulp manufacturers have made an effort to reduce chlorine use considerably. The reduction implies investments which are spread over several years. The target is to get away from chlorine use at all.

In a recent answer to a written question of Ms Diez de Rivera Icasa it was referred to earlier answers of the Commission: 30% of the format 61 cm × 86 cm and 11% of the format 21 cm × 29.7 cm used in the Commission's stationery printing is recycled paper.

On the other hand, about 20% of the paper consumption of the Publications Office is recycled paper. The Publications Office intends to improve the part of recycled paper of its total consumption.

The Commission would like to increase its use of recycled paper. New measures are presently being studied by the Commission's print shops to develop the use of this type of paper within its various departments. However, barriers like user acceptance, acceptance by photocopying and printing machines, and guarantee of conservation over several years have to be studied and overcome.

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Question No 97, by Mr Killilea (H-352/89)

Subject: EC aid for deer farming in west of Ireland

Has the Commission any proposals aimed at including deer farming in the aid package for the western region of Ireland and if so, will it provide details?

Answer

Community financing for assistance to deer farming is possible under a number of different measures such as investment aid under farm improvement plans.¹ The Commission is re-examining the question of compensatory allowances for deer farming and will report by June 1990.

In 1988 the Commission approved a revised agricultural development programme² which provided for a measure for deer farming in the less-favoured areas (including the western region). At present a multi-fund operational programme for rural development is being prepared by the Irish authorities. This will contain measures for the promotion of farm diversification in Ireland, which it is expected, will include support for deer farming.

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Question No 98, by Mr Lalor (H-353/89)

Subject: Revising procedures for checking-in passengers and handling luggage and freight

Will the Commission indicate what progress is being made with its proposal for a regulation on the consultation between airports and users which could provide opportunities to revise procedures for checking-in passengers and handling luggage and freight?

Answer

The proposal on consultation between airports and users will be submitted shortly, that is in January or at the latest in February.

The aim of this proposal is to improve the exchange of information between airports and users, with a view to ensuring the best possible utilization of the airport infrastructure.

The procedures mentioned by the honourable Member of Parliament are operational matters for which the Commission has no proposals in the pipeline.

However, consultation between airports and users may lead to improved procedures at individual airports for checking-in of passengers and handling of luggage and freight.

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Question No 99, by Mrs Lehideux (H-375/89)

Subject: Aid to the ACP countries for the fight against AIDS

How does the Commission envisage the funds allocated to the ACP countries for the fight against AIDS being used, given the difficulties these countries will have in building, without outside help, the hospitals and dispensaries needed for treatment?

Answer

The Commission stresses the special attention it is giving to the problem of AIDS in the ACP countries. In this connection, it would refer the honourable Member to the replies given to her oral questions Nos H-373/89 and H-374/89 tabled at the November and December part-sessions of Parliament. The Commission explained in these replies how the funds allocated to the fight against AIDS were used.

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¹ Council Regulation (EEC) No 797/85 on improving the efficiency of agricultural structures.

² Council Regulation (EEC) No 1820/80 for the stimulation of agricultural development in the less-favoured areas of Ireland.

Question No 100, by Mrs Lenz (H-379/89)

Subject: Monthly newsletter *Women of Europe*

With reference to the Commission's written answer to my question No H-28/89¹ of September 1989, I should like to know why the Commission gives priority to French and English in the production of this newsletter. German is the most widely distributed language in the Community. What review appearing every two months is the Commission referring to? *Frauen Europas* (Women of Europe), a publication intended to supply long-term information to women's associations, appears at irregular intervals and after prolonged delays in the individual languages. It is totally unsuitable for the provision of up-to-date information. What action does the Commission intend to take?

Answer

For budgetary reasons the Commission has been forced to restrict the publication of its new monthly newsletter on women in Europe to only two languages, English and French, which are the most widely understood languages throughout the Community.

Women of Europe is a publication which the Commission has been putting out every two months since 1977 and which appears in the nine official Community languages. The delays connected with its publication are caused by the complexity of producing such a work. The Commission will make every effort to reduce delays whenever possible, given the budgetary restraints with which it has to work.

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Question No 101, by Mr Cassidy (H-415/89)

Subject: OJ tenders — insufficient notice

In Official Journal C 252 of 5 October, there were two invitations to tender by open procedure under the Action Programme for Employment Growth. One was for employment-creation projects. The other was for local development of employment.

The final date for requesting the relevant documents in both cases was 13 October — 8 days after the publication date of the Official Journal. Given the intervention of weekends and the delays in postal services within the Community, 8 days is clearly insufficient.

What action does the Commission propose to take to ensure that it gives sufficient time for interested parties to respond, especially small and medium-sized enterprises?

Answer

1. Request for tender documents in the case of the invitation to tender for the Local Employment Development Programme and the Action Programme for Employment Growth were accepted by telefax, telex, letter and personal collection.
2. Requests by letter, in accordance with the rules governing invitations to tender, were accepted if they were postmarked up to and including the limit date.
3. For the Action Programme on Employment Growth, 137 sets of tender documents were requested and sent out. In the case of the tender for the Local Employment Development Programme, 114 sets of tender documents were requested and sent out. In both cases these requests came from all Community countries and a wide range of organizations, ranging from large multi-national firms of consultants to small specialist firms.
4. The deadline for submitting an offer on the basis of the tender documents was 10 November (date of postmark) as stipulated in the regulations.

* * *

¹ Verbatim Report of Proceedings of 13 September 1989, p. 26.

Question No 102, by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (H-475/89)

Subject: Levies on imported pigmeat

Does the Commission intend to cut the levies on pigmeat imported into the EC? Given that the pig producing industry is only just beginning to recover from a deep and sustained recession, would not such a move be counterproductive?

Answer

As you already know after my speech in the last Plenary Session on 13 December, the Commission has already put forward two proposals for Council Regulations amending some parameters used for calculating levies and sluice-gate prices, and the trigger mechanism to apply management measures in the event of a substantial rise in pigmeat prices.

As you know, our proposals are designed to avoid a new crisis in the pigmeat sector for both producers and the industry and to achieve more stability. Our aim is to avoid the sharp price fluctuations to which the sector has been subjected in recent times.

Of course, the measures provided for in the whole pigmeat regime have this aim. But some of the mechanisms and parameters in question were established as far back as 1967 and maintained since without any substantial change.

The update of the said measures will as far as the first proposal is concerned result in a slight reduction of import levies of no real practical impact.

The second proposal aims to facilitate imports from countries outside the Community by reductions in import levies in situations of excessively high prices.

As you may know, the level of pigmeat prices have dropped quite a bit since our proposal was made in September 1989. Therefore, at present we are not in a situation where this Regulation might be applied in practice.

It is the Commission's view that, far from being counterproductive, its proposals are necessary to achieve long term stability in the pigmeat regime.

* * *

Question No 103, by Mr Canavaro (H-486/89)

Subject: Epidemics among animals in Spain and Portugal

In the light of the recent outbreaks of epidemics among animals in Spain and Portugal, what steps does the Commission plan to take to eradicate animal diseases so that, with a view to the 1993 single market and the opening-up of frontiers, the free movement of livestock produce can be introduced, given that such products are increasingly affected by peripneumonia, foot-and-mouth disease, brucellosis, leucosis, tuberculosis and African horse sickness?

Answer

Measures to eradicate the diseases listed in the question H-486/89 are at present found in national or Community legislation.

It is the overall objective that a uniform high standard of animal health shall be achieved in all Member States before 1993 and a number of eradication programmes exist or are being initiated in order to meet the objectives.

Disease eradication and control measures including restrictions on movements of live animal products will depend on the characteristics of the disease. Area (regional) restrictions are laid down when epizootic diseases, which pose a serious threat to the Community economy, occur, e.g. foot and mouth disease; while herd restrictions are used in the case of diseases such as tuberculosis and brucellosis.

It is envisaged in the event of disease outbreaks that local restrictions will be imposed by the authorities of an affected Member State or by Commission decision and enforced by the Member State under Community supervision in order to safeguard not only the other Member States but also the remainder of the national territory.

* * *

Question No 104, by Mr Cooney (H-488/89)

Subject: Community cereal crop

The announcement by the Commission that the Community cereal crop for 1989 amounts to 160.5 million tonnes has been greeted with some scepticism by farming organizations.

Will the Commission make available to COPA details of the methodology used to ascertain the amount of the crop and invite COPA to monitor the results of the 1990 crop?

Answer

The Commission reminds the honourable Member that, concerning the assessment of cereal production in 1989/90 within the framework of the stabilizers system, it answered this point at Parliament's plenary sitting of 24 November 1989. COPA might also profitably refer to the answer given by the Commission on the same subject in reply to Written Question No 781/89 by Mr Verbeek.

In a more general context, according to all information currently available final cereal production in the 1989/90 marketing year will amount to some 161 million tonnes.

With respect to the assessment of the 1990 harvest, the Commission would appreciate the collaboration of COPA, as of any other organization, providing, however, that the information conveyed to it can be considered complete and impartial.

* * *

Question No 105, by Mr Newens (H-518/89)

Subject: Commission inspections — Battery cages

Article 7 of Council Directive 86/113/EEC¹ laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens kept in battery cages obliges the Commission to carry out inspections to ensure uniform compliance with the directive by the Member States.

The Member States were supposed to adopt the national measures necessary to comply with the directive by 1 July 1987. Has the Commission started to fulfil its own legal obligation to carry out inspections?

If not, when does it expect to do so?

Answer

A veterinary inspection service has existed in the Commission since 1983 to conduct the inspections required by the veterinary legislation including the protection of laying hens kept in battery cages.

At the moment, the activities of this service are concentrated on the checks referred to in Council Directive 64/433/EEC concerning intra-Community trade in fresh red meat and Directive 72/462/EEC concerning imports from third countries of the same product.

The inspections are carried out in order to protect public and animal health.

The Commission has always been concerned with animal welfare in general and with hens in battery cages in particular. However, due to insufficient staff it has been unable to conduct inspections in this field. The Commission fully intends to carry out such inspections when the necessary staff become available.

* * *

Question No 106, by Mr Telkämper (H-521/89)

Subject: 'European mouse care expert' (COM(89) 500, 17.10.89)

In its proposal for a Regulation COM(89) 500² the Commission proposes — in addition to measures to raise the productivity of an EC market in mice and rats — the establishment of an A 7/6 post for a 'mouse care expert'. Provision is also made for a mission allowance for an *annual* total of 200 (!) working days. I should like to enquire whether this unusually large

¹ OJ L 95 of 10 April 1986, p. 45.

² Doc. C3-207/89.

amount of travelling time is connected in any way with the restless habits of the objects of this attention. If this is not the case, how is one to account for the extensive travels of the 'European mouse care expert'?

Does the Commission believe that the encouragement of 'intra-Community trade in mice and rats' is in the interests of the Community?

Answer

1. The proposal for a Council Regulation COM(89) 500 for which the Commission has requested additional staff does not concern only mice.

This proposal is made within the scope of the realization of the internal market and relates to health conditions for the placing on the market of rodents within the Community.

The marketing of rodents represents a considerable amount of trade. For example, trade of rabbits within the Community exceeded 2 million head in 1988 only and the same number were imported from third countries. This market has a value of more than ECU 11 million.

2. The veterinarian in the Commission to be responsible for this dossier will ensure the correct application of the regulation, especially the observance of the fundamental health policy in the single market and the cooperation of safeguard measures which might be necessary in the event of the appearance of a disease which is dangerous for animals and possibly transmissible to man. Furthermore, the appointed official will carry out the preparatory investigations, studies and developments necessary for the elaboration of a Community regulation on imports of rodents from third countries.
3. The proposal has already been discussed by your Committees and will be presented to the house on Friday for your approval.

* * *

Question No 107, by Mr Carvalhas (H-535/89)

Subject: Compensation and access for Portuguese fishing vessels to Canadian and NAFO waters

Portugal has given the EEC one of the largest and most important exclusive economic fisheries zone of any Member State.

However, since accession, it has not been permitted to fish in Canadian waters, while large fishing areas of what is known as the NAFO zone, where it operates only 40 vessels, have also remained closed to it.

Could the Commission say how it intends to resolve this situation and whether it envisages compensation for the inequitable losses sustained by fishermen, shipowners and the Portuguese economy?

Answer

Under its 1981 long-term fisheries agreements with Canada the Community was allocated fishing possibilities in Canadian waters in exchange for tariff concessions on fish products of interest to Canadian exporters. The fisheries agreement between Portugal and Canada was guided by the same kind of considerations.

Since 1987 Community fishing vessels have, however, not had access to fish in Canadian waters. This was, *inter alia*, a consequence of a new fisheries policy, announced by Canada in 1986, under which:

- the concept of access to resources for access to markets is abandoned except for centrally managed economies, i.e. the East European countries;
- cod is defined as a non-surplus stock from which no allocations to foreign countries are granted.

As the honourable Member will recall, cod was the main species under the Portuguese as well as the Community agreement with Canada. Many Community fishermen — not only the Portuguese — have suffered from the lack of an agreement with Canada.

The Community has, in numerous contacts with Canada, tried to re-establish the bilateral fisheries relations. Canada has, however, shown no flexibility and has insisted that it has no interest in renewing the fisheries arrangement with the Community.

As regards the fishing possibilities in international waters outside the Canadian zone the Community has, since 1986, and for conservation purposes, established autonomous quotas in order to safeguard the fishing interests of Community fishermen.

Portuguese fishermen are amongst the Community fishermen benefiting the most from these fishing possibilities.

The Community's common fisheries policy does not provide for any compensation for reduced fishing possibilities, due to conservation measures. The attention of the honourable Member is, however, drawn to certain provisions for Community measures to improve and adapt structures in the fisheries sector, providing *inter alia* for premiums for the temporary or permanent withdrawal of certain fishing vessels.

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IN THE CHAIR: MRS PERY

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 10 a.m.)

1. Approval of the minutes

PRESIDENT. — The minutes of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments?

KRIEPS (S). — (FR) Madam President, the Minutes mention the protest by Mr Schönhuber which has to be brought to the attention of the President. I should also like it to be brought to the President's notice that Mr Schönhuber was formerly a member of a criminal organization which was deemed to be such by the judges at Nuremberg.

Also with regard to item 1, I would like it recorded in the Minutes that the European Right was the only group not to join in the standing ovation for Mr Dubcek, and that they pointedly remained seated at that time when the whole chamber was on its feet.

PRESIDENT. — The point is noted.

Are there any other comments?

LANGER (V). — (IT) Yesterday, as emerges from the first page of the minutes, there was debate in this House on the matter of a luncheon organized by Mr Barón Crespo, the President of this Parliament, for the chairmen of some of the groups. We would be interested to learn whether political guidelines were adopted at that luncheon and wish to ask the President to inform the House of any political decisions which may have been reached by the five selected groups or their chairmen.

Please convey this request to President Barón Crespo and let us know the outcome.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Langer, as I was not present at this meeting myself, I cannot give you the information at the moment. I will pass your remarks on to the President.

GOLLNISCH (DR). — (FR) Madam President, a point of order, if I may, and a very brief personal observation. On the point of order, the Group of the European Right echoes the question asked by Mr Langer. We should like to know the political outcome of this luncheon to which

GOLLNISCH

three groups were not invited. And I am asking once again because we were told at yesterday's sitting by the president of the sitting that this was a private and not an official luncheon, which supposedly made the exclusions perfectly legitimate. We would like to know if President Barón Crespo has picked up the tab for this luncheon himself or whether the cost of this — private — luncheon has been charged to Parliament funds. So much for the point of order.

As for the references to my Group's conduct during Mr Dubcek's visit, described in extremely forceful terms by one of our honourable friends, I would say that my Group adopted an attitude of silent deference. We listened to what Mr Dubcek had to say. I take one honourable member's point that Mr Schönhuber had, in his view, formerly belonged to a criminal organization, but that was the case at the time with 80 million Germans, including many who sit elsewhere in this House. So if we accuse Mr Schönhuber, then they too would have to produce their excuses. I will say that from 1947 to 1968 Mr Dubcek, and we have nothing against him personally, was also a member — in his case knowingly, he was not conscripted at the age of 18 — of a criminal organization which ruled by dictatorship in Czechoslovakia following a *coup d'état* and carried out summary trials and executions before, admittedly, falling victim to the system himself. So, ladies and gentlemen, I think we should follow the lead of our best Christian and European tradition and forgive each other's trespasses.

BETTINI (V). — *(IT)* Madam President, again regarding that luncheon, which seems to have become part of the fundamental political framework of this Parliament, we consider that there was a very important secondary aspect involved here, namely the menu — and because we know that, scientifically speaking, food helps us think, intrigue or take decisions — we wish also to be informed by the chef of the type of menu served and indeed whether the cigars contributed to political decision-making. What were the cigars and what were the political decisions?

PANNELLA (NI). — *(FR)* Madam President, I think I can answer the questions which some honourable members are asking. At yesterday's luncheon the President, whom we see paying less and less attention to his official duties and devoting more and more of his energies to the pleasures of the table and to stirring the pot politically, raised the question of what should be done about the resolutions which have been taken by Parliament. Since Parliament has decided to take major initiatives at the institutional level, the calling of pre-conferences and all the things we agreed on in November and December, the President said 'Let's look at what we can do about these stories which are going around.' Whereupon it seems that our Socialist and Christian-Democrat colleagues made it quite plain that they had no intention of allowing Parliament to take overly-important initiatives of the kind they had helped to approve. Since the President is increasingly nothing

more than an expression of the combined power of the bureaucracies which predominate in this House, I think that now, straight away, every member, whether Socialist, EPP, Non-attached, should take the initiative himself. I think we have problems concerning Europe...

(The President interrupted the speaker)

BALFE (S). — Madam President, I will be very brief. Surely the President is entitled to invite whoever he wishes to dinner. If he invites political leaders representing 80% of Parliament, that is surely up to him. It is not for this House to debate whom he has to lunch.

WYNN (S). — Madam President, at the bottom of page 15 of the Minutes it says 'Mr Wynn spoke'. I would like to make the point that during Question Time I was in another meeting. I was watching the television screens but the speed of events overtook me: as I approached the Chamber, I notice that Mr Jackson and Mr Schmid had not been present. Consequently, Mr Titley was having his question answered. When I got into the Chamber following Mr Titley's question, I asked if my question could be taken, which is common practice. But I was told that the relevant Commissioner had left, and therefore I could not have an oral answer. Now I know that I will get a written answer, but the opportunity to put a supplementary question on what was and what is a very important issue in the United Kingdom — that is the sale of the Rover car group — was lost. Could I have it in the Minutes that I asked for my question to be taken and that this was refused because the relevant Commissioner was not present?

PRESIDENT. — The point is noted, Mr Wynn.

*(Parliament approved the minutes)*¹

2. Topical and urgent debate

Panama

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the joint debate on eight motions for resolutions:

- Doc. B3-96/90 by Mr Robles Piquer and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on Panama;
- Doc. B3-107/90 by Mr Miranda da Silva and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the US invasion of Panama;
- Doc. B3-109/90 by Mr Gollnisch, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the situation in Panama;
- Doc. B3-120/90 by Mr Vandemeulebroucke and others, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the situation in Panama;

¹ Documents received: see minutes.

PRESIDENT

- Doc. B3-133/90 by Mr Gutierrez Díaz and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the United States' military intervention in Panama;
- Doc. B3-144/90 by Mr Linkohr and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the US military intervention in Panama;
- Doc. B3-163/90 by Mr Bertens and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on Panama;
- Doc. B3-167/90 by Mr Telämper and others, on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, on the US military intervention in Panama.

ROBLES PIQUER (PPE). — (ES) Madam President, a few words about the past. The PPE Group's profound disagreement with the North American invasion of Panama is firmly set out, with all the logical consequences, in the motion for a joint resolution which we helped to draft and for which we shall vote.

It is essential to add that General Noriega symbolizes everything bad — together with much that is good — in Spanish America: moral and physical violence, systematic treachery, constant duplicity, corruption extending to drug trafficking and the use of false patriotism for personal advantage. Noriega deprived his people of the elections of 1984 and 1988, served the CIA and Fidel Castro, was responsible for the bombing of the Sandinista headquarters and finally proclaimed a state of war with the United States, a war which he naturally lost.

A few more words about the future. Starting out from very difficult conditions, a number of Panamanian civilian politicians, President Endara, Vice-Presidents Arias Calderón and Ford and their ministers, must reorganize the State, impose civil authority over their Pretorian guard, recover Panama's prosperity, implement with the United States the Torrijos-Carter Treaty and keep the canal operating in the service of mankind. And they must, above all, return to their people the full right to choose their future leaders in entirely free elections.

Our Community must support these objectives firmly and unobtrusively without giving futile lectures which, in the light of Europe's tragic history, we can scarcely do. Thus we must respect the Panamanian people's true dignity, hitherto trampled underfoot by barbarians pursuing their own wretched personal cupidity.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) Madam President, I see that except in the case of the motion by our Group, the other motions speak merely of disagreement with what took place in Panama. And that, with reference to a barbarous use of force, invasion, bombardment of populated areas, the deaths of victims, the destruction of property, violation of international rules and agreements, and the establishment of jungle law by a sort of international police force which considers itself

entitled to intervene where and when it likes, on various pretexts.

This creates a precedent, Madam President, and we must bear in mind that something similar may occur in our own countries. Because in our countries too there have been cases when leaders and sometimes even prime ministers have been called to account for various scandals of international dimensions. What would you say if a neighbouring country or the United States invaded your own country to arrest an accused person and bring him to trial? Madam President, we must not allow such precedents to be created. We must vote to condemn this uncharacteristic act against an independent, sovereign State, irrespectively of what regime was ruling it.

GOLLNISCH (DR). — (FR) Madam President, I think the US intervention in Panama was rather like taking a sledge-hammer to crack a nut. In this case the sledge-hammer was the pounding given by American air power. The 'nut' is General Noriega, though we are in no way sticking up for him. But the real victims are the Panamanian people, who still have not had their sovereignty restored to them, whose capital has seen some of its densely populated areas bombed, and who are permanently stuck with a more or less colonial situation.

I wish to protest, Madam President, at the fact that we are only being given one minute's speaking time on all these subjects which are of considerable importance. This decision goes against the conventions of Parliament. It was put forward at the meeting of the Enlarged Bureau and was not approved unanimously. It seems to me that since this involved a basic change to the usual procedures observed by this House, where we are talking more and more, but more and more briefly and often fairly meaninglessly, a decision of this kind ought only to be adopted by consensus. And our Group's spokesman, Mrs Lehideux, raised objections. Decisions like this are going to follow thick and fast. I don't think Parliament's reputation will be enhanced as a result and I don't think the work we are doing here will be of much benefit to Panama or to any of the other human rights issues we examine.

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE (ARC). — (NL) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, we believe that the means used by the US Government to remove General Noriega were not justified. In our view they contravene the principles of international law and we also believe that the principle of non-interference must be respected in Central America. We thus give our support to all initiatives aimed at enabling the States of Central America to solve their problems by themselves and among themselves in order to achieve full democracy based on social justice. We shall thus vote for this compromise motion and trust that the rest of the House will do likewise.

SPECIALE (GUE). — *(IT)* Madam President, the military invasion of Panama is a very serious event and, as such, has to be vigorously denounced and strongly condemned by the European Parliament. That intervention resulted in hundreds or thousands of deaths among the civilian population with bombardments, destruction, instances of brutality, cruelty and violations of the law. More particularly, the military action blatantly and unacceptably violates, as far as we are all concerned, the fundamental principle of respect for international law and for the sovereignty of all peoples and all States. Such considerations cannot be called into question on the basis of criticism of Noriega's dictatorial regime and its evil drugs' trafficking, because to do so would be to undermine the very principle of legal certainty and the possibility of the coexistence of different peoples and States, according recognition to only the will and the argument of the strongest.

Our position must be all the firmer and more rigorous, precisely because the events of recent years and months are making it possible to move away, finally, from the Yalta mentality, from the partitioning of the world into blocs and zones of influence. Europe cannot allow the events currently causing far-reaching upheaval in the East to be interpreted as a licence for one side only to continue to apply the Yalta mentality, as some kind of approval of aggression and the use of force. On the basis of that line of reasoning, the rights of all peoples would be curtailed in the face of the arrogance of a State claiming to be the arbiter, where everyone is concerned, of what is just and fair.

For those reasons and to avoid interfering with the processes of democratization and demilitarization, to defend ourselves and to help democratic forces within the United States, Europe and this Parliament must make clear their position, and this is done in the joint motion for a resolution.

PANNELLA (NI). — *(FR)* On a procedural motion, I wish to protest at the increasing number of meetings of the enlarged Bureau which are held at the same time as the plenary. I was down to speak in three debates but shall be unable to fulfil my obligations here because of this meeting.

LINKOHR (S). — *(DE)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen. In a civilized world, it cannot be accepted that a State, albeit a superpower, should set itself up to police its neighbours. It is therefore important that this House should condemn by a very large majority the US invasion of Panama. It would be intolerable, were it to become the rule in this already complicated world, that States, powerful States, should intervene in the affairs of their neighbours. Just imagine, according to its rules of play, Iran could seek after Salman Rushdie anywhere in the world and pick a quarrel in order to get hold of the writer and perhaps execute him in Iran.

There are other examples: Vietnam and Afghanistan. Even where invasion might have been to some extent justified — think of the Khmer Rouge and the genocide

in Cambodia — Vietnam was condemned by the UN and by the United States. Relations with Vietnam were broken off because it had intervened in Cambodia. I personally had a lot of sympathy for the Vietnamese action at that time. The point is that in truly extreme cases — genocide and Cambodia — the international community must take a decision within the framework of the United Nations, but an individual State may not set itself up as a world-wide police force.

At a time when the Soviet Union has, thank God, shown great restraint in Europe enabling what we now term the 'democratic revolution in Eastern Europe' to take place, it is our friends, the United States, who are setting themselves up as a worldwide police force in what they often call their 'own backyard', in Central America. It is in our own European interest to condemn that, as we would not like to see others one day use that invasion of Panama as an excuse to do the same in Europe.

(Applause)

The United States must realize that also. It is therefore important that we should speak clearly and I would therefore ask the Parliament to vote for the motion tabled by several groups, my own included.

BERTENS (LDR). — *(NL)* Madam President, it is clear that a lot of people, including governments, are unsure of what their attitude should be to the US intervention in Panama. The governments of the Community Member States also reacted differently at the beginning and it is clear that discrepancies may yet appear. Anyone wishing to judge events must of necessity weigh certain pros and cons. On the one hand it is a good thing that General Noriega has gone. He was a dictator who didn't give a hoot for the result of a democratic election. To that extent the outcome of the US intervention is thus to be welcomed. It must not be forgotten, however, that Noriega was for a long time Washington's man, and his contacts with the CIA are well known. It now transpires that he also worked closely with the US Drug Enforcement Agency and that he was subsequently wanted by the American justice authorities on drugs charges. As Virginia Woolf says, 'Someone had blundered.' That lends a somewhat unsavoury aspect to the US action which most regrettably also cost the lives of tens if not hundreds of citizens.

But what the world community cannot let pass without comment is the means which the US chose to influence the situation in Panama. The end does not justify every kind of means. Never. Armed intervention is and remains a violation of international law. But we can't pronounce on the rights and wrongs of the matter and shouldn't aspire to. Without the rules of international law relations between nations deteriorate into chaos and anarchy and only the rule of might will prevail. Yesterday in this chamber Mr Dubcek repeated the words of Comenius, namely that States cannot and must not do each other violence. Breaking the rules may sooner or later rebound on those who do. The rules of international law must consequently apply to all States,

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however powerful the one and however reprehensible the other. The fact that US intervention has produced one doubtless positive result must not blind us to the fact that international law was broken. The resolution passed by this House must encompass both points.

BANDRÉS MOLET (V). — (ES) Madam President, in Spanish we have a clear and precise definition of the armed intervention of the United States of America in Panama; it is called simply invasion, that is, the most serious infringement which a government can commit against the sovereignty of another people. And there is no excuse for it. We all agree that Noriega is probably a criminal, and of course he was a dictator, but the serious thing is the philosophy behind the attitude of the United States of America, a philosophy of contempt for others, of absolute supremacy and impunity in the international sphere.

Furthermore, Madam President, it is a serious matter that our European Community has been affected by this conflict. There was a split in European political cooperation, in the unity of external policy, during the debate in the United Nations on this subject. This time Spain preserved the dignity of Europe, with Ireland and Greece somehow or other managing to avoid committing themselves, but the rest of the Member States simply caved in before the power of the United States. My Group, Madam President, subject to the freedom it allows its members, will vote in favour of the joint resolution tabled by various Groups, even though we find the wording rather weak.

ROMEOS (S). — (GR) Madam President, the military incursion, the invasion, as the previous speaker said, of the United States into Panama once more confirmed Washington's intention to begin a new phase of contemporary crusades to gain control of the sensitive Central American and Caribbean region.

We too had condemned the Noriega regime, but we do not accept the United States' arguments concerning the supposed legitimacy of the incursion. The American military incursion into Panama is a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of that country, and a disregard of the rules of international law. It constitutes a warning which might presage future surprises in relation to American policy in that area. Such incursions into countries in the area, with various reasons and excuses, and moreover at this critical time, put the independence of Central American countries at risk and destroy the peace-promoting processes and the democratization that the recent agreements have set in motion. The restoration of democracy in any country is the concern of the citizens of that country, and not of foreign military interventions. Besides, the recent changes in Eastern European countries show that peoples can regain their freedom by their own efforts, and that they do not need military intervention from us, but only our support. That is the only weapon which democracy should offer peoples struggling to gain democracy.

For that reason I believe the European Parliament should adopt the resolutions condemning the military invasion of Panama, so that this may not become a precedent, not only in that area but anywhere in the world.

SUÁREZ GONZÁLEZ (PPE). — (ES) Madam President, my Honourable Friend Robles Piquer has clearly expressed our point of view. I should only like to add a comment on something that was said here last Tuesday and repeated here this morning, when some Members stated that there had been a split in European political cooperation on the subject of the invasion of Panama.

When nine out of twelve countries vote one way and one votes the other, you cannot criticize the nine for not following the only dissident voice, although we accept that there are minorities which may be right. Still less can that vote, which reflects solidarity with kindred countries, be called a vote for dignity. I am sure that the authors of that phrase did not use the word 'dignity' in the sense in which it is understood in Panama.

(Mixed reactions)

RUIZ-GIMÉNEZ AGUILAR (LDR). — (ES) Madam President, we have had a detailed discussion about the grave situation in Central America, which is exacerbated, following the intervention of the United States, by a fresh factor of destabilization and uncertainty. The majority of motions for a resolution and of the various Honourable Members' speeches have stressed the seriousness of the situation and condemned the violation of the principles of international law and diplomatic law embodied in the United Nations Charter. My Group has decided to maintain its own motion for a resolution. However, the Spanish Members in our Group have decided to support the joint motion for a resolution presented to the Assembly and we shall vote for it. We think it is more forceful in its condemnation and more consistent with the position adopted by our country in the United Nations.

(Applause)

PATTERSON (ED). — Mr President, yesterday we heard from Mr Dubcek about intervention in 1968 in a smaller country by one of the superpowers. Today we are debating intervention in another smaller country by the other superpower. It is very tempting to equate the two. But there is a fundamental difference. In 1968 the result was the replacement of a popularly supported government by dictatorship. In 1989 the result has been the replacement of a dictatorship by the previously democratically elected government. That is a fundamental point, Mr President, we should be very careful indeed, before we condemn the United States. To do so sounds very like hypocrisy. We shall not be voting for the resolution.

(Applause)

BUCHAN (S). — Madam President, on a point of order. Not only are Mr Patterson's politics wrong when he calls you Mr President, he has also got his politics wrong in every sense, including the worst sense. For Mr Patterson's information, it is *Madam President*.

PATTERSON (ED). — Apologies to you, Madam President, for getting your sex wrong but no apologies for what I said. I am politically correct.

MORÁN LÓPEZ (S). — (ES) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, it is true that European political cooperation did not vote unanimously for the motion for a resolution presented in the United Nations. As has been said here, one country saved the dignity of the Community with its vote. Two others acted correctly.

It is therefore tremendously important that this Assembly, in approving this resolution, should echo the principles guiding international life because, Madam President, the important thing is not to agree on a decision in political cooperation but that such agreement should be in line with international law and with the principles of our civilization. General international law and the United Charter forbid interference in the internal affairs of a country and the use of force except in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter. Similarly the general law of nations, the law of treaties and in particular the Geneva Convention on International Relations prohibit violating the precincts of diplomatic premises or a diplomatic residence. Madam President, the fight against the scourge of drug trafficking must be conducted in accordance with the principles of domestic law and international law. So the actions of the United States in embarking upon a military intervention in Panama, costing many civilian lives and much destruction, is not justifiable and cannot be silently condoned by this Assembly. The principle, now relied on, of legitimate defence or humanitarian intervention, which has served in the past as a pretext for many colonializing nations, requires proportionality and so does the use of force to achieve what could be achieved by normal, peaceful and legal methods.

So, Madam President, this Assembly's condemnation of the actions of the United States, with which we have close ties of civilization and political principles, must be unequivocal, and in this respect my Group unreservedly supports the motion for a resolution tabled.

(Applause)

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, in view of the deterioration in the political situation and human rights in Panama over the last months of last year, the Commission has been following the guidelines agreed by the twelve Member States as regards relations with Panama. In this respect formal regional cooperation, in which Panama was involved, was continued, but no specific cooperation programmes were initiated with that country. The Commission was very concerned about the rapid progressive deterioration of the

situation from 15 December last, when a national assembly appointed by the dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega declared — at the instigation of Noriega himself — that Panama and the United States were in a state of war. The Commission became extremely concerned at the subsequent North American military invasion of the Republic of Panama and much regrets the loss of human life which occurred.

On 22 December the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Twelve published in Paris — where they had met for the Euro-Arab Conference — a declaration within the framework of European political cooperation expressing their concern at the situation in that country and at the resultant loss of human life. The Twelve stressed their hope that peace and security would be rapidly restored in Panama and that democratic and constitutional normality would soon be re-established.

The Twelve and the Commission have been following developments closely since then. The Commission is particularly pleased that the evacuation of United States troops has begun and that the country is gradually returning to normal; we are still following the situation very closely. The Community institutions are examining what changes ought to be made to the guidelines in view of the change in the situation. Nevertheless, Honourable Members may rest assured that in so far as the required conditions are fulfilled the Commission, in the context of its action programme for Central America, will propose all measures within its power to help to rebuild the Panamanian economy and in short to restore peace and democracy in Panama. And it hopes, as always, for Parliament's close support for this proposal.

PRESIDENT. — The joint debate is closed.

We shall now proceed to the vote.

(Parliament adopted a joint motion for a resolution ¹ on Panama)

Cambodia

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the joint debate on the following motions for resolutions:

- Doc. B3-86/90 by Mr Maher and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the deterioration of the situation in Cambodia;
- Doc. B3-123/90 by Mr Antony, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on Cambodia;
- Doc. B3-126/90 by Mr Piquet and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the situation in Cambodia;

¹ Tabled by Mr Linkohr and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Lucas Pires and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Vandemeulebroucke on behalf of the Rainbow Group and Mr Vecchi on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-96/90, B3-120/90, B3-133/90 and B3-144/90.

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- Doc. B3-127/90 by Mr de la Malène and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the situation in Cambodia;
- Doc. B3-138/90 by Mrs Catasta and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the situation in Cambodia;
- Doc. B3-153/90 by Mrs Dury and Mr Cheysson, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the deterioration of the situation in Cambodia;
- Doc. B3-158/90 by Mrs Banotti, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on Cambodia.

BANOTTI (PPE). — Madam President, this is the third time this week we have discussed the tragedy of Cambodia, and even as we speak the Khmer Rouge continue their murderous journey towards Phnom Penh. They are fuelled by arms from China, assisted by the Thailand Government to arrive at the camps on the borders of Thailand and Cambodia. They are fed by United Nations food which is being sent into these camps.

The Commissioner yesterday informed us that he intends to visit these camps next week and today I would like to make a specific request to the Commissioner. When he visits these camps would he please try and get into Camp No 8 which is where the Khmer Rouge are actively recruiting and training their soldiers. It is also from these camps that thousands of Khmer people go to either their death or mutilation. There are 200,000 amputees already in Cambodia, who have lost their arms or legs as a result of landmines set by the Khmer Rouge.

I would also like to insist that the Commissioner also takes a very active role in the current Paris peace discussions. We applaud the Australian initiative though we find extremely alarming the idea that Cambodia might be split in half, so to speak, with one half ruled by the Hun Sen Government and the other as a neutral zone, possibly, under the auspices of the United Nations. If we move the border down and put yet another border into Cambodia we simply bring the fighting nearer and nearer to Phnom Penh.

The Commissioner has given us a very worthy list of initiatives taken by the Commission since Christmas. However, we still have not sent our own fact-finding mission to Cambodia and obviously our own involvement in aiding that country will remain more or less in abeyance until we have our own direct information from there.

So once again, Commissioner, you spoke to us very movingly yesterday. Would you please make it your business when you are there next week to get into Camp No 8 so that you can report directly to Parliament on the exact conditions in that camp.

MAHER (LDR). — Madam President, Cambodia is once again rightly on the agenda today. We have seen

the progress of Pol Pot and his murderous league recently who attacked the second city of Cambodia, Battambang. We have gone over the ground again and again in relation to what has been happening in Cambodia but it is essential to acknowledge the efforts made by the Australian Government to find a resolution and to praise the five members of the Security Council who at last reached agreement in Paris the other day. Unlike their very weak decision of last summer they have now agreed that the United Nations should be brought into this problem to find a final solution with free elections to allow the people of Cambodia to govern their own affairs.

However, the crucial point is this. Very often these decisions are reached and then the United Nations is not given the wherewithal to put into effect those very decisions. This time I would like to state very strongly that the member countries of the United Nations have a responsibility to give effect to those decisions, to provide whatever is necessary, finance and otherwise, to make sure that this decision is not just another decision that is going to be put on the shelf without any material result.

I would call upon the members of the United Nations to give the necessary finance to ensure that a final solution is found to this long-running problem so that the unfortunate people of Cambodia can look in future to a peaceful life.

ANTONY (DR). — (FR) Madam President, I very much fear that once again all we shall manage to do here is voice pious hopes for Cambodia. That hapless country is once more witnessing a new flare-up of civil war between communists, torn apart between the Khmer Rouge and forces backed by Mr Hun Sen's former Vietnamese army of occupation.

What should the Community's policy be? We should put our money where our mouth is. If Europe were a world power it would tell Thailand to stop giving shelter to the Khmer Rouge base camps. It would tell China to stop supplying what the previous speaker has rightly called the murderous league of Pol Pot, and we would decide who are our friends, those who at all events symbolize the continuing independence of Cambodia, namely the legal government of Prince Sihanouk and the nationalist forces of Hun Sen. But once again Europe is incapable of deciding who are its friends and who are its enemies and so, despite everything we may say here, we shall once more be standing by whilst hundreds of thousands of people die, over and above the enormous numbers who have already fallen victim to communism. Plainly we are still reluctant to acknowledge that the numbers are so high, and I once again quote Solzhenitsin who says that they now exceed 200 million.

AINARDI (CG). — (FR) Madam President, whilst we are expressing our concern at the situation in Cambodia there is heavy fighting on the ground and observers tell us that the Khmer Rouge are on the verge of taking

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control of the temple at Angkor and advancing on the capital.

Some western capitals, though deploring the genocide practised by the Khmer Rouge in the past, thought that if these troops were militarily dominant following the withdrawal of the Vietnamese forces this might bring down the government of Mr Hun Sen. This double game is showing its shortcomings. What it has done is to increase the danger of a return to power by Pol Pot and his men.

Madam President, the Left Unity Group welcomes the fact that the world community has recently become alert to this danger. It welcomes the recent meeting in Paris of the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council. The Left Unity Group calls on the Community to make every effort to restore peace to this war-torn country, and calls on the Community authorities to start by ensuring that no Community Member State supplies any further arms to the Khmer Rouge. Our Group also asks the Community to resume humanitarian aid for the rebuilding of Cambodia forthwith.

IVERSEN (GUE). — (DK) Madam President, it is now ten years since the Red Butcher Pol Pot was driven from power in Kampuchea. This happened after the disclosure of what has come to be called the Killing Fields. With his Khmer Rouge forces Pol Pot carried out a thoroughgoing genocide with up to 10 million victims. This carnage was as bad as anything we have seen in human history. History of course tends to repeat itself, with tragic consequences. Last week it was reported that Pol Pot's forces were on the point of taking over Cambodia's second largest town, Battambang. The Khmer Rouge, supplied with Chinese weapons, appear to be gaining ground throughout the country. Worse still, they are also being supported diplomatically by both the Danish and the other EEC governments. Western governments, including the Danish, have refused to go along with the idea of Pol Pot's representatives being excluded from the UN. This has been accompanied by a refusal to recognize Kampuchea's *de facto* government. This could be justified while the Vietnamese were still in that country, but there has never been any plausible reason for Denmark and the EEC to maintain a recognition of the Pol Pot regime in the UN.

Now that the Khmer Rouge are again storming through Cambodia, it is high time the EEC countries and the Danish Government opened their eyes and massively refused a repetition of the Killing Fields. The European Parliament has said this again and again. Over the past week the Danish Government has been softening its policy on Kampuchea and is willing to consider withdrawal of support for Pol Pot, i.e. the Pol Pot regime in the UN. There are good reasons for the EEC to reconsider the matter, and we therefore urge EEC Foreign Ministers to discuss the Kampuchea question at their next meeting in Dublin. It is important to ensure that the Pol Pot regime never again gets the chance to

take over in Kampuchea. We therefore support the compromise proposal. I would also ask the Commission to respond to what is contained in that proposal, in relation to the sending of a fact-finding mission to Kampuchea. It is time the Commission took its responsibilities seriously. We also want a clear statement on its thinking with regard to a fact finding mission.

CHEYSSON (S). — (FR) Madam President, ten years ago the world learned of the horrors to which the people of Cambodia had recently been subjected. Villages systematically laid waste, families systematically broken up, and genocide, yes, true genocide, because at least one Cambodian in three had been killed. Genocide indeed. The proof is still there on the ground.

With the Vietnamese occupation a veil of silence settled over this people. Since last year, hopes for peace have emerged and we now find to our surprise, stupefaction, that our own governments are prepared to accept the Khmer Rouge as normal negotiating partners and are prepared to accept the idea that the Khmer Rouge might be part of a transitional government, as if, after the war, we had invited Martin Bormann, Seyssinquant or Klaus Barbie to be part of a caretaker government for Germany. Appalling! It has to be deplored, and Parliament has done so. A good thing too.

But, Madam President, we asked for an urgent debate because it is now for the European Parliament, for the Community, to take the initiative. Once before, when the Khmer Rouge had been driven out, the Community played an important part by sending relief aid and a considerable amount of humanitarian aid to Cambodia, when governments we did not recognize were powerless to do anything. We quite properly did not recognize the authority set up by the Vietnamese in Phnom Penh. You will recall that all that time the Community approved ECU 79 million of relief aid to be distributed by the non-governmental organizations, plus food aid. We gave well over ECU 100 million in aid in a period of a few months, a total unequalled anywhere else in the world.

Well, today we are being called on to help. On 21 December, the 12 ambassadors of the Community meeting in Bangkok sent their governments, the twelve Member State governments, a joint message asking for a delegation of MEPs to be sent to Cambodia, naturally without that implying any recognition of the regime in Phnom Penh.

The motion for a resolution put down by the Socialist Group thus contained one essential element, namely the desire for this fact-finding mission to take place. It won't be a delegation to the government in Phnom Penh, which we do not recognize, but a fact-finding tour.

Madam President, I call on the House for support on this. Tomorrow we shall be asking the Enlarged Bureau to agree to this fact-finding mission as soon as possible.

The Commission will be giving us its views on this presently. For once it will not be a pious hope on the

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part of Parliament, not simply a declaration of intent and principle. We are being asked to act, to report. We must do so. And in the same way that the Community previously provided this prodigious amount of humanitarian aid when the Member State governments were not able to act, once again this time the European Parliament must help to determine the truth about what is happening in Cambodia so that the peace process can continue, without the involvement of the Khmer Rouge. There can be no compromise with the Khmer Rouge, as the President of the French Republic quite rightly said a few days ago.

(Applause)

PAISLEY (NI). — Madam President, this Parliament, the Commission and the Council ought to unite strongly on the issue of Cambodia. We welcome all the Commission has done and I trust, when the Commissioner visits Cambodia, he will insist on a thorough investigation of the camps.

What remains of Cambodia is now permanently threatened with annihilation. The whole nation could disappear as a result. The atrocities that have been perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge are unmentionable and unthinkable. I would welcome the initiative taken by the Australian Government and I trust that this Parliament and the Commission will support the Australian Government in its initiative to seek UN intervention to establish an interim administration in Cambodia.

I also welcome the part that is now being played effectively by the five permanent members of the Security Council. The way Pol Pot supporters are able to operate in the USA and even in countries of this Community is deplorable. There must be an embargo on arms to the Khmer Rouge. The various Cambodian patriotic forces must be brought together to provide a proper national army for the defence of the patriots of Cambodia. China must be told in no uncertain manner of the outrage felt throughout the world at their arming the Khmer Rouge.

This is an issue that all right-minded citizens in this Community and throughout the world are united on. I trust that effective action can be taken.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — *(ES)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, you may be sure that we are following the situation in Cambodia with the closest attention in the framework of European political cooperation and the Commission itself has frequently expressed its categorical opposition to the return to power of the Khmer Rouge.

The Community advocates a comprehensive political solution. The day before yesterday, as honourable Members know, since it has already been mentioned, agreement was reached for a most important fundamental strengthening of the role of the United Nations on the lines advocated by Mr Evans. For the first time the permanent members of the United Nations Security

Council succeeded in reaching an agreement in Paris which undoubtedly represents a step towards peace in Cambodia. In their declaration they state that a lasting peace can only be achieved by means of a comprehensive political solution including, moreover, the proven withdrawal of foreign forces, a cease-fire and an end to military aid from abroad, to which honourable Members have already referred.

As is acknowledged in almost all the urgent resolutions and questions presented by honourable Members, it is the Cambodian people who are suffering the effects of the struggle so that it is essential, as you will agree, to increase humanitarian aid. Although aid had been given previously, in 1988 the Commission, seeing the course of events, began, at the instigation of our colleague Claude Cheysson, providing aid through non-governmental organizations under multiannual programmes to a value of ECU 2.8 million, which speaks for itself when compared with the ECU 167 000 for 1987. The non-governmental organizations continued to implement those projects throughout 1989.

Last week, as I was saying yesterday in answering some of your questions, I received two of the organizations working in the Cambodian camps near the Thai frontier and in other camps in Thailand for Indo-Chinese refugees. One of these organizations — Doctors without Frontiers — has been financed by the Community ever since the Cambodian crisis began on Christmas Day in 1978. During these talks I was assured that a joint project would be started as soon as possible by that organization together with the other organization present at the meeting, Doctors of the World, to reconstruct the biggest hospital in Phnom Penh with financial backing of half a million ECU from the Commission.

I should also like to point out, to reassure honourable Members, that both organizations have undertaken a bold and active campaign drawing attention to the dangers of genocide if there were to be a fresh revival or accession to power of the Khmer Rouge, so it is absolutely certain that none of this aid can be diverted to the Khmer Rouge. However, various resolutions call attention to the real and existing danger that part of the aid offered by the Community to help these quarter of a million Cambodians in the camps along the Thai border may be diverted and misused for the Khmer Rouge itself.

Several times we have stressed to the ONUSF — the United Nations organization for frontier assistance — that every precaution should be taken to ensure that this aid cannot be diverted. As a result, since May 1988, and Mr Cheysson has the evidence, the ONUSF has refused to distribute aid to camps which it is not allowed to enter. And as regards the four Khmer Rouge camps which the ONUSF, which also distributes our aid, is allowed to enter, the strictest control has been laid down as to the manner in which the aid is distributed, but even so there is still a risk of diversion. So next week I shall personally investigate the situation on the

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frontier between Thailand and Cambodia and on my return I hope to be able to inform you, on an appropriate occasion, of the results of my investigation and of specific improvements which we shall try to introduce in our aid programmes for refugees. Naturally I shall also try to visit that famous camp, No 8. Furthermore I think that the proposed visit by a delegation from this Parliament — a semi-official rather than an official visit and to the country rather than to the Cambodian authorities — to see how matters stand, may also yield valuable information. On the basis of the results of these two visits we shall decide whether an official mission from the Commission is also to go ahead.

Let me end by repeating two points: the Commission is intensifying its aid to Cambodia; waiting would only worsen matters. The Commission is also prepared, in the second place, to support the population of Cambodia in rebuilding their country once the overall political situation has been restored following the withdrawal from Cambodia of foreign forces. Then the Commission will join in other types of measures discussed at the peace conference in Paris in August 1989, which will necessarily imply sending other fact-finding missions — which is why I am reluctant to do so at the moment — and moreover having systematic interviews with the duly constituted authorities of the country at both national and local levels. The Commission has declared its readiness to take part in the programmes for the voluntary return and resettlement of the Cambodian refugees, which must be carried out under the supervision of a suitable international organization and of course with the agreement of the governments concerned. Meanwhile the difficult, tragic and terrible situation through which these unfortunate people, most of them children, as honourable Members know, are going, persists. The Community will do everything possible to see that the Cambodian refugees are moved from all the frontier camps to a safe neutral place which may make it possible, when conditions are stable, to carry out a programme of voluntary repatriation.

PRESIDENT. — The joint debate is closed.

We shall now proceed to the vote.

(Parliament adopted a joint motion for a resolution¹ on the situation in Cambodia)

¹ Tabled by Mr Maher on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr Vecchi on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, Mrs Dury and Mr Sakellariou on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Habzburg and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Vandemeulebroucke on behalf of the Rainbow Group and Mr Newton Dunn on behalf of the European Democratic Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-86/90, B3-138/90, B3-153/90 and B3-158/90.

Ambulancemen's strike

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the joint debate on the following two motions for resolutions:

— Doc. B3-111/90 by Mrs Ewing and Mr Vandemeulebroucke, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the ambulance strike in the UK;

— Doc. B3-151/90 by Mr Donnelly and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on ambulance workers.

POLLACK (S). — Madam President, before the debate starts on the next resolution, I felt Members ought to be aware that I have heard today that in the London area, managers of the ambulance service have taken away ignition keys from 500 vehicles leaving only 200 providing emergency voluntary cover on the roads.

DONNELLY (S). — Madam President, since September, ambulance crews in the United Kingdom have been trying to negotiate with their employers in the health service for a decent wage. The British Government is obstructing negotiations and has suspended workers from their jobs. The ambulance workers will accept binding arbitration, yet the British Government's response has been to heap insults on the heads of those workers by comparing them to nothing more than professional drivers. How can we create a true citizens' Europe, with free movement of workers, when the emergency services of a major nation are being crippled by the United Kingdom Government?

Madam President, Mrs Thatcher does not understand the meaning of the words 'social justice'. That is clear in the way that she is trying to destroy our health service and it was clear when she voted against the Social Charter. Our Social Charter wants to achieve harmonious industrial relations. That is what the British ambulance workers want. They want fair treatment and I hope this House will support them in that quest.

EWING (ARC). — Madam President, fact one, and I think everyone can agree — and I am speaking particularly to the Conservatives — is that these men and women are absolutely dedicated to duty. Yet, along with nurses and firemen they have been long-suffering against a background of being under-appreciated by being underpaid.

Fact two is that they were slow to rouse to action so they feel deeply and sincerely. Action is repugnant but they are having to take it.

Fact three, what is wrong with their demand for their pay to be linked to firemen? That would obviate future strikes and is reasonable.

Fact four is that lives are at stake and there is a crisis now. Others cannot do the job as well. That is another fact that cannot be disputed. In this crisis it is the weakest people and the vulnerable sectors of the population which are at risk.

EWING

The next fact is that the public support the ambulance-men. They do not like strikes but they love the ambulancemen. That fact has been proved by opinion polls.

The next fact which I would ask the Conservatives to bear in mind is that the costs of the UK Government not settling this dispute already exceed what it would have cost to settle the dispute.

I am now appealing to the Conservatives. Apparently there was a *malaise* admitted between the UK and MEP Conservatives and now they are going to hold monthly meetings to improve the situation. Would it not be a wonderful initiative in this first month of the year for the MEPs to accept my facts? How can they dispute them? Can they not use their influence to say: 'Let us settle', because the last fact is this: If the ambulancemen are driven back — and that could happen — the bitterness will linger on. If in some way the UK Government could find this linkage answer reasonable, the ambulancemen would go back in a spirit of renewed dedication.

JENSEN (S). — Madam President, excuse me for speaking English, 23 000 ambulance staff were suspended in November and even without pay they are still taking emergency calls. They have accepted arbitration, something which you cannot say of the United Kingdom Government. The ambulance workers deserve Europe-wide acclaim for their willingness to negotiate, to compromise and for their moral standard. Like the ambulance workers we should all seek to avoid such chaotic industrial relations where only one part sides with commonsense. In the Europe we want, negotiations and social justice are key expressions.

BROK (PPE). — (DE) Madam President, one of the principles of a free and social economic order is the existence of the right of wage-bargaining which may not be interfered with by political bodies. For that reason alone, my group will be voting against the motion because, in our view, it is not in line with the development of agreement freely reached between the social partners at European level if, as a result of decisions of a political institution, such as the European Parliament, sides are taken in a wage dispute. Moreover — if I may make a personal comment — we shall never achieve a progressive and stable economic and social policy in the European Community if, as proposed in the motion, we move over to a system of salary and wage indexation.

We are, of course, used to the fact that the Socialist Group and its chairman, Mr Cot, have, as a result of strong Labour Party influence, become instruments of British domestic policy, but I do not wish to see the European Parliament itself become an instrument of British domestic policy. Incidentally, there was last year in one of the Member States a major dispute involving strike action and concerning hospital staff in which the national government behaved in a most extraordinary way; that was France's socialist government, Rocard's

government, which was not able to reach agreement with the hospital staff within a reasonable period of time. We will be able to see to that also in the future, if we wish to become involved in this area.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that, if we wish to develop the social dimension of the European Community, we must make it clear that we want the structures of European social policy improved. If, however, we give the impression that all this is only a party-political game designed to cause a national government — whether or not it is to your taste is without relevance — difficulties, then we shall never achieve our aim, that is to say the social dimension, and I wish the Socialist Group every success in putting on another show for the press, but they have prejudiced the issue in doing so.

O'HAGAN, The Lord (ED). — Madam President, to my regret my country did not sign the Social Charter. We had an important visitor this week, Mr Dubcek. I wonder if he noted what this Parliament did on the Social Charter. Did he notice that the Socialist Group consistently voted against the right of workers not to join a trade-union, for example? Did he note that the British Labour Members are still, as I understand it, against the abolition of the closed shop? Did he notice that people like Barry Seal use this Parliament to play British politics and not to talk about the future of social Europe?

What sort of socialism is going to be peddled around by the Socialist International in Eastern and Central Europe if the old Stalinists from the BLG are in charge of the use of the information? Are they going to be democratic socialists as Mr Dubcek wants them to be? This debate is an abuse of parliamentary procedure. Just as the Socialist Group is the cat's paw of the British Labour Group.

(Interruptions)

Julian Priestley's lads and lasses are trying to turn this Assembly into the sort of legislative tyranny which the United States of America was founded in order to undermine in the state legislatures, in the individual 13 states after the Declaration of Independence. Legislative tyranny. Tyranny by assembly. That is what the British Labour Group wants.

Vote against this motion and vote for democracy.

(Mixed reactions)

CECI (GUE). — (IT) Madam President, as regards the dispute about which we have just been speaking, we consider the discussion in this House to be extremely important and will be voting in favour of the resolution precisely in order to express specific and genuine support for the thousands of workers engaged in the struggle in that country which, as has been pointed out, has not signed the Social Charter, and because that failure to accede to the Social Charter should not mean that the rights which the European Parliament has approved and wishes to extend to all workers through-

CECI

out the Community should be abandoned in that country.

We shall also be voting for the resolution because it seems to us that there is another, further-reaching, issue underlying that conflict. We cannot forget that until the early eighties the United Kingdom was the country with one of the strongest and most exemplary national health services. That service has gradually sunk into crisis, the victim, for no good reason, of a concept which views the extension of social welfare to a greater number of citizens as being an alternative to and in conflict with a mistaken notion of progress and simple economic growth. That idea has wended its way from the United Kingdom to many other Community countries undermining the national governments' responsibility for and commitment to establishment of the right to health. We therefore consider that it is legitimate and necessary for the Community to consider this right today because we are not intervening in a national collective bargaining agreement, we are simply supporting a particular view of Europe, namely that described yesterday by President Delors: the idea of a strong and competitive Community but based on affirmation of the principles of solidarity and the extension of fundamental rights such as the right to health, and not of their suppression or negation.

FORD (S). — Madam President, I was going to reply to Lord O'Hagan but as he managed to speak for 2 ½ minutes and not mention the subject of the resolution, it is very difficult for me to reply.

Mr Brok made a number of interesting points. This dispute has been dragging on now for five months. Why? Because it has been relying on the ambulance workers in their feeling of duty and commitment to their jobs to continue to provide emergency cover and their commitment to people in need, including members of the current government. When they were involved in the Brighton bombing and they needed these same people to drag them out from under the rubble that IRA terrorism had caused, there was no problem then.

We do not believe in intervention in this sense but it is the British Government that is refusing, by intervening in this dispute, to actually get it resolved by binding arbitration. We do not have to choose who to support. What we are asking for is to allow arbitration to take place. Ambulance drivers are asking for their pay to be linked. We are in favour of that. MPs have their pay linked, under a system brought in by the British Government, and we have been getting 20% increases over the last few years. Why cannot the ambulance drivers have the same conditions as those for MPs introduced by Mrs Thatcher?

Finally, we are being told that there is no support. In fact there is support for the ambulance drivers. 90% of the public are in favour of the ambulance drivers. 83% of Tory voters are supporting the ambulance drivers. Please Sir Christopher Prout tell Mrs Thatcher to listen to what people want, in Europe and outside.

PRESIDENT. — The joint debate is closed.

We shall now proceed to the vote.

(Parliament adopted a joint motion for a resolution¹ on the strike by British ambulance workers)

BLANEY (ARC). — Madam President, my vote was not recorded. My machine did not seem to work. I was voting in favour of the last resolutions, and I want that recorded.

FALCONER (S). — Madam President, before you move on to the next item, paragraph 4 of this resolution states 'Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the UK Government.' I expect this House will receive replies to those letters at the next part-session.

Human rights

PRESIDENT. — The next item on the agenda is the joint debate on the following motions for resolutions:

- Doc. B3-92/90 by Mr Antony and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the recent violations of human rights in Israel;
- Doc. B3-94/90 by Mr Piquet and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the situation in the occupied territories;
- Doc. B3-104/90 by Mrs Aulas and Mrs Cramon-Daiber, on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, on Israeli police repression during peaceful demonstrations in Jerusalem;
- Doc. B3-128/90 by Mr de la Malène and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the situation in the Middle East;
- Doc. B3-135/90 by Mr Vecchi and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on repression in the Israeli occupied territories;
- Doc. B3-150/90 by Mrs Dury and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on condemning the Israeli law banning all contact between the citizens of Israel and Palestinians from the PLO;
- Doc. B3-99/90 by Mrs Giannakou-Koutsikou and others, on behalf of the European People's Party, on the human rights violations perpetrated against the Greek minority in Albania;
- Doc. B3-97/90 by Mr Verhagen and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on the situation in Sudan;
- Doc. B3-148/90 by Mr Seal, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the situation in the Sudan;

¹ Tabled by Mr Donnelly and Mr Ford on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mrs Ewing and Mr Vandemeulebroucke on behalf of the Rainbow Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-111/90 and B3-151/90.

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- Doc. B3-125/90 by Mr Ephremidis and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on human rights in Turkey;
- Doc. B3-149/90 by Mr Romeos, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the expulsion of an English journalist from Turkey;
- Doc. B3-154/90 by Mr Balfe, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on detentions in Turkey;
- Doc. B3-119/90 by Mr Staes, on behalf of the Green Group, on the situation of the Yanomami Indians in Brazil;
- Doc. B3-161/90 by Mr Pimenta, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the plight of the Yanomami people in Brazil;
- Doc. B3-137/90 by Mr Giovanni and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the conflict in Armenia and Azerbaijan;
- Doc. B3-139/90 by Mr Nianias and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan;
- Doc. B3-145/90 by Mr Cheysson and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on human rights in Soviet Armenia;
- Doc. B3-156/90 by Mrs Giannakou-Koutsikou and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on the disturbing developments in Azerbaijan;
- Doc. B3-157/90 by Mr Simeoni and Mr Vandemeulebroucke, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the confrontation between the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis in Transcaucasia;
- Doc. B3-160/90 by Mr Dillen and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the situation in Armenia;
- Doc. B3-162/90 by Mrs Veil and Mr Nordmann, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the serious situation in Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan;
- Doc. B3-165/90 by Mr Piquet and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the confrontation in Azerbaijan;
- Doc. B3-146/90 by Mr Schwartzberg and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the sixth International Conference on AIDS in San Francisco, June 1990.

ANTONY (DR). — (FR) Madam President, the situation in the State of Israel is going from bad to worse. Parliament was quite right to express displeasure at the repressive measures taken against a demonstration which was aimed at peace in the region, but more generally speaking we cannot but express our sorrow now at the injuries sustained by 80 000 young Palestinians and the deaths which are part of the daily bloodbath in that unfortunate country.

We do not deny that the State of Israel is entitled to live within secure and guaranteed borders, but the Palestinian people too have a right to live in freedom on the land they have occupied since time immemorial. We sometimes wonder how it is that the Israeli ambassador can lecture the political group we represent, expressing indignation at our alleged opposition to immigration into France, when the State of Israel won't grant full fundamental freedoms to the Palestinians who are, and always have been, present on its territory. And we have heard this very day that the State of Israel proposes to control immigration into Israel and even to exclude Jews who do not have an irreproachable Jewish pedigree going back several generations.

We say that peace must be restored to this region. For our part, we hope that an international conference on peace in the Middle East will be held so that all the ethnic and religious communities in this region can live in freedom.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ALBER

Vice-President

DE ROSSA (ARC). — Mr President, the position of Israel in the international community is a question on which this House should, I feel, express an opinion. I am particularly concerned at the recent report from Amnesty International which indicated that there were severe breaches of international law in the way Israel's security forces are dealing with the Intifada, and with young people in particular, who are throwing stones and generally expressing their dissatisfaction with the fact that Israel is occupying their homeland. I am particularly concerned that the guidelines which the Israeli security forces have on the use of firearms — and Amnesty International has said this — actually encourages the use of firearms against unarmed youths.

There have been various estimates of the number of people shot dead by the Israeli security forces in the occupied areas. It is significant that all of the people who have been shot were unarmed civilians. In many instances they were shot dead by security forces in back alleys, shot in the head because they happened to run away from groups of men who were armed. It is intolerable, in my view, that the Israeli State should be allowed to carry on in this way and this House must express its concern at that kind of activity.

I hope that Parliament will support this motion and make it clear that we are not satisfied with the anti-democratic activity of the Israeli State and the activities of the Israeli security forces.

AULAS (V). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, like others working actively for peace and non-violence I went to Jerusalem. Like others who took part in the women's march, and in the human chain, I wished on behalf of my Group to demonstrate, albeit symboli-

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cally, our commitment in the face of dramatic events which are all the closer to our hearts in that they derive from an offshoot of European history.

None of us, ladies and gentlemen, can remain aloof from the experience of a people whom certain circles persist in ignoring, in refusing to recognize. Together with over a thousand others, from Europe and the West, we witnessed and in some cases were on the receiving end of the provocation and repression meted out by the occupying authorities. We no longer had the distance, that distance with which we here perceive what goes on there. That distance which robs words of their meaning. That distance across which the impact of repeated and commonplace evil is weakened. There, on the spot, in the midst of a daily round made up of humiliation, repression and, it must be said, breaches of the law, we saw and listened to Palestinians and Israeli pacifists. All of them have great expectations of us, of Europe. After all, they say, and these are their very words, Europe is now the focus of history. It is up to Europe to take the initiative and deliver us from a power whose ideology and fantasies have become sick and distorted. At all events a power which professes to want peace, but puts as many obstacles as it can in the path of dialogue, a power which repeatedly puts off all possibilities of a solution.

If we are not to be guilty of a breach of trust let us be true to ourselves, to our principles and traditions. Let us be bold enough to further the cause of peace without giving in to intimidation and pressure from those who distort those things which are dearest to our hearts, here as elsewhere, namely peace, democracy, right and freedom.

This is what we believe. That is the thrust of our motion.

VECCHI (GUE). — *(IT)* Mr President, for the first time, on 30 December 1989, thirty thousand people stretched out their hands to form an enormous human chain around the walls of old Jerusalem. Thirty thousand Israelis, Palestinians, Europeans and North Americans wished to express in this way and together their desire for a just and negotiated peace, for the respect of human rights and for the establishment of the right to self-determination for all peoples, in the same way as, on the previous day, a further five thousand women had marched for the same reasons.

The 1990 initiative 'Time for peace', organized by Israeli, Palestinian and European peace movements, has certainly been one of the greatest, most original and most intelligent ways of expressing the desire for peace and political awareness of events in the Middle East, which have permeated Israeli public opinion, the struggle of the Palestinian people and the international consciousness.

And so, for those reasons also, the attitude repeatedly taken by the Israeli police authorities to demonstrations which are permitted under the law and are strictly non-violent are all the more detestable, serious and

unjustified. Tear gas, smoke bombs and other instruments of repression have been used against those taking part, even inside the hotels sheltering them, causing dozens of people to be injured — among them Israelis, Palestinians and Europeans — and hundreds to suffer bruising. Marisa Manno, an Italian citizen, lost an eye and, of the Italians alone, another thirty people were injured by police missiles. Some Members of this Parliament were violently struck, in particular Dacia Valent who was repeatedly abused and detained by the police despite having clearly informed them of her status.

The brutality and lack of justification for that action have actually been confirmed in a report by senior officials in the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

And so, for that reason, we are asking this House and the European Council to support the already numerous protests, some of them official, addressed to the Israeli Government, and the Israeli Government itself to guarantee that it will allow prompt investigation by an independent commission of inquiry which will clearly establish where responsibility lies, also compensating those who have suffered loss.

Those events further emphasize the need for the European Community also to increase initiatives in that region.

DURY (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, on behalf of the Socialist Group I must register our protest at the manner in which those taking part in the peaceful demonstration held on 30 December last were treated. The Israeli authorities used a degree of violence which, whilst I cannot say it was unusual, was at all events unacceptable in our eyes. Some of our Group were present as an indication of our desire for peace. Jannis Sakellariou and Ernest Glinne were witnesses to this violence. Happily they escaped unscathed.

But I have a few points to make in connection with the motion put down by the Socialists. Firstly, we would ask the Commissioner to tell us whether the agreements between the European Community and Israel are being upheld in respect of products from the occupied territories. Secondly, we wish to make it known to the Israeli authorities that we cannot believe their professed desire for peace when Israeli citizens are condemned for having contacts with members of the PLO. Frankly we pay tribute to all citizens of Israel who fight for peace at the price, I won't say of their lives, but of their physical safety.

GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU (PPE). — *(GR)* Mr President, the motion I have tabled and which concerns the violation of human rights, especially violation of the rights of the Greek minority in Albania, relates to a particular event and incident. On 9th October 1989 four brothers of the Prasou family were arrested by the Albanian authorities while trying to escape to Greece. The information we have, both from Yugoslavia and from the Greek Foreign Ministry, is that the Prasou

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brothers have been executed. But in any case, since the Greek Government cannot be content with mere information, the Albanian authorities were asked for an assurance that the individuals in question were still alive. The Albanian government categorically declined to allow the Greek Ambassador to visit the village from which the Prasou brothers came, and to ascertain that they were still alive.

Of course, the problem of Albania does not just concern the execution of four brothers. We all know very well, from the motion associated with the Tzounis report which nearly all of us voted for, the situation that prevails in Albania. I have the impression, Mr President, that the European Community, which would like to develop relations with Albania which is in a sensitive area, will have to reiterate the same principles and prerequisites that Parliament in particular laid down in that resolution. Namely, that the basic prerequisites for the development of relations between Albania and the EEC are respect for international principles, for human rights, for the Helsinki agreements, and if you will, that our relations must be determined exclusively by the principles of the Treaty of Rome and the Single Act, which look to the protection of human rights not just within the Community but in a broader sense outside it as well.

I therefore call upon the European Parliament to support the motion I have tabled, and if the Albanian government does not furnish the necessary proof during the specified period, I call upon Parliament to send a delegation of Ministers to ascertain whether these circumstances are true or not.

PAPAYANNAKIS (GUE). — (GR) Mr President, at this time we will refer briefly to Albania and to the treatment of its citizens by the regime in power, whom it regards as subjects. The exceptionally oppressive conditions of government, Mr President, apply in equal measure to all Albanians, but in some cases more particularly to the disadvantage of national minorities and especially the Greek minority. There are serious problems relating to education, language, religion, population shifts, the disruption of homogeneity by founding new villages within the areas where the minority lives, and the information and testimonies we get about executions, pillorying, and arbitrary arrests are most disturbing.

Mr President, we all recognize Albania's special position in Europe. We also know that its regime is the only one still holding out against the current of democracy that is streaming at this time. In no sense does our Group identify the independence and integrity of Albania with its regime, however much the latter may claim everlasting authority, as do all others before they fall.

With our motion we are asking Parliament to demonstrate its sensitivity and solidarity, and call upon Albania, if it wants good relations with the EEC, to

respect the basic principles to which it has already become a signatory.

VERHAGEN (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, in December of last year Amnesty International published a report on grave violations of human rights in Sudan. A shocking story which faces us with the sad fact that the military regime is holding large numbers of dissidents in prison, many of them without formal charge or trial.

The military takeover has still brought no end to the series of serious human rights violations going on there since the start of the civil war. Countless unarmed citizens have since been killed or cruelly tortured. A number of death sentences have also been pronounced recently on the authority of the military regime, with no heed for the UN guarantees safeguarding the rights of those under sentence of death or for the international convention on civil and political rights to which the government of Sudan is also a signatory. An appeal on this matter from Parliament's President Baron Crespo recently secured a stay of execution for Magdi Mahgub.

Those sentenced to death include a number of doctors whose only offence was that in protest against the regime's decision to outlaw all trade unions they had organized a 10-minute strike. At this very moment the threat of execution hangs over Dr Muamwa Mohammed Hussein, one of the strike leaders. We simply must do everything we can to stop this execution. And we must do everything we can to put an end to these serious violations of human rights. It may be that appeals by the President of the European Parliament like that concerning the recent proposed execution will not be enough to achieve this. The Commission and European Community ministers must use cooperation with Sudan as a lever to stop the executions and make sure that human rights are upheld in Sudan.

SEAL (S). — Mr President, I too rise to speak on the resolution on the Sudan.

For six years there has been a bloody civil war in the Sudan; a war which has commanded very little media attention; a war which has resulted in thousands of innocent civilians being tortured, being killed and being continually repressed. Unfortunately it is the Government of the Sudan that is primarily responsible for these killings and for these repressions.

Six months ago the government was overthrown in a military coup. The new government, however, is even worse than the last one. A new wave of terror commenced when they took power, and it has not only increased the killings, the torture and the imprisonment but it has extended them to a whole new range of people. Trade unions were outlawed and mass arrests of trade-unionists and other people took place. People were arrested and detained without any trial and without access to lawyers. Any people suspected of having anti-government feelings were detained and, to make things worse, these detainees have been held in prison as far away as possible from their homes. It is not

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possible for their friends or their relatives to visit them, and there is little prospect of any trial because — as I say — they are denied access to lawyers. These repressions, as the previous speaker said, resulted in a mass series of strikes, not just of manual workers but strikes of professional people — lawyers and doctors. They were so incensed at repression that they took strike action, but the response of the government was to arrest the strike leaders and even sentence some of them to death.

As has been said, because of pressure from my colleagues and myself, the President wrote to the Sudanese Government, but this has resulted in another execution taking place. I urge all of you to support this resolution. I urge all of you to support calls for the immediate abrogation of the death sentence on the strike leaders, for the immediate release of people detained and for the Sudanese Government to restore some semblance of civil rights in their country.

EPHREMIDIS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, I will refer to the violation of human rights in Turkey. This is a subject which for the past 10 years has never failed to be debated sometime during every session of this House, despite which the situation continues. The reason for today's motion is the recent arrest of 107 people who are being held in high-security prisons and elsewhere, and are undergoing various types of ill treatment. All this goes quite against what the present President of the Turkish Republic proclaimed, and what he proclaimed while he was still prime-minister, when he said that to restore relations with the Community he would repeal the notorious Article 141 and 142, which are Fascist in character and content, and whereby people are persecuted simply for their political views.

Mr President, both this House, by voting for our motion today, and the other institutional bodies, must at last make headway with some kind of substantial action and measures. They at last have the possibility of persuading the Turkish government and their regime to set free the political prisoners and abolish those shameful articles, so as to tear down the wall that debars the Turkish people too from enjoying its human rights.

On this opportunity however, Mr President, as I am talking about human rights in Turkey, I must not fail to reiterate our view about what has been said concerning Albania. We support respect for human rights everywhere, and therefore in Albania as well. In that sense the motion by the European Unitarian Left, which Mr Papayannakis spoke about a short while ago, has our complete support and we will vote for it.

ROMEOS (S). — (GR) Mr President, I would like to refer in particular to the motion concerning the violation of human rights in Albania and Turkey. The development in recent years of relations between Greece and Albania, indeed very good relations, has greatly improved the position of the Greek minority in Albania. Despite this, as also mentioned in the motions tabled, the Greek minority continues to be deprived of certain rights, such as the right of religious freedom.

Where Turkey is concerned it comes as no surprise that today's agenda includes three motions about violations of human rights. The decision to expel a British journalist, Mr Christopher Wilding, about which I myself have tabled a motion, demonstrates and stresses the fact that at least in the violation of human rights there is equal treatment. Foreigners are not exempt. However, information received today from Amnesty International has it that the Turkish government has already decided to rescind the decision on expulsion, and I therefore withdraw the motion in the hope that the information is accurate and I will not have to come back with it to the House next time.

BALFE (S). — Mr President, my resolution specifically refers to the case of two women who returned to Turkey, Cicek Yagci and Culenay Ozturkcy, who were initially detained in Istanbul. The prosecutor there appeared to be willing to release them on bail but they were then taken to Ankara where they have been kept in prison on the orders of Prosecutor Demiral in Ankara. This office appears to be a judicial service completely independent of the Turkish State, because there are statements regularly coming out of Turkey to the joint committee about changes in procedure, access to lawyers, reduced periods of detention, review of Articles 141 and 142, yet at the same time all this is being totally ignored by the prosecutor in the capital city of the country itself.

The European Commission of Human Rights did not receive full cooperation when it visited Turkey recently. There is no doubt that these two women should not have been put in prison. It is quite possible to release them on bail. We have another case of a person now over two years in prison. There is no reason why the proceedings against them cannot continue with them on bail. Recently we have had 106 people arrested for belonging to the Communist Party which the president of the country himself says is to be legalized. There is a total difference between what happens in Ankara and what happens in other parts of the country. I believe that the delegation for Turkey must meet soon and, before we go to Turkey in March, we have to set down a number of demands to visit prisoners, to have meetings with the prosecutor and to have a useful exchange of views on human rights subjects, because I am not prepared to go and sit by the seaside for three days in Antalya. We have a job to do in the prisons and with the prosecutors and I hope that this resolution will provide a framework for the delegation to consider its procedure and its proposals in Antalya.

JOANNY (V). — (FR) Mr President, our Group, by virtue of its thinking and its Portuguese chairwoman, cannot just stand by and watch as the Brazilian Indians and the Yanomami people in particular are exterminated. Following grand statements in the media to the effect that the gold prospectors were being expelled from the Indians' territory, President Sarney's government has just concluded a pact with the industrial concerns in the Paranapanema region whereby prospec-

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ting for gold is to continue on other areas of land, but other land which also belongs to the Yanomamis. Not only are the working conditions of the gold prospectors dreadful in themselves, the methods they use are polluting with mercury and drastically reducing the water and food supplies of the local populations. Furthermore, the presence of these gold prospectors is altogether illegal under the Brazilian constitution which grants the Indians full control over their lands. We are astonished that President Sarney's Justice Minister remains silent on this point. In addition, our governments do have a certain responsibility in regard to the economic development of Brazil by virtue of the size of the debt which Brazil owes and the structural adjustments she is being required to make.

In view of the pace at which this extermination is proceeding I thus urge you, ladies and gentlemen, to vote for this motion and, if you wish, to come to the Green Group or myself and put your names to the petition which our Brazilian friends are organizing on this matter of the gold prospectors.

BERTENS (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, a tragedy is being played out at the moment, in fact it has been going on for a number of years now, in the rainforest of Brazil's Amazonian basin: namely the disappearance of the Yanomami Indians primarily as a result of the activities of large numbers of gold prospectors, the so-called *garimpeiros*, in the areas allocated to the Yanomamis. These activities are extremely destructive of the Indians' natural habitat, which is of course part of our own environment too, namely the tropical rainforest. The method used by the prospectors causes large areas of primeval forest to be cleared. The mercury used to bind the gold poisons the soil and water on which the Indians depend. The consequences are disastrous, even fatal. The Yanomamis are being decimated by infectious disease and infant mortality has shot up.

In October of last year there seemed to be a glimmer of hope for the Indians when the Brazilian judges declared the presence of the gold prospectors in the area to be illegal. The Brazilian Government launched a major operation to enforce that judicial ruling. The operation which got under way last Monday was abandoned the very next day. It is particularly lamentable that the Sarney Government has given in on this. We hope in any event that the president-elect can be persuaded by the European Parliament to do something which will protect the tropical rainforest and its indigenous population.

One final question to the Commission. A report by Mrs Van den Heuvel approved last year pressed in this same connection for specific development projects to help the native peoples of North and South America. How far have these progressed?

DUVERGER (GUE). — (FR) What can the European Parliament do in the face of the pogroms which the Armenians are suffering in Azerbaijan, the civil war

they have unleashed, the military intervention decided on by the Soviet Government? This is the question asked in the motion for a resolution placed before the House jointly by five of our groups.

These five groups, and the three others which put down a motion on the same subject, are practically unanimous as to what the reply should be, and such unanimity is rare in this Chamber. All of us want to see a search for ways of resolving the conflict peacefully, the start of a constructive dialogue leading to a negotiated settlement, and we want the populations involved to be consulted. On this latter and most important point the Group of the European Right and the Left Unity Group are expressly agreed. But the unanimity thus emerging in Parliament unfortunately comes up against an insurmountable obstacle. The two peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan are not at present disposed to move towards conciliation, compromise, peace, as we would have them do.

In these circumstances the Soviet Government had no alternative but to intervene militarily. Though we may deplore such action on principle, we are all concerned as to the outcome. What is at stake is not only the restoration of safety and coexistence ...

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

... for six million Azeris and three and a half million Armenians, *perestroika* itself is at stake, and would not survive if Azerbaijan were to secede. Between Leningrad and Vladivostok, 209 million men and women are advancing along the difficult road from dictatorship to freedom. Whether or not they make it will depend ...

(Interruption by the President)

NIANIAS (RDE). — (GR) Mr President, some colleagues have spoken today about the subject of Albania's Greek minority and its oppression, and others about the violation of human rights in Turkey. I will move on to another tragic area, that of Armenia. Today's news, and yesterday's as well, is deeply disturbing. A great, historic and martyred people, the Armenians, are living through one of the most difficult times in their history. There are killings, looting, the burning down of churches and houses, people are fleeing and of course all this is reminiscent of the massacres of 1915, a crime which we here have insisted on branding as genocide. The Armenian problem is an aftermath of the Stalinist era, but it is of course promoted or exacerbated by the religious fanaticisms in the area. The Azeris have taken to massacres as I said, and now know no limits. That is an urgent challenge to our own ideal but also to our duty to play a constructive role in the world. The Armenian problem is now the harshest and most direct challenge that we face from the East. What is the problem itself? I think that a general and correct answer is that the Armenians are paying the price of two things: the Stalinist dark ages, and at the same time the fact that they are Christians. It would therefore be historically impermissible for us not to make our presence felt there. With today's motion we

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have a direct aim. We call, as a first measure, for the immediate cessation of armed conflict. This does not mean that the realization of that aim, the cessation of conflict, should come about with more victims in the area. The second aim is that the two sides should come closer together in a more durable way. We call for a peaceful settlement of the problem and also ask that our Parliament should be represented where it will indicate the measure of our interest, and as a factor to promote peaceful resolution. Unless we do that now in Armenia after the historical experiences of that people, we will already have created a very bad precedent.

SABY (S). — (FR) Mr President, what was yesterday a serious infringement of human rights in the Caucasus is today open warfare. The situation is very acute and the consequences may be extremely dangerous and place the process of democracy and freedom in the USSR and Eastern Europe in jeopardy.

We are currently witnessing an escalation. Information coming out of Yerevan this morning says that there has been no water for three days in Stepanakert because the supply pipes have been destroyed. There's no more heating. During an attack on the villages of Marounian and Petranion, the Azeris seized new military equipment and sizeable sums of money. More seriously still, they are now using Turkish-made munitions. Barely 4 000 people escaped the massacre in Baku, with great difficulty. The 40 000 Armenians left in Baku are in danger of their lives. In two Armenian villages in Nagorno-Karabakh gallows have been put up and Armenian farmers are being hanged by the Azeris. The wounded are being evacuated with great difficulty. An appeal for blood donors has gone out, as there isn't enough blood to treat the thousands of injured.

As I speak, the army is under orders to shoot. Today, Mr President, this is no longer a matter of human rights. The peoples of Europe, the Community must send out a true SOS to help the Soviet Union settle this problem peacefully. I believe that everything we are saying and doing today to help the peoples and countries which are moving towards freedom and democratization may be rendered useless tomorrow. For this reason we urge the House to give a massive vote in favour of the joint motion and call on the Council of Ministers and the Commission forthwith to take the measures needed to save these peoples and to restore peace.

GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU (PPE). — (GR) Mr President, the situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan, in Nagorno Karabakh, is extremely worrying. There have been references to the history of the Armenian problem. Both the genocide perpetrated by the Turks and branded as such by this Parliament, and the behaviour of the Soviet Union, especially under the Stalinist regime, create huge problems for that people, and I would like to point out that the population in question, which is a Christian population in contrast to the Azeris who are a muslim population, deserves a better fate. What worries us in particular as the European People's

Party is the intervention of Iran and the Khomeini regime in the matter. Our information is more than clear. The Azeris are obtaining weapons from Iran and that should be a matter of concern to the European Community, in relation to how far the Khomeini regime and the muslim fanatics can influence developments in the area. It is clear that the Soviet Government has been slow to find a solution to the problem, and that with its decision of last year it inflamed the situation and made it even more explosive. The European Community must look to the specific problem with particular care, and I have the impression that any intervention should take the form of a direct and substantial aid, among other ways through non-governmental agencies, granted that the isolation of the area creates problems even of food supply. Substantial pressure should also be exerted on the Soviet Union to make it possible for the Armenian people for the first time to live as they really want to, within the framework of a kind of self-regulation and self-determination, if you will, without influence from neighbouring peoples but within the framework of the Soviet Union as a whole. I have the impression that the European Community, without wishing to exacerbate the situation in the area, will have to make its intervention even more substantial. The Council must undertake initiatives at the diplomatic level, and the Commission must undertake to offer specific food and other economic aid.

SIMEONI (ARC). — (FR) Ladies and gentlemen, since the present motion was tabled and our debate scheduled for today, the situation in the Caucasus has got worse and the Soviet Government has sent reinforcements and given orders to shoot if necessary.

These racial and religious clashes are blind and bestial and cause the onlooker to feel revulsion. But there are those, here and there, who capitalize on the situation cleverly and try to put the blame for the situation on 'nationalism' or 'nationalist elements'. Our nationalism — that of my Group and my own in particular — campaigns for a Europe of brother nations, precluding by definition any relationships built on subjugation and dominance.

We must remember that the major powers, supposedly civilized and democratic, have chalked up a large and constant tally of deaths, torture and infringements of human rights. None of us here has reason to be proud when we look at the post-colonial era. Lebanon, Ireland, the Basque country are permanently soured by nationalist politics. Without interfering in the internal affairs of any given country Europe must use its strength to help the central Government of the USSR and the local governments of the republics to restore peace and concord. The decolonization of Europe is not yet complete and the Europe of brother nations has yet to be built.

NEUBAUER (DR). — (DE) Mr President, we regret the superficial manner in which this House expresses itself. When we are talking about Armenia and Azerbaijan, we

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are at the same time discussing the policies of Mr Gorbachev whose desperate attempt to rescue the Communist system from bankruptcy the West is mistaking for liberalization.

It is the Soviet regime which is responsible for the bloodshed in the Caucasus. Responsibility lies with Mr Gorbachev who stubbornly refuses to draw the political consequences of the revolutionary processes within his sphere of control. The USSR — and we on the European Right are stating this clearly — continues to be the jailer of many peoples, to imprison nationalities in a way which conflicts with the right to self-determination of nations and individuals. We are dealing with the last remaining major colonial system in the world. And we should not hypocritically mourn the victims of the Soviet conflict of nationalities in this House, if we are not at the same time prepared to make the decisive statement: the Soviet Union in its present form belongs on the rubbish tip of history! It is a poor joke when some of the motions for a resolution tabled here propose that the central authorities in Moscow should send more troops into the Caucasus. The people there do not need more soldiers of an occupying power to restore the peace of the tomb! No, those people need freedom, self-determination and a secure future in the international community. Only when the USSR ceases to exist will the bloodshed stop and the way be open towards a just and peaceful system.

VEIL (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, even as we speak in this debate today, they are fighting in Armenia. It is war out there. The Azeris have seized heavy weaponry, the Armenians are forced to organize if they are to escape the pogroms, and the Soviets, with the world's blessing, even the active encouragement of local populations which are in danger of being massacred, are constrained to intervene on a massive scale. And yet we are discussing the situation as if all it entailed were a simple infringement of human rights. Because of our silly procedure on human rights our debate once again mixes together widely differing subjects: for the last half-hour we have pottered from Brazil to the Middle East, from Albania to Sudan, with a little detour to Armenia. It shames us, and our Parliament,

(Applause)

it is an insult to all the men and women concerned! I'm not suggesting we should rank these cases in any order of importance. They are all important, because a human life is a human life, and equal in value to any other. Freedom is always freedom, wherever it is at risk. But the situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan demands special attention. Because, as we have heard here, it is not just a violation of human rights which is involved, it is an out-and-out war! And we don't know at the moment where this war will stop, what it may destabilize from one day to the next, one hour to the next, and what it may not have destabilized already. The two communities have tumbled into bloody conflict where the parties involved are receiving support from neighbouring countries, and it is well known that

Iran is already providing political and indeed military backing.

I am happy that most of our groups have agreed on a motion for a resolution. I won't dwell on it, we are nearly all agreed. I would merely say that we have to act very swiftly, because the test is to see whether a dialogue can be established, compromises reached between conflicting nationalisms, oppressed minorities. It will unfortunately be a few years before the world changes, and we must show right away what we can do, and above all we must tell the Armenians that we are not indifferent to this new plight of theirs and shall not allow them to be the victims of genocide again.

(Applause)

ELMALAN (CG). — (FR) Mr President, I feel very strongly about the dramatic happenings in Armenia. There simply has to be an end to this intercommunal hatred, the pogroms and deaths, and the blockade on food aid to Armenia has to be lifted. In these circumstances the Soviet Government's decision to send troops is perfectly justified. It is its duty to maintain order today in order that there may be a chance for dialogue tomorrow.

Our duty is to see that a move of this kind does not jeopardize the process of democratization embarked on by Mikhail Gorbachev. Our motion reaffirms the need for urgent talks to meet the situation. The Left Unity, the Greeks, the French, the Portuguese, Irish, all support the compromise motion for a resolution, even if we do not agree with every point made.

The urgent needs today are threefold: the massacres must stop, humanitarian aid must be increased, and political dialogue between the communities must be expanded. The aim of our motion is to help in that. To settle the problems with the people themselves, and allow greater autonomy to the federative republics which make up the USSR. This must be negotiated with due respect for international agreements, in particular the Helsinki Final Act and its principle of the inviolability of frontiers. To deny all that would be to risk unleashing the most sinister of forces. At all events we must at once take steps to increase vital humanitarian aid to these peoples and ensure that they get it. To this end the Community should cooperate with the Soviet Government to help organize transport supplies.

For all these reasons we signed the joint motion for a resolution and shall be voting for it.

SCHWARTZENBERG (S). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the next international conference on AIDS is to be held in June 1990 in San Francisco. Anyone who is HIV-positive and wants to attend will have to meet special criteria, entry visas being conditional on a prior declaration. Anyone with a contagious disease is effectively banned from entering the territory of the United States. An exemption from this ban may be obtained from the US Attorney-General. If this is granted, the passport will then be

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marked 'dangerous and contagious disease' which, these days, means AIDS. For one thing, this is medically inaccurate since AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease but not contagious. For another, it constitutes an impediment to the free movement of individuals. Thirdly, it offends against the rights of the individual, the need to respect confidentiality and privacy.

We have seen the leper's mark, the yellow star for Jews, the pink triangle for homosexuals, the social exclusion of gypsies. Are we now to stigmatize the sick as well?

A number of bodies have already decided not to take part in the congress: the International League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the British Haemophilia Society, the US National Association of People with AIDS. Mr Man, the World Health Organization's director for AIDS, has expressed his concern. We thus call on the US Government to withdraw this discriminatory measure. We urge all European Community scientists to stay away from this conference and boycott it, we urge all governmental and non-governmental organizations in the Community to do likewise and we suggest that the conference organizers should transfer it to a country where discrimination of this kind will not be practised.

MEDINA ORTEGA (S). — (ES) Mr President, the Brazilian Indians are in a difficult position; we know that they are seriously threatened because the Amazonian rainforest is being destroyed. Nevertheless, I do not support the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pimenta and the Green Group.

I am against it because, as Chairman of the Parliamentary Delegation for South America, I am tired of seeing us adopt resolutions without sufficient foundation, without information. This resolution accuses an official of the Brazilian Government, of acting illegally. Of course, I have no proof that he has done so. There are also allegations about a bishop of whom we know nothing and the resolution ends by demanding nothing less than the writing off of debts and Community medical aid for those suffering from tropical diseases. It seems to me that it is an inconsistent resolution without sufficient foundation. If we really want to help the Indians of the Brazilian rain forest there are better procedures such as actually studying the situation and offering resolutions based on facts, which do not call in question the sovereignty of a democratic country which Brazil is today.

DE DONNEA (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, it is the duty of this House to condemn all violations of human rights which come to its notice. I therefore endorse the views of those who condemn proven human rights violations in Turkey. However, I do not believe, as one of the motions for resolutions now before us suggests, that it would be an effective move on our part to suspend once more the work of the EEC-Turkey Joint Committee. On the contrary, this Joint Committee is a privileged forum for dialogue between Community and Turkish political spokesmen in which we are ideally

placed to uphold our views on the observance of human rights in face-to-face discussions with our Turkish opposite numbers.

Suspending the work of this Committee once again would certainly not be an efficacious measure. Quite the opposite, we might perhaps be playing into the hands of those in Turkey who would feel happier without rather than with these contacts which exist between the two sides within the Joint Committee.

LEHIDEUX (DR). — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it has taken quite a few years for the European Parliament to talk about AIDS. Probably it is doing so now because the motion for a resolution comes from the Socialist Group. The debate is prompted by the ill-considered and false pretext that the USA has decided to refuse entry to foreigners suffering from AIDS — something they have a right to do, indeed a duty to do because they have to protect their own people. This is not a question of human rights but of health, public welfare and particularly of protection for young people. I am surprised that it was a doctor who put forward this motion, which our Group will not support. We are conscious of the seriousness of the situation and have, for years now, been calling for vital safeguards to be taken, urgent measures which are more necessary now than ever before.

I would remind Professor Schwartzberg that AIDS is not transmitted by sexual contact only. We want checks at frontiers, screening, specifically by premarital and antenatal examinations, and also screening of those who have responsibility for the lives of others. Wake up to the problem! Airline pilots sometimes carrying more than five hundred people may have AIDS and thus serious symptoms which place other people's lives in danger!

Before too long the voters who elected you will be calling you to account for what you have done, the steps you have taken to protect their lives and health.

Mr Rocard told us recently that the European Economic Community couldn't take on the poverty of the entire world. Nor can we act as the world's hospital. It is quite irresponsible and criminal to talk here about human rights. We have to talk about health, stop covering up the figures which everyone knows, listen to what we are being told by the countries of Africa which are asking for help. But let's treat the Africans in Africa! Let's treat our own people here! We can, we must close our frontiers!

SPERONI (ARC). — (IT) When we speak of the Israeli problem, we generally consider it in terms of the problem of human rights; one of the reasons for this is that we do not have the specific expression 'rights of peoples' to which that problem, like so many other similar issues, should really be related: what is actually happening in Israel and in other parts of the world is a direct consequence of that violation of the rights of peoples.

SPERONI

What is happening in Israel is the result of a mutual failure of understanding of peoples who are compelled to co-exist; we see, on the one hand, Israeli oppression of Palestinians resulting from the fact that the Israelis hold political and military power, while on the other we see the Palestinians who, through their political and armed spokesman, the PLO, have declared their main aim to be not peaceful co-existence but the destruction of the State of Israel. Forcing peoples to live together in that way leads to that deterioration in relations which, as we can all, as the whole world can see, results in repression and violation of human rights.

I cannot share the definition of the Israeli question given by that government, I most certainly cannot believe that it is possible to resolve such problems by means of military repression, torture, imprisonment without cause and, furthermore, in breach of the law. Nor, however, do I believe that the problem may be resolved by means of an armed struggle between the two peoples. There can be only one solution proposed, negotiated and decided by common accord; that proposal should be: two peoples, two States!

SCHLEICHER (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Parliament has on several occasions discussed AIDS and not just given an opinion on the matter but made constructive proposals. The proposal made today to boycott an international conference in San Francisco does not seem to me to be at all constructive.

At issue is the convening of an international conference. I know neither who is sponsoring it nor who has organized it. If, however, a rule exists in a country in the free world, then I must respect it. I cannot prevent those who wish to attend it from doing so by calling for a boycott, and therefore attendance at the international conference should be a matter of choice. I am opposed to the Parliament attempting to prevent people who wish to discuss that subject at international level from so doing and thereby perhaps making it impossible for constructive work to be done at an international conference.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, although I wanted to keep the Commission's reply short and to the point, the issues raised by honourable Members have been so numerous and so complex that I am afraid my remarks will be rather lengthy.

As regards Israel, the Commission has always been conscious of the importance of the cooperation agreements between Israel and the Community. The Community's view is based on strict compliance with the agreements and naturally we expect the same of Israel.

As to the Palestinian territories, the Community has consistently reminded Israel of its responsibilities as the occupying power. It was on 14 January last that we last demanded that human rights be respected in the

occupied territories and that Israel comply with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Commission has been following very closely Israel's handling of direct exports from the occupied territories to Community markets and consequently the results for this marketing year have already far exceeded last year's. I think one decisive factor was the Commission's prompt reaction to problems encountered in the early stages with regard to security inspections in Israel, which were appropriately dealt with here at the time. Generally speaking, we may say that Israel is complying with its undertakings as regards these direct exports.

In view of the lack of progress towards peace in the Middle East and of Israeli practices infringing human rights in those territories, which even threaten the future of the Palestinian people in general, cooperation between the Community and Israel is clearly becoming more difficult and is more and more precarious, as the resolutions already approved by Parliament show. I had occasion yesterday to point that out to the delegation of the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, which has been visiting us.

As regards Albania, which, apart from Libya, is the only Mediterranean country with which we have no agreement in force, I have noted what Mrs Giannakou and the motion for a resolution said and in addition to what Parliament decides I intend to make representations to the Albanian Government, and depending on the outcome the Commission will adopt the appropriate decisions.

With regard to Sudan, the Commission shares Parliament's concern. Since the military *coup* last year we have been following the trend of events and the policies being pursued by the new régime. As a result the Commission issued a statement last November regretting the resumption of fighting in the south of the country and the resultant suffering and loss of human life. In addition the heads of the Community mission in Khartoum have made various urgent representations to the Sudanese authorities — the most recent on 5 and 14 December last — about the need to ensure that supplies of aid were provided urgently for the populations most directly affected. Further, the Commission expressed its deep concern about the death sentence imposed upon Dr Mohammed Hussein, accused merely of encouraging and taking part in a strike.

We have heard that since the intervention not only of the Commission but of the President of Egypt, Dr Hussein is not to be executed but has apparently been given a long prison sentence. We think in fact that fresh representations should be made — and we shall make them — for the government to resume the peace talks with the SPLA which have been broken off, so that no progress has been made, since last December. We welcome President Mubarak's initiative in offering to organize these talks. Within the framework of European political cooperation we shall consider the subject with the Sudanese authorities, to whom we shall continue to stress the need to respect human rights.

MATUTES

With regard to Turkey, the Commission must support any progress towards bringing about a full multi-party system and improving human rights in Turkey. The Commission's views on this matter have already been expressed very clearly in the report on Turkey's accession to the Community, sent to the Council and Parliament on 18 December — so clearly in fact that I need not, for the sake of brevity, make any further observations.

The Commission also shares Parliament's concern about the Yanomami peoples and is keeping a close watch on events concerning other Indian peoples of Amazonia. Within the scope of its powers the Commission is working to find appropriate solutions to the whole question of the tropical rainforest, with which the fate of these peoples is closely linked, and is making sure that the Brazilian authorities are involved, since we must, of course, have regard to the principle of national sovereignty so as not to invite reactions which would in fact hinder this work.

The Commission shares honourable Members' anxieties in respect of Armenia and Azerbaijan. It hopes that the Soviet authorities will be able to restore order in these republics and to protect the people, whatever their nationality. Of course the best thing would be to achieve a lasting political solution which would bring back peace and stability to the region, a question which naturally has many implications and although we shall not go into them now, we do not underestimate the difficulties involved.

In answer to the suggestions made by various Members to the effect that emergency aid should be sent to those regions, the Commission wishes to say that it has not so far received any request for aid from the Soviet authorities or the peoples concerned. In any case, I think the present situation is mainly a matter for the Soviet Union and is not comparable in any way with a natural disaster — with the Armenian earthquake of December 1988 — when the Commission allocated emergency aid of ECU 10 million.

DURY (S). — (FR) Before we begin voting, may I make one or two comments.

Firstly, the Socialist Group withdraws its motion B3-149/90 on Turkey.

Secondly, if Parliament is to appear serious we should replace the name of Stalin with that of Lenin in the text on Armenia. I think that is a historical error, but if we might perhaps correct it!

Thirdly, I would point out in connection with the vote on Albania that at the preparatory meeting for this debate with President Baron I said on behalf of the Socialist Group that in order for our voting to be clear we wished to vote each time on one motion only and wanted all the other groups to work on the amendments collectively. That was not possible for Albania, I was told. Consequently we shall be voting for just one of the two motions. It is not that we are hostile to the substance of the motion put forward by our EPP

friends; it was a statement of clarification on our part in respect of all the votes held in this House. For this reason we shall also be voting for motion B3-134/90.

PRESIDENT. — The joint debate is closed.

We shall now proceed to the vote.

(In successive votes Parliament)

- rejected the motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-92/90) on violations of human rights in Israel;
- adopted a joint motion for a resolution¹ on the question in the Middle East;
- rejected the motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-99/90) on Albania;
- adopted the resolution (Doc. B3-134/90) on Albania;
- adopted a joint motion for a resolution² on the situation in the Sudan;
- rejected the motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-125/90) on the situation in Turkey;
- adopted the resolution (Doc. B3-154/90) on Turkey, the joint motion for a resolution³ on the situation of the Yanomami in Brazil, the joint motion for a resolution⁴ on Armenia and Azerbaijan and the resolution (Doc. B3-146/90) on AIDS

Natural disasters

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the joint debate on the following motions for resolutions:

- Doc. B3-82/90 by Mr Carvalhas and others on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the storms in Portugal;

¹ Tabled by Mr Sakellariou and Mrs Dury on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Vecchi on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, Mr Piquet and others on behalf of the Left Unity Group, Mrs Aulas and Mrs Cramon-Daiber on behalf of the Green Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-94/90, B3-104/90, B3-135/90 and B3-150/90.

² Tabled by Mr verhagen on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Seal on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Newton Dunn on behalf of the European Democratic Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-97/90 and B3-148/90.

³ Tabled by Mr Pimenta on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group and Mr Staes on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-119/90 and B3-161/90.

⁴ Tabled by Mr Sakellariou and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Lagakos and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mrs Veil and others on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr de la Malène on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, Mr Newton Dunn on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr Vecchi on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-137/90, B3-139/90, B3-145/90, B3-156/90 and B3-162/90.

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- Doc. B3-93/90 by Mr Capucho and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the storms and flooding in Portugal;
- Doc. B3-155/90 by Mr Lucas Pires and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on adverse weather conditions in Portugal;
- Doc. B3-85/90 by Mr Cox and Mr Maher, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on storm damage in the east and south coast of Ireland;
- Doc. B3-101/90 by Mr Cooney and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on storm damage caused in south-east Ireland during the weekend of 15 to 17 December 1989;
- Doc. B3-112/90 by Mr Blaney and Mr Vandemeulebroucke, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on storm damage in Ireland;
- Doc. B3-130/90 by Mr Lalor and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the storm damage in Ireland;
- Doc. B3-90/90 by Mr Antony and Mr Martinez, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the events of December 1989 in the French Mediterranean region of the Thau Basin which amount to a natural disaster;
- Doc. B3-129/90 by Mr de la Malène and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the storms in France;
- Doc. B3-105/90 by Mr Piquet and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the damage caused by the violent storms of 16 to 18 December on the Atlantic coast of Europe;
- Doc. B3-122/90 by Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the forest fires in the Basque country;
- Doc. B3-132/90 by Mrs Domingo Segarra and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the storms and flooding in Spain;
- Doc. B3-140/90 by Mr Cabezon Alonso, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on hurricane-force winds in the Cantabria region of Spain;
- Doc. B3-159/90 by Mr Melis, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the effects of the drought in Sardinia;
- Doc. B3-88/90 by Mr Pereira and others, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, on the oil slick caused by the oil tankers *Kharg 5* and *Aragon*;
- Doc. B3-106/90 by Mrs Mayer and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on oil pollution off the Moroccan coast;
- Doc. B3-121/90 by Mr Pacheco Herrera and others, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, on the accidents involving the tankers *Kharg 5* and *Aragon*;
- Doc. B3-131/90 by Mr de la Malène and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic

Alliance, on the drifting of the oil tanker *Kharg 5* off Morocco;

- Doc. B3-136/90 by Mr Iversen and others, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the accidents involving the tankers *Kharg 5* and *Aragon*;
- Doc. B3-143/90 by Mr Romeos, on behalf of the Socialist Group, on the ecological disaster caused by an oil spill off the coast of Morocco;
- Doc. B3-95/90 by Mr De Rossa and others, on behalf of the Left Unity Group, on the dumping of toxic waste at sea;
- Doc. B3-100/90 by Mrs Banotti and others, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, on illegal dumping of chemical waste at sea;
- Doc. B3-117/90 by Mr Lannoye, on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, on ending the continuing industrial waste dumping by the UK in the North Sea.

As we only have a few minutes left I would suggest that we vote immediately to wind up the debate pursuant to Rule 104 of the Rules of Procedure.

(Parliament agreed to this proposal)

We shall now proceed to the vote.

(In successive votes Parliament adopted joint motions for resolutions on storms in Portugal¹, storm damage in Ireland,² natural disasters in Spain,³ the oil spillage off the Moroccan coast,⁴ the dumping of toxic wastes at sea⁵ and the resolution (Doc. B3-159/90) on the effects of the drought in Sardinia, the resolution (Doc. B3-105/90) on the European Atlantic coast, and rejected the

¹ Tabled by Mr Carvalhas on behalf of the Left Unity Group, Mr Pimenta on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group and Mr Lucas Pires on behalf of the European People's Party, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-82/90, B3-93/90 and B3-155/90

² Tabled by Mr Cooney and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Cox and others on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr Piquet and others on behalf of the Left Unity Group, Mr Lalor and others on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-85/90, B3-101/90 and B3-130/90

³ Tabled by Mr Cabezon Alonso on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mrs Domingo Segarra on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, Mr Garaikoetxea Urriza on behalf of the Rainbow Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-122/90, B3-132/90 and B3-140/90

⁴ Tabled by Mr Romeos and others on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Pereira on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr Iversen on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, Mr de la Malène on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, Mrs Mayer on behalf of the Left Unity Group, Mr Pacheco Herrera on behalf of the Rainbow Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-88/90, B3-106/90, B3-121/90, B3-131/90, B3-136/90 and B3-143/90

⁵ Tabled by Mr De Rossa on behalf of the Left Unity Group, Mrs Banotti on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Lannoye on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs B3-95/90, B3-100/90 and B3-117/90.

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motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-90/90 on the Thau Basin region of the Mediterranean)

This concludes the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance.

SCOTT-HOPKINS, Sir James (ED). — Mr President, I do not query the Chair's decision to put those issues to the vote without a debate, but I must make my protest to you that I think it is an extremely undemocratic way of going about it, because one has no chance of expressing an alternative view. I am not talking about any particular issue but one has no chance of persuading one's colleagues that there is an alternative view to the one put down in the particular resolution. Although what you have done is completely within the rules and I do not argue with it, it is an extremely undemocratic way and I wish my protest to be lodged.

PRESIDENT. — In principle you are right, Sir James, but when there are 65 motions on the agenda and everyone who has a minute to speak exceeds his time by 100%, we have to choose between at least holding a vote or having nothing on record. Knowing you as I do, I am sure you will have already made your views known to colleagues in private beforehand so that they will all have voted as you would have wished.

(The sitting was adjourned at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: SIR FRED CATHERWOOD

Vice-President

PRESIDENT. — Two Members have asked to speak on a point of order.

McMAHON (S). — Mr President, my point of order concerns reports today in the press relative to the British Aerospace/Austin Rover takeover. There are very serious allegations for the Commission to consider, notably that Lord Young conned Commissioner Sutherland over the question of State aid and tax breaks for British Aerospace. There has been a great deal of interest in this affair in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the Community. I would hope that Commissioner Brittan could take some time off from boosting the fortunes of the European Democratic Group in speeches in Colchester and elsewhere, and come under Rule 56 to this House and make a full, free and frank statement about what he is going to do to remedy the matter on behalf of Community citizens.

WYNN (S). — I would ask Sir Leon Brittan if he can give an answer to yesterday's question concerning the same issue that Mr McMahon has raised? We would like a speedy answer because of the seriousness of the accusations in the British press.

3. Commission statement of fisheries

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the statement on recent decisions in the fisheries sector and the principal issues to be addressed by the Commission.¹

CARDOSO E CUNHA, *Member of the Commission*. — *(PT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for being a few minutes late, but I was detained by another of parliament's meetings. I have the honour of representing my colleague, Mr Marín, who is unable to be in Strasbourg, and of presenting, on his behalf, the Commission's statement which Parliament is expecting and also of trying to reply to the oral question raised by Mrs Ewing and Mr Vandemeulebroucke, which I am naturally pleased to do.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as my first contribution to the parliamentary debate on the common fisheries policy I intend to give a summary of the decisions adopted by the two Fisheries Councils last November and December and to deal with some of the consequences of those decisions. Then I shall mention the new priority subjects which the Commission intends to tackle in this sector during the year in addition to the traditional management of the common fisheries policy machinery.

Last December's Council laid down the fishing allowances for Member States' fleets not only in the Community's fishing zone but also in the waters of Norway, Sweden, the Faeroe Islands, Greenland and NAFO. At the same time it laid down the usual autonomous Community quotas to take effect in 1990 in the interests of the Community economy. It also changed the technical measures for conservation and adopted a new regulation on improving conditions for processing and marketing fishery and aquaculture products. That regulation replaced Regulation N° 355/77, which was well known to Parliament, and which had expired. Finally the Council was able to give a fresh impetus to fishing relations with the Soviet Union, inviting the Commission to continue and extend its contacts with the Soviet Union with regard to the content of a possible agreement.

Before that, the November Fisheries Council had laid down the price system for 1990 and adopted a decision envisaging a Community contribution of ECU 22 million a year for five years for Member States' investment in fisheries protection vessels and aircraft. All this amounts to an important series of diversified measures and I should like to point out that it was possible once again to lay down all the details of the fisheries system applicable in 1990 before the marketing year began. Fishermen and other traders in the sector therefore have the precise data they need for planning all their

¹ Oral Question Doc. B3-21/90 to the Commission was included in the debate.

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operations. The Commission realizes that the level at which it was necessary to fix certain TACs aroused a certain amount of feeling and I think I should go a little further into this specific aspect of the system laid down for 1990.

The particularly disturbing situation regarding certain fish stocks in the north-east Atlantic, the exploitation of which has a decisive importance for achieving a balance in managing the North Sea fleets, necessarily led to considerable quota reductions, particularly in cod and haddock. Of course the Commission shares the fishermen's worries about the economic and social consequences and is making efforts to overcome the need for these reductions. It is undeniable, however, that the fish stocks in question have deteriorated largely because of over-fishing.

The Commission has several times called attention to the dangers of maintaining over-capacity and the dangers stemming from catches of too many immature fish which are frequently thrown back into the sea, already dead. These two factors together have clearly been instrumental in putting pressure on the fish populations and that pressure cannot be relieved by rules on supervision, no matter how rigorous. To renew these fish stocks a long-term programme is required aimed at eliminating the deep-seated causes which are upsetting the basic equilibrium of the breeding stocks, and the success of this programme mainly depends on the industry's willingness to cooperate. The message is clear: it is essential to reduce fishing activities to allow fish stocks to improve and thus to give the sector a sounder economic basis.

In view of this situation, the Commission, at the Fisheries Council in December, made an important statement, to be recorded in the minutes, emphasizing that the disturbing situation affecting various demersal species made it essential to make a very considerable reduction in fishing operations but in stages in order to minimize the economic and social upheaval. In its statement the Commission stresses the need for the adaptation of fishing capacities by means of multi-annual guidance programmes. It also mentions the need for immediate support measures intended to cushion the effects of the restrictions and to reorganize the operations of undertakings most affected by the situation with regard to fish stocks and the TACs adopted for 1990. I am referring here in particular to the first point in Mrs Ewing's oral question. The Commission will pay special attention to the implementation of the existing provisions on the subject of temporary and permanent laying up of fleets. Certain Member States have not yet taken advantage of the Community funds available to them under this machinery. The Commission requests them not to deprive their undertakings of the financial benefits in question.

The Commission also thinks fresh encouragement should be given to structural programmes relating to experimental fisheries, temporary associations of undertakings and the promotion of fishery products. At

the moment it is considering the possibility of extending the field of action to cover experimental fishery operations. It intends to intensify its action by encouraging the establishment and development of temporary associations of undertakings and encouraging support programmes aimed at promoting fish consumption in the Community. These programmes are being drawn up and the relevant proposals will shortly be made. The Commission intends to play its part in achieving the most effective administration possible for this fisheries scheme already laid down for 1990. It is fully aware of the short-term effects which the necessary reduction in fishing operations may have on fishermen's incomes. For that very reason it is intending to promote the series of measures which I have mentioned with a view to minimizing the blow of reducing fishing operations and to preserving the long-term economic viability of the sector.

Before ending, Mr President, I should like to summarize for Parliament the Commission's new priority tasks for the year. The Commission has undertaken to submit to the Council before the end of June proposals on the application of the common conservation policy in the Mediterranean. The Commission's aim is to protect fish stocks from over-fishing, to ensure uniform and effective conditions for the exploitation of fisheries resources and to encourage the setting up of a consistent framework of structural adaptations for the fleet, equipment and the processing industry. We must seek appropriate solutions for the economy of our coasts. The situation is characterized in particular by the alarming deterioration in certain fish stocks and increased fishing operations both by Community and third-country fishing fleets. The geo-political situation of the Mediterranean region may well lead the Commission to consider solutions different from those adopted in the North Atlantic and the North Sea.

The Commission also intends to propose within the year specific measures for small-scale inshore fisheries, not only in the Mediterranean but in other waters as well. Of course the basic regulation on structural policy does not cover action in favour of small boats, so that there is a gap here — clear since the time when this responsibility fell to me — to be filled by the rapporteur, Mr Vasco Garcia. However, the policy to be drawn up in this field must carefully avoid any increase in fishing operations affecting existing inshore fish stocks which are frequently extremely sensitive.

As regards the Community's international relations, in the changed situation the Commission is intending to pursue taking up relations in the field of fisheries with the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and Poland. It also intends to build up relations on fisheries matters of mutual interest with Namibia and certain Latin American countries. As regards fishing undertakings, access to the resources in question must be covered in the framework of development cooperation in which the Community will try to encourage the development of mixed undertakings. The Commission is studying how to devise new incentives in the fields not

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only of production but also of processing and marketing.

Before concluding, I should like to deal with the three final points in Mrs Ewing's oral question. I have already mentioned the first; the second is an old question and I well remember the amicable disagreement about my opinions as the Commission's representative. The Commission scrupulously respects the existing legal situation but hopes to be able to overcome this disagreement by means of joint study seminars on the basic questions covered by the common fisheries policy.

With regard to Mrs Ewing's third point, the Commission always wishes to be open in its relations with representatives of the fishing industry. That is why the Advisory Committee on Fisheries, whose first plenary meeting was held at the end of 1989, has recently been set up. As regards the question of negotiations with Norway, the relevant talks held at the end of the year, which were naturally difficult, enabled us to reach an agreement for 1990, which is in our mutual interest and has already been approved by the Council.

Mr President, in conclusion I would say that the end-of-year Council meetings have made it possible to lay down quite clearly the operating conditions for the fishing industry for the whole of 1990. The conditions are not easy for all regions but they reflect the situation as it is and as we must all accept it and the Commission will try to keep problems to a minimum. Secondly, the Commission also intends to advocate extending the fisheries policy to non-industrial fishing, setting up a framework for intervention in the Mediterranean and encouraging the establishment of mixed undertakings in third countries; in doing so it intends to work out these new steps in close collaboration with the European Parliament.

(Applause)

VÁZQUEZ FOUZ (S). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, perhaps this is not the best way to hold a general debate on such a broad subject as fisheries which we are to discuss this afternoon.

Of course the general nature of the communication made by the Commission has not helped us to consider the matter in depth or to tackle directly those problems at present facing the fisheries sector, ranging from the fleet to the industrialization, processing and trade policy or the policy on markets.

Today's debate is confined to aspects of resource management and planning. I think we are wasting powder and shot which probably we could have used later in a more appropriate climate. But once the debate has been instigated by some of the political groups, others of us think that we should on no account oppose it but make the best of today's situation.

The Commissioner spoke of the Commission's statement as being 'awaited'. I would add the word 'dreaded', because from *everything* it has said and the Commission's own work programme which it has

provided us with this week, we foresee that the serious fears to be found in all fisheries sectors will perhaps be increased. Uncertainties have scarcely been dispelled, whilst many extra doubts have been aroused.

It does not say much for the Commission's regard for the second of the common policies — the fisheries policy — that in this two-part programme — a general part setting out the objectives and a second part on specific measures — there are only three proposals, which I shall mention. As regards the statement of grounds, it mentions basically the questions related to resources, the fleet and industrial sectors; but there is not a single word about such important aspects of the fisheries policy as the problems of workers and of the economic sectors involved in fishing today.

This naturally gives one cause to ponder. With regard to the first point, management and planning of resources, we wonder why for the NAFO fishing grounds — where the Commission quite rightly objected to the quotas at the time — such drastic reductions were accepted as those for zone 2J3KL, with a TAC reduced from 84 000 tonnes to 22 000, why zone 3M is still closed without any clear explanation and why there are no checks on the biological studies carried out for those fishing grounds.

But perhaps that is the least of the problems. We may be in agreement with the reductions, and the sector itself may be in agreement with them. The difficulties lie in introducing the social and economic measures to offset these political measures, which are certainly necessary but which have other repercussions. We cannot think only of resources but also of the whole sector behind those resources.

The new proposals are too scanty. As regards non-industrial fisheries, we were hoping for measures of genuine help for the sector. You have given us only conservation measures. We placed great hopes on the new Mediterranean policy and you offer us only conservation measures. Those are by no means the only problems, Mr Commissioner, and I think the Commission should note that.

As regards international policy, you have mentioned new agreements. Fine. But you have not said a single word about the two agreements which are most controversial at the present time: on the one hand the one with Canada and on the other hand the agreement with Argentina which the Commission is about to sign, if it has not already done so, and which is an important fisheries agreement for the Community. I think, Mr Commissioner, that you ought to have given us your views on an agreement with that country.

Moreover, if we are seeking diversification in international fisheries policy, the urgent thing is not to reflect but to decide. It is urgent for Parliament to know the rules for mixed or temporary or joint undertakings, whatever one likes to call them. But this Assembly, like the Socialist Group on whose behalf I am speaking, insists on the urgency of these rules for mixed undertakings.

VÁZQUEZ FOUZ

Finally, problems of market policy have not been solved. Help is being given to the sector, but at the moment we have 40 000 tonnes of squid and financial aid has been offered to cover only 5 000 tonnes, and none of it has yet arrived. We still have the problem of frozen hake and inadequate control of imports at dumping prices. That is the real position.

CARVALHO CARDOSO (PPE). — (PT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Commissioner, the common fisheries policy instituted in 1983 is of course an important landmark enabling the Community to operate on the basis of long-term rules. But we now need fresh incentives to meet the challenge of the single market of 1993. The policy for conservation and the management of resources has not yet succeeded; the sector's structural policy has been excluded from the aim to double the structural Funds. The policy for the processing and marketing of fish, recently introduced, received very scant resources. It is still very far from creating an internal market for fish. The social aspects of the common fisheries policy are unfortunately considered only to a very limited extent or are not even considered at all.

The European Parliament has repeatedly tried to improve the situation but apart from some very sound measures adopted by the Commission and the Council in recent years, to which the Commissioner has referred, in particular the most recent Fisheries Councils, we cannot be over-optimistic, as is shown by the actual programme for 1990, an extremely modest one, as Mr Vázquez Fouz has just mentioned.

As regards relations with third countries, we must continue to enter into agreements which will enable the Community to offset the deficiency in resources in its own waters. But the Community's own quite justified concern to avoid biological deterioration and its keenness to allow the fish to survive will oblige those most interested to act likewise so that the imbalance is not accentuated, which has not always been the case. The Community, Mr Commissioner, cannot accept disinformation and deception campaigns such as the one recently launched by certain Canadian circles which, by all appearances, were aimed solely at shaking off competitors who were able to set lower cost prices and thus dominate the market. And in the quotas which the Community is accepting, whether in Canada, Greenland, NAFO or other regions, whether for cod, redfish or other species, there must be cooperation, fairness and solidarity between all Member States. Spain and Portugal in particular, countries with a lengthy tradition of high-sea fishing, must demand perfect equality of rights and duties in agreements negotiated by the Community so that the apparent aim of certain 'lobbies' to make fishing by these two countries impracticable in certain regions of the globe may not succeed.

GARCIA (LDR). — (PT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Commissioner, we have before us two

aspects of the fishing industry: on the one hand the decisions taken, on the other, the priorities to be worked out. So naturally some aspects of the decisions taken, particularly the most recent ones, need to be corrected, whilst we need to add some priorities which, surprisingly, are not included. In fact the agenda shows that the Commission intends to promote conservation of resources, international relations and the Community market for fisheries products. These are important matters, no doubt, but they are not enough, still less on their own, to satisfy anyone who has the duty to represent and defend the interests of Community fishermen, above all the least favoured small-scale fishermen.

Parliament made the provision of support for inshore fishing and non-industrial fishing a priority in unanimously approving my report on non-industrial fishing last year. What is the position today with regard to the Commission's reaffirmation of these principles and proposals, so clearly accepted by Mr Commissioner Marín, both in the Assembly and at meetings of the Committee on Fisheries? Or are the interests of small-scale fishermen one thing when it comes to political proposals which are sure to produce a good return and another when we are in the seats of power? Might it be that at Commission level too the interests of the mighty take precedence over the duty of fair play, even in the name of economic and social cohesion, for a category which represents many thousands of jobs? I very much hope that this Community, whose humanitarian ideals of freedom and social justice are an example to the world, will not give an impression to the outside world which does not correspond to internal reality.

So we, Members with special responsibility for fisheries, put the accent, in the motion for a resolution which we are tabling, on the social and structural aspects for those who make their living from the sea and sometimes risk their own lives on it. I cannot bear to go on telling our fishermen from the Atlantic islands, from Galicia, Nazaré or the Greek islands that all the Commission's programme for 1990 envisages for inshore fishing is proposals on rules for conserving resources. I would agree with those who are responsible for fisheries that fish are important, because without them there would be no fishermen, but it is not the small-scale fishermen who are chiefly responsible for destroying our oceans' resources, nor can inshore fishing priorities solve the problems of conservation and management of resources! And mankind? What place has this Community for mankind? Has everyone gone mad in this complex world of fisheries? I myself am worried, more than about the complexity, that the social sector, the structural sector has already been penalized for some inexplicable reason by not being included in the doubling of structural Funds. And this is a situation about which a political agreement was reached in this Assembly and then taken up by the Commission. We must all accept responsibility, otherwise there is no point in our coming here. I repeat that I personally have little enthusiasm for dialogues of the deaf.

GARCIA

I take advantage of the presence of Mr Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha, who supported the original work and followed with great interest the report on non-industrial fishing, quite rightly accepting our views, to ask him to act as the interpreter of these feelings of frustration at the Commission's programme for 1990.

In my opinion, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this new year is not starting well for the small-scale fishermen. Let us hope that it will end better, and I draw a certain hope from the words of the statement made here by the Commissioner.

PRESIDENT. — I have received five motions for resolution with request for an early vote to wind up the debate on the fisheries sector.¹

The vote on the request for an early vote will be taken at the end of the debate.

HOWELL (ED). — Mr President, we welcome the presence of the Commissioner today and we also welcome the fact that the Council of Ministers reached agreement at their recent meeting in spite of the very difficult situation they faced. We also welcome the fact that they reached agreement within scientific limits and in conformity with the principle of relative stability. This is a very important consideration for British fishermen. We take this opportunity of complimenting our Ministers on their achievement in extremely difficult circumstances.

Fish stocks, particularly in the North Sea, are in a precarious state. Reliance on young fish entering the fishery makes it particularly difficult to plan ahead when natural stock replacement varies so greatly from one year to another. The sad fact is that when stock levels are so low, there must be a high probability of low recruitment. In these circumstances a top priority must be to find ways of making the most of the limited stocks available and of ensuring that more fish are allowed to remain in the stocks and grow. It cannot be right that, with stocks so low, large quantities of fish are thrown away dead. Discarded is too polite a term.

The fishing industry faces a difficult future. There are tough decisions to be taken. Our sympathies are with the communities dependent on fishing. Europe and the individual Member States must not shirk their responsibilities. However, only by working with the industry and harnessing fishermen's own skills and judgement can we hope to secure the necessary improvements in how our fleet deals with its fishing opportunities.

Conservation is the key to increasing opportunities for our fishing industry. As our motion states, TACs and quotas have not been able to achieve this on their own. We must have improved conservation measures. We therefore very much welcome the Commission's commitment to produce conservation proposals by the

end of July. For its part, Parliament must now enter into a dialogue with the industry on the necessary measures to be taken in order that the Commission may be fully informed of the industry's views.

We look forward to the Commission's proposals and ask to be assured that Parliament will be consulted. Our joint motion also welcomes the Council agreement on the new fishing processes and marketing regulation. The challenge of 1992 will place a considerable burden on the industry. I hope the Commission can answer these questions satisfactorily.

FERNEX (V). — (FR) Mr President, it is difficult in two minutes to cover these serious fishery issues which are in our view one of the most important and most crucial items in our Community policy.

First of all, we all agree in principle on the need to preserve fish stocks. But in this case we would need extremely precise commitments to ban certain fishing methods, by Community vessels and under bilateral agreements between the Community and third countries or agreements with the world community. I would mention the banning of beam trawling. I would also mention the practice of drift-netting, for example by France, in the Pacific, where Nouméa accepts fish caught in this way, but these nets are also found in the Mediterranean in the Bay of Biscay. There should also be a ban on fishing for fishmeal, where fish of all sizes, and very young fish in particular, are caught.

Our Committee ought also to concern itself with and take strong action in the area of marine pollution. We have had two oil slicks off the Azores and today the coastlines of the Azores are ruined. I really don't know how stocks are to build up again because the breeding grounds are covered with films of oil. So extremely prompt action is required.

On the question of non-industrial fishing, I won't repeat what a lot of speakers have already said: it is not the small non-industrial fishermen, whose position is extremely difficult, who are making the fish stocks disappear. They are the ones who primarily need help.

As for agreements with Third World countries, these must take account of existing stocks and must be negotiated with the fishery organizations of the countries concerned. That is vital. The twenty-mile limit must be respected totally. It is very often violated, and yet it is a limit reserved for non-industrial fishing by the ACP countries which represents a source of protein that is essential in view of the serious food shortages experienced in those countries.

LATAILLADE (RDE). — (FR) Mr President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, this is a very hasty debate we are having. There is no urgent reason for it, and it is necessarily partial and thus less than impartial, called more for personal reasons than for the purpose of a full and collective review of the issues.

Such is the haste that the calendar for this part-session did not include this debate when the political groups

¹ See minutes.

LATAILLADE

looked at the programme at their meeting last week. I am thus grateful to Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha for being here to brief us, though I make the point that no account was taken of whether or not Mr Marín would be able to attend. He did not choose to be absent, but his absence is readily understandable in that he had had other meetings and trips planned for a long time. So here we are having a debate which isn't a debate, with material which isn't complete.

There is no end to the criticisms one could make of this excessive haste, which is not very propitious for a proper in-depth discussion of fisheries, where technical implications are not the only ones. The political importance of the question is clear to everyone. The issues concern not only the twelve Community countries but, by virtue of the economic, ecological, human and social importance of fisheries, make it a world problem. This is apparent in the contracts which the Community is impelled to conclude with various countries in the world, one of which, at the last meeting of Fisheries Ministers in December, was a formal agreement. This was with Guinea-Bissau and will be examined by the Subcommittee on Fisheries at the end of January, one and a half months after the Council decision, which shows how well that institution organizes its work and would, if it were not so serious, appear laughable to the outside world.

Nor does this debate make any special provision for the Subcommittee on Fisheries as such to make its views heard, at least through its chairman. I have thus taken the time I have just spent on these general points out of the time available to me to speak on behalf of my Group.

For my part I have heard nothing really positive about two areas of concern: structural aspects and economic aspects. Regarding structural aspects, there is talk of a work schedule, questions of substance, concerning surveillance, the fleet, fish stocks which may be high or low — we don't know — collective management, and many other things. We need measures on the economic front, because intolerable things are happening in the Bay of Biscay which I would have preferred not to see highlighted in this Chamber but which are, on the evidence, very close to acts of piracy. Can the Commission really impose order in an area which is the province of the national authorities but which they clearly cannot control? There must, then, be protection, respect for codes of conduct in an area where Parliament has already had to involve itself in tailoring fishing fleets to the ports available.

I am thus grateful to the Commission for its catalogue of good intentions and I hope that the programme it has devised with the Subcommittee on Fisheries will enable us, in future seminars, to hold a proper debate prior to the meeting of Fisheries Ministers which will not take place until June.

DE ROSSA (CG). — Mr President, I welcome the opportunity for this debate. It is important because it is

the first opportunity the European Parliament has had since 1983 to be consulted adequately on important aspects of EC fishing policy, such as the total authorized catches, quotas and prices. Repeated demands for improvements in EC research investment into the industry have been ignored but, when the annual reviews take place, negotiations between Member States have traditionally been behind closed doors with the results then presented as a *fait accompli*, a comparative success or failure by the individual Minister for his or her national constituency.

Ireland, with 25% of the European Community's fisheries but only 4% of the catches, is in particular need of long-term strategies supported by the European Community to maximize exploitation of this valuable resource. But it is not only Irish fishermen who suffer by the present lack of consultation. Portugal's fishing industry has been particularly hard hit by cuts of up to 50% in its catches. They have an historic fishing ground in the North Atlantic, but were not consulted before the new agreements with Greenland and Norway were reached. Yet the Commission has quite happily negotiated the importation of fish, without even seeking reciprocal fishing rights for the EC fishermen in non-EC waters. While demand for fish continues to rise ahead of our resources, imports are needed. We now have a situation where boats will be laid up and fishermen unemployed because of our inability to plan comprehensively. In this regard the fishing industry is very much the Cinderella in the drive to create a dynamic economy based on the single market.

I should also like to say a few words about the needs of the Irish fishing industry. Given our underdeveloped structures, Ireland suffers particularly from problems of peripherality. Transport subsidies are urgently needed if proper marketing and processing are to develop in Ireland. At present, a lot of Irish trawlers call in to Scottish ports with their catches because of difficulties due to peripherality. This in turn reduces the ability of the on-shore industry to develop, even though some communities are dependent on fishing for survival. There is also the reliance on low-priced species which are close to Irish shores. With investment in better vessels, more financially attractive species could be caught in greater numbers. The revelation in a report of the Irish Economic and Social Research Institute this week that 80% of State aid to the industry is eaten up by administration and fishery protection gives rise to concern and needs to be investigated. There is certainly a need for greater monitoring of grants from Irish and EC sources and such funding should be closely linked to job creation.

Finally, one obvious source of revenue is the very considerable fines which are collected by fishery protection agencies, which could be channelled back into the industry and not lost or buried in central financial resources.

EWING (ARC). — Mr President, I should like to thank Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha. It was good to see him

EWING

again. We have had many discussions over the years. We have much in common since most of people here are people who love this industry and who fight hard for the communities they represent. Most of us admire the way of life of fishermen — a traditional, worthy way of life. Many of us agree that the scientific evidence should be more open to scrutiny. Perhaps, I would suggest, the TACs and quotas should be fixed over a three-year period, for this financial-year question often means tremendous unfairness here and there. Mr Howell mentioned the discards so that saves me a minute or two. I agree with what he said. Industrial fishing should be looked at. In the North Sea there is no doubt that small fish are being taken and turned into fish meal. I do not know whether the Community can afford that situation to continue.

Neither I nor my colleagues make any apologies for raising the question of the crisis in the UK, two-thirds of the fleet being in the north and much of it being in my area. Most of the communities are what I think the Commissioner referred to as local coastal areas. That is a very bad situation. To give you just one example. We had 120 000 tonnes of haddock in 1988. That figure was down to 54 000 tonnes in 1989 and further reduced to 36 000 tonnes now. This means that fishermen will only fish until the summer. How will they pay their bank loans if they are limited to 70 boxes? That is £2 800 a week until the summer. It won't be enough even to pay the bank and the petrol. You are witnessing the situation of a fleet that has poured its investment back into the fleet. You are witnessing a situation of bankruptcies and useless vessels which no one will want to buy.

I was pleased to hear the Commissioner talk about proposed action. I noted down what he said, namely that there should be offset funding to guarantee economic viability in the future. These words were music to my ears, because that is precisely what I have been asking for in my resolution. There was a resolution tabled by quite a number of the bigger groups. Unfortunately, I did not have a chance to put my oar in then, but I have tabled amendments, as I said today at a bigger meeting. If these are accepted, I will withdraw my resolution. If they are not accepted, however, I will have to maintain my resolution. I am not putting a lot of passion into my voice but you may take it from me that words almost fail me when I look at the crisis in my area.

LÜTTGE (S). — (DE) Mr President, the Commission has also mentioned the negotiations with the Soviet Union. It has had a mandate for some time now and has spoken of a possible agreement. I am going to speak of that a little critically here, as we have already discussed the problem in the Fisheries Subcommittee. In my view, the negotiations must gradually be brought to a conclusion — and I appreciate the sometimes difficult negotiating situations and positions. The Community as a whole is called upon to speak with one voice. There has been in particular a deterioration in the situation in

the Baltic for German and Danish fishermen because that agreement has still to materialize.

In the meantime, a special agreement has been reached between Sweden and the USSR, and this has further restricted the rights of fishermen from Denmark and the Federal Republic in that they may not fish in Soviet territorial waters and to a very limited extent only in Swedish territorial waters.

The Commissioner has also mentioned the Commission's intention to negotiate in certain circumstances with Poland and the German Democratic Republic. The Socialist Group would welcome it if those negotiations could be pushed forward. We realize that this also depends on international developments in both those countries but we have been given to understand that the German Democratic Republic at least is ready to enter into specific negotiations very quickly. It is most certainly of interest here whether this requires a further mandate from the Council to the Commission or whether the negotiations can be entered into without further ado on the basis of the existing legal position.

It was gratifying to note that the Commissioner devoted a large part of his short statement to the need to conserve stocks. I should very much welcome it if at last, going beyond what he has said, concrete steps were finally to be taken. It is my view that all aids to fishermen and fisheries in the European Community will come to nothing if ecological problems are not properly dealt with at the same time.

That is going to be the common thread in all the discussions which we are to have, enabling us finally to establish the approaches required. I am not excluding my own country, the Federal Republic of Germany here. I am pleased to say that a stop has been put to the burning of toxic waste in the North Sea but European standards have not been respected in other areas. I am calling most particularly on the British Government finally to put an end to the dumping of sludge and nuclear waste in the North Sea.

MAHER (LDR). — Mr President, I am not so concerned about deep-sea fishing or the highly developed commercial fleets as I am about inshore fishing and the future of coastal communities. There is no doubt that in many regions of our Community these coastal communities are under threat. I would draw attention to the fact that in some regions, I mention specifically here both Portugal and Ireland, there has been scant use, or application, of the new structural Funds to assist these coastal communities. Far too few of these resources have been devoted to the development of fishing and the development and preservation of these coastal communities. Remember that these communities are very often on the periphery of the Community and there is no doubt that the whole development of 1992, while it is positive and good for the European Community in general, does hold out further threats to these kind of communities because of their peripherality.

MAHER

I want also to say to the Commissioner that I was pleased to hear that a new programme is being developed in relation to this coastal fishing but I wait with bated breath for the details. Exactly what does it contain? I certainly hope that this comes quickly and that we shall be able to debate it in this House.

Could I also reassure the Commissioner that money spent on monitoring of fisheries and fishing is money well-spent. It is very difficult to operate a fisheries policy in a legitimate way or an acceptable way without adequate monitoring. Fishermen are very suspicious of one another. They worry that the other guy might be getting away with something while they are being constrained in their fishing. I therefore support the Commission's efforts. In fact, we do not really have enough monitoring.

I want to draw attention, for instance, to a problem in our own country, namely, salmon fishing, that has existed for a long time. I remember raising with the Commissioner when he had specific responsibility for that subject, what goes on at the mouths of our rivers, namely, illegal salmon fishing, with the result that the inland fishing in our rivers, which is important for catching freshwater salmon, is seriously impeded. In this particular case I think it is a question of the country's national government not putting into effect the rules relating to conservation. This is a point which is often missed. It is one thing for the Community to have conservation laws. It is another thing as to whether the national governments are prepared to effect those laws or not.

BOGE (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome in principle the Commission statement and particularly its readiness to enter into discussions on the decisions due to be taken with those directly affected as well as here in this House with the Fisheries Subcommittee in the run-up to those decisions, because there is, when all is said and done, a lack of involvement of the European Parliament in the decision-taking.

I should like to mention three points. First, in the recent discussions on the budget, Parliament made clear the emphasis it places on fisheries policy and got its views accepted where the preliminary proposals of the Commission and ideas of the Council were concerned, especially as regards modernization of the fishing fleet and investment for that purpose. I should like to add that the related monitoring and supervision of reduction in capacity by the Commission naturally goes hand-in-hand with this.

Second, the application of measures to conserve stocks is of prime importance. The quota reductions decided upon will in principle be helped along by the fishermen in question here, if there is consistent and strict monitoring and if fraud is more severely punished than hitherto. But where are the Community measures for keeping the seas clean?

To establish quotas on a scientific basis is a good and necessary thing, and we have always demanded it. But I have to ask the Commissioner: how do the Commission and Council come to set, for example, the cod quota in the North Sea at a total of 105 000 tonnes — and a far lower figure than that was actually being sought — when the Scientific Council of the Oceanographic Society proposed 130 000 tonnes? To put it bluntly: there is bound to be annoyance if those affected get the impression that the fishermen are the victims of a political tit-for-tat.

Third, the German fishermen in the Baltic are, as I have already mentioned, in an extremely difficult position. In 1978, they lost 90% of their traditional fishing grounds. A third of the fleet was broken up. I am trying to make clear here that the mandate given to the Commission by the Council to sound out the Soviet Union must very soon become a negotiating mandate allowing the Commission to draw up a general fisheries agreement with the USSR as well as with Poland and Hungary, and to consider, as a negotiating overture, both joint ventures and transfer payments as well as negotiations on specific types of fish outside the Baltic, such as the smelt.

A region like Schleswig-Holstein, formerly a thriving agricultural region, which has since been forced by the Commission to become completely dependent on tourism and fishing as part of the concept for the future of rural areas, must also have some prospects for its off-shore and inshore fishermen. I would add that solidarity is not all one way here either. I wish clearly to call here for the Community to show solidarity with the North Sea and Baltic fishermen.

BEAZLEY, Christopher (ED). — Mr President, the management of the common fisheries policy has far-reaching consequences, not only for those directly involved in the industry themselves but for the public at large. As we approach the extremely important developments of the Community towards the single market of 1992 and the new constitutional and working relations between the Community and Central and Eastern Europe, it is essential that we can demonstrate that those policies which we already have in place are working to the satisfaction of those directly affected.

I hope the Commissioner could dwell in his responses on two particular aspects. One which is clearly shared throughout the House is the consultation of the European Parliament in fisheries questions. It is quite wrong that Parliament should be discussing this matter after the decision has been taken by the Council of Ministers. Parliament should have been involved at a far earlier stage and we should have held our debate in advance of that meeting so the Parliament's views could have been clearly on record; not simply Parliament's views but quite clearly those of the constituents, the fishermen themselves, their communities and the public at large. There is potential for dissatisfaction to grow just as there was over the shortcomings in the past of the

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common agricultural policy. This is something that all of us must be extremely concerned about.

Secondly, there is the question of the quota system itself. This, as the debate has shown, engenders considerable conflict between Member States of the Community and between regions within those national Member States. We must, in terms of conservation measures, rely far less heavily on the quota structure and look for other measures to enhance and to build it up.

In my own area in the South-West of the United Kingdom there was considerable difficulty over the mackerel stocks which have been virtually wiped out and in recent months we have suffered from problems over the cod allocations and cod quotas.

In conclusion, the only solution ultimately is going to be a European solution, looking at the available fish-stocks and looking at the available fishing fleet. If we continue with a system which has an inbuilt mechanism for national conflict we are going to increase public disquiet and concern in some of the areas which are most important to us.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ROMEOS

Vice-President

LANE (RDE). — Mr President, for too long the common fisheries policy has been the poor relation of the European Community support mechanisms. Yet it must be remembered that the vast majority of people involved in fishing come from the poorer regions of the EEC. When we talk about fishing, we include not only those actively involved in fishing, but also those in the processing sector, many of whom, because of the nature of the industry, are in the lower paid sectors of employment.

I am glad that the Commissioner has highlighted the new measures in processing and marketing. However, as we in the Fisheries Subcommittee saw on our recent visit to Portugal, future developments in processing will tend towards mechanization and will, in fact, cause a drop in the numbers of people employed. The Community has a major role to play in ensuring that those who lose jobs because of automation will get an opportunity for further training or retraining for jobs in their own region.

The common fisheries policy must not be used to depopulate coastal regions. Ireland requires special aid for both transporting and marketing because of its distance from the market place. We need the greatest possible amount of monitoring of fish stocks. This must be conducted on an ongoing basis. We do not want to overfish any species, but on the other hand, as species numbers increase, we must adjust the quota accordingly. If I heard the Commissioner correctly, he spoke of about ECU 22 million for assisting Member States in building fishery-protection vessels. This is indeed a very modest sum. In the deep-sea sector there is still great

potential for deep-sea fishing. Further research is needed in relation to argentine species, both as regards stock numbers and use of the species as also on many more species that are coming on the market.

I am glad to hear that the Commissioner talks about a special need for small boats. The common fisheries policy, as it stands, militates against this sector. The owner of the small boat is generally a low-income person, fishing from a port without good marketing and processing backup. These people require a special fisheries policy designed for their own needs, with their own quotas, in the same way as a policy applies under the disadvantaged-area scheme for farmers. This proposed policy must be geared to developing small fishing piers to ensure that they are safe and can be used throughout the year. This is particularly important on the west and north-west coast of Ireland.

There is much speculation at present on the effects of fish-farming in coastal regions in Scotland and Ireland. Much of this speculation is without a scientific basis. Many times in this Parliament we tend to put emotion before science. I hope sufficient finance will be made available for scientific research into the possible effects of fish-farming on wild fish stocks and, indeed, on the environment. I should, in particular, like to see a research programme carried out on fast-flowing estuaries such as the Shannon Estuary on the west coast of Ireland. I believe that we have tremendous potential for fish-farming in that area that will not affect fish stocks or the environment.

BLANEY (ARC). — Mr President, a few of my colleagues have already spoken. I do not disagree with much that they have said, but I think that the real situation in Ireland stems from a rather stupid, ignorant agreement arrived at when we negotiated our accession to the Community in 1972.

Our quotas, the TACs, are ridiculously low. As my colleague, Mr De Rossa said earlier here today, although we have 25% of the fishing grounds our quota is only 4%. This affects in particular the West of Ireland, the area with the highest unemployment rate, the highest emigration rate; an area which lacks the potential to employ the people who have left, except in fisheries. To give a clear picture to the House, the normal ratio between those employed in on-shore processing and full-time fishermen is seven to one. In Ireland our ratio is one person at sea, one person on shore. Could anything be more ridiculous?

McCUBBIN (S). — Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the Commissioner for his statement on the fisheries policy. There are one or two items in it which have opened up some new areas which, I am sure, we would like to explore in Parliament.

The first part of what I have to say concerns the North Sea. I understand that because of the migratory behaviour of the fish in the North Sea this is one area that does require a common fisheries policy. Only from

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the overall standpoint of an institution such as the European Community is it possible to manage properly the fish stocks in the North Sea.

However, we have difficulty with the credibility of the evidence. It has been pointed out before just how much it has varied in the past three years. This creates a problem for us as politicians in explaining to the fishermen exactly what has happened. The quota has been reduced to a quarter of what it was some two years ago. It is going to be quite disastrous economically to some of the areas that we represent. There is little doubt that giving it the air and oxygen of parliamentary scrutiny will not do any harm. Scientific advice has never suffered from a little critical scrutiny.

We also need to ensure that pollution in the North Sea is controlled. To this end we welcome the waste water directive from the Commission. We would ask them to pursue their policy of prohibiting any form of dumping of waste in that sea. The problem again is that the fish move around, in addition to which there are various mammals in that sea which we also want to protect.

As to technical improvements in conservation, I know that there are some proposals coming forward shortly. I also know that we have the support of the fishermen for conservation because they, too, want a long-term future. This is an area where there are also difficulties. The proposals must be submitted early to enable them to be discussed openly. On top of this we cannot expect the fishermen to police these agreements themselves and we have to ensure that adequate resources are put into surveillance of the fishing grounds. I do know that the Commission is increasing that particular budget.

However, the other problem that confronts my particular area, and Britain in general, is the fact that we have not accepted the offer of a decommissioning scheme. I would reckon that last year alone there could perhaps have been 10 million pounds available for us to reduce the size of our fleet and bring it more closely into line with the catching capacity, the fishing that is required in the North Sea. The problem here is that the individual fishermen are the ones who suffer from the lack of a true fisheries policy in the United Kingdom. This will mean bankruptcies. It is not the way to conduct our affairs, particularly when the opportunity of decommissioning is there.

The other side of the fishing industry is that for every person at sea there are three to four employed on shore in the fishing industry. Therefore, aid to the industry, especially with the fall in catches, has to take this into account and ensure continued supplies for the processing sector so that these communities do survive. They are very specific in their form and, unfortunately, do not necessarily fit in to any of the objectives that the Commission presently has for social funding.

I would, therefore, call on the Commission to look very closely at the fishing industry and, in particular, those small harbours where 40-50% of the economic activity is entirely based on fishing and to seriously consider a programme such as RECHAR for these areas. There is

little doubt about that, within the next twelve to twenty-four months, there will be difficulties for individual fishermen. I would call on the Commission to consider that.

McCARTIN (PPE). — Mr President, most of the important points regarding fisheries policy have been covered. We do not recognize sufficiently the extent of the Community's powers in this area. This is one area where the Community has taken to itself — and I think that is a good thing — entire responsibility for control of the fishing industry.

We should realize that the possibility exists of making it the complement of our regional policy, and an instrument of the social cohesion we talk about. It is engaged in in the peripheral regions, it is engaged in in the areas where the regional and structural Funds need to be spent. In spite of the fact that we have the necessary power, the view the Community takes of itself as the manager of our fishery resources is a very negative one. We tend to regard the Community's function as confined to limiting the ability of fishermen to catch fish and reducing the number of boats. That is what gets the headlines, although that view of the Community's role is not accurate. For that reason it is good to hear the Commissioner say that we will have new initiatives this year.

I certainly hope, like my colleague, Mr Lane, that these initiatives will apply to research, particularly in this fish farming area. I have also on a number of occasions mentioned salmon ranching, which has been carried out successfully in Iceland, Japan, New Zealand and the Soviet Union. It is environmentally very friendly and, at the same time, has tremendous potential for development, particularly where angling is concerned.

There are two major sources of discontent in Ireland. There is the basic belief that an injustice was done to the industry, as Mr Blaney and others have mentioned, when the quotas were established initially: the reference period did not suit us, the original calculations were not based on any scientific knowledge and the quotas should have been much greater than they were. I do not want to nationalize this debate, except to say that in the interests of social cohesion and regional policy we should consider seriously the situation of Irish fishermen.

The second point in regard to the total allowable catch is that they do not seem to be based on any scientific knowledge. 60% of it is accepted as being a precautionary strategy. The information that we have is, we think, not founded on good research. Ireland has, somebody said, 25% of the fishing grounds. Well, it is not 25%. It was originally, before Greece, Spain and Portugal arrived. It is a lot less today, but the waters have not got any less. There is a lot of water there and a lot of fish. We have one 60-foot vessel. Irish fishermen do not believe that we have established any reasonable basis to support the reductions of those catches. In Northern Ireland they have one 40-foot vessel. We need

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to apply much more resources to obtaining real evidence. If that real evidence was put on the table and if we in this House got an opportunity to debate it before the Council made its decision, it would diffuse a lot of frustration and anger.

Mr Commissioner, we want to thank you for your statement. We look forward to a more timely consultation and an opportunity to participate before decisions are taken in the future.

PERY (S). — (FR) Mr President, I should like to begin by mentioning the latest Fisheries Council meetings, awaited with considerable anxiety by those in the industry. The figures of the scientific experts had pointed to a very considerable reduction in the TACs and quotas. It must be said that the outcome was less disastrous than we had expected, though it clearly was not good enough to satisfy the expectations of fishermen regarding a proper standard of living and depreciation of their boats and gear. We shall certainly be hearing in future about the quotas for sole. Although this is up, sole is now such a sought-after species that the levels allowed will not be enough.

I will move on now to a number of decisions taken at the last Council meeting which I think are a good thing. A high-level working party was set up and I would specifically list three subjects which this working party should study before the end of the Irish presidency, following proposals from the Commission.

Firstly, how to protect coastal fishing and make allowance for the difficulties of inshore fishing. Catches better suited to multi-species fishing should be sought so that fish which will not survive are not needlessly discarded at sea. Further thought must also be given to the multiannual guidance programme. The notion of kilowatt power is no longer enough. Account must be taken of fishing vessels and equipment if we really want to achieve a better balance of marine resources.

Secondly, we need a common policy on the Mediterranean. The European Parliament has compiled several reports on this subject and necessarily endorses any initiative here. We need measures to safeguard and manage the Mediterranean, applicable to all Member State vessels, but we also need international agreement with non-member countries so that any technical measures introduced are more effective. We should also consider Community funding of international measures to monitor the Mediterranean.

Thirdly, we should study accompanying measures to offset the effects of lower TACs for certain species. For example, the rules whereby subsidies to experimental fisheries are currently granted might be relaxed. At present, to qualify for a subsidy, the catch must be harvested over the least two months and in non-Community waters. This period might perhaps be shortened and these catches permitted in Community waters.

As this point I must remember that I represent a maritime region, the Basque country. So I would like to

touch briefly on a few points which specifically concern my region.

A number of species are currently fished and subject to a TAC although scientific bodies such as IFREMER have said that this precaution is unnecessary. I would mention first of all the anchovy, Commissioner. As you know, this is an erratic species which comes to our region from time to time, lives only two years and, if it is not fished, dies in its own good time. If this TAC were abandoned our fishermen could, as they say, 'save their season', that is to say have a month-end which is more or less right.

The second concern in my region is that the Saragossa agreements should be reviewed with regard to the reciprocity rule and that the rules should be obeyed by everyone in Community waters. I won't say any more. The fishermen will know what I mean.

Mr President, in concluding I would say that every solution we can find to regional fishery problems should help us to build a Europe which will be understood by its citizens, because what is true of fishing is true; it seems to me, of all our common policies.

BOURLANGES (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, 'blue Europe' is an excellent idea but it isn't working. It is an excellent idea because the objectives we are pursuing are excellent objectives to which we can all subscribe — pooling and protection of stocks, modernization and streamlining of fishing operations, processing and marketing of fishery products to maximum effect. But the idea isn't working because this policy is comprehended less and less by those whom it is designed to benefit, and blue Europe will not succeed if it is opposed by, or even if it is not accepted by, the fishermen and their industry.

I will, with your indulgence, give you an example of this lack of comprehension, which seems to me to be growing. I refer to the introduction of the POP, the multiannual guidance programme. I am weighing my words carefully when I say that the conditions in which the multiannual guidance programme is applied at present are placing the world of fisheries, and inshore fishing in particular, in a state of serious imbalance. And this is largely because the timetable set by the Community is too tight and imposes constraints on the industry as a whole which it cannot accept. A degree of flexibility *must* be introduced here.

Another problem is that implementation of the POP leads not only to the declared and necessary objective of preventing the fleet from growing, but also effectively prevents that fleet from being modernized; something which works primarily to the disadvantage of the younger fishermen. And we shan't build Europe, blue or otherwise, if our young people are against it or not actively for it.

In addition to the POP, let me quote the example of the TACs. Here too the position is deeply unsatisfactory. Firstly because this policy, whilst basically reasonable, is clearly too harsh in its effects. When we take measures

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on the basis of scientific knowledge which is very uncertain, as has been admitted, measures which lead to a massive reduction in the catches allowed in a given zone, we have to realize that we make it virtually impossible for the industry to adapt in the short term.

We should think about multiannual contracts with the industry which would allow it to take account of all its activities rather than merely imposing a ban. I would also criticize the accompanying measures as inadequate and too tentative.

In conclusion I would say that any policy includes elements which hold back and elements which encourage. It's what we call the 'stick and the carrot'. I fear that the fishery industry may feel the stick so often that it won't go for the carrot or see this policy as designed for its benefit. There is danger in that. We need to take action.

CARDOSO E CUNHA, *Member of the Commission.*

— (PT) Mr President, Ladies and gentlemen, as you may imagine, I followed with great interest the various speeches and certainly I can tell Parliament on behalf of my colleague Manuel Marín that the suggestions made by honourable Members will obviously be studied seriously and in depth. However, I shall certainly take the liberty, in view of my long involvement with this sector, of making some personal comments in such an interesting debate. And with all my respect for Parliament, I should like to begin by thoroughly endorsing the remark made by Mr Lataillade, who said that this discussion amounted more to a presentation of points of view than a real debate. I agree.

In fact, we have not had a debate here today, if only because most of the points raised by honourable Members had a clear answer in my initial remarks. It was rather, and I think this needs to be said, an acknowledgment that both the Commission and Parliament realize that there are a number of constraints on this activity, which have serious economic and social effects, but that there is not at present any clear idea of how to solve these problems. We agree that there is a crisis in fishery resources but opinions differ as to what must be done. I think, ladies and gentlemen, — and I shall apologize for encroaching upon your territory, but in one way or another I also represent the Commission here today — that the vital problem for fisheries lies in the error of thinking that it depends upon the return of the fishermen, when it really depends upon the return of the fish. There is no point in saying, as various Irish Members did, that Ireland has 25% of Community waters: Community fishermen need not water but fish and Ireland unfortunately does not have 25% of Community fish.

It is important to protect the marine environment. Any action or initiative taken with regard to rivers flowing into the sea, the coast, the burning of refuse, is naturally advantageous to fishing. But let us not delude ourselves: the greatest problem for maintaining the present unsustainable level of fish stocks is not environmental

pollution but over-fishing and the fact that various Community fishing countries maintain fleets which are much too big for the resources available. And as regards this irrefutable fact, quite apart from all political discussions, there is only one solution: the industry must accept this fact and support plans to adjust and reduce operations. If I might anticipate the debates in Parliament which my colleague Manuel Marín announced to the Assembly and which I think will be a splendid opportunity to discuss at technical level in a more restricted field the real limits of the sector, I would say that it seems to me essential to think out together what the extent of fishing operations should be and what proportion of the catch should go for processing, which is much more closely connected with the real needs of European people for fish consumption, and then grant generous compensation to those in the industry who, as in other spheres of the European economy, may eventually be persuaded to cease operations. Having taken the liberty of putting forward this personal view, I now leave it to the forthcoming debates to tackle together honestly, seriously and free from purely political considerations, a subject of enormous importance.

I should also like to draw attention to the statement I made on behalf of my colleague Mr Marín about the possibility of steps being taken in the first half of this year in the sphere of non-industrial fisheries. It is a subject of enormous social and political importance as regards the steps to be taken in the Mediterranean and particularly for operations involving national waters and demersal fishing. I am delighted to note the readiness of the Commission and Parliament to try together, in working seminars, to find the serious, suitable and intelligent solutions which the fisheries policy needs if it is to continue as a real Community policy.

VÁZQUEZ FOUZ (S). — (ES) Mr President, I should like to put a very brief question to the Commission. Is the Commission in a position to give an appropriate response to the social and economic consequences which the conservation measures adopted or to be adopted will have on the fisheries sector, which is the real question of the debate today?

CARDOSO E CUNHA, *Member of the Commission.*

— (PT) Mr Vázquez Fouz, I can say on behalf of the Commission that problems of this nature must form the central point of the debate which is to take place between the Commission and the European Parliament in the seminars announced by my colleague Manuel Marín. The additional idea about the need to rethink the scale of the fishing industry in relation to the processing industry and the need to provide generous support for the necessary structural alterations arising out of the first idea must be regarded as a personal contribution which I take the liberty of making in anticipation of the debate.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

PRESIDENT

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 9 a.m.

We shall now vote on the five motions for resolutions with request for an early vote to wind up the debate on fisheries.

(Parliament agreed to the request for an early vote)

The vote on the resolutions will take place tomorrow morning.

4. Competition policy

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-108/89) by Mr Merz, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council (SEC(89) 873 final — Doc. C3-123/89) on the 18th report by the Commission on competition policy.

MERZ (PPE), rapporteur. — *(DE)* Mr President, we are today discussing the 18th report of the Commission on competition policy and the Parliament's position on it. I should like to begin with a preliminary remark. The Community's competition policy is, in my view, faced at the beginning of the nineties with two quite special challenges. First, the opening up of the Community towards the East is a matter which also has repercussions for competition policy and, second, swift development towards the European internal market is again making the subject of competition policy a central issue for us. I therefore consider that it should in the coming years be treated as being of central political significance for the Community. Sound competition policy is the prerequisite for proper functioning of the market economy. I am certain that this will prove to be the second triumph of the market economy *post* 1948/49 inside Europe.

There have in the past, are now and are bound to be in the future challenges on two fronts for the market economy system. The first consists in subsidies. The State intervenes here by favouring individual branches of industry or individual undertakings with special benefits as far as competition is concerned. The second consists in mergers. In that case industry or undertakings intervene in the market economy by buying up other undertakings, often claiming to have to guarantee their own competitive capacity but, in reality, seeking to force a troublesome competitor off the market.

Allow me to make a few comments on both these aspects in relation to the Commission's statements in the competition report and the report on aids. The Commission points out that 3% of total gross domestic product of the Member States is provided by way of subsidy in the European Community. This is more in total than is collected by way of revenue from corporation tax in the Community. That means in simple terms that individual undertakings and branches of industry in the Community receive more by way of State subsidy than is paid in taxes by the whole of

industry and the economy. That is a gross imbalance, and it is therefore to be welcomed that the Commission is taking up that subject in an independent report.

We hope that that report will be forwarded to us not only informally but officially in the very near future, and we should ask the Commission to see to this.

As far as I am concerned there is a close link between subsidies and crisis sectors. It is no coincidence that the three crisis sectors of the Community are those very sectors which are in receipt of the lion's share of subsidies. They are agriculture, coal and steel. I feel we shall have to discuss these further and in detail in the future.

Second: competition and the merger process. Many citizens in the Community are rightly concerned about an accelerating process of merger in the Community as the 1992 internal market approaches. The wave of mergers is gathering pace. But let me state clearly and unequivocally: not only the formation of companies but also their amalgamation and, of course, their failure are part of the market economy. But the Community and the Member States must ensure that competition is not hindered or even excluded as a result of mergers. Size itself is not the deciding factor here. The big undertakings on today's small market may be the small undertakings on the big market of tomorrow. What matters is how changes to the structural format of undertakings alter or result in deterioration of the competitive situation.

We have therefore specially to welcome the way in which the French President of the Council managed, at the last minute so to speak, in December of last year, to have adopted the regulation on the supervision of mergers. This gives the Community, albeit very belatedly, a measure of political power to act in an area in which there has long existed industrial decision-making capacity.

According to its own estimates, the Commission will, following the entry into force of the regulation on 21 September next, have some 50 or 60 cases to review. As the intervention threshold is reduced, there will be considerably more. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy therefore proposes to you the setting up of a European cartel office at the same time as a reduction in the intervention thresholds. My group will today abstain in the vote on this point of the motion for a resolution because we are aware that it does not meet with the undivided approval of the whole House. We are aware that discussions are taking place on it in all the groups. We will discuss this point in the near future in a special report in plenary sitting.

FUNK (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development has also discussed the 18th Report on Competition Policy and welcomes the fact that the Commission has laid down particularly strict criteria for the review of individual infringements. We have,

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however, to note that with its new types of stabilizers and compulsory price reductions where the prescribed quantities are exceeded, agricultural policy represents a major challenge to competition policy.

For that reason, I should like to call upon the Commission to take greater account in future competition policy of the new problems causing difficulty in agriculture. And I am referring in particular here to the sacrifices required of farmers in the interests of the environment and the protection of nature.

I should like to point out that very considerable differences exist within the Community. There are even now regions in which 25% of productive agricultural land is situated in drinking water catchment areas, placing particular burdens on farmers. There has, of course, to be compensation for this, and greater account must in future be taken of this in competition policy than has formerly been the case.

Beyond that, the Committee recognizes in principle the validity of the criteria laid down by the Commission. Of 161 applications for State aid submitted, 100 met with no objection from the Commission because they were justified. Regionally speaking, European agriculture will be burdened to differing degrees by the new conditions for protection of the environment and the natural bases of life. Greater attention must, in future, be paid to this, when looking at competition.

Harmonization is naturally appropriate with a view to preparations for the internal market in many agricultural sectors, and I urgently request that the Commission take up these matters rapidly to ensure a smooth transition, if the internal market is soon to become a reality.

LAMASSOURE (LDR), *draftsman of the opinion of the Committee on Budgets*. — (FR) Mr President, Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights I must thank the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and its rapporteur for incorporating into their report the essential points of the opinion we delivered.

For a number of years now our Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights has favoured the improving of procedures for the monitoring of competition, to make it more efficacious and ensure that it shows greater respect for the rights of the undertakings concerned. In this regard the creation of a Court of First Instance is a qualitative leap forward. In the future the European Commission and Parliament should work along two main lines.

The first is the creation of a truly independent authority for monitoring mergers and acquisitions. This exists in the federal States where the rules of competition are upheld best, it is the point on which all the pragmatic reforms of latter years have converged, the ambition voiced aloud by President Delors in this very place on 21 November 1989. We should take the chance afforded

by the institutional reforms required for economic and monetary union to achieve it.

The second line of endeavour should be to combat the misuse of public aid. If public aid, State or regional aid, continues to proliferate at its present rate, it will completely distort the single market in 1992. The first thing needed was an assessment of the extent of misuse. This has been done, thanks to good work by the Commission. We need now to equip ourselves with the wherewithal to punish it. Repayment of improperly paid aids into the Community budget would already be more of a disincentive than the present system.

These are the two points which our Committee wished to see emphasized.

READ (S). — Mr President, I would like to record some serious reservations about some of the assumptions and inconsistencies in the report. I have submitted amendments which are targeted at what I consider some of the more simplistic and potentially divisive aspects and which I hope will merit the support of Parliament. There is a difficulty over the word 'enterprise' in Amendment No 8. In the German and, I think, Dutch versions, it has been translated as 'private aid', which of course is very different from the English 'enterprise'. It is important too to remember that the Treaty is very specific about the nature and extent of State aid, even though this is not acknowledged or taken into consideration in the report.

It is also impossible to consider competition policy and the removal of the barriers to competition without being both aware of, and concerned about, the regional implications. A British newspaper, last weekend, carried details of a case study from the Commission about the economic and social effects of the single market on parts of the Community, particularly with regard to unemployment and social deprivation. It made stark and distressing reading. I would like to draw particular attention to my Amendment No 2, which deals with the regional and social implications of mergers and stresses the necessity of consultation with workers. A capitalist and organizational logic in the matter of mergers is illogical and damaging to the social cohesion of the Community since it can only lead to unemployment and the creation of industrial and rural wastelands. The Commission's goal of a flat playing field in the sphere of competition can seem attractive until you remember that even on the flattest playing fields the goal posts are still a considerable way from many of the players.

Finally I would emphasize that competition policy, however effective, is no substitute for a logical and clear industrial policy. I know that many other Members of this House share my frustration with the Commission, but we still pay so little attention to the industrial future of the Community.

PINXTEN (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, mergers, acquisitions of minority sharehol-

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dings and the setting up of subsidiaries are commonplace today. Increasingly they involve two or more firms from different Member States. In its 18th report the Commission rightly makes a distinction according to the aim of the operations engaged in. Mergers are aimed primarily at strengthening the parties' market position whilst research and development are the main objectives when subsidiaries are formed. I would ask the Commission, and DG IV in particular, to distinguish clearly between these two quite different objectives in carrying out its competition policy.

The Commission is proposing preventive monitoring of mergers. No problems with that. But to eliminate any random factors, objective criteria should be laid down as far as possible. The proposal for a regulation on the control of mergers already contains a few criteria, but in my view not enough. I say this because experience has shown that the Commission, in its policy of aid measures to companies always refers to Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty but regularly formulates and substantiates its rulings somewhat vaguely. This creates uncertainty amongst the firms concerned as to the proper legal position. Adequate monitoring also depends ultimately on proper information. For aid measures the sacrosanct principle is that of 'transparency', though for Spain and Portugal it seems that even after four years there is still not always enough information. I refer to paragraphs 184, 201, 222 and 226 of the report. Well, transparency is essential for the monitoring of mergers too.

Lastly, Mr President, Commissioner, a comment on fundamentals. This 18th report again overlooks something which has become accepted wisdom in economic theory, namely that the positive effects of healthy competition on market prices and purchasing power depend not only on actual competition, to which this report regrettably confines itself, but also and primarily on free access to the market for potential new producers or sellers. Thus for example a monopolist or oligopolist may actually be forced *in extremis* to offer the same price advantages as he would if operating in a totally free competitive market. The report ignores this, and it would be expedient for the Commission in future to adapt its approach to competition and include for example an examination of cost structures and profit margins in its analysis.

DE VRIES (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, I shall confine myself to a few brief incidental comments in the time allotted to me. Firstly, a question to the Commission.

At present there is a backlog — or there was a backlog at the end of 1988 — of 3 451 cases of alleged unfair competition. That is of course quite unacceptable. The Community and the Commission in particular loses a lot of credibility by the Commission's inability to settle competition disputes quickly. I would specifically ask the Commissioner what priority he intends to give to clearing this backlog quickly.

A second point I would ask him to consider is the question of the export aids, export credit guarantees and export subsidies which Member States give to business and industry. I think it would be a very good thing if the next report on competition or perhaps a separate report were to provide a picture of these in the Member States and any aspects of these export aids which distort competition. I would also ask the Commissioner to give his reaction to paragraph 32 of the Merz resolution. We should appreciate a Commission report on the competition aspects of industries which operate in that grey area between civilian and military production. Member States can take measures which they deem necessary to protect essential security interests and which relate to the manufacture of armaments and suchlike. But such measures must not change the conditions of competition on the Community market for products which are not intended for specifically military purposes. We have never yet been given any concrete picture of the competition aspects here. A review of them would be welcome.

My last point is this. Aspects of Community competition policy are impinging more and more on the USA and vice versa. A specific example is Sir James Goldsmith's takeover bid for BAT. That bid was investigated by the US Justice Ministry's anti-trust department and then vetoed. It thus appears that our law has to some extent been thwarted by US law. I should be glad if the Commission's next annual report were to indicate how Community law and US law encroach on each other here. One thing we must do is ensure that our competition policy cannot be thwarted by measures taken by the Americans and vice versa.

CASSIDY (ED). — Mr President, on behalf of my group I welcome this report. My group will certainly vote for it. It is commendably free-market in its application and has many things in it of which we heartily approve. The Socialist Group is conspicuous by its absence on these occasions when we discuss competition policy and aids because, of course, they are against competition and in favour of State aids. They would rather spend their time talking about ambulance strikes.

I would also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of the Commissioner's predecessor. The 18th Report on Competition Policy refers to the year 1988 when it was in the capable hands of Commissioner Peter Sutherland who did a brave job in tackling many State monopolies and some Member State governments. I know that Sir Leon Brittan has already tackled similar problems in an equally brave and courageous way, and we look forward to debating the 19th Report on Competition Policy which will be Sir Leon's first. I would like to make a point in that connection. Here we are at the beginning of 1990. The 18th Report on Competition Policy deals with the year 1988. May I ask whether it is at all possible for the Commission to produce its report a little bit earlier so that it appears to have more relevance to our debates.

CASSIDY

The other point I would make is that I understand that dealing with the backlog of 3 000 cases, to which Mr De Vries referred, the Commission would like to take on at least 40 new staff to deal with it. May I urge the Commission when they are recruiting additional staff to avoid if possible putting an age limit in the recruitment notices, thereby leading to a notable increase in competition in recruitment to the Commission services.

ERNST DE LA GRAETE (V). — (FR) Mr President, I will speak very briefly to tell you our views on this motion and the questions raised by competition.

The first recital of this resolution extols the free market economy. This is fashionable at a time when the events in Eastern Europe testify to the bankruptcy of planned economies. Two objections to this, however. The first is that none of our countries, not even the United Kingdom, has an economic system based solely on the law of the marketplace. In all our countries the State takes financial action to influence both supply and demand, and I will quote as examples public transport or energy.

And when we quote the virtues of our economic system we must also mention its drawbacks, particularly the enormous debt we are in the process of incurring *vis à vis* future generations by wasting and polluting our natural resources. The free market economy is not a panacea. Europeans, whether from East or West, don't want to consume more, but above all to live better.

The question of corporate mergers is of enormous concern to us. Firstly because the promised directive is slow in coming and secondly because even if it comes this year, it seems to us inadequate because of the level of the effect thresholds it envisages.

We have heard about an anti-trust office which would study all these merger and acquisition proposals. Personally we don't think that is the right answer to the problem at present. We think the answer lies above all in guarantees, in the independence of the officials called on to judge these cases and we want guarantees of that independence, within the Commission or within this proposed office, whichever.

IN THE CHAIR: MR PEREZ ROYO

Vice-President

WETTIG (S). — (DE) Mr President, the rapporteur has already pointed out that, with this 18th report which we are discussing today, we find ourselves at a transitional stage in which two major developments, one of them determined by us, namely progress towards a fully developed internal market in the European Community, as well as progress in Eastern Europe, will in the future have a decisive influence on the competition policy of the European Community. The internal market represents the completion of a process enabling full use to be made of competitive advantage within the European

Community itself but also reinforcing the competitive position of European industry on the world market.

Not only will the changes in Eastern Europe bring with them expanded markets, given that markets previously partitioned off will in the future again be participating in competition in Europe, but they will also lead, if the proper conditions in law are established, to expansions of undertakings within Europe, and you do not need second sight to see that that might in turn result in distortions of competition within Europe. If we look at the future of competition policy in terms of those two factors, it is clear that it must have a very different status within the Community and gain enormously in importance over the next ten years.

Not only has the internal market produced a considerable amount of investment in undertakings, it has also basically encouraged undertakings in certain sectors of the economy to eliminate competition by merging in an attempt to neutralize the advantages which an internal market could bring with it in the field of competition by making arrangements with others. An increase in size does not necessarily mean a loss of competition, but the danger most certainly exists. For that reason the criticism of the Commission and its organizational method is justified. The Commission must properly organize competition and take more intensive measures to monitor competition in the Community so that it is better able to supervise that area than in the past. That applies in particular to the system for preventive monitoring of mergers. It is my own view that unless there is a cartel office or a strong authority, it will not be possible to establish a system of that kind.

A further word on the problem of aids. It is to be welcomed that the Commission is taking more action on such aids. It will not be possible to complete the internal market if attempts are being made on all sides to get around the effects of the internal market by means of open or disguised aids. There have in the past been such violations in agricultural policy, for example. That was not so very successful. It is true that we are currently tackling the fatal situation whereby protected sectors are at the same time subsidized sectors and that we are dispelling the notion that protection from competition always means economic success. It has, unfortunately, to be pointed out that that is not the case in wide areas. Developments in Eastern Europe and the economic collapse of its system are fundamentally the consequence of attempts to insulate sectors from competition within the national economy itself but above all on the world market. Decisive measures are therefore required here along with, however, the attendant social measures. I hope that when it comes to the 19th Report on Competition, we shall be able to discuss all this in greater depth and that we shall have made greater progress in the Community than we have in the past.

BEUMER (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, if you look at the Commission's programme the passages on competition policy are extremely limited. But we have the impression that competition policy is increasingly being

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systematically and consistently adapted; something which is necessary given that the internal market is fast approaching and also of course because the Treaty provides for it.

The Commission's programme names four points: State aids, energy, shipbuilding and maritime transport. I have a few questions on two of these, namely State aids and shipbuilding, and then one or two on counterfeit products and book prices. I take it, Mr President, that as Mrs Read says in Amendment 1, Article 92 (2) forms part of the Treaty. My questions concerning State aids are these: to what extent does the revised survey described by the Commission differ from the old one? And secondly, is it possible to find out to what extent State aid is based on established fiscal legislation? Thirdly, how far would harmonizing company taxation — I don't see that in the Commission's programme — help improve the position as regards competition?

My questions on shipbuilding are these. Is it true that the European Community is now better placed to compete on the world market? And if so, can we assume that the 7th directive will assume a lower level of aid than the current level of 26%? Does the Commissioner think it is possible that countries will be able to afford a shipbuilding industry unless it has State aid, unless it makes use of the Community rules?

On counterfeit products I have the following question for the Commissioner. Could we be told something, now or later, about the number of actions brought on this matter? I should like to know to what extent European firms are involved, for example how many bring actions against each other. Does the Commission think its current policy on this is adequate?

Lastly, a question about book prices. In 1987 the European Commission established that the national systems of internal subsidies should be respected in order to ensure a broader and more specific availability of books. Parliament said at the time in a resolution that a single language area ought really to have a single ruling. The Commission agreed to a pragmatic solution on that point. We are now in 1990 not 1987, but there has still not been any proposal on the matter by the Commission. Will the Commissioner look again at Parliament's resolution perhaps together with his colleague Mr Dondelinger and will he honour the pledge given at the time of the debate on the Commission's behalf?

RAWLINGS (ED). — Mr President, I congratulate Mr Merz on the thoroughness of his report. The enormous volume of State aids identified in the report, ECU 82 billion, verge on the scandalous. The Member States cannot afford to engage in retaliatory subsidizing as it can only lead to grotesque distortion of competition. If you doubt my words, consider a case that the Commissioner knows well. A company in my constituency is fighting a losing battle in the air transport market, against heavily subsidized Community rivals. They have been forced to axe twelve hundred jobs. They

may soon be forced out of the market, thus leaving the field to two subsidized leviathans to fight it out in the arena, with the inevitable result of victory for one and the inadvertent creation of a monopoly.

This is not an isolated affair. Genuine fears are expressed by all sectors of business in the UK that Community-wide differences of economic policy *vis-à-vis* State intervention will make the single European market a ghastly joke played on competitive but non-aided companies. These will go to the wall while their State-pampered rivals, laughing heartily, clean up.

I support, therefore, the strong line on State aids in this motion, and particularly the call in paragraph 14 for a review of procedures currently in force, with an eye perhaps to strengthening Articles 92 and 93 if need be.

VAN HEMELDONCK (S). — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is customary in this House to pay tribute to the rapporteur, but regrettably I am unable to do so. I have to say that I do not at all like the tone of his report and a number of absurdities it contains. What he says in the first indent of paragraph 1, namely that the market economy system is the only efficient means of providing consumers with goods and services, I find totally unacceptable. As regards goods, just ask the consumer who lives in a remote region; as for services, where would our social services be, where would transport and our health services be without the guarantee of State intervention and State aid? And if you want to make a total wasteland of some areas of Europe, if you want to emulate the situation in the townships of America, just go along with what the rapporteur wants!

The second thing I find unacceptable is that he describes the concept of competition policy as a necessary part of an orderly legal framework. If he believes that, why does he then say in paragraph 18 that subsidies to the press and media are actually State aids which distort competition? Straight away the whole European press is controlled by twentieth-century robber barons, and Messrs Hersant, Berlusconi, Maxwell and a few others control the entire media market. It is precisely because of State aid that there is competition over the right to information and freedom of expression which form the very cornerstones of democracy. I admit, Mr Merz, that mistakes have been made over State aids. I have in the past been the first to denounce them, including some in the textile sector in my own constituency. But as Article 92 of the Treaty states, there is a legitimate basis for State aid if that helps to provide employment in the region which will bring infrastructure and structural improvements so that there can be true equality of opportunities for all firms, all regions and all citizens of our European Community.

BRITTAN, Sir Leon, Vice-President of the Commission. — Mr President, I am delighted to have this opportunity of addressing you in the final stage of your discussions on the 18th Competition Report. I certainly have no hesitation in expressing my thanks to the

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Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and, quite specifically, to Mr Merz who is the rapporteur. He has presented his draft report in a very lucid and informed manner and the report itself was similarly discussed by him in this report and in his speech. I should like to congratulate him and thank him most warmly. He has demonstrated once again the central role that Parliament has to play in the development of competition policy. May I also say how much pleasure it gave me to hear from Mr Cassidy his just tribute to the work of my predecessor, Peter Sutherland, on whose work I am very happy indeed to build on the same principles that he followed.

It goes without saying that it is also a very particular pleasure to be able to report to you on the historic breakthrough which was achieved in December when the Council adopted the Commission proposal for a regulation in the field of merger control, unquestionably the most important development in competition policy for a very long time. It has of course long been recognized by Parliament as well as by the Commission that a merger regulation was essential to the promotion of effective competition in the single market. I am grateful for Parliament's assistance in bringing it about.

As you know, the restructuring process taking place in European industry, which is largely in response to the single market programme, has promoted a wave of mergers and acquisitions which have been referred to by a number of speakers in the present debate. Obviously, to the extent that this makes industry in Europe more efficient and competitive, that is to be welcomed. However, sometimes, as has been pointed out, the opposite occurs with large-scale mergers resulting in the creation of new dominant positions. Since the maintenance of competition is essential to the success of 1992 and its programme, an effective merger regulation forms a vital part of our policy in that direction. That is why the decision taken on 21 December is so historic. The regulation which was adopted focuses on mergers of a Community dimension. Those which do not fall within this definition will be subject to the appropriate national rules. We will, in this way, create a one-stop shop.

Reference has been made, for example by Mrs Ernst de la Graete, to the threshold, which it has been suggested the regulation sets too high. There is a certain logic in allowing the Commission to gain experience in applying the regulation, but we have made it quite clear that, in the review of the regulation which is to take place in just under four years' time, the Commission will propose a lower threshold, indeed a threshold of ECU 2 billion instead of the present one of ECU 5 billion. Some reference has been made by a number of speakers to the suggestion that a European cartel office of some kind — maybe bearing a different name — should be set up. That is not a practical proposition at the moment, because we obviously have to get on with the task of implementing the merger regulation under the present arrangements, and that requires a considerable amount of administrative work so that we may organize

ourselves to be able to do so. But I have some doubts as to the wisdom, apart from the time-limits or practicality, of a European cartel office. The question of the division of powers between the Commission and cartel office has not necessarily been thought out by those who favour it and the question of handing over powers totally to such a cartel office is plainly not on, because of the Treaty and the obligations that it imposes on the Commission itself. Therefore, though I understand the reasoning behind this proposal, I could not pretend that I am at present persuaded that it is the right approach. However, if anyone is concerned about the timeliness of it, they need only to think for a second about the amount of time that would be devoted to a discussion as to where such an office would be located to realize that, if we are to deal with the mergers that are occurring in the run-up to 1992, this is not an immediately practical proposition.

A more general point has been raised with regard to the handling of mergers, namely that the competition policy that is applied by the Commission has to be applied in the case of mergers on the basis of the criteria set out in the regulation. That is bound to be the case. References have been made by Mr Pinxten and Mrs Read to the broader social questions. I would say to them that competition policy is not applied in an economic and social vacuum, as one of the amendments seems to suggest. It is a question of balance and, in considering the regulation, the Council deliberated at length on the appropriate balance to be set as between the key objective of maintaining healthy competition and other factors. I will not seek to repeat that debate or to summarize the words of the regulation which set out the criteria, but I think they are sensible criteria, having been discussed at great length and giving proper primacy to competition criteria, which is, after all, what we are talking about, while, at the same time, making it clear that such matters have to be looked at in the real world and taking account of factors — national and international — within and outside the Community and, not least, the need for social cohesion, which is enshrined in the Single European Act itself. The criteria that have been finally adopted provide sensible and workable guidelines fully in line with the Treaty.

With regard to State aids, I would say that I note and agree with the concerns in this area expressed both by Mr Merz himself and very forcefully by Mr Wettig and, if I may say so, very movingly by Mrs Rawlings, who produced a particular case which, as she knows, we have been looking into. The problem, as so often, is finding the evidence to take the action which instinctively many will feel would be appropriate. Mrs Van Hemeldonck referred to the question of State aids in a rather different sense. I certainly do not share her criticisms of the report of Mr Merz. I do not think they are justified. However, she is right to point out that there is no question of State aid being banned. She rightly referred to wholly legitimate purposes for State aid, for example in connection with regional policy, of which I have always been a strong supporter and with

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regard to such matters as research and development. Nonetheless, what we are talking about and what is of importance is the control of State aid. The points that have been made about the damaging effect of State aid if it is uncontrolled have full force, and it is only on the basis of effective Community-wide control through the Commission that one is able to ensure that State aid has the benefits which it can rightly bring, without distorting competition and without having the unfair effects that have been drawn to.

I certainly think it is right that at a time when all the other barriers to trade are being removed, there will be a temptation for companies in difficulties to run to their governments and ask for protection, which will only be available in the form of State aid. That is something we must guard against. It is also the case, in my view, that the total amount of State aid is too high and does, by its very weight, amount to distortion of competition.

Mr Beumer referred to fiscal matters. It is certainly the case that what purports to be a tax break can in fact be State aid. The Commission has not hesitated to act where that is the case. On the other hand, to the extent that Community Member States are entitled to follow differing tax policies, the latter can, in a general sense, lead to different competitive conditions. But they cannot be regarded as State aids for that purpose and the question of the extent of harmonization of taxation has to be dealt with on a different basis by the Community although of course it has long been a subject of most anxious debate. Similarly, company law can vary, and its variations can cause variations in the competitive climate. That also has to be dealt with on a separate basis, except in the case of some very special provision of company law favouring a particular enterprise or group of enterprises.

Mr De Vries raised the question of export aids and the follow-up to the state-aid survey. I am glad that survey has been so warmly welcomed in this debate. We are now following it up with a major review, in which we have decided to focus more strongly on existing aid schemes rather than simply dealing with new ones as they are reported. We are beginning with a reappraisal of the largest schemes in each Member State. In some cases, I have no doubt, it will lead to the conclusion that such aid is still justified but, in others, we may well need to take action to stop it. I am sure that that is the right approach. We will of course report to you in due course about the progress we are making in this respect and I welcome the continuing dialogue with Parliament and its appropriate committees in respect of this matter. I, for my part, regard this dialogue not only as being part of my duties but it also enables me to carry out my duties much better than if that dialogue were not available.

Until recently, the service industries were not so much to the fore in our competition policy, but that is a broad sector which now requires more effective and invigorating competition and we will be working in this field.

Reference has been made to air transport and telecommunications. These are certainly areas where competi-

tion policy is now very much more to the fore. Mr Beumer referred to shipbuilding. Yes, it is true that the conditions for European shipbuilding are better than they have been. It is for that reason that in the annual review of the ceiling of aid, we have come down from 26% to 20%. What will happen at the end of this year when a further consideration of the matter is required, and a consideration of the appropriateness of a seventh directive also will be necessary, is something which is too early to anticipate.

As far as some of the other points are concerned, I hope I will be forgiven if I do not cover them all, but I would just like to say that Mr de Vries' point about potential conflicts with the United States in this area is one that we will have to look into and take seriously. As to the question of administrative arrangements, I would point out that within DG IV there is already a considerable separation of functions between the director for general policy, the operative directorates and the hearing officer. And there is of course a separation between DG IV and the legal service, not to mention the scrutiny of the advisory committee. Given your concern about the backlog, I would hesitate to suggest further bureaucratic hurdles. But reference has been made to the establishment of the Court of First Instance, which of course is a further opportunity for checking the work of the Commission. Therefore, I think that that is another argument against any immediate steps in the direction of a cartel office.

Mr Cassidy urged us to try and produce the competition report earlier. I welcome his thirst for the report and will attempt to slake it by producing it rather earlier than has been the case in the past. We shall of course be examining the resolution in detail, and the suggestion it makes. In many sectors we are already active in the sense that you suggest, and I hope that when we produce that earlier report next year, we will be able to look back on considerable progress. Few would dispute that competition policy makes an essential contribution to a dynamic and successful European Community, and few would dispute that now, with the 1992 process, it is more important than ever. I look forward to maintaining the role of competition policy, to continuing to discuss it with you in the years up to and beyond the completion of the single market.

(Applause)

DE VRIES (LDR). — Mr President, I would like to thank the Commissioner for his very instructive and comprehensive reply. I would however like, through you, to urge him to reply to one particular point I raised, and that is how the Commission proposes to clear away the ever-increasing backlog of cases with which it is faced and which threatens the credibility of the Community's competition policy.

BRITTAN, Sir Leon, *Vice-President of the Commission*. — There isn't a single answer to that. The extra staff which we will be seeking, I have to say in all candour, will be required primarily for dealing with the

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merger regulation. But we have made progress as far as the backlog is concerned and we will continue to do so by setting priorities. You are quite right, that is one of the things to do. The cases that are already there, we have to deal with. But I think it is important in this area that we focus on what is important and do not waste time on what is unimportant. That is a statement with which nobody can disagree, as Mr de Vries' expression seems to indicate. We have actually taken action to give effect to it so that is not a bland statement. For example, the decision with regard to *de minimis* aids is one which is plainly designed to have that effect.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken this evening at 6.30 p.m.¹

5. *Financial and technical assistance to developing countries*

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the debate on the report (Doc. A3-112/89) by Mrs Van Putten, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (SEC(89) 1456 final — Doc. C3-169/89) for a decision setting general guidelines for 1990 for financial and technical assistance to Latin American and Asian developing countries.

VAN PUTTEN (S), *rapporteur*. — (NL) Mr President, as rapporteur for the Committee on Development and Cooperation I recommend on behalf of that Committee that the House reject the Commission's proposal and ask the Commission to withdraw it. I can assure you that my Committee did not come to so harsh a conclusion without due reflection. The Committee on Development and Cooperation does not often take a stand of this kind. Parliament takes development aid to Latin America and Asia very seriously. And the amount available every year is not inconsiderable, though compared to other budgets it is by no means enough. In the form currently before us, the directives are far too vague. So vague that the Committee on Development and Cooperation could not make anything meaningful out of them, even by tabling amendments. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, however hard you try!

The Committee on Development and Cooperation does not know enough about the policy of DGI. This document does nothing to clarify the policy it pursues. The directives were put forward at a time when the budget procedure was virtually complete. That is like putting the cart before the horse: first the money and then the decisions on what to do with it. Nor is there a single reference to prior assessments. In the developing world that is most unusual. In short, my Committee was very much of the opinion that these directives should be

summarily thrown out by Parliament. This House just will not tolerate that way of doing things.

But, Mr President, and this brings me to my Committee's main argument, in 1988 this House adopted a resolution which asked the Commission henceforth to submit only directives covering a period of several years. That resolution came after years of promises to Parliament and Commission. And what do we have in 1989? Once again we are given directives covering one year only. Because of the 1988 resolution the Committee on Development and Cooperation twice rejected the EC Commission's proposal in December, almost unanimously. A position which was confirmed yesterday evening at an emergency meeting of our Committee by all the political groups. That meeting also resolved not to agree to an unacceptable proposal by Commissioner Matutes. We are concerned today with democracy. Parliament is not sitting here because we have nothing else to do, we aren't here to twiddle our thumbs. Parliament is an elected body in the Community which must exercise its supervisory powers, and in the light of the previous events I have just described none of the groups can or will accept this proposal from the European Commission. In contrast to what the Commissioner told us at yesterday's emergency meeting, namely that the Council would not agree to anything but the directives currently before us, I have to point out that the Council minutes of 30 October last show that it wants exactly the same as Parliament. The Council too is pressing for multiannual directives. I have heard it suggested that Eastern Europe is now the most important area; these multiannual directives are doing quite nicely; perhaps they'll be tying up too much money over the next few years? Don't let Asia and Latin America bleed to death for the sake of that other policy!

That brings me back, in conclusion, to democracy. In Eastern Europe they are saying, looking in our direction, that's the kind of democracy we want as well. But we, we are undermining that same democracy if we can't exercise proper controls, if we aren't taken seriously, and if we don't take ourselves seriously. These directives, I repeat, are unacceptable to my Committee.

Mr President, I think I have made myself perfectly clear.

(Applause)

WYNN (S). — Mr President, Mrs Van Putten, as rapporteur, has not, I am quite sure, made her recommendations lightly. A lot of thought has gone into all that she has said and all that she has written. We in the Socialist Group and the members of the Committee on Development and Cooperation have not given our support lightly. In a similar vein we have given it a lot of consideration.

The actions that are being proposed by the rapporteur are not intended simply to strike a blow against the Commission. It is not a game we are playing, nor is it being done to jeopardize any finances that are earmarked for Asia and Latin America. We are told that

¹ *Communication of common positions of the Council: see minutes.*

WYNN

if we carry out this action, if we approve this report, then the moneys will be in jeopardy. We are not doing it for that purpose and we have been led to understand that the money is still available and will be until April at least.

We in the Socialist Group support this action because we care about the development of and cooperation with these countries in Asia and in Latin America. The reason we are quite adamant about this attitude is because we consider it to be an extremely important point that Parliament should play a major role in aiding the least developed countries. It is not exclusively the role of the Commission and the Council. We, as elected Members, have a major role to play too. It is also important because it is the only part of the Community's budget for developing countries that we can influence and monitor. The moneys allocated under Lomé, of course, do not come directly from the general budget.

Part of this influence that I speak about is intended to help generate and establish new ideas in the field of development. The rapporteur makes that quite clear in her explanatory statement when she says that the five articles in the Commission's report are far too vague. To name but two items, there is no reference to women and there is no reference to environmental protection.

We in the Social Group are quite sure about our approach to dealing with developing countries. We are quite sure about what our approach should be towards the developing world. I can tell you this, Mr President, our approach is more than a few vague articles in a short report which people hope will be looked at, read, accepted and then forgotten. Our approach is more than setting a budget and then looking for projects to spend it on. Our approach is about knowing the extent of the problem; it is about planning for the future through a multiannual policy that the rapporteur recommends. Our approach is not about rushing documents through in a hurry and taking scant notice of what elected Members have to say. That is not the approach of the Socialist Group. We will not tolerate anything like that.

The proposal from the Commission is, in effect, a broad brush approach. It tries to cover everything in general statements. It is a series of generalities with nothing specific in it, and that just will not do. We as Socialists want to know what the priorities are, not only what the Commission's priorities are but what the priorities are for Asia and Latin America. We want to have a say in how those priorities can be implemented, how we can put to work the moneys of this Community to help the least developed countries throughout the world.

Mrs Van Putten deserves to be congratulated on the report that she has written. We give her our congratulations. The Socialist Group has no hesitation in supporting her.

VERHAGEN (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, the aim of funds earmarked for the developing countries must be to make true development possible in the countries of

the Third World. If we cannot provide maximum guarantees of the quality and effectiveness of our development cooperation that will undoubtedly and rightly lead to a discussion of the scope and size of the development budget and the value of development cooperation in general.

There is no point merely salving our consciences about underdevelopment, about the great problems facing the Third World, by making a certain sum of money available. No, we have to ensure that the money is allocated on the basis of carefully studied criteria, with a view to ending underdevelopment. And so we mustn't be too quick to agree to certain proposals on how the money should be spent. And in the recent budget talks I called for a discussion on the quality of the EC's development aid in general.

We ought thus in planning our aid to Latin America and Asia to have a long-term view, a multiannual programme under which we can try out the allocation of funds in a given year, a multiannual programme setting out the criteria which our development cooperation with the countries in question aims to satisfy, if there is to be a development relationship good enough to pass the quality test. In my view it is impossible to plan properly for the developing countries on the basis of directives and criteria which are valid for one year only.

Neither is it possible, and the rapporteur said so clearly, for ECU 400 million to be spent every year on the basis of criteria which may in theory be different from one year to the next, which consequently make the execution of multiannual development projects extremely difficult, which are also very vague and even now fail to tackle an enormously important issue like protection of the environment. The environmental impact of our development projects is a factor which must also be expressly considered.

If we the European Parliament want to be taken seriously, we must start by taking ourselves seriously. In other words, since we deemed it necessary on 16 December 1988 to prepare a multiannual programme in 1989, then there are naturally repercussions from that.

Regrettably I find that we the European Parliament are not taken seriously and that despite promises we now face the fact that we still have no multiannual programme on the subject. Although the Christian-Democratic Group appreciates that the Commissioner responsible, when he first took office, was faced with a situation in which he clearly had too little time remaining to comply with Parliament's wishes, in my view the European Parliament has no option but to reject the Commission proposal in the form now before us. We would be failing to stand by our own earlier pronouncements if we did otherwise.

We should also be failing to honour the responsibilities which we as the European Parliament have in regard to the earmarking of funds, and to our budgetary powers, if we were to agree to lines of policy which like last year once again contain vague criteria and fail to tackle

VERHAGEN

properly the real problems and differences existing between the various countries in the region.

Like the rapporteur, whom I must compliment on her work, my Group thus believes that the European Parliament should call on the Commission to withdraw its proposal and submit a new one which this time should include a multiannual programme.

LARIVE (LDR). — (NL) Mr President, why is the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group supporting the Van Putten report? Why did even our Spanish Liberals, specifically Mrs Ruiz Gimenez, take the initiative in committee to reject the Commission proposal? Firstly, we need to stand by our own political decisions. Rapporteur Van Putten mentioned the amendments which Parliament approved in December 1988 and which called urgently for a multiannual programme. But what we have before us are guidelines for 1990 only, almost the same as those for 1989 and couched in vague and general terms. The year-by-year basis of financial aid also would appear to hamper continuity in projects and is an obstacle to stable and coherent action. A regulation dating from 1981 cannot cope with the complex and diverse developments which have taken place in the regions since then.

Secondly, our intention in rejecting this proposal is to support the European Commission, to support the Commissioner and strengthen his hand in efforts to obtain a multiannual programme and in arguing the case for it in the Council.

Thirdly, at a time when all the European Community's attention is focused on Eastern Europe my Group thinks it vital that there should be no cutting back of aid to these other regions of the world. After all they are engaged in an equally hard struggle for democracy and development and I would remind the House of the solemn declaration made in March 1989 at the San Pedra Sula conference when Community aid was pledged for the process of democratization in Latin America.

Fourthly, a multiannual programme is needed if our priorities are to be adapted to meet changes in the regions. The 1981 priority for rural development and improved food production is now outdated and the practical effect has been that many projects in other sectors were quite simply cancelled. But what about education and training? What aid is being given to women? The policy guidelines say not a word about their most important role and the Commission seems never to have heard about environmental safeguards, built into projects. The Netherlands Advisory Council on Development and Cooperation is quite right. Its report published today rightly and emphatically says that development planning by the European Community does not take enough account of environmental concerns.

It would be so nice, ladies and gentlemen, if the European Community could be a source of inspiration to the Member States, with new ideas and a fresh

approach. They won't be in the least impressed by this minimal, vague Commission proposal which, as far as my Group too is concerned, can be consigned to the dustbin. What we need is a consistently updated multiannual programme which will also motivate the Member States to align their own policies better with each others' and with that of the European Community.

In short, we support Mrs Van Putten's report and we support it willingly.

DALY (ED). — Mr President, the European Democratic Group fully supports Mrs Van Putten's report and we congratulate her on the work she has undertaken in its preparation which has not only meant writing the report but actually being involved in many meetings to try and reach a successful conclusion. We really welcome the courageous stand she has taken in pursuing the decision of the Committee on Development and Cooperation to reject the Commission's proposal.

However, as other speakers have said, these guidelines have been the subject of debate in Parliament each year and in addition to the annual consultation in 1988 we prepared a detailed report on the type of aid and programme we wanted to see for the future for Asia and Latin America. In the debate here in this Parliament Mr Narjes, on behalf of the Commission said, and I quote:

This report outlines in clear detail the policy which the Community needs to pursue in its relations with the developing countries of Asia and Latin America. Above all the report describes all the measures in detail and indicates the basic direction to be followed in consolidating and expanding them.'

Yet we are told by the Commission that they have not had an opportunity to work out the kind of aid that is needed. I say that because I actually prepared that report. I worked closely with the Commission in the preparation of that report and it was well aware of the type of aid and accepted many of the views that we discussed with ambassadors and representatives from Asia and Latin America. So it is not just good enough to say that they have not had time to work out the kind of aid that is needed.

Mrs Van Putten has already referred to the fact that the Commissioner told us that the Council would not accept our view. I have here also the minutes of the Council meeting and it is clear that the Council welcomed the report on aid for the past 13 years but they too wanted a report on what is needed in the future. There is nothing in this report of the meeting between the Council and the Commission to say that the Commission said they could not do it by the end of the year.

My group shares the view of other speakers that in a democratic Community, Parliament's views and the Council's views cannot be ignored in this way. We therefore strongly support Mrs Van Putten's report and

DALY

the call to Commissioner Matutes to withdraw his proposal and to take account of Parliament's views.

AULAS (V). — (FR) Mr President, I won't repeat everything my colleagues have already said. I shall get straight to the point, especially as I don't have much time.

The proposal which the Commission has put before us is very much a rehash of the same old thing. It contains principles which have already been stated, which are general, superficial and devoid of any real substance, like free gifts from an advertiser which are done up to look good but are worth very little.

There is nothing in the proposal which shows awareness of the current problems facing the peoples of Latin America and Asia. Nothing on protecting the environment and on the status of women, as previous speakers have pointed out. Nothing on the informal sector, or cooperation with NGOs. Nothing either on the position of the Indian populations of Latin America, on which we adopted a resolution this morning. Nothing on opportunities for regional integration, and nothing either on the coordination of aid between the EEC and Member States.

In short, nothing in the directives has changed, although in practice, as you know, there have been a lot of changes on the structural front. And that is not all. The Commission, as you have heard, has ignored the reports and opinions of our Committee on Development and Cooperation to a point where democratically agreed objectives have been ditched as if we did not exist. Quite apart from the meagreness of the proposal in question, a principle is at stake here. For this reason the Green Group rejects the Commission's proposal and endorses the views of the rapporteur.

We warmly congratulate Mrs Van Putten for having stuck to her guns.

TRIVELLI (GUE). — (IT) Mr President, I wish to stress the importance and the highly unusual nature of the position we are adopting, namely rejecting the Commission proposal under discussion.

It is a serious but considered action, reiterated yesterday evening after a meeting which we may also consider out of the ordinary — Commissioner Matutes was present at it — in which we were invited to change a vote which had already taken place.

We do not like to argue with the Commission just for the sake of argument; this House has therefore always endeavoured to reach an understanding with the Commission so as to bring the Council to adopt the appropriate guidelines. We were led to reject the proposal on grounds of method and merit which I shall simply remind you of here. On the merits: there is no multiannual programme; there is no description of the policy to be followed; the resources are inadequate. As for the method, on a number of occasions, Parliament has specifically invited the Commission to adopt certain criteria, and it has failed to do so. Moreover, this is a

broadly majority position and not only in the Committee on Development. A similar assessment has been given by the Committee on Budgets in its opinion, as well as in that of the Committee for External Economic Relations, in a different form perhaps but the substance is the same.

We understand the frame of mind of Commissioner Matutes and, if you like, the contradictory nature of his position. We feel it would come close to what we are asking for. I do not wish to express a judgment here on the primarily procedural reasons adopted by him. It is a fact that no way has been found of acceding to the long-expressed wishes of Parliament, and I therefore consider it would be completely unwarranted to accept the Van Putten report in order to press for greater political effectiveness *vis-à-vis* the countries of Asia and Latin America.

VAN DER WAAL (NI). — (NL) Mr President, there is no reason to disagree about the need to continue financial and technical aid to the so-called non-associated developing countries in Latin America and Asia. Those countries still have a lot of desperate poverty and are still very underdeveloped. And now when Parliament is being asked for its opinion on the Commission proposal to approve some ECU 300 million in appropriations for commitment and some ECU 200 million in appropriations for payment, there is no doubt as to its approval *per se* of continuing Community aid. What Parliament is not clear about is the efficacy with which that aid is targeted and applied. What the Commission says is so broadly based and so summary that we remain unconvinced. The Commission does say in its ten-year report that despite a difficult start Community aid is being targeted and used effectively, but the criteria for measuring the success of projects are not given. Nor is there any assessment of the aid programmes which have been carried out. We are thus not in a position to make any meaningful judgment of the quality of the aid which has been given.

It is a well known fact that in general things still go wrong in development aid. That is in itself a pity, but it is not the worst thing. It is serious if failures are not brought into the open and subjected to a proper scrutiny aimed at learning from the mistakes made and making improvements. The need for this is all the more pressing in the light of developments in Eastern Europe. The aid which the West is prepared to offer to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe cannot be a one-off operation. On the contrary, this aid will become a structural part of the West's aid policy. That has already prompted the suggestion that some of the money needed should be taken out of the funds set aside every year for aid to the Third World. This debate will question all the more keenly the value and effectiveness of the aid earmarked for the Third World. So it would be a bad job if we could not provide convincing proof that the programmes of aid to the countries of Latin America and Asia are effective and high-quality programmes.

VAN DER WAAL

In view of these things I shall abstain from voting on the Commission's proposals.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Mr President, first I should like to thank honourable Members and in particular the author of the report, Mrs Van Putten, for the work and enthusiasm shown. The legitimate disagreement about means must not in any way overshadow the considerable degree of agreement we certainly feel about the aims and objectives we are all pursuing. This agreement is particularly noticeable where Mrs Van Putten referred to the inadequacy of the means at our disposal for development aid to the countries of Asia and Latin America — something about which the Commission can do little since it is not the budgetary authority, whereas Parliament is.

Secondly, I am genuinely convinced that the Committee on Development and Cooperation is certainly not intent upon raising difficulties but, rather, upon backing the Commission in general and me as Commissioner in particular in our efforts to strengthen and renew the Community policy of cooperation with the countries of Asia and Latin America.

But having said that, I must add that I have not reached my own views lightly but have considered them in depth and evaluated them with at least as much attention as honourable Members.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, my major concern in this matter is that, whilst we agree on essentials, we have become bogged down in inessentials, in ephemeral matters and things of lesser importance. What is the important thing at the moment, ladies and gentlemen? It is the profound change which is taking place on the world scene, which will necessarily have repercussions on Community policy.

The disappearance from the world stage of the model of Eastern Europe in favour of an interdependent model of multiple, sensitive balances like our own also produces changes, not only in East-West relations but also in North-South relations. The first consequence is new and increasing demands on Europe by all the developing countries, without exception, for which the European Community is an exemplary region to be imitated in today's world. So the basic question is this: shall we be capable of meeting those hopes and giving our support to all those who make this demand on Europe, or shall we be dependent upon fortuitous events which hold up and hinder our actions? And since the Community must not be seen as an organization turned in upon itself — dealing with its own problems, its internal quarrels, contemplating its own navel — it is essential for development aid policy to take a leap forward, a leap which must be not only quantitative but qualitative in line with what President Delors was saying the day before yesterday in this Assembly when he spoke of internal and external solidarity. This is the essential objective shared, I am sure, by all Members of this House and not only the members of the Committee on

Development and Cooperation. And that is how we are working in the Commission.

On the one hand the complete balance sheet of programmes financed and implemented in Latin America and Asia from 1976 onwards, for which Parliament asked four years ago, was presented last May. That report, therefore, does not relate to ten years' cooperation but to thirteen. And I must say that I gave my instructions in January in compliance with this request, although it arrived in May. At the same time we undertook, in presenting the report, to provide an additional document setting out and explaining the new guidelines for Community cooperation policy, which should logically evolve from the conclusions of the document on thirteen years' cooperation. That is what actually justifies this change of guidelines, because it weighs up the evidence in order to draw conclusions about the new guidelines for the future and thus brings about an improvement. This document, I am glad to say, is in a reasonably advanced stage in my department and I think it might be officially presented in April.

Meanwhile, as a transitional measure and because the Commission could not wait for this thirteen-year balance-sheet to be produced and before drawing conclusions — because time and the world do not stand still — the Commission's proposal for the development guidelines, covering 1990 only, preserves the status quo of previous years. These guidelines have been retained for many years and I thought that what should be done whilst awaiting the results of the in-depth study which was under way concerning the new guidelines for the whole decade of the 1990s.

These new guidelines will allow us to implement resources at once. Meanwhile we must have the resources available this year, because you yourselves, since every month you ask questions which show your concern about what is happening with regard to refugees in Cambodia, in Palestine or in Central America, realize that the Commission cannot wait and must act meantime.

And in my view this, ladies and gentlemen, is the only sensible thing to be done: to extend the status quo for a year and then draw the appropriate conclusions for the next decade. It does not seem reasonable to me, if I am to be frank, to question this document, which relates only to one year, just because it does not include commitments for multiannual expenditure. We are talking about only a single year and we must avoid making contradictions in terms!

The strategy advocated by the Commission has the twofold advantage of allowing our programmes for this year to be conducted without delay and at the same time of enabling us calmly and responsibly to consider, without undue haste, the new guidelines for the decade of the 1990s. And I can tell you now, since these studies are well advanced, that the lessons we are drawing from a perusal of the balance-sheet are leading us to conclusions broadly in line with the ideas put forward

MATUTES

this afternoon by Mrs Van Putten and other honourable Members.

In view of these considerations I still hope that Parliament will accept this proposal relating to a single year. I must tell you quite clearly and frankly that the Commission would have to oppose, with great regret, the withdrawal of the Commission's proposal, since, as I have explained, our departments must have available right away policy guidelines since we are already behindhand and because the budgetary year in question has begun and I cannot refuse these demands upon Europe which I am receiving from all over the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, Auguste Comte used to say that 'the living are dominated by the dead'. I am afraid that in this case the inertia of the past has rather disturbed our present situation. I urge you to let us face the future, let us try to broaden our horizon towards the whole decade of the 1990s and not allow past inertia to ruin our hopes for the future.

VAN PUTTEN (S), *rapporporteur*. — (NL) Mr President, I think the position is now clear. If the Commissioner cannot agree to our request we must refer the report back to the Committee on Development and Cooperation.

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken this evening at 6.30 p.m.

6. Result of the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the debate on the report (Doc. A3-107/90) by Mrs Napoletano, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the results of the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly meetings in Bridgetown (Barbados) and Versailles (France) in 1989.

NAPOLETANO (GUE), *rapporporteur*. — (IT) Mr President, the purpose of my report is to explain to Parliament the basic points to emerge during the meetings of the Joint Assembly in the course of 1989.

The Joint Assembly is the sole example of a regional agreement between developed and developing countries but it too is suffering from a period in which questions of North-South relations lack the immediacy and topicality they enjoyed in the seventies and early eighties. Nonetheless, the North-South issue is one of the essential factors which will shape the future of the world. And if European cooperation is indispensable for the ACP States, it also represents one of the distinguishing features of the Community itself, enhancing its prestige and encouraging cooperation.

The message of the Joint Assembly is therefore of particular value for Europe today and should be heeded because many of the considerations it contains refer to regions in decline in many ACP countries and in Africa

in particular, and to the possibility of identifying new and more effective instruments for cooperation.

From the very outset of Lomé, numerous improvements and innovations can be traced back to the Joint Assembly; whether we are dealing with Stabex in relation to commodities, with apartheid or human rights, the Joint Assembly has always been in the forefront. Three major questions have dominated the work of the Assembly: the problem of processing commodities locally, the effects of the single European market on the ACP countries and human rights.

As far as the first of those is concerned, the ACP countries remain for the most part commodity producers and exporters. That came about at the time of the Lomé I negotiations and you may wonder why ACP-EEC cooperation has failed to change that situation to any appreciable degree. And therefore, in the context of a crisis in the North-South dialogue, is there room for improvement? And which countries involved in ACP-EEC cooperation should we be looking at? Those are the important questions formulated in varying terms by the Assembly in the course of its work. But how will it be possible to make progress in local processing by the ACP countries if that element is not included in the agricultural, industrial, commercial and fiscal policies of the Community? If this is not done, the policy of the Community will increasingly be destined to be an aid policy, thereby curtailing to a considerable degree its objectives.

Stabex has been presented as being the most innovative mechanism of ACP-EEC cooperation. Its positive role is not in doubt but it is its effectiveness which is being called into question today. It is in fact a short term economic instrument unable to stem negative developments in the medium and long-term. Supporting diversification of production in the ACP countries is the idea developed in the general report and adopted by the Assembly; that decision is going to be supported by ACP-EEC strategies for the local processing of commodities, examining in detail the obstacles arising here and the division of responsibilities between the ACP countries and the Community.

There is, moreover, a considerable degree of uncertainty, and the Assembly agreed on this, as to the consequences which the European market might have for the majority of the ACP countries and for some of them in particular. The increase in competition after 1992 may affect both the exports of the ACP countries and investment flows to them. That trend is already very marked in Africa today. As regards the renewal of the Lomé Convention — a subject which dominated the work of the Assembly — there was detailed discussion of the new macro-economic instrument proposed by the Commission on structural adjustment and a call for a critical review and careful evaluation of the negative effects in the social field of the structural adjustment policies set in place so far by the International Monetary Fund.

NAPOLETANO

As far as human rights are concerned, the Assembly continues to direct its attention towards the situation in southern Africa. The serious violations of human rights in South Africa under the continuing apartheid regime were again strongly condemned. There was, however, support for and interest in the situation in Namibia — to such an extent that a delegation from the Assembly followed the elections — as well as for the dramatic situation of the refugees in southern Africa.

A significant new development has been the review of health which I am drafting in connection with human rights, the first of those being the right to life. The most senior officials in the organizations concerned have sent us alarming data: for instance, certain statistics on death as a result of malnutrition in some African hospitals, increasing from 15% in 1976 to 37% in 1987, and the cutbacks in expenditure on health supplies and services in many developing countries, this again as a consequence of certain structural adjustment policies.

It will be necessary to take account of this in the application of Lomé IV and in the opinion to be given by Parliament; it will require a proper strategy to tackle the problem of debt and environmental policy in the developing countries.

These points, together with a number of proposals designed to make the Joint Assembly increasingly a parliamentary assembly form the bases of the 23 points of the resolution which I am putting to Parliament, and it seems to me that this could contribute to an interesting discussion and to effective decisions.

(Applause)

VAN HEMELDONCK (S). — *(NL)* Mr President; I must begin with congratulations to my honourable friend Mr Napolitano. It is particularly refreshing to hear someone distil out the essence of what is extremely complex work and pinpoint the things we shall have to work towards in the coming Parliamentary term.

I turn now, alas, to duller matters, namely the institutional aspect which is not always clear in this Parliament. The Joint Assembly is a body which is party to an independent international agreement. The Joint Assembly is an arm of the Lomé Convention and that has implications both for the status of members of the Joint Assembly and for the means and resources which the Joint Assembly employs. It is plainly high time the Community institutions, including Parliament, clearly acknowledged the Joint Assembly's budgetary autonomy. Indeed, the European Parliament's legal department delivered an opinion on the matter in June 1988. That means too that the operating budgets of the Joint Assembly and its dependent bodies would be grouped under a single overall budget and that the Joint Assembly would have control of a budget which complied with all the financial provisions current in the EC. It would thus be desirable for the annual budget of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly to be debated as part of the interinstitutional multiannual budget agreement.

It will also be necessary to increase the appropriations which the ACP countries can claim under the annex to the Lomé Convention to enable them to send more Members of Parliament to the Assembly. That has already been said in a 1988 resolution. Ideally we should be dealing with more ACP parliamentarians rather than government representatives and diplomats. There should also be appropriate financing for consultations with the social partners, as envisaged in the new Convention. The democratic functioning of the ACP Assembly has three weaknesses: the dearth of parliamentarians on the ACP side, the virtual absence of women and the technical difficulties entailed in consulting the social partners.

We shall come back in later months to the debate on the spirit in which the Lomé Convention was concluded, but the tug-of-war over Lomé IV has left us with a bitter aftertaste. The money earmarked for it really is not enough. Can't we really be a bit more generous? Above all we need more money to help new ACP members and because we have to try to keep up with the growth in population, and now there are new problems involving health, the status of women, technology, in other words the whole social dimension. In addition we need to study structural changes and problems of infrastructure. I am thinking primarily of technology and transport policy which will shortly be under consideration. For us the watchword remains solidarity and that too will become clear in the future.

The rapporteur mentions the fact that we constantly need to emphasize together with our ACP partners the repellent nature of apartheid. I would remind you that on 9 January six members of South Africa's Railway and Harbour Workers' Union were killed by knives and machetes and that it was obvious that the employers and authorities did nothing to stop it. It is a shame, a scandal, an abomination and we have to say so time and again in our meetings with the ACP countries.

PERSCHAU (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we can of course agree with substantial sections of Mrs Napolitano's report, but there are three points which raise problems and to which we are unable to agree. It is claimed under point 4 that the Community has done nothing and taken no effective steps to overcome the indebtedness of the ACP countries. I consider that the Community has done a very great deal and that the debt burden is not merely the consequence of incorrect policy on the part of the Community. We have to be quite clear here that there are a great many problems in the ACP countries which have led, in the final analysis, to the difficult and in part desperate economic situation in those countries.

The crux of the matter is that reluctance to invest is the result of an absence of legal certainty, a failure in part to respect human rights and an excessively rigid and inflexible bureaucracy. An exodus of capital has set in in those countries for those very reasons. I believe that population trends in those countries have also had a

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considerable part to play. What I am trying to say is that we must look at both sides of the problem.

Debt relief for those countries requires increased commitment on the part of the Community but it also requires measures to be taken in those countries. We cannot therefore accept the categorical statement contained in point 4 as it stands.

It is tersely stated in point 18, referring to the need for structural adjustment, that such adjustment is wholly negative. It is true that too many structural adjustment policies have emanated from the ivory towers of bureaucracy and failed perhaps to take account of the requirements of the individual countries, but absolute rejection of structural adjustment policy and the need for structural change in those countries cannot be disputed, and that point cannot therefore meet with our agreement either.

A most important and significant point for us, however — please bear with me here, that simply cannot be right — is point 22 which deals with South Africa. Anyone who has looked closely, honestly and without prejudice at political developments in southern Africa in recent months will know that changes have taken place there. Anyone who has observed the developments in Namibia knows the hopes that have been aroused there, and we all hope that this will accelerate the reforms in South Africa. The true situation is turned on its head in point 22 which states: 'Condemns the South African Government for maintaining and intensifying the regime of discrimination.'

Objectively speaking, that is untrue. We cannot act as if it were unnecessary to take note of the political reality or simply push it to one side. The very many true statements contained in the report may be undermined by statements such as this. That is why I and my group are calling for those three points to be removed from the report. If they are, we shall approve it, if not we have to reject it.

PRESIDENT. — We now come to the votes so the present debate will continue afterwards or tomorrow morning.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ANASTASSOPOULOS

Vice-President

7. Votes

Report (Doc. A3-110/89) by Mr Saridakis, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 349 — Doc. C3-117/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2262/87 laying down special measures in respect of olive oil

SARIDAKIS (PPE). — (GR) Mr President, I hope that this time the Commission will take note of the European Parliament's amendments and not ignore them, as it did in the case of citrus fruit in a previous report by our colleague Mr Ortiz.

Explanation of vote

DOMINGO SEGARRA (GUE). — (ES) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, our Group for the European Unitarian Left will vote for the Commission's proposal, with the amendments approved in committee, for action concerning the olive oil sector. We shall vote in favour because it seems to us to be a good thing for the intervention agencies in this sector to be strengthened and provided with wider powers and duties, but above all with independent financing, which is the way to ensure their independence from States and administrations. The left has traditionally believed in supervision and avoidance of fraud. The problems of growers must be solved jointly with them, leaving no room for fraudulent activities. So this amendment seems to us appropriate since moreover it requires special sensitivity on the part of these agencies so that the relevant legislation may be applied more fairly by means of a constant dialogue with growers' organizations and the administration itself.

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

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Report (Doc. A3-111/89) by Mr Mottola, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 424 final — Doc. C3-159/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 727/70 on the common organization of the market in raw tobacco

Explanation of vote

DESSYLAS (CG). — (GR) Mr President, the consequences on the one hand of applying the agricultural stabilizers and not applying the principle of Community preference to tobacco, and on the other hand of the hypocritical and ungenue campaign against smoking, are extremely severe for small and medium tobacco growers, especially of the eastern variety of tobacco in Greece, but not for the tobacco trade enterprises which receive large subsidies, make enormous profits, and can overcome those consequences. The Commission of the European Communities, however, with its proposal, is on the one hand introducing measures favourable to the tobacco traders, and on the other hand, with great partiality, in the context of its proposals on agricultural harvesting prices for 1990-91, is taking annihilatory measures against the small and medium tobacco growers, chiefly in connection with the black varieties, which are cultivated in arid, disadvantaged and problematic regions in Greece such as Etoloakarnania; measures such as the reduction of the 2000-tonne quota,

DESSYLAS

the reduction of the price in ECU by 15%, and the imposition of a co-responsibility tax, also of 15%. Indeed, the partiality of the rapporteur in his proposals is greater than that of the Commission. For these reasons I will neither vote for the Commission's proposal, nor of course for the draft resolution on Mr Mottola's report.

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

* * *

Report (Doc. A3-109/89) by Mr Wilson, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 449 final — Doc. C3-166/89) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) 2727/75 on the common organization of the market in cereals

Explanations of vote

VERBEEK (V). — (NL) Mr President, I'm not sure the House really realizes what exactly is at stake here. It appears to be a minor technical adjustment to the co-responsibility levy on cereals. But the political crisis underlying this, which has been deliberately brought about by the European Commission and the Council since 1987, means that thanks to these stabilizers — a nice neutral word — many farmers are no longer able to make a decent living, they can no longer afford to look after the land and thus safeguard food supplies and the future. That is the policy and the rules which the EC is stuck with until 1992 and, as the first rumours would have it, beyond 1992 as well, because that is what GATT wants and that is what the USA will insist on: ever greater quantities of cereals at ever lower prices.

It is obvious who are the losers under this policy — the farmers, the environment, the Third World. If there are any winners, it is the big merchants. They will do very nicely thank you. This policy of rock-bottom prices will enable them to conquer the world market. I would remind you that the EC's farm policy, even allowing for this year's budget which we agreed in December, is actually spending very little on agriculture. If you divide the 64 billion earmarked for agriculture by the 320 million citizens of the Community, that makes a cost of less than 220 guilders spent per citizen.

MARTINEZ (DR). — (FR) I think the House should be aware of the implications of what looks like a small technical change. In effect, behind a technical smoke-screen, things are going on which are not right.

The cereals producers have to pay a basic tax of 3%, plus a further 3% and, if they exceed the production ceiling, the price paid to them is cut by 3% as well. That means a total levy of almost 9%. And what for, if you please? To prevent a build-up of stocks. But these stocks no longer exist. They are now less than 9 million tonnes, not even 6% of the 160 million tonnes of cereals produced every year by the Community. And mean-

while our producers are not allowed to produce, meanwhile stocks are limited to 8 million tonnes. We import 18 million tonnes of cereals substitutes from the USA, 50% of them free of duty, in other words we are feeding our European livestock on American products and stopping French farmers from producing cereals which they could use to feed their own animals. That really is Community farce. It doesn't make sense. In addition, we are told there isn't enough money to administer stocks, and two billion are given to Poland, equivalent to half the Community levy charged to the farmers.

Ladies and gentlemen, there must be an end to these inconsistencies. I will leave it there, because the Treaty of Rome is clear. It wants Community *preference*, not *penalization*.

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

* * *

Situation in Eastern Europe

PRESIDENT. — Ladies and gentlemen, before we move to the specific votes I wanted to explain to the House that the various motions have been examined very carefully to take account of the interpretation of Article 64 proposed by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, which was also accepted by the enlarged Bureau. However, in the specific case involved, we ascertained that all the motions had new elements that made it essential for them all to be put to the vote. Of course, in many motions there are elements which are repeated, but it was only necessary to withdraw two motions. It is of course too early to ascertain the consequences of the interpretation by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, but I believe that there is some need for concern and besides, I am informed that the Committee is already once more considering the matter and it will be as well if it reaches the necessary conclusions.

We now move on to the voting on the motions relating to Eastern Europe.

Explanations of vote

COT (S). — (FR) Mr President, the Group of the European People's Party and the European Democratic Group have just withdrawn their motion. I should like to say on behalf of the Socialist Group that we were in sympathy with that motion and would have wanted to support it as far as possible. Because every democratic political body in Western Europe has a duty to support and encourage the still fragile democratic movements emerging in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the difficulty was what kind of political and financial instrument should be created. It was suggested that support should be given to the parties recognized by the European Parliament. Each of our political groupings no doubt has its favourite partners in the East, though the choices, even in bilateral relations, are sometimes tricky. We

COT

Socialists are certainly not going to support any old party which calls itself socialist and I imagine the same goes for our Christian-Democrat or Liberal friends who might have a bit of a problem otherwise. On what criteria can one refuse to support this or that grouping, Fascist, neo-nazi or antisemitic? I don't see how, on the basis of the motion, we could choose, and the European Parliament seal of approval would have been claimed by all those receiving aid.

But I would add one fundamental political consideration. We of the Socialist Group think we must not play with fire. We strongly deplore the attitude of those who currently applaud nationalist, revisionist trends of any colour. The first service to democracy must be to guarantee a peaceful transition to democracy, and not to interfere in a wrong and half-baked fashion in the process now under way. And the generous project put before us offered no guarantees in this regard because by definition it could not do so.

Consequently, with these aims in view, I hope that this initiative may be taken up in another form, the form of support for the newly and freely elected parliaments in Eastern Europe. There, by a real transfer of democratic technology, we can provide support which will be effective, useful, impartial. I hope we shall talk about this again and that we shall all agree on this objective.

(Applause)

KLEPSCH (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, it is true that we have withdrawn this motion because it proved impossible, despite two days of talks, to reach agreement on its acceptance. We did our best to deal with the reservations in all possible ways but to no avail, as we were unable to gain approval for the essence of our proposal. The situation is this: elections are now taking place throughout the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and new political forces have to get themselves organized although they are lacking in material support as a result of the previous situation — only the Communist bodies have the necessary resources. We had therefore decided to attempt to have a resolution adopted enabling the democratic forces now forming to be supported by this House.

(Applause)

We were unable to achieve agreement on that. The idea that our assistance should first come into play once the parliaments concerned had been elected was really the exact opposite of what we were aiming at; we should not wait to help until those who have received no support have perhaps managed to get their voices heard nonetheless.

However, all is not yet lost; let me take up what Mr Cot has said. We have changed the motion by tabling it as a normal motion and it will now be submitted to the Committee on Budgets and the Political Committee. We shall be able to discuss it further together in those committees and resolve the matter as soon as possible. I would point out that we have stated in recital F of the joint resolution which we are now adopting that we

wish to support change in the political and economic structures. We have made clear in points 1 and 3 that we wish to gear all measures in support of Central and Eastern European countries to their needs and difficulties. In my view that is the basis which will enable our resolution, which will now be submitted to the committees, to provide the foundation for a joint solution.

I must again emphasize that our problem is that we must help democratic structures to be established *now* and that we do not want to delay this until after the elections in Central and Eastern Europe. Doubt as to whether a parliament should do such a thing is clearly not felt by, for example, the US Congress which has adopted a similar resolution. For that reason, we support the present resolution and ask for the agreement of the House in the committees.

McMILLAN-SCOTT (ED). — Mr President, we all know that the European Community is very generous in its aid programmes to East and Central Europe. So far not one Ecu has been given in favour of democracy. This year we face elections in five East and Central European countries. But we recognize that neither the new opposition nor their coordinating organizations have the resources to fight these elections. This is admitted by all, including the Socialist Group. I have visited the Civic Forum offices in Prague last Sunday. They have two telephones to coordinate an election campaign on behalf of 20 political parties. Mr Klepsch has pointed out that the US Congress has indeed a fund for democracy and, if the US Congress sees fit to provide assistance to political parties, political groups and to the establishment of democracy, I see no reason why this House, which should be a beacon of democracy in Europe, cannot do so.

(Applause)

I believe that the European Parliament should rise to the needs of democratic parties by creating its own fund. We can work out the details later. The proposal we made was not an intergovernmental proposal. Neither is that of the US Congress. It is Parliament to politicians. It comes from us to politicians. It is essential, if we are to help the democratic groups to get their message over to the electors that we help them now. We put forward a resolution on behalf of the European People's Party and the European Democratic Group. Mr de la Malène, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance also put forward such a resolution. The compromise text we are about to vote on does not contain any reference to these proposals. We have withdrawn our motion because the Socialists put an amendment which would provide assistance to democratic forces only after the forthcoming elections and then only to parliaments. We have had the entire week to discuss these proposals but have found it absolutely impossible to reach an agreement with the Socialists. They know that the existing arrangements give a

McMILLAN-SCOTT

tremendous advantage to the current ruling parties and their followers. It will make a travesty of these elections.

(Applause)

I appeal to all democrats in this House to examine their consciences during this vote. We should give the lead to the peoples of Eastern Europe in our democratic procedures. The Socialist action shames us all. We must examine now other procedures to give reality to the democracy people like Mr Dubcek fought for and for which thousands have died.

(Applause)

LANGER (V). — *(IT)* Mr President, it is our view that the Community today should lend a hand without further ado, that it should provide aid to those who ask for it. It should help, yes, but not act as a missionary, not think in terms of buying the East, of setting up either financial or political subsidiaries in the East. That is why we can only abstain from voting for what we call the compromise resolution, which has been agreed, and are continuing to support our own.

We would draw your attention to a number of specific points on which we are asking for the agreement of others also. First: it is today necessary for Community Europe to express disapproval of the reintroduction or retention of the death penalty in Eastern Europe as well as of policies of revenge. Democracy in Eastern Europe will be credible if it clearly renounces the death penalty as well as all demagogic exploitation of that issue. Second: we have a resolution on which we would ask you to vote separately, resolution B3-173/90 concerning the state of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. It is necessary to support and encourage an open and democratic attitude to the Turkish minority and, more generally, all minorities. Third: if today we speak of reciprocity, of mutual relations with Eastern Europe, it is important that this should not consist only in diplomacy between governments and States, and so we are proposing in our resolution the encouragement of all forms of twinning. There was an important twinning campaign with Romanian villages threatened with destruction, in particular those inhabited by minorities speaking another language — Hungarians, Germans, gypsies. Twinning is of interest even now and therefore the policy of twinning local communities seems an important step towards reciprocity.

Finally, we consider that this Parliament in particular should now offer Eastern Europe a forum in which to meet and be together. Only today, we were discussing in this House the important Joint Assembly combining our Parliament and the ACP countries. Could we not at least think in the same way in terms of a joint assembly between this Parliament and all those freely elected parliaments of Eastern Europe that wish to take part? It is an offer that we should now be making over and above commercial and financial relations or straightforward material assistance. We therefore wish to intensify relations, to help when requested, but we want to avoid

all suspicion of interfering, of wanting to teach, to buy or to annex.

Finally, Mr President, may I request a small amendment to the Italian and French texts which contain an obvious drafting error, referring under point 11 to 'small parliaments'. We do not wish to describe any parliament as being small. Whoever dictated the text to the typist, put in one word too many.

PRESIDENT. — *(GR)* Mr Langer, I take note of your request that the text should be corrected.

SCHÖNHUBER (DR). — *(DE)* Mr President, we cannot agree with the resolutions of the other groups on Eastern Europe because we do not in any way support the view advanced in this House that Communism has itself given up and is preparing the way for democracy.

Gorbachev wants to save what can be saved. He represents without qualification a regime, the fundamental principle of which is total contempt for people and nations. We are dealing in Eastern Europe, and above all in the GDR, with the most dihard of Stalin's descendants. They all want help to survive from the States of Western Europe, but we should be helping the Communist regime commit euthanasia.

This Parliament must be blind if it has failed to notice that the wolf has simply chalked up a whole lot of debts. It is not a change of heart and reformation which have caused Communism to change its tactics. No, economic collapse and revolutionary mass protests have brought about the all too euphorically interpreted changes.

I have felt in all debates in the European Parliament that the Socialists are simply concealing their spiritual affinity with Communism. Like their comrades in East Berlin, they have therefore developed a concept of the enemy in order to distract attention from their own difficulties. That concept of the enemy — and this was clear to me from what Mr Cot said this afternoon — is called 'Fascism'. But it is not Fascism that is threatening this newly won freedom but Communism in the guise of Socialism!

The people know that and that is why, Mr Cot, the Right is gaining impetus in Eastern Europe. That is why pseudo-communist divisions of the party are encouraged and patriotic parties banned, and this is done with the help of the Western Socialists. The spirit that reigns in part over the left majority group in this House was clear when some of those on the left approved at the top of their voices the immigration ban imposed by the Communist Government in East Berlin on a member of this House. I know what I am saying, and I am not saying it off the top of my head, I have thought it over carefully. The approval of those who jubilantly applauded and cheered reminds me of the behaviour of the National Socialists in the Reichstag in 1933.

(Mixed reactions)

I repeat: reminds me of the jubilation in the German Reichstag in 1933. Things must be stopped before they

SCHÖNHUBER

get out of hand; democracy must be rescued from the arbitrariness of the ultra-left and the arrogance of which comes with power put firmly in its place. We are therefore voting against the other motions for a resolution.

Ib CHRISTENSEN (ARC). — (DK) Mr President, uppermost in our minds in the vote on the joint motion is our desire to give all possible support to the new democracies in Eastern Europe. It is imperative to ensure respect for human rights, including that of self-determination and the development of a pluralist democracy. Whatever economic reforms are introduced, the individual countries themselves must make the decision. We need an open Europe, not a centralized or self-centred union. The Berlin Wall must not be replaced by new walls around a super State. If Europe's divisions are to be overcome, cooperation must be extended and intensified. Trade policy is of crucial importance. Through association and free trade agreements the foundation must be laid for the closest possible cooperation between all European countries. Such intra-State bodies as the UN Commission for Europe, the CSCE, the European Security and Cooperation Conference and the Council of Europe can provide the framework for wide-ranging cooperation on security policy, human rights, the economy, energy, environment, technology and culture. We must provide backing for the reform process in Eastern Europe, but without forgetting our commitments to other areas of need. For these reasons we will vote for the joint motion.

McINTOSH (ED). — Mr President, this House has a special role to play in ensuring the smooth passage of countries in Eastern and Central Europe to democracy. I welcome the initiatives shown by my own group and the Group of the European People's Party to set up a European democracy fund to ensure that emerging opposition parties in these countries have the necessary infrastructure to enable them to fight free democratic elections. I deplore the fact — and I find it entirely scandalous — that the Socialist Group have felt unable to support this initiative, bearing in mind that these elections will already be taking place this spring. We cannot afford to delay setting up this fund and I find it a scandal that the Socialists have chosen to do so.

At the same time we must do all we can to ensure the transition of the economies of those same Eastern and Central European countries to a free market economy with a strong private sector. To this end I am leading a delegation of local Essex businessmen next week to Warsaw to explore the possibilities of doing business in Poland. Where Conservatives lead, I hope that Socialists will dare to follow.

I shall be voting in favour of the joint resolution and regret the withdrawal of our own text.

RAWLINGS (ED). — Mr President, I spent three days at the European Democratic Union Round Table

Conference in Vienna last week. The delegates from Eastern Europe, were for the first time ever at an international conference, not Communist Party *apparatchiks*. Many of these men were until recently, political prisoners of their ruthless totalitarian governments and are now attempting to fight these same Communist Parties in modern elections. Yet their platforms are not level. Unlike the monolithic monster they are attempting to rid themselves of, they have no party organization and they are denied access to the basic essentials of a political campaign — paper, ink, loudhailers, envelopes, typewriters and copiers. These they specifically asked for, as also — most importantly — election observers from this Parliament. A positive response from this Parliament will as my colleague said earlier on, help in a concrete way the advent of true democracy in Eastern Europe.

I shall vote, and I urge others to vote, accordingly.

(Applause)

ARBELOA MURU (S). — (ES) Mr President, I am speaking purely personally. I fully agree with the resolution. It seems to me excellent and I shall vote in favour. But what I miss, perhaps for technical reasons — which I respect — is congratulations to the Romanian National Salvation Front for abolishing the death penalty, even though provisionally, and an appeal to the Romanian people to vote against the restoration of the death penalty in the referendum on the 28th of this month. I know, Mr President, that the most effective, ideal solution would be for the Council of Ministers to issue a statement before the 28th — I know too that they cannot be asked to do so — but perhaps we could do something to arrange for such a statement to be made known to the Romanian Government, the Romanian press and the Romanian people. But at least, Mr President, I am sure that the European Parliament, which only a few months ago proclaimed here by a huge majority that the death penalty should be abolished, will reaffirm its rejection of such barbarity either for Ceausescu's enemies or for Ceausescu and his wife or for the innumerable collaborators who might be dead after the referendum on the 28th. Mr President, you as a Greek know better than I that humanist and humanitarian logic is much more implacable than the actual barbarity of the death penalty.

(Applause)

NEUBAUER (DR). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the European Right is not able to approve resolutions in which the right of peoples to self-determination is not unequivocally expressed. That applies in particular to the Baltic States. Their annexation by the Soviet Union is null and void. Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania are the victims of the pact between Hitler and Stalin, and if the Left in this House were genuine in their often misplaced claims to anti-fascism, they would begin by pressing Moscow to get rid of this terrible heritage.

NEUBAUER

It is the responsibility of this Parliament to make it absolutely clear to Mr Gorbachev that he must release the Baltic peoples as rapidly as possible from their Soviet jailers. If he feels it necessary, however, to continue to rely today on the arrangement between Hitler and Stalin, then he deserves to be the object of contempt of all who love freedom. We have noticed that the action of the majority groups in this House is often directed to regions outside Europe, while direct rights of, for instance, the peoples of Eastern Europe have for too long been ignored.

Of course, we can hardly afford to do that today. It is time to look both ways, but the resolutions before us have the same old flavour. The Europe Right therefore rejects these motions, advocating instead honesty and justice for the peoples of Eastern Europe.

SPENCER (ED). — Mr President, I address myself if I may solely to the Socialist Group. Last Saturday I stood in Wenceslas Square and asked an ordinary member of Civic Forum what was his major problem. It was not typewriters or ink. It was that if he is to be a candidate or to take part in these elections, he has to find some way of feeding his family, because if he is to take part, he has to give up his current job. That is the reality of democracy in these freely contested elections. This was a proposal for immediate help for all democrats. The Socialist Group has cynically and deliberately, on the basis of a calculation of party advantage, sabotaged it.

(Applause)

I appeal to the Socialist Group that it is not in your interest so to do, and to think again next week because for 40 years hypocrisy has been committed in the name of socialism in Eastern Europe.

It is in your interest, above all, to ensure that socialists go into this election and come out of this election with a decent reputation as democrats. Your actions this week have not helped. They have hindered. Change your minds!

(Applause)

FALCONER (S). — Mr President, first of all, we do not need Mr Spencer or indeed any of the Tories to lecture us on this side of the House about socialism coming out in Eastern Europe with majorities. I have every faith in the people of Eastern Europe to reject capitalism.

(Mixed reactions)

I, for one, reject the propaganda they perpetuate about the US Congress. Let us speak the truth. The United States and their cohorts' hands must be dripping with the blood of murdered workers and their families in Vietnam and Chile. That is what the US Congress does for you!

(Applause)

Nor do we need lectures from the other side about hypocrisy and democracy. May I remind this House that it is the Tories who put up legislation to stop trade-

unions contributing to the Labour Party. They have not brought about similar legislation to attack the financial institutions who are financing them. Lecture yourself! Do not lecture us!

(Applause)

MARTIN, David (S). — Mr President, I thought I had my name down for an explanation of vote. The point I want to make concerns the hypocrisy of the Conservatives on the other side of the House. This is a party which opposes the funding of national political parties in the United Kingdom.

(Protests)

...because they have the bankers, the stockbrokers and big business behind them and they spend more money on the election than the rest of the British parties combined.

(Mixed reactions)

If you want an example of political bias...

PRESIDENT. — Mr Martin, that is not a point of order.

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-168/90) by Mr Jepsen, on behalf of the European Democratic Group, on the issue of a charity stamp for solidarity with Eastern Europe: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-170/90) by Mrs Piermont and others, on the distribution in international air traffic of a map showing the 'German empire' with the borders as they stood from 1937 to 1939

PIERMONT (ARC). — (DE) I have proposed an amendment to that resolution since, following the uproar caused by the distribution of the maps of Germany with the 1937 borders, the Berliner Flug Ring has declared its readiness to withdraw the maps and cease distributing them. The resolution remains valid to the extent that the company which manufactures the maps is still producing them. The amendment therefore seeks to have the reference to the Berliner Flug Ring deleted.

(Applause)

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

* * *

Joint motion for a resolution ¹ on Central and Eastern Europe: *adopted*

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Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-172/90) by Mr Langer and others, on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, on the situation in Eastern Europe: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-173/90) by Mr Langer and others, on behalf of the Green Group in the European Parliament, on the situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-176/90) by Mr Schlee and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the events in the Baltic States and in particular Lithuania: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-177/90) by Mr Gollnisch and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on Eastern Europe: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-178/90) by Mr Dillen and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the events in Romania: *rejected*

* * *

¹ Joint motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Woltjer on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Habsburg and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr De Clercq on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr Moorhouse on behalf of the European Democratic Group, Mr Colajanni on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, Mr Vandemeulebroucke on behalf of the Rainbow Group, seeking to replace motions for resolutions Docs. B3-170/90, B3-174/90, B3-175/90, B3-180/90 and B3-181/90.

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-179/90) by Mr Schönhuber and others, on behalf of the Group of the European Right, on the legal status of Members of the European Parliament in the countries of Eastern Europe and in particular in East Berlin: *rejected*

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-201/90) by Mr de la Malène, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on problems in Eastern Europe: *rejected*

* * *

Second report (Doc. A3-114/89) by Mr Seligman, on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(89) 129 final — Doc. C3-72/89) for a regulation concerning the promotion of energy technology in Europe

SELIGMAN (ED), *rapporteur*. — Mr President, following the debate yesterday in plenary when I asked the Commission to debate with us some of the amendments which they had rejected, I and the spokesmen of the main political groups met Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha this morning. I am happy to report that the Commission and Parliament were able to come to an agreement on the main issues.

In addition to the amendments accepted by the Commissioner in November, the Commissioner now accepts fully Amendments Nos 10, 18, 21, 30, 34 and 41. This means that the Commission has now fully taken on board nearly 50% of our amendments. Our Amendments Nos 42 and 43 which we regarded as crucial, concerning monitoring and the rating of energy technologies in relation to polluting gases and emissions, and the use of professional marketing bodies in disseminating the programme, a compromise has been agreed between the Commission and Parliament which the Commission will support and propose to the Council.

On Amendment No 44 concerning the indicative breakdown of expenditure, the Commission will be sensitive to Parliament's view in its dealings with the Council on this subject. Finally, agreement was reached on the key issues of staffing and finance. On staffing, Amendment No 6, the Commissioner has given an undertaking that the staff situation will be optimized. On Amendment No 5 concerning adequate finance for Thermie, the Commissioner attaches great importance to the total financial envelope of ECU 700 million mentioned in our Amendment No 9 and has given a formal undertaking to do his utmost to ensure that the forthcoming revision of the financial perspective will

SELIGMAN

provide adequate financial provision for Thermie in 1991 and 1992.

This being the case, I can recommend to the House that the vote should proceed and that Parliament should adopt its report on the Thermie programme. This outcome reflects great credit on Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha whose cooperative attitude is appreciated. It also represents progress in establishing the position of Parliament in sticking to its point of view in the legislative procedure. The need for eventual conciliation with the Council will depend on the Commissioner's success in incorporating our common views in the Council's common position. Since we have already voted once on our amendments which have not changed, I recommend that we vote the 44 amendments *en bloc*.

Explanation of vote

NORDMANN (LDR). — (FR) Mr President, I wanted just to express my regret at the outcome of the votes on amendments 32 and 33; they are not all that serious but I hope they won't prejudice the in-depth debate we shall be holding on the non-food use of agricultural products. The vote on these amendments which, as I say, is of very minor importance, should not be allowed to trouble the in-depth discussion we shall need to conduct on this most important question.

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

* * *

Report (Doc. A3-108/89) by Mr Merz, on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy, on the 18th report of the Commission on competition policy (SEC(89) 873 final — Doc. C3-123/89)

Explanation of vote

GARCIA ARIAS (S), *in writing*. — (ES) The report before us on the annual report on competition policy is a fine example of the kind of Europe we are all seeking to build. The majority of us reject the idea of an internal market in which only market mechanisms would hold sway ravaging those sectors of the economy or regions which are structurally weak. The European Parliament should reflect and adopt a position on the corrective and guiding role to be played by the public sector and the State by means of subsidies or national and regional incentives, always bearing in mind the aim of overcoming inequalities as well as safeguarding competitiveness.

There are also reasons of strategy for protecting or promoting specific sectors. One of these is definitely the energy sector. Here it is necessary to recognize the role of European coalmining as a guaranteed source of supply in this strategically vital area and consequently the role of public subsidies for this.

Internal trade in domestic coal is irrelevant as it cannot be considered to affect competition between States.

Finally there are considerations of regional development and social stability when we consider what the effect of cutting off State aid would be for large regions of the Community.

We therefore welcome the fact that the House has adopted the amendments tabled on this point.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

(The sitting closed at 8.10 p.m.)¹

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see minutes.

SITTING OF FRIDAY, 19 JANUARY 1990

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IN THE CHAIR: MRS FONTAINE

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)

PRESIDENT. — Madam Zaïdi has informed me in writing that she wished to vote for, and not against, the motion to include in the item 'Disasters' the motions for resolutions on the dumping of waste at sea. This concerns part 1, item 4 of the minutes of 17 January 1990.

This point is thus noted.

1. *Approval of the minutes*

PRESIDENT. — The minutes of yesterday's meeting have been distributed. Are there any observations?

HARRISON (S). — On a point of order, Madam President, in view of the remarks by Lord O'Hagan yesterday about this Assembly being a legislative tyranny, may I, on behalf of the Socialist Group and the British Labour MEPs, express my sympathy to my Conservative colleagues, who have been summoned by the legislative tyrant, Mrs Thatcher, to a meeting on 24 January to be told off for the activities they are performing within this Parliament.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Madam President, yesterday morning Mr Wynn made a statement concerning Wednesday's Question Time. To

remove any misunderstanding I should like to stress that the Commissioner responsible was present to answer Mr Wynn's question at the appropriate time. I simply wish to state, on behalf of the Commission, that I am sure that Mr Wynn did not intend to criticize the Commission in his statement.

LANE (RDE). — On a point of order, Madam President, I refer to page 9 of the minutes on Disasters. When the question of disasters came up yesterday, the time for urgencies had already elapsed. I said that it would be more correct for this House to discuss first of all problems within the Community, such as disasters, in urgencies, and only afterwards to discuss the problems of Sudan, Ethiopia and wherever. Priority under urgencies should be given to matters within this Community. I said that yesterday and the minutes do not reflect what I said.

WYNN (S). — On a point of order, Madam President, can I reply to the comments of the Commissioner regarding Question Time on Wednesday. The problem was of course that I arrived as the relevant Commissioner left. I would have been happy with an answer from any other Commissioner, but the words of the President in the Chair at the time were: 'Your question cannot be put because the relevant Commissioner is no longer here.' That was not the Commissioner's fault, it was really the ruling of the President in the Chair at the time.

(Parliament approved the minutes)

TOMLINSON (S). — On a point of order, Madam President, while we have somebody from the Commission present, can I raise a point arising from Commissioner Andriessen's speech at the end of the debate on Eastern Europe on Wednesday. I think that it is quite within the recollection of everybody who was present in the House that Commissioner Andriessen said that there was now available a comprehensive paper on all the needs of Eastern Europe.

I immediately went across to Vice-President Christophersen, congratulated him on the fact that such a paper was available and asked that it should be made immediately available, both to Parliament in general and to myself in particular. When I asked the secretariat of the Committee on Budgets to approach Commissioner Andriessen's Cabinet that afternoon, they spent the best part of the afternoon trying to obtain the document that we were told was available, but Commissioner Andriessen's Cabinet claimed to have no knowledge of such a paper. This is the kind of incoherent approach by the Commission to Eastern European questions that this House can no longer tolerate. When we are told that this sort of documentation exists, everybody must have it and must have it quickly. It is particularly relevant to this morning's agenda. Madam President, when we are having to look at part of our response to the developments in Eastern Europe without having information that, while clearly available in the Commission, is being withheld from this House.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) What Mr Tomlinson has just said suggests that there was some contradiction between what Mr Andriessen said and the information subsequently obtained from members of his cabinet. I shall pass on this question, but the House will understand that I am not in a position to reply myself.

GOEDMAKERS (S). — (NL) Madam President, on a point of order. I should like to add to what has been said about Eastern Europe and the confusion regarding the Commission. There is confusion in our Parliament too. As I understand it, the enlarged Bureau will no longer be authorizing delegations to visit Eastern Europe before the elections. I do not believe there has been any consultation with the delegations concerned and I would ask the Bureau to look into this. I think we are politically crippled as a parliament if we cannot have contacts in Eastern Europe, when the Commission, officials or whoever, can.

COT (S). — (FR) I simply wish to say on behalf of the Socialist Group, that I agree with the arguments which have just been put forward. In the light of yesterday's debate, I believe that significant compensation would make it possible for the delegations for Eastern Europe to visit the countries in question before the elections. I therefore ask the enlarged Bureau to take the matter up again.

PRESIDENT. — I note your request and will pass it on to the enlarged Bureau.¹

2. Votes

PRESIDENT. — We now come to the vote on the motions for resolutions concerning the fisheries sector.

Explanations of vote

FERNEX (V). — (FR) Madam President, the fisheries problem is a problem of absolute importance as far as European construction is concerned. I therefore welcome the fact that, unlike other debates, which took place in an almost empty House, a very large number of Members have turned to hear the arguments put forward in drawing up a European fisheries policy. I am pleased that this debate has been put at the top of the agenda.

In considering the Community fisheries policy it is essential at the present time to take account of stock preservation which is being threatened in several ways. As several speakers pointed out in the fisheries' debate yesterday and also during the urgency debate it is being threatened by the discharge of waste into the North Sea and by an ever-increasing number of accidents. There was the *Kharg* off the coast of Morocco and more recently of the *Aragon*, the oil slicks from which are spreading along the coast of Madeira and are posing a grave threat to fish stock reproduction at the beginning of spring.

Community action should be much more energetic. The European Community did not react to the *Kharg* accident which took place on Christmas Eve until some eight days after it occurred. Nobody did anything and nobody took any action until the oil slicks moved towards the coast of Portugal.

The second thing which threatens fish stocks are the fishing practices adopted by Community vessels, by those countries with which we have fishing agreements and, in a general way, by fishermen throughout the world. We should insist on an absolute prohibition on the use of drift nets and vacuuming which takes up all fish without discrimination in particular small fish and, in general, the utilization of fish to produce fish meal for fattening livestock.

Another point I would like to stress is that quotas should favour small fishermen. It is not the small fishermen from the less-favoured parts of the Community who are threatening fish stocks and it is precisely these fishermen whom Community fisheries policy should primarily benefit.

A final word, Madam President, on our agreements with Third World countries. We should without exception observe, as Parliament agreed to observe, the

¹ Documents received — Referral to committee — Procedure without report: see minutes.

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20 mile limit and vessels which infringe this 20 mile offshore zone reserved for local fishing in Third-World countries which need the catches for food, should be severely punished.

LATAILLADE (RDE). — (FR) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I wish, very rapidly, to give an explanation of vote. I want to point out, as Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha yesterday, that we have not had a genuine debate on fisheries but simply an exchange of views.

Hence this impromptu, fragmentary and of necessity, partial debate should not prevent us from organizing another one. We must have a real debate on fisheries in the weeks and months to come since the Council will have to take a decision on what is to take place at the Fisheries Council in June and, as we all aware, on the more practical proposals put forward by the Commission in the light of the facts to which Parliament has drawn attention.

Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, we shall take our cue from the vote since a topic of such economic and political importance as this cannot be exhausted in a debate or a discussion lasting one-and-a-half hours.

This is also a very emotionally-charged debate. Turning to the Commission, I would ask it to ensure both by its own actions and by bringing the issue to the attention of the Member States, that events detrimental to Europe will not take place in the Gulf of Gascoigne, particularly where the Arcachon fishermen who have brought the matter to my attention, are concerned. Failure to grasp the fact that people inevitably cannot understand what we are seeking to achieve when what we intend is not realistic, could lead to ill-conceived actions and unfortunate results. That was said yesterday.

Turning again to the Commission, I would say: this particular case should not blind us to the wider implications but help us to realize that, to prevent unfortunate incidents taking place, this project should be extended to other regions and even to regions outside Europe. Nonetheless, all things considered, and particularly in the light of the proposals which have been put forward, the Group of the European Democratic Alliance will vote for almost all of the resolutions and amendments.

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-72/90) by Mrs Ewing and others, on behalf of the Rainbow Group, to wind up the debate on the Commission statement on fisheries: rejected

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-73/90) by Mr Lataillade, on behalf of the Group of the European Democratic Alliance, on the failure by fishermen of an EEC Member State to respect the principles of the law of the sea and Community rules: rejected

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-74/90) by Mr Vazquez Fouz, on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Arias Cañete, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, Mr Garcia, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Reformist Group, Mr Howell, on behalf of the European Democratic Group and Mrs Domingo Segarra, on behalf of the Group for the European Unitarian Left, on the Commission's statement on recent decisions in the fisheries sector: adopted

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-199/90) by Mr Miranda da Silva and others, on behalf of Left Unity, on the Commission statement on fisheries: rejected

* * *

Motion for a resolution (Doc. B3-202/90) by Mr Fernex, on behalf of the Green Group, on fisheries: rejected

* * *

Report (Doc. A3-112/89) by Mrs Van Putten, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a decision setting general guidelines for 1990 for financial and technical assistance to Latin American and Asian developing countries (SEC/89/1456 — C3-169/89)

VAN PUTTEN (S), rapporteur. — (NL) Madam President, I think we ought to make it quite clear what we are about. After yesterday's debate there can be no doubt about the situation. All groups have spoken. We reject the Commission proposal and we must now be clear in the way we vote. If we reject the Commission proposal unanimously it is automatically referred back to the Committee on Development and Cooperation. But I would ask you to indicate this very clearly.

Explanation of vote

ROBLES PIQUER (PPE). — Madam President, I greatly regret that having studied the documents I cannot agree with Mrs Van Putten's report. The good faith of all the participants and, of course, of the Commission has been recognized but I do not believe that one can claim that simply drawing up a complicated report — which was

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completed last June — on the last 13 years of work constitutes a pluriannual plan. More time is needed to draw up a proper plan.

I also believe that this report will be prejudicial to those receiving aid from us. It will lead to a delay of several months in the administration of these funds. This will create a false and confused image in Latin America and Asia on the overall attitude of the Community institutions which of course over there are difficult to distinguish from one another. Moreover, it could also provide a pretext for the Council, which is always ready to tighten the purse strings, to do just that, and moreover it will not help to increase the already scanty resources which our Community has earmarked for these worthwhile goals.

VAN PUTTEN (S), *rapporteur*. — (NL) Madam President, I think we should be very clear as to what we are now about. My proposal as rapporteur, on behalf of the Committee on Developments and Cooperation, is that we reject the Commission proposal.

(Parliament rejected the Commission proposal)

MATUTES, *Member of the Commission*. — (ES) Madam President, I already explained yesterday the very serious reasons which make it necessary for us to maintain the status quo where the guidelines which were applied in the past are concerned to enable us, in the light of an analysis of 13 years of cooperation with Latin America and Asia, to draw up carefully and without haste new guidelines for the nineties. Mr Robles Piquer has explained the other reasons which make it impossible for the Commission to withdraw its proposal. As I also stated in yesterday's debate, although the Commission sympathizes with many of the suggestions in Mrs Van Putten's report, it cannot, regretfully, withdraw its proposal.

PRESIDENT. — As the Commission is not prepared to withdraw its proposal, this is automatically referred back to committee.

3. Financial aid to Hungary

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the report (Doc. A3-2/90) by Mrs Peijs, on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations, on the proposal from the Council to the Commission for a decision providing medium term financial assistance for Hungary (COM(89) 627 final — C3-7/90).

PEIJS (PPE), *rapporteur*. — (NL) Madam President, the situation in Poland and Hungary is considerably more serious than in the other East European countries. The foreign debt burden of those two countries is a reflection of that. Hungary in September 1989, through the Belgian Government, which represents Hungary in the International Monetary Fund, applied to the EEC for help with its balance of payments problems. The Commission, which coordinates aid to Poland and

Hungary on behalf of 24 industrial nations, was given the go ahead. Never before has balance of payments assistance been given to a non-Community Member State.

The REX Committee is concerned at this precedent. We accept the Commission's assurance that this is a one-off. But the help given must go hand in hand with democratic and economic reforms in Hungary. Happily we note that changes in Hungary are already underway. Elections are to be held very soon though we cannot yet say if there will be a level playing field for all parties.

From their Parliament have come various praiseworthy initiatives to increase the chances of an equal start for all parties. In any event the elections will be multi-party. I understand that 103 parties will seek to take part. Much will depend on the elections as far as a genuinely new economic policy is concerned. Only a government of genuinely new people will be able, backed by the people's trust, to bring in the necessary reforms. The conditions the IMF attach to the loan should be closely monitored, not to tie Hungary down, but to give her help and support in a very difficult and painful process. Hungary needs this help urgently since most loan repayments fall due at the start of the year.

For all these reasons Parliament has agreed to the urgency procedure requested by the Commission. Parliament, should, however, have been closely consulted on this loan, in a serious manner. This was not the case. The Legal Affairs Committee was forced to reach a decision without knowing the opinion of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, which had important things to say. Where matters of urgency are concerned, Parliament is always prepared to do its utmost. The Commission could have anticipated this problem months ago. On behalf of the REX Committee I therefore ask the Commission to put appropriate proposals to Parliament as quickly as possible so that they can be properly dealt with.

Though Hungary has duly met its financial commitments up to now, the REX Committee has to put in place various measures in case Hungary defaults on the loan. With that in view an amendment has been tabled to ensure that the cost incurred does not affect Community priorities but is covered by a supplementary and amending budget. This Amendment No 1 is accepted by the REX Committee. Amendments 2 and 3 are tabled by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and seek to ensure that the difficult IMF terms do not endanger social stability. Social stability will, in its turn, have a favourable influence on economic development, which is why I, as rapporteur, welcome this addition. The urgency procedure has meant that it has not been possible to discuss Amendments 2 and 3 in the REX Committee. Again, as rapporteur, I am in favour.

This is not the case with Amendment No 4 tabled by Mr Metten. He wants the IMF to take much greater account of the social implications. As rapporteur I consider this unacceptable. This amendment was not

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tabled in committee for the same reasons as before. I cannot recommend it.

One final remark, Madam President. We have all heard this week Mr Delors' address on the Commission's programme for 1990. He gave us remarkable statistics in relation to Eastern Europe, but it is not the statistics I am so interested in at the moment. Much more importantly, he appeared to be making a start on a comprehensive policy for Eastern Europe. That is something to be welcomed and we shall ask the Commission to put a scheme of that sort before Parliament.

(Applause)

TOMLINSON (S). — Madam President, I rise to support the report that has come from the Rex Committee. I think in this particular case it is a necessary report and we have to go along with it. I draw the House's attention to a genuine concern which is strongly and widely expressed in the Committee on Budgets as I believe it also was in the Rex Committee itself, namely a certain incoherence that has recently crept into our approach to financial questions concerning Central and Eastern Europe; something which is to some extent understandable, but which cannot be allowed to continue. Of course certain *ad hoc* responses are going to be necessary in the course of building a coherent programme, but *ad hoc* responses and *ad hoc* solutions must soon give way to a programme covering the whole of our foreseen liabilities in relation to the financial consequences of our relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Members of this House will recall that it is barely three months ago that we were having to argue with the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers as to whether, in the 1990 budget, we ought to meet the financial needs of Poland and Hungary with a figure of ECU 200 million or ECU 300 million. On that very low financial level we were having to have major and fundamental arguments with the Council of Ministers with, I have to say, precious little support from the Commission to establish what we believed was a justifiable level of demand.

Since then, we have had proposals for European Investment Bank loans for Poland and Hungary: a potential liability of over ECU 1 billion. Now we have the discussion on medium-term financial assistance to Hungary, another ECU 1 billion potentially. We have the debate on the Commission work programme. Following the very interesting intervention of President Delors, figures of ECU 14 billion are being bandied about in relation to six countries of Eastern Europe, and an additional ECU 5 billion from possible European Investment Bank loans. Had we to treat those six Eastern European countries on the same basis as Objective 1 regions of the Community? I know that nobody was suggesting that that ought to be done, but figures of ECU 19 billion were bandied about in the course of that debate. And this without any sort of

coherent, financial, global approach from the Commission in relation to Eastern and Central Europe. We cannot, in this House, tolerate any longer — and certainly the Budget Committee itself will not tolerate — the idea of things being foisted upon Parliament at the last minute. There must be a coherent, overall plan.

The particular needs of medium-term financial aid to Hungary were foreseen as far back as September of last year. The detail of an application from the Hungarian authorities was submitted to the Commission in December. This House was treated with capricious disregard by the Commission in the way that they sought urgency. They sought urgency on Monday of this week, and the documentation upon which they were seeking urgency was not available to the Budget Committee until 6.30 p.m., when we walked into the room. That is unacceptable. I have to say to the Commission, this assumption of our continual compliance with their demands ceases from this day forth as far as the Budget Committee is concerned. We demand to have an overall plan, an overall plan which shows quite clearly what is being done by the Community, what is being done bilaterally by the Member States of the Community and what is being coordinated by the Community on behalf of the Group of 24. If you have not got that information in a form that we can have and understand, then I have to say you are not in a fit position to be making proposals to meet the needs. We have to have that information. We have to have it in comprehensible form and we have to have it quickly.

The final point I will make is that I am very glad to support the amendment of the Rex Committee. In the original proposal of the Commission, they suggested that if there were a liability arising from a default on the loan to Hungary, that could be dealt with by transfer. That is unacceptable. We are not going to accept the possibility of a liability arising from debt default being dealt with internally by transfer. That is why I think the Rex Committee amendment is so important. It says that were there to be such a liability, it would have to happen by way of supplementary and amending budget so that it came before this House. With those notes of caution to the Commission on their future conduct, I support the report.

(Applause)

TITLEY (S). — Madam President, like Mr Tomlinson, I very much regret that such a decision has been made in this way. Parliament has had very little time to consider what is, in fact, a very important commitment. We must be very clear that this measure sets a precedent. For the first time Parliament is making financial aid available in this form to a non-Member State. Of course, we want to help Eastern European countries but we want to do it together, all of the European Institutions united and we do not want Parliament bounced into making decisions in this fashion. We recognize the urgency of a continuing debate on Europe but that does not mean that Parliament should be treated in such a cavalier fashion. Parliament may well assert itself very soon by

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rejecting a measure like this and that would not be in the best interests of all concerned. I detected a very strong note of discontent in the REX Committee meeting on Monday night about Parliament being treated in this fashion. I very much hope that the Council and Commission will start to stabilize their activities and work properly with Parliament in the future.

As Mr Tomlinson has pointed out, the main reason why we must stabilize our activity is that we are only now beginning to realize just how enormous the task ahead is. If we are to help Eastern European countries throw off the yoke of one-party centralism we need a major commitment. President Delors this week indicated that we needed in the region of ECU 14 billion a year if we are to provide the sort of assistance that we are providing to our less well-off regions within the Community. The British newspaper, the *Guardian*, has this week calculated that the Marshall plan would be worth \$400 billion at today's prices. That is a major commitment. Given that magnitude of resources it is very clear that we need an effective strategy for dealing with Eastern Europe. With reference to this proposal, of course we have to help Hungary and there are three very good reasons. Firstly, the democratic process in Hungary is already very well advanced, it has been in progress since 1987. Secondly, it is generally accepted that Hungary's decision to open up its frontiers was a catalyst for change in Eastern Germany and, to a lesser degree, in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Therefore, perhaps, Hungary is particularly deserving of our help and support. It must also be stressed that Hungary has always provided a sound financial basis in that it has always regularly serviced its debts and has not defaulted on those debts.

However, it is important that we do not forget the reason that this aid is necessary. Firstly, the economic reforms of the mid-1980s in Hungary has led to a boom in demand. The liberalization of foreign trade in Hungary has consequently sucked in imports and Hungary has found it extremely difficult to boost exports, particularly to the West. Therefore, it has an increasing balance of payments deficit. This illustrates my greatest worry, namely, that the transition to a mixed economy from a highly centralized command economy is a very dangerous process. There is a danger of the economy being destabilized and going out of control. If that happens the infant democracies will be undermined and destroyed. That is why we must proceed with great caution. We must take a measured view in insisting as we have done in several aid packages to Eastern Europe on a market economy. But if we go too far we endanger all that is good in Hungarian society at the same time as rectifying all that is bad. We cannot afford to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

In this sense I was greatly encouraged by Commissioner Andriessen's reply to my question on Tuesday night. Our aid must be aimed at giving a soft landing to the Hungarian economy. In this respect my greatest worry is the condition attaching Hungarian aid to the IMF. As we know elsewhere IMF aid does not necessarily

produce very good results. THE IMF has no experience of the transition from a command economy to a market economy. We must not allow the IMF to run Hungarian society if we have to pay the price. We need to ensure there is proper provision to guarantee the living standards of the Hungarians so that we protect democracy. Our aid should be given in order to ensure the Hungarians get the democratic society they want and the economic system they want. We must not approach this problem with pre-concepts that undermine that society and undermine that economy.

(Applause)

FRIEDRICH (PPE). — (DE) Madam President, I should like to begin by congratulating the rapporteur, Mrs Peijs. I support the report fully. The pressure for economic and political reform in Central and Eastern Europe is only making little headway because the gradual introduction of democracy and a social market economy, is an extremely complicated undertaking.

The socialists in the west who are observing this gigantic undertaking, are increasingly suffering an identity crisis because all their splendid toys and model Utopias which served as counter examples to evil and corrupt capitalism are being swept away by the people and the dreadful reality of stagnating socialist reality.

And while we are on the subject of a gradual introduction of the market economy: let me give an example of why that is so difficult. Just imagine, our English friends decided to change over in the United Kingdom from driving on the left to driving on the right, and tried to do it in a number of stages: in the first year the taxis, in the second year the buses and in the third year the trams.

It is easy to imagine, Mr Beazley, the chaos that would be created, and it is similarly difficult to transfer the market economy into socialism, because this famous alternative route to socialism with a human face is simply a diversion. It is precisely this which leads to disaster and confusion.

A social market economy is the viable alternative and anyone who is interested in really helping the people in Poland, East Germany and Hungary should tell them the truth and not try to mislead them yet again by conning them into believing that capitalism rules in the West and that a new type of socialism needs to be given a chance. No, my friends, wherever an attempt has been made in the world to solve problems by means of socialism, this has failed completely. It was not Stalinism which ruined socialism but socialism itself which has failed in practice.

The ancient philosophers knew only too well that anyone who promises mankind heaven on earth ends up in purgatory! The worse conditions get, the longer we leave them like that, the more difficult the task will become. The people in Karl-Marx-Stadt want to call their city Chemnitz again and they are quite right. What we need is not Karl Marx but Ludwig Ehrhard.

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And for this reason I do not support the demand from Mr Metten concerning the International Monetary Fund. I would say to the previous speaker, we have to look the facts in the face: the conditions imposed by the IMF are not designed to make life difficult but to help Hungarian politicians take the necessary unpopular steps because we all know from experience that very often short-term unpopular decisions turn out for the best in the long run, and *vice versa*.

Moreover, I would say to my socialist colleagues, that we know that Hungarian politicians have approached the IMF and are therefore clearly aware what conditions will be put to them. All, therefore, will be for the best if the IMF conditions are met. Of course help is needed and we have a duty in this respect. What we need is not a new form of socialism but a quick transition to democracy and the social market economy. This is the only way to arrive at new, self-assured citizens and Europeans.

BEAZLEY, Peter (ED). — Madam President, the sweeping political changes which have taken place in Eastern Europe during the past month have been the cause of great enthusiasm and excitement in the Community. The desire to provide help in every possible way to Eastern European countries which have recently fought for their freedom has been the response of the European Community and the nations which comprise it. However, the effect of so many decades of Eastern Europeans being under the heel of Communist political and economic regimes has been not just the loss of their personal and national freedoms but the enforcement on them of economic and financial systems which have destroyed their wealth-creating capacities.

Hungary, despite the great efforts of its people, now faces an appalling scoresheet in financial terms. The reports of the REX Committee, and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy set out the facts in all their stark baldness. I have no need to repeat them in detail here but the financial cost of Communism is clearly measured in these figures without adding to it the human cost.

Having studied these figures in great detail as well as the proposition to help Hungary to move out of its present impossible financial difficulties by this additional facility of a loan of up to ECU 1 billion to finance medium-term aid up to 5 years, to alleviate its balance of payments problem, I consider that the Community is undertaking a vital step to keep Hungary afloat at a time when without such aid it would have no chance to regenerate its economy.

I have also studied the terms on which this loan is being made and I would suggest, perhaps, that our Socialist friends study them as well. I personally am satisfied that they provide the borrower with the most favourable conditions while safeguarding the lender in the way in which it is essential to do.

I can therefore heartily recommend this proposition to this House. We all know only too well that once the euphoria of the present heady happenings of the past few months is over, it will require hard work and hard heads to get Hungary's economy back on its feet. In voting wholeheartedly for this proposition, this House will have put its head where its heart is. The means which we are offering to Hungary will break the chains of its balance of payments problem which it could not otherwise have managed to do and so release its new-found energies to restore its economy.

The risks involved have been well taken care of in the terms set out and Hungary has a very good reputation on servicing debts. It has never yet asked the Paris club to reschedule its debts. This action is of vital importance to Hungary, is well-conceived and, together with other financial means which we have offered, is something which the Hungarians will be overjoyed to receive and also something of which we can be rightfully proud.

JUNKER (S). — (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen. The problem here is to provide help for a country which is trying to push its way through to freedom. This is no place for scoring points and exerting political pressure. Our help must be given without preconditions to smooth the passage for reform. In the light of what has been said, however, I should point out that not every part of the capitalist Western world is prospering. We all know how many people, even in the European Community, are on the fringe of poverty and that we have a political responsibility to take steps to change things.

Following the many talks which I have had with people in Eastern Europe I can only say that there are things there for which we would be very grateful. Thus, for example, the young women in Eastern Europe would not like to have to do without the child care facilities which do not exist here and which, as a result, make it very difficult for women in our countries to reconcile the demands of a job and the family, quite irrespective of the market economy. Let me move on. I accept the criticisms expressed by Mrs Peijs and previous speakers as regards procedure and I would point out yet again that at the end of last year we were confronted by the need to adopt a report on a 'take it or leave it' basis because the Commission had not thought it necessary to embark on a sensible procedure to allow serious discussion. At that time we rejected the request for urgency, albeit with great reluctance, because we knew how much Hungary and Poland needed the help and the same applies today.

It simply is not on for Parliament to be confronted suddenly with Commission proposals on which it is impossible to have a serious exchange of views. That is hardly a shining example of democracy! Our own democratic options in this Parliament are severely curtailed and, for me at any rate, it leaves rather a nasty taste in the mouth if we are constantly making our aid subject to the promotion of democracy when we ourselves have an awful lot of ground to make up in this

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respect. Nevertheless it is of course correct and essential to take measures here to improve the economic and financial situation in Hungary. To that extent we accept the Peijs report.

As far as the individual elements are concerned, I do not think our positions are very far apart. One shortcoming which has been revealed by our discussions in the Committee on External Economic Relations has been that we were confronted with these different aid measures on an *ad hoc* basis without any overall concept being presented. But it is absolutely crucial to discuss aid to Eastern Europe as a whole and to decide on the general overall programme in which, of course, the financial implications must be clearly understood.

As I have said, until now we have had this or that measure presented on an *ad hoc* basis and always under the pressure of urgent procedure. So far we have yielded to this pressure and agreed, but this really cannot go on! There is absolutely no chance of any coherent planning. We cannot go on in this way and we must insist on a change. A few million here, a few million there, is fine because we know that the need is great.

In his speech, the President of the Commission, Mr Delors, made an interesting remark. If we were to give the countries in the East the same amount of aid as we give to the poorer parts of Europe, this would need ECU 17 billion over the next five to ten years. This may not necessarily be the programme needed for Eastern Europe but it does provide an indication of what would be necessary. This needs to form part of an overall coherent plan and it has to be clear that this can only be achieved by an increase in own resources rather than transfers from other parts of the budget.

We must take steps to allay the concern felt by countries in the Third World and of course the poorer regions of southern Europe who have grave misgivings about what may happen to funds allocated to them. These fears are justified. We must find a way to provide such aid by an increase in resources. This cannot be done on an *ad hoc* basis simply with orally presented amendments. A major debate needs to take place in the specialist committees to arrive at a joint concept as to how this aid is to be provided.

Nor is it any comfort to know that Hungary has hitherto always met its obligations for payment. I do not doubt for a minute that this will continue in the future. Nevertheless the Community must provide a guarantee should it not prove possible for whatever reason. It is not enough simply to be confident that such a situation cannot arise and we must give serious thought to the question of how the monies are to be used. This again means that new ways and means need to be found. That should not, however, present an obstacle to this aid.

METTEN (S). — (NL) Madam President, on Wednesday President Delors indicated to us how much Eastern Europe would cost us in terms of assistance from the structural Funds: ECU 15 billion a year. A further ECU 4 billion a year from the European Investment Bank. He

estimated that such aid would need to be provided over five to ten years. It seems to me that this is an extremely optimistic estimate, since it assumes that the help we give within the EEC by way of the structural Funds is effective — and in a pretty short period at that. Well, I am bound to point out that all the research done so far into the effects of the structural Funds does not exactly point in this direction, and that is putting it mildly. This means of course that if it is no easy matter to achieve positive economic changes within our own system, it will be a lot more difficult for Eastern Europe. There are no easy recipes. There is no recipe, I believe, for turning a command economy into a market economy. We have neither the recipes nor the experience, but neither does the International Monetary Fund. As regards assistance and the conditions we attach to that assistance, we must be very clear in our minds that the East European system has something positive to offer on the social side and that this must be preserved.

This is also the central thrust of the three amendments, two from the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee and one from myself. What do the amendments seek to do? They seek to correct the somewhat simplistic reasoning of the Commission that Hungary, if it falls in with the IMF terms, can count on our help. That is a very dangerous strategy. In Latin America, for instance, we have some experience of IMF schemes. They contain, among other things, reorganization strategies whereby domestic consumption is strictly curbed in order to promote exports. If there is one prescription that can really do for the East European democracies, it is surely that one. It is so hard that it can only be carried out by an authoritarian, not to say dictatorial regime. I should like to draw your attention to the draft preamble of the East European Bank, the establishment of which we are in the process of negotiating, and which clearly states, in the first place, the political objective, namely a movement towards democracy and political pluralism and the installation of a constitutional state. If, however the Community simply falls in with the IMF's terms for the extending of loans, it is doing precisely the opposite of what is laid down in the preamble for the East European Bank. It is for this reason that the Economic Affairs Committee has tabled two amendments and I myself one amendment, the aim of which is to ensure that there is no longer automatic compliance with IMF terms, but rather that account is taken of the social implications of a stabilization programme agreed with the IMF. It is not the case, as Mrs Peijs believes, that I no longer wish to have anything to do with the IMF. If she reads my amendment properly, she will see that the IMF is still included and that Hungary must come to an agreement with the IMF.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the idea of a medium term loan to Hungary came up towards the end of February last year. The Belgian Finance Minister, Mr Maystadt, made a public announcement on this in Washington during the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund. This was no mere coincidence

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because Belgium represents Hungary in the Fund's administrative council.

Once this idea had gained ground at the European Council meetings in Paris and Strasbourg in November and December of last year, the Commission began towards the end of the year to draft a Council decision which it finally approved on 6 December.

It is this draft which I am briefly presenting today and in due course I shall deal with the points the honourable Members have made. What is the *raison d'être* for this loan? There are in fact three: the first is political and quite clear, namely to support the process of transition to democracy in Hungary. Secondly, there is the financial argument. And thirdly the economic justification. The financial situation in Hungary has been deteriorating during the series of reforms which that country has achieved. Finally, seen in the context of free elections to Parliament, the political powers have become paralysed and do not dare to take the corrective measures the situation requires. The foreign debt is now at a very high level, in the region of \$20m, and it is important to bear in mind that Hungary's debts were contracted to a very large extent with private creditors and are mainly dealt on the markets in Frankfurt, Tokyo and Vienna. Nevertheless, despite this increase in its foreign debt, Hungary has remained a model debtor, a financially responsible country which regularly meets its commitments, without recourse to the Club of Paris or to be more accurate since most of its debts are with private creditors, the Club of London. A key element in Hungarian economic policy has been to maintain free access to the world's money markets. And I should add that there is a broad political consensus within Hungary on this issue. If we manage to make this Community loan available within the next few weeks, we shall be effectively helping Hungary to maintain its freedom of access to the international capital markets. Certainly the time has come to take a critical view of the disastrous balance of payments position — in 1989 the deficit reached \$1,400 m — which is the reason for our request for urgent procedure. We are trying to avoid the shock which would result from a sudden turnaround in the flow of capital which currently is in Hungary's favour but could go the other way if the private banks were to pull out. Aid from us would have both a direct and an indirect effect. By making fresh funds available, the Community would be showing its confidence and this would encourage the merchant banks to do the same.

In accordance with its mandate from the Paris summit, the Commission decided that the best way to help Hungary would be to make a medium-term loan available, similar to those in the past to Member States, to help them to overcome the financial difficulties to which I have just referred; to enable them to fulfill their obligations; to safeguard the integrity of Hungarian commitments; and ultimately to support the ongoing process of reform.

The proposal for a Community loan, for a maximum period of five years is not, however, solely intended to redress the balance of payments. It is essential to bear in mind the third objective which is the economic purpose of the loan. This loan is to promote structural changes and in this way the transition of the Hungarian economy away from a socialist economy towards a system of real market economy.

This is why we propose to introduce certain conditions in the form of structural adjustments. The precise terms will be agreed on with Hungary itself but there will be two basic features: firstly, the conditions will be based on Hungary's economic programme. These will, therefore, not be conditions imposed from outside. Secondly, they must be straightforward, few in number and verifiable. The first, absolutely essential condition is the approval of the International Monetary Fund. It is a question of establishing a macro-economic framework to promote confidence in the markets. And I should point out — because I understand the view expressed by Mr Metten — that we cannot accept his Amendment No 4 because there is a consensus within government and opposition circles within Hungary on the need for IMF approval and on the positive effect this would have on the markets.

A second condition will be that the present structure of Hungary's foreign debts is maintained. We wish to ensure that our entry into the circle of creditors does not cause others to leave. In other words, we need an undertaking from Hungary that its foreign debt will not be radically restructured as a result of this Community lending. The other conditions will have to be negotiated with Hungary and — let me say again — will be based on the programme of structural reforms which the present Hungarian government has drawn up with the approval of the opposition.

Two other features of the Community loan are the surety and the instalments. In effect the Community will approach the financial markets to obtain ECU 1 million on the most favourable terms which it will then lend to Hungary. But obviously the terms will be those granted to the Community and not to Hungary which is the whole idea of the operation: Hungary will thus benefit from the triple A rating conditions the Community enjoys on the world markets.

Hence the need for a Community guarantee which means it will be necessary to add a new budget line in 1990 with a token entry for the maximum Community commitment, namely ECU 1 million plus the appropriate amount of interest. The Commission will shortly be submitting a draft supplementary budget for 1990.

The instalments will have to be negotiated. Very probably, the first will be quite high to help Hungary to meet its most pressing commitments at this crucial stage. Similarly, the conditions will not be very strict for this first tranche. Essentially they would consist of IMF approval and the undertaking concerning maintaining the structure of the foreign debt I have already

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described. The terms would be progressively tightened up and be fully applicable for the disbursement of the third tranche.

Finally, let me stress again the urgent need for this loan and point out that we are embarking on a completely new, and certainly adventurous, undertaking by granting a loan of this kind to a State which is not a member of the Community.

In conclusion, I feel what I have said makes clear that the Commission can accept Amendments Nos 1, 2 and 3 but not No 4 concerning the IMF because, as I have said, this condition has been set by the Hungarians themselves, both the government and the opposition.

METTEN (S). — (NL) Madam President, in view of the Commissioner's comment that he cannot accept my amendment but he can accept Amendments Nos 2 and 3, and seeing that we shall first be voting on my own amendment and the groups on this side of the House support that amendment, in which case probably Amendment No 2 automatically falls, I wish to withdraw Amendment No 4, albeit reluctantly, so that Amendment No 2 can be adopted.

PRESIDENT. — I thank Mr Metten for withdrawing his amendment. The debate is closed.

PEIJS, rapporteur. — (NL) I should like to thank the Commissioner. I am also grateful to Mr Metten for withdrawing his amendment, which I feel made the voting clearer. It was very good of him to do so. May I also say a word, Madam President, to Mr Titley. It is very strange to hear someone saying in Parliament today that Hungary can choose whatever economy it likes. A year ago in this Parliament no one would have given any thought to a loan to a totalitarian regime with a top-down economy.

Explanation of vote

HABSBURG (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, the European People's Party is happy to support the splendid report by Mrs Peijs but one comment needs to be made. We must recognize that this is simply a first step, and that Mrs Peijs had specific terms of reference so that she was unable to consider other aspects because these were outside her competence.

One of the determining elements in the Hungarian situation is not only its foreign indebtedness which was created by the fact that the previous regime borrowed money on a quite unjustifiable scale and then spent it on all sorts of projects. This had no benefit for the economy and in addition Hungary is awash with roubles. But the President of the Hungarian National Bank, Mr Barthar, specifically said when he visited the European Parliament that Hungary's major difficulty within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance was that Hungary was obliged to accept non-convertible roubles, while the Soviet Union was exporting less and less so that more and more money was coming into Hungary

with which it could do nothing. A further factor now that the border between Hungary and the Ukraine has been opened is that Russians are constantly visiting the country, buying everything in sight and that under the present Comecon principles there is no way in which Hungary can refuse to accept these roubles.

I feel we should deal with these problems in greater depth. Apart from this, the Hungarians' aspirations are tremendous. The people are willing to work. The people are willing to make reforms. We should help them to do it.

This was a first major step, but, for heavens sake, we must ensure that it is not the last and do everything we can to secure further progress so that Hungary, together with Czechoslovakia, soon has an opportunity to become fully integrated in the community of democratic peoples.

(Applause from the right)

(Parliament adopted the legislative resolution)

EWING (ARC). — Madam President, I should like to apologize to the House for having missed the vote on fisheries earlier this morning. This was due to a mix-up in the transport arrangements.

4. Result of the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the report (Doc. A3-107/89) by Mrs Napolitano, on behalf of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, on the results of the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly meetings in Bridgetown (Barbados) and Versailles (France) in 1989.

MENDES BOTA (LDR). — (PT) Madam President, the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly in 1989 was overshadowed by three fears: the unsatisfactory renegotiation of the Lomé Convention, the impact of the 1992 internal market on the ACP countries and competition from the new East-West solidarity. Despite their importance, all other political and operational questions were dealt with on a different level. However, for this reason we do not believe that a report of this sort can become a mere passive account but must be above all a document which studies the practical effects of the Versailles and Bridgetown decisions and that certain comments need to be made. This is why everything turns on Lomé IV. It has to be said that the 15 December 1989 agreement offered no grounds for great rejoicing or even for modest hope.

Developing countries have witnessed a dramatic decline in their social and economic situation, and the ACP countries comprise some of the poorest countries in the world. This is the result of the demonstrated lack of goals and Community cooperation policy which is in stark contrast to the surpluses of specialized undertakings and of the trade balances of the European

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countries. Sometimes cooperation appears as a type of business, a new sector of profitable economic activity for everyone but less so for those for whom it is destined. As the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations stated yesterday, the 1980s were a lost decade for development. That is the truth! Moreover the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly echoed this. Unfortunately the Lomé IV financial packet indicates that the Commission and the Council were not sufficiently aware of this. This perhaps should have led to greater restraint in the festivities surrounding the signing of the new treaty. During this debate, despite the very tight budget no mention was made of the cost of the feast: 13 million francs according to reports in the press. It was Asiatic luxury, an imperial banquet, an unnecessary exhibition of *nouveau riche* behaviour.

In Togo Michel Rocard reaffirmed that 'Europe will remain faithful to its promises'. This was repeated by François Mitterrand. The only thing is that the favourite child of the EEC is now Eastern Europe. The North-South dialogue is still the most pressing need but it now appears to be out of fashion. And because European loyalty is quantified it should be added that Community aid per capita to the countries of Eastern Europe is much greater than that given to the ACP countries. François Mitterrand stated that aid to Eastern Europe should not be a matter of subtraction but of addition. However, in the last analysis it appears to be a matter of multiplication.

Lomé IV has introduced us to the great novelty of structural adjustments. However, the Community must bear in mind the weakness of the budgetary means available to lessen the social cost which these adjustments will inevitably bring. And what about the timidity with which the very serious problem of the external debt of the ACP countries is being treated? However, not to take a pessimistic view of everything we have to welcome the progress which has been made in certain areas which were debated some time ago in the Joint Assembly. This is the case where respect for human rights, or a more active role on an equal footing for women in society, or environmental protection, or incentives for private initiative as a necessary contribution to economic development etc., are concerned.

Fifty-four resolutions were adopted between Bridgetown and Versailles. There was no need to produce such an enormous volume of documents. What is needed in the last analysis is to congratulate Mrs Napoletano on her report.

DALY (ED). — Madam President, may I also thank Mrs Napoletano for her report and say that, in general, my group supports the amendments which have been tabled. We welcomed very much Mrs Van Hemeldonck's comments yesterday on the importance of having more parliamentarians involved in the Joint Assembly, because we really see the Joint Assembly of the ACP-EEC as a partnership between the Community and ACP countries, which is important and necessary if we are to exchange the information about the Lomé

Convention that we need to exchange to ensure that it is effective. We welcome the comments in paragraph 6 about human rights. We think there has been some progress on the situation in this respect and we hope that the system for investigating complaints about human rights that has been developed in the Bureau will be developed within Lomé IV.

We also feel very strongly that if the Assembly is to be able to play its role as an institution created in the Lomé Treaty, we need to have sensible financial arrangements. We cannot be in a situation where every time we want to buy a paper clip we have to go to the European Parliament Bureau. What we would like to see is the Parliament's Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Development and Cooperation or the ACP representatives getting together and working out a sensible budget, so that we can have a limit within which we can work and then we will know exactly what we are doing, instead of wasting time two or three times a year arguing over finances.

One other point I want to emphasize is the importance of the informal contacts which one has at meetings of the Joint Assembly. To give you an example of how these can be very useful, at one of the Assembly meetings last year a representative from the Parliament in Tanzania responsible for education told us that he had no schoolbooks for his children in the schools. Following representations to the Commission, we found we could not get any money from the Community, but we were able to put him in touch with the British Government and, as a result of that, the Ranfurly Institute has just in the last month sent 5,000 books to the children in Tanzania. He told me last week that he no longer has a problem with chemistry and physics in the schools in Tanzania. It is through exchanges of this kind that we can develop very practical benefits for people in Third World countries. I hope this kind of activity will continue in the Joint Assembly.

ROTH (V). — (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen. Lomé IV has been negotiated and ratified — negotiated by the Commission without any involvement of Parliament. Our role is simply to act as a rubber stamp. Yet again a further scandalous example of the lack of democracy which obtains here.

When we look at it closely, we can see that the Lomé policy is essentially the continuation of the old colonial policy. Its consequences for the EEC countries are disastrous: high rates of inflation, a growing deficit in foreign trade, ever greater indebtedness towards foreign countries, the despoliation of natural resources, ecological destruction. This in turn leads to great social problems: a reduction in living standards, a fall in real wages, growing unemployment and underemployment, increasing health problems which have shocked us all. There has been no positive change from the point of view of the individuals. Not only has there not been any improvement, this policy has tended to consolidate structural inequalities.

ROTH

In the Green Party we do not share the current beliefs in growth. We would urge more than ever that there should be a new just world economic order. We call for economic policy to be oriented towards basic demands and strengthening the internal market structure in the various regions. We call for diversification instead of monoculture. We urge a lower dependence on imports and, above all, a global waiver of debts.

Let me raise a point which at first sight appears positive, namely the consistent condemnations of South Africa. If we see on the other hand how trade with this racist apartheid State continues as before, particularly by West Germany and as a result the European Community, then the fine words and sentiments are seen to be meaningless.

We welcome the fact that our resolution on the structural adaptation measures were supported by a majority in Versailles because this called for an end to the destructive policy practised by the IMF and World Bank. Our group supports the report by Mrs Pasqualina Napoletano.

(Applause from the Left)

WURTZ (CG). — *(FR)* The Left Unity Group fully supports the report of our friend and colleague, Mrs Napoletano.

If, as seems likely, Parliament adopts it, the Commission and the Council will be taking a lead from the main ideas which emerged from the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly in 1989. I shall mention three of these ideas which I believe dominated the discussion both in Barbados in January and at Versailles in September.

The first concerns the amount and the nature of Community aid to the ACP countries. We all know that these countries are being increasingly suffocated by debt and, let us not be afraid of the word, pillaged by the continual deterioration of the terms of trade because the price of primary products is at its lowest level for 30 years. They have therefore asked that the amount of aid in Lomé IV should be substantially re-evaluated to take account in particular of the increase in population and the accession of three new countries to the Convention. They have insisted on the importance of a new type of cooperation to promote genuine partnership, reduce dependence and to stimulate in particular the development of genuine processing industries in the ACP countries.

To date the Twelve have refused to recognize this two-fold need. No progress has been made on processing industries. As regards the amount of money being made available under Lomé IV, it represents in fact a step backwards in comparison with Lomé III. Until now it represented FF50 per year per ACP country inhabitant and the contribution of a country like France was of the order of FF10 per year per inhabitant. The amount was already very small and in Lomé IV it is even smaller. Is that not true, Commissioner?

Secondly in the vote on the resolution which my friend, Claudia Roth, has just mentioned, the Joint Assembly rejected, by a very large majority, the structural adjustment policies similar to those of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Nonetheless, the Community has decided as a new feature in Lomé IV, to promote those programmes which have caused so much damage wherever they have been applied. Henceforth, part of the Lomé funds will be earmarked for those countries which accept these programmes. Is that not the case, Commissioner? Conditions are being attached to the aid in total contradiction of the spirit of Lomé.

Thirdly and finally at the Joint Assembly serious misgivings were expressed regarding the consequences for the ACP countries of the completion of the Single Market and the Community's new strategic goals. The expression frequently used in this context was 'the marginalization of Third World countries'. The ACP countries asked in particular, and the Joint Assembly supported them in this, for firm guarantees against the loss of the benefit of ACP-EEC cooperation to be formally included in Lomé IV. Where are they, Commissioner?

Madam President, in his long speech yesterday, Mr Delors addressed a few sentences to the ACP countries stating that the Community had been, and I quote, 'generous', but made no mention whatsoever of the precise requests of the ACP countries. I believe that it is our duty as parliamentarians not to let this pass without reacting against supercilious indifference to the positions adopted by the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly and more importantly to the repeated cries of alarm from the most needy and dependent countries on the face of the earth.

(Applause from the Left)

EWING (ARC). — Madam President, first I should like to thank the rapporteur. It is a very fine report. It covers the major problems in depth and it refers also to toxic waste exports, which is a very important subject and one which I think this Parliament is very much united on. I would also like to thank the outgoing Edwin Carrington, who spent 13 years of his life doing an excellent job in the ACP. I should like to comment on something from his New Year message. He referred to the 80s as being the decade of the unfulfilled promises as far as we were concerned. He also said it was a 'lost decade'. Nevertheless, he went on to say that it was still the best North-South cooperation in the world. We can take some satisfaction from that.

The subject I would really like to talk about, however, is one I do not think has been mentioned very much, namely famine. This has killed 2 to 3 million people in the past two decades. It now stalks again and we know that there will be more famine. I should like to mention a wonderful project that I saw with Mrs Pery and others in Mali. This was an early-warning system about famine, which has been a huge success of which the Commission can be very proud. The early warning is so

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arranged that all the villages are in contact with the Commission delegates, whom they trust and to whom they pass on the facts about their crops. So before the famine happens, before the village gets hungry and the people start trekking away for food and water, the project is able to fill the gap and the village can remain and operate as a village. That early-warning system works in Mali and I believe it should serve as a model. I would ask the Commission why we cannot have that model, now that it is a proven success, applied in the pre-famine situations we know are going to arise — in Sudan and Ethiopia for example.

Finally, a very interesting book has been published by the Clarendon Press in Oxford called *Hunger and Public Action*. It makes a very interesting point that sometimes, cash would be better than food aid, because, in the case of famines that have occurred in the last two decades, there was not always an actual shortage of food in the country; the people were just unable to buy the food. Perhaps we should look again at the whole concept. The one thing our citizens of Europe cannot bear is to read about these famines.

BINDI (PPE). — (IT) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, thanks to the excellent work of the rapporteur, the report which the Committee on Development and Cooperation is submitting to Parliament on the results of the work of the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly, contains several pointers to future development and cooperation of the Community institutions. Nonetheless because of the speed at which our Parliament works and the developments taking place in the world, this report is inevitably somewhat dated. I wish to pick out one point to show clearly, how this report has not been able — or perhaps did not wish — to take into account the developments taking place. I have in mind the situation in South Africa and in southern Africa. Last November I was part of the Group of the European People's Party delegation to South Africa and of Parliament's delegation to Namibia for the first free elections in what was the last colony in the world. The balanced programme for the visit to South Africa enabled us to meet the government, including the President, Mr De Klerk, spokesmen of all the opposition groups and many representatives of economic and social groups.

We were therefore in a position to witness that real progress was taking place and one has only to recall three signs of change: the authorization of peaceful demonstrations and meetings by opposition groups, the free and fair elections in Namibia, the abolition of apartheid in certain parts of the country and the attitude towards Nelson Mandela. What do all these signify? That apartheid is disappearing in South Africa? Clearly not. We are in fact very far from the total abolition of apartheid and the construction of a just and peaceful society in which the fundamental rights of all individuals are recognized. We are also still far from the destruction of the racist mentality which is widespread among the people of that country. At the same time

while reaffirming our determined and fundamental condemnation of the apartheid regime, and while we recognize that the attitude of the international community has also helped the popular struggle to bring about change in South Africa through the use of sanctions and the cultural and political isolation of South Africa we should today, while maintaining the pressure, recognize the positive developments which are helping the process of reform that is taking place in the teeth of conservative resistance, bearing in mind that in politics the task of the reformer is more difficult than that of the dictator or the revolutionary.

HABSBURG (PPE). — (DE) Madam President, the report by Mrs Napoletano contains one point which justifies optimism, namely her emphasis on the fact that the question of human rights needs to be included in future. Our partners have always rejected the inclusion of human rights or tried to replace it by the non-term 'African human rights'. We must continue to attach special importance to this aspect.

Following this positive aspect, however, there are a number of very negative aspects. In particular I should like to refer to paragraph 8 which refers to a parliamentary body for developing North-South policies. I should like to make it crystal clear once again that North-South policies can be developed by the European Parliament. These can then be placed before the Joint Assembly, but not vice versa! That would be like trying to build a house by starting with the roof instead of the foundations.

Secondly, I should like to point out that paragraphs 21 and 22 contain some very misleading information. It is perhaps rather optimistic to talk about a dialogue in Angola and Mozambique if one considers that in the past we were very close to a solution whereas now the regime in Luanda, more specifically the regime of President Dos Santos, is doing everything in its power to delay these negotiations or carry out further warlike operations. We should not invest too much optimism in the attitude of the Angolan Government.

I can only support what Mrs Bindi said. We really should not seek to tighten up measures against the discriminatory regime in South Africa because serious progress is being made there. There is a saying to the effect that you catch flies with honey not vinegar! We should therefore lay emphasis on the positive aspects. If they do not keep the promises they are making today, then we can still resort to other measures! But we should begin by doing everything to encourage them and therefore any speech about sanctions or tighter sanctions is rubbish — particularly as political experience shows that sanctions have never had any useful effect against a proud people.

JEPSEN (ED). — (DA) Madam President, in the light of the volume of work carried out in the Joint Assembly last year, particularly in drawing up Lomé IV, it is only natural that Parliament should take stock of the work of

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the Assembly. The dialogue between the ACP and the EEC is one of the most important aspects of that work.

As Mrs Napolitano's excellent report points out, the ACP-EEC Assembly was primarily concerned with promoting economic and social development in the ACP countries by strengthening industrial production, i.e. by ensuring that in future the ACP countries themselves should be responsible for processing their own raw material.

Another important point was clearly the repercussion of the creation of the internal market on the situation of the ACP countries together with the problem of human rights and environmental policy. Reservations have been expressed regarding the content of Lomé IV. I believe, however, that the innovations in Lomé IV should be stressed. To give some examples: the increasing importance given to industrial production in ACP countries, growing decentralization of cooperation between developing and developed countries and the greater importance being attached to human rights questions, particularly health, and finally the express prohibition of the export of toxic wastes from the Member States of the EEC to ACP countries.

It is clearly possible to stress some shortcomings in ACP-EEC cooperation. For example, we are unable to find a solution to the problem of indebtedness. However, it is important to try to improve the situation. Nonetheless I think it can be said that the many innovations in Lomé IV can be regarded as a step in the right direction and that the ACP-EEC Assembly did recognize that these innovations are to a large extent the result of the work of this House. The European Parliament has a great responsibility. Great hopes have been placed in the work of the Assembly and it is my belief that we should be very conscious of this responsibility.

MATUTES, Member of the Commission. — (ES) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen. I also wish to congratulate Mrs Napolitano on the resolution which is before the House today. I fully share Mrs Napolitano's view of the importance of cooperation and development policy within the overall framework of Community policy. The work of the Joint Assembly last year was characterized, I believe, by certain fundamental developments: the negotiation of Lomé IV and the recognition of the opportunities and possible difficulties for the ACP countries created by the achievement of the large market in 1992. Without going into great detail, because Lomé IV is to be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee on Development and Cooperation and in the House in March, I should nevertheless like to make a few observations.

I believe we can be well satisfied with a level of financing of ECU 12,000 million, which represents a 26% increase in real terms at a time when all international aid organizations are experiencing difficulties. The structural adjustment certainly represents the most significant innovation in Lomé IV and is a quite new political

feature in that for the first time we have a global North-South agreement on the principles and instruments on which macro-economic reforms should be based.

As far as the debt question is concerned, clearly the Community cannot do more than that which falls within its powers. Nevertheless the incorporation of a section in the IVth agreement on debt is evidence of a willingness for more of a Community approach to deal with this matter.

Finally, as to dangerous waste, I can confirm that a ban on exports and imports will certainly include radioactive waste.

The effects of the large 1992 market on the ACP countries were debated at length in the Joint Assembly and this showed the enormous challenge and opportunities this magic date represents not only for us but also for these States.

I should not like to leave unmentioned the constant concern in the Joint Assembly for the protection of human rights. On the other hand, the Commission is aware of the precarious situation in the health field in the ACP countries with the acute problems of malnutrition, the lack of hygiene, growing infant mortality. This concern in the Joint Assembly was reflected both in the preparatory work and in the final document of the IVth Lomé Agreement.

I welcomed and found very interesting the suggestions from Mrs Ewing on an early warning system for famine and I shall pass these on to my colleague, Mr Marín. The annual nature of the report on the work of the Joint Assembly has not prevented its contents this time reflecting the impetus which the European Parliament received from the elections last June. Clearly the positive role which the Joint Assembly has played in the context of ACP-EEC cooperation could be further strengthened by some of the measures set out in Mrs Napolitano's resolution.

Strengthening parliamentary representations will help to promote a genuine political dialogue between democratically elected representatives in the formulation of North-South policy. At the same time better organization of the work will also enhance the effectiveness of this parliamentary body.

The resolution thirdly suggests making financing of the Joint Assembly independent of the European Parliament, a question I will not go into as that is something for you ladies and gentlemen to decide. I should however like to inform you that there has been an increase in the funds available under Lomé IV for participation by the ACP members in activities organized by the Joint Assembly and for contacts with social and professional bodies, from ECU 1 million to 3 million.

Let me conclude by saying this: our development policy is one of the foremost challenges facing us in the 90s; the ratification and implementation of Lomé IV; the completion of a single market to form the basis of a strong, and at the same time generous Europe and the

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pressures towards liberty which are sending shock waves through totalitarian regimes.

The Joint Assembly and the European Parliament must be the driving forces behind the North-South parliamentary dialogue.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — The debate is closed.

Explanations of vote

BELO (S). — *(PT)* Madam President, I had considered giving my explanation in writing, but in view of Mr Habsburg's speech I wish to give it orally.

Although economic cooperation is important, particularly in these regions, more fundamental still is political cooperation. Our political relations, particularly with Africa, will not change as long as apartheid and local conflicts continue in the southern zone — the zone with the greatest potential — of that continent. No fundamental change has taken place in South Africa where the system of apartheid is concerned and as long as apartheid continues and South Africa has not become a multiracial society, development will not be possible in that region.

However, I would state that there have, in fact, been positive developments in the peace process in Mozambique and Angola. There is evidence of a new form of participation on the part of South Africa in this process. South Africa is not only actively collaborating in the peace process in Mozambique but has completely ceased, according to the MPLA and even the government of Angola itself, to intervene in the relatively violent conflicts which took place in recent weeks in Angola between UNITA and the armed forces of the Angolan Government.

ARBELOA MURU (S), in writing. — *(ES)* Mrs Napolitano has accurately recorded the work and conclusions reached in the ACP-EEC Joint Assembly in 1989.

For the members of that assembly there is nothing here which is unaccustomed or surprising although this harsh reality, so different from our own and its language strikes a discordant note amidst our bland Eurospeak.

One typical example is paragraph 18 of the resolution concerning relations between the EEC and the international financial institutions. Compare paragraph 5 of section III of the draft Council decision on financial aid to Hungary (COM(89) 627 final) although the situation is not strictly speaking identical.

Clearly it would be better to be able to coordinate EEC structural adjustment policies with those of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, but on what terms? At what price? The ACP States have had bitter experience which makes them very mistrustful.

An open and thorough debate on this issue is more necessary and urgent than ever. The IMF and World Bank's Ten Commandments do not contain a monopoly of wisdom.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

5. Adjournment of the session

PRESIDENT. — I declare adjourned the session of the European Parliament.

*(The sitting closed at 11.10 a.m.)*¹

¹ *Membership of committees — Written declarations (Rule 65) — Forwarding of resolutions adopted during the sitting — Dates for next part-session: see minutes.*

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