

Annex

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NOTE TO READER

Appearing at the same time as the English edition are editions in the five other official languages of the Communities : Danish, German, French, Italian and Dutch. 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 : *(DK)* for Danish, *(D)* for German, *(F)* for French, *(I)* for Italian and *(NL)* for Dutch.

The original texts of these interventions appear in the edition published in the language spoken.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DE FERRANTI

Vice-President

President. — The sitting is open.

(The sitting was opened at 5.10 p.m.)

1. *Resumption of the session*

President. — I declare resumed the session of the European Parliament adjourned on 13 February 1981.¹

2. *Membership of committees*

President. — I have received from six political groups¹ a motion for a resolution pursuant to Rule 37 on the renewal of appointment of committee members up to 31 December 1981 (Dec. 1976/80).

I call Mr Pannella on a point of order.

¹ Membership of Parliament — Membership of Committee — Documents received — Texts of Treaties forwarded by the Council — Referral to committee — Withdrawal of a motion for a resolution — see Minutes.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Mr President, I believe that, in accordance with our Rules of Procedure, it is for the Bureau to take the initiative in this matter and not for one or even six political groups. That is all I wanted to say.

President. — The Bureau received these six approaches for a motion for a resolution. The matter was discussed and is now being put to you.

I propose that the deadline for tabling amendments to this motion be set at 6 p.m. this evening. I would remind the House that the list of committee members is to be found in the bulletin which has been distributed. An up-to-date list, including the most recent changes in the membership of committees, is available at the sittings office for consultation by Members.

The vote on the renewal of the appointments of committee members will be held at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting as scheduled in the agenda.

3. *Order of business*

President. — The next item is the order of business.

At its meeting of 18 February 1981 the enlarged Bureau drew up the draft agenda which has been distributed (PE 71.918/rev.).

² See Minutes of Proceedings.

President

At their meeting this morning the President and the chairmen of the political groups agreed to propose to you the following changes:

As regards the constituent sitting, it is proposed that the motion for a resolution on the membership of committees be put to the vote at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

As regards the Luster report — item No 1 on the agenda for Tuesday, 10 March — the deadline for tabling amendments should be fixed at 6 p.m. this evening.

The vote on amendments to the Rules of Procedure should be held over until the extraordinary part-session in March — until Tuesday, 24 March, to be more precise — with the vote on the motion for a resolution as a whole being held at the beginning of Wednesday's sitting.

As regards the Clwyd report — item No 2 on the agenda for Tuesday 10 March — the vote on the motion for a resolution would take place on Wednesday 11 March after the vote on any requests for urgency.

The Plumb report on the common agricultural policy — item No 3 on the agenda — has not been adopted in committee and has therefore been withdrawn from the agenda. It is proposed that it be replaced on the agenda by the Bocklet report, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the organization of the market in sugar. I must inform you that the Council and Commission have asked for urgent debate on the consultation on which this report is based.

I have also received two further proposals concerning the agenda. A joint debate is scheduled under item No 5 on Wednesday's agenda on the Spinelli and Bonde reports on the budget guidelines for 1982. The latter report has not yet been adopted by the Committee on Budgets which will be meeting this evening to decide on the matter. I therefore propose that it be retained on the agenda as a possible item.

At the request of the Council and the Committee on Transport, I propose that the Hoffman report on the Council's programme of activities in the field to transport until 1983 be entered on the agenda at the beginning of the sitting of Friday, 13 March. I would ask Members who wish to speak on these proposals to limit their speeches to one speaker for and one against so that we can start on the agenda as soon as possible.

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Mr President, I shall try to comply with your request. Firstly, I would point out that in Italy we have not yet received the Luster report. Dutch colleagues and colleagues from other countries have also not yet received it. Secondly, we

would ask to be spared this grotesque arrangement of holding a debate — and nobody knows why it is urgent — before even receiving the report and then taking the vote in a fortnight or a month. I say again this is grotesque and against all parliamentary traditions.

Finally, Mr President, it seems to me appropriate for the Luster report to be debated in April. If that is decided, Mr President, I can assure you that you will have the personal cooperation of my group. After saving the right of all parliamentarians to know what is being discussed and to have sufficient time to give thought to the matter, we shall then confine ourselves to tabling only a few amendments. But we shall do so only if the right of all parliamentarians to take a well informed decision is respected.

Mr Herman. — (F) Fascist! Blackmail!

Mr Pannella. — (F) Keep those terms of abuse for your election teams in Belgium.

President. — Mr Pannella, it is my intention to call a proposed amendment to the agenda from your group on whether or not the Luster report should be debated today. You will therefore have another opportunity to speak when you move that proposal and the House can vote on it in the normal way. What I am putting to the House at the moment is the proposal from the President and the group chairmen that the vote on the Luster report should be held on Thursday.

I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Mr President, on behalf of my group, I would ask for the vote on the report by Ms Clwyd to be taken on Tuesday immediately after the debate as indicated in the draft agenda. We had agreed that for the purpose of press reporting on such an important topic it is vital for the vote to be taken immediately after the debate since the press can otherwise only report the debate, leaving the result of the vote until later or even overlooking it altogether. This report really is important in the Year of the Disabled and my group cannot see why we should not take the vote on Tuesday after the debate. I therefore ask for the vote to be taken on Tuesday as planned.

A further point which is rather less important: I would ask for the time-limit for tabling amendments to the Spinelli report to be fixed at 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday to give the groups, including my own, an opportunity to consider the report again tomorrow. We have had no opportunity at all to discuss it in our groups. I therefore ask for the amendments to be submitted by 10.00 a.m. on Wednesday as in the case of the Bonde report.

(Parliament agreed to these two requests)

President. — I call Mr De Goede.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Mr President, you are not merely authorized to direct the conduct of our activities and sittings on the basis of Rule 8 of our Rules of Procedure. You are in fact required to do so and when I tell you that we only obtained the Dutch text of the Luster report at 4 o'clock this afternoon, you must surely agree that it is impossible to hold the debate already tomorrow, especially if you ask us to table amendments to this report of 160 pages by 6 o'clock this evening, in other words in three-quarters of an hour. I assure you in all sincerity that this report was only placed in the pigeon holes of the Dutch Members at 4 o'clock this afternoon although it is dated 23 February. Mr President, you cannot therefore arrange a debate on the Luster report tomorrow without giving us an opportunity to take note of it. That is no reason for us to adopt an obstructive attitude but only to ask you to be reasonable and to make use of the authority vested in you by Rule 12 (2); this you can do by deciding that the Luster report cannot be debated at this stage because of the objections raised today. I hope, Mr President, that you will make use of that authority otherwise we shall be faced with renewed chaos tomorrow. Nobody wants that but we all want sufficient time for a reasonable debate on this report which we must have time to consider and on which we want to make a number of essential observations.

President. — Not only does the President have duties to ensure the smooth working of the House, but, with respect, Members also have a similar duty. I already said to Mr Pannella that I will be taking his amendment which has been correctly proposed and moved and you would therefore have had an opportunity to make your speech then.

I call Sir James Scott-Hopkins.

Sir James Scott-Hopkins. — Mr President, may I first comment on the proposal that the amendment to the Luster report should not be taken. Perhaps I could save time by also stating the position of my group concerning the postponement of the debate on the Luster report. I will be very brief in my comments.

First of all, I believe that both the Dutch and the Italian texts of this report have been available for at least ten days.

I find it quite incredible that people who have been sitting on the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions are not aware of what has been going on there.

(Applause from certain quarters)

When you said this morning that there was agreement among the group chairmen, I myself — and my colleagues will recall this — protested on my own behalf and on behalf of my group at the postponement of the voting on the amendments until a later part-session. I find it quite intolerable and insupportable that we should have to do this on a debate which we have agreed would be held in March. It has been postponed for heaven knows how long. The committee has been working on it for over a year, and everybody knows full well what is happening. All the groups, with the exception of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members, have agreed to put down very few amendments, and yet we are being held to ransom not just by one group but by one man, Mr Pannella. The nerve and hypocrisy of that honourable gentleman in saying the things that he has been saying I find quite intolerable, particularly when he has been making a point about the expenditure of this House. He knows full well that by putting down the enormous number of amendments he threatens to put down, he is going to cost this Parliament and this House a great deal of money.

(Applause from certain quarters)

What I find even more intolerable is that he has said just now that if the matter is postponed until April he will only be putting down a few amendments, which must mean that most of the amendments he intends to put now are completely useless and a waste of the time and money of this House. He cannot have it both ways. That this House should be held up to ransom and indeed ridicule by the honourable gentleman concerned is completely unacceptable and I will most certainly oppose his motion.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Rogers.

Mr Rogers. — Mr President, Sir James Scott-Hopkins has said quite a lot of what I would want to say, so I am going to be extremely brief. What amazes me is how a person who has not seen a report can already decide how many amendments he is going to put down in a month's time!

(Laughter and applause)

As I understand it, he has already put down amendments, so either they are plucked out of the air or else they are based on the report that is coming before us. I understand the cost to the Parliament could even be in the region of 20 million francs, and Mr Pannella places advertisements in the newspapers to complain about the expenditure of Parliament. Now really Mr Pannella ought to come clean. In his constant urging of the rights of individual Members he had a great

Rogers

deal of sympathy from those of us who are rather opposed to the Conservatives on the other side of the House, but it has become fairly obvious to me, having sat in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions over the last two years, that what Mr Pannella really wants is a continual state of anarchy.

Mr Pannella, come clean, don't use these silly technicalities to cover what you are really about! You do not want Parliament to work. I am not saying whether I would agree with you on that or not, but at least come clean and say that what you really want is a state of anarchy. If you have already got amendments down on a report you have not seen, I can only congratulate you on your brilliant political judgment and your clairvoyance.

(Laughter and applause from various quarters)

President. — I call Mrs Dekker.

Mrs Dekker. — *(NL)* Mr President, the observations by Sir James Scott-Hopkins and Mr Rogers give me an opportunity to look further at this point of order. The Luster report was most definitely not available in The Netherlands. Not only have individual Members not received it until today but it was also not obtainable through the official representation of Parliament in The Netherlands.

A second point is that some twenty non-attached Members, apart from Mr Pannella's group, are not represented in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure not even as substitutes. This means that we have not been informed in any way of this report.

Mr President, I would appeal to you once again not only to make this point the subject of a majority decision but to take clear steps to ensure that those of us who are in a minority position are also given the opportunity on so fundamental a matter as the Rules of Procedure, the regulations governing decisions taken by our democratic institution, to express their own views. In the present situation it is quite impossible for us to deal with the Luster report and take part in the discussions of it.

President. — I call Lady Elles.

Lady Elles. — Mr President, the impression may have been given that there was no representative of the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defence of Independent Groups and Members in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. We have had Mr Coppieters' cooperation the whole time since he replaced Mrs Bonino. So that group has been represented throughout the entire course of the deliberations on the Luster report.

President. — I call Mr Sutra.

Mr Sutra. — *(F)* Mr President, I should like to speak on the subject of the five last points on this week's agenda. These points already appeared on the agenda of last month's part-session. I was under the impression that items which were not taken for lack of time during one part-session were always given priority on the agenda of the next.

Sir Henry Plumb, the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, has already had to write to the Bureau of Parliament to see to the inclusion of these items last month. I see that they have been put down yet again for the end of the week. I should not like them to be held over a second time.

I shall therefore be grateful if you would confirm that items not taken will be entered as a matter of priority on the agenda of the next part-session. We cannot spend our time discussing items over which we have no authority while relegating until 10.00 p.m. on Thursday evening those matters on which Europe does have real authority.

President. — Not at all, Mr Sutra, no such decision has been made.

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(F)* Mr President, I am not quite sure where we have got to because you have not yet read out my proposed amendment.

Having said that, Mr President, I have come in for enough criticism to speak again and point out, first of all, that Lady Elles has been in this Parliament for twenty months and still does not know the difference between the Non-attached Members and the Technical Coordination Group. I hope that she will learn the difference in the next eighteen months. The Technical Coordination Group was present but the Non-attached Members were absent.

Secondly, Mr President, there are eye-witnesses here. It is incorrect to say that this document was distributed in all the languages on 23 February. This document was distributed in one single language on 23 February. In other words in many cases it arrived too late. Forwarded through the normal channels of Parliament, this document did not reach us in Italy. And in the case of The Netherlands, Mr President, you have heard what Mr De Goede had to say.

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

Mr President, you have allowed Sir James Scott-Hopkins and others to develop their arguments. I hope that you will recognize that I have the same rights. What I wanted to say, Mr President, is that . . .

President. — I think I have gone out of my way to allow you to put your point of view. I thought you were going to reply to Mr Rogers but you have not, so I would ask you to conclude.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Mr President, I reserve the right to speak when you call me on my amendment. I would insist that our Rules of Procedure do not allow us to deliberate in this fashion. I personally would say to Sir James Scott-Hopkins that I am not a hypocrite and I am always direct, faithful and precise in my attacks. I shall prove that to him.

President. — At the moment I am raising those changes in the agenda that have been proposed by the President. I now come to those proposed under Rule 12, so I take it that the changes proposed by the President and the chairmen of the groups are agreed.

I call Sir James Scott-Hopkins.

Sir James Scott-Hopkins. — I really hate wasting the time of the House, but let us get this absolutely clear. I have a document in front of me here which says that the Luster report was distributed in all languages on 26 February. Is this, or is this not, true?

President. — Mr Scott-Hopkins, I refer it directly to the officials concerned. They are assuring me that it is true, but I will have checks made. It is certain that the President can report to the House exactly what the position is.

I now come to those changes to the agenda proposed according to Rule 12 (2). I have received from the Technical Coordination Group a proposed amendment to the agenda, tabled under Rule 12, seeking to delete the Luster report from the agenda of this part-session.

I think Mr Pannella has already moved this proposal but he may, under the rules, speak again if he wishes.

Mr Pannella. — (F) Mr President, we are asking for this debate to be held in April because we think that the constitution of an assembly, its Rules of Procedure, are sufficiently serious matters for all Members to be allowed time to form a direct and responsible opinion.

I would stress yet again, Mr President, that while considering this report and our Rules of Procedure to be bad we could confine ourselves to tabling only a few amendments if the report is held over until April. It is our right and duty to reflect carefully before holding a debate and pronouncing on so important a matter.

President. — Mr Bangemann will speak against.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Mr President, I well recall the debate and vote in this Chamber when we discussed for the first time the amendments which we all felt necessary to the Rules of Procedure, this — let me stress — to facilitate the work of Parliament and not in any way to restrict the rights of minorities. In that debate Mr Pannella voted for the discussion of a set of amendments; he considered that those amendments should first be examined by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions in order to give careful thought to them. He said that he and his group would then be willing to see a public vote taken here in the Chamber. I see now, Mr President, that everything that Mr Pannella said was untrue. Everything he says and promises is idle chatter. He promised months ago to participate in the debate in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. How often was a representative of his group there; how often did he himself take part by submitting amendments? Not once. Now he is asking for the debate to be held over. My group opposes that. This morning in a meeting with the President we said that the vote would not be taken until the special part-session because we want an opportunity to examine all the amendments at our leisure. Mr Pannella can ask no more than that. He is doing now exactly what he has always done. He is obstructing our proceedings. He comes from a country which as a whole looks favourably on European policies and on the development of the Community. What he is doing here is against the interests of Europe and against the interests of his own country.

(Applause from certain quarters)

In one last sentence I should like to revert to something that Sir James Scott-Hopkins said. In Brussels Mr Pannella complains that translations of a few pages are costing us 2.7 million Belgian francs. But then he alone — not even his group as a whole — tables 200 amendments and does not bother at all what it all costs.

(Applause from certain quarters)

Mr President, a Member of Parliament of that kind is not worthy of the name of Member of the European Parliament. I say that advisedly and hold myself responsible for my words.

(Applause from certain quarters)

President. — I call Mr Balfe to speak in favour of the motion.

Mr Balfe. — Mr President, I am speaking for the motion but — let me make it clear — not on behalf of the group. It is extremely easy at times like this to

Balfé

personalize around the figure of Mr Pannella opposition to what he is putting forward. I would like to point out that even if the officials are right and this report was released in all languages on 26 February, we are still being asked to debate a report affecting the Rules of this Parliament within a total of 11 days of its coming out, a report which contains some major changes to the Rules of this Parliament and ones which I think we would do well to reflect upon. This Parliament has now worked for well over 1½ years and it has worked with a reasonable degree of success. It certainly needs a reform of its rules but I do not accept that that reform is now so urgent that it needs to be pushed through at this particular session. I think that we must try and get away from the image of Mr Pannella and what we do or do not feel about him; we must reflect as to whether this item should have precedence on this agenda at this time.

In our group, the chairman of our group read out a long list of items of business which were still awaiting consideration by this Parliament. We then went on within our group to consider that there might well not be another session in March for this vote to take place. What is being proposed, Mr President, is that we should have a vote at a session of this Parliament which has been especially called for a completely different purpose, i.e. agricultural prices.

I would ask Parliament to reflect very carefully before it continues with this item on this agenda at this time, because I believe that, whatever one may think, there are issues of parliamentary freedom and of the rights of Members of this Parliament which are important enough for this report to deserve the proper reflection and the drafting of amendments. So I ask you to support Mr Pannella's proposal without necessarily confusing the matter with the image you have in your own minds of Mr Pannella because many of you are voting for your rights as back-benchers which is something many of you may some day surely be.

(Applause from certain quarters)

President. — I call Mr de Goede.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Mr President, Sir James Scott-Hopkins has asked you whether you can indicate on behalf of the Administration when the Luster report was sent to Members. He stated that it was available on 26 February. I have since enquired how matters actually stand. The report was available during the group meeting in Brussels last week but as you know the Non-attached Members have no access to the information given to groups. At all events my communication was addressed to the Non-attached Members and to all those who did not attend a group meeting. The report was not sent and the Secretary-General must accept that fact; we found it in our pigeon holes for the first time this afternoon.

President. — I have already pronounced on my proposed course of action as regards to that.

(Parliament rejected the proposal)

I have received from Mr Forth and others a proposal seeking to modify the agenda by introducing a Question Time with questions addressed to the President of the sitting.

As such a procedure is not provided for in the existing Rules of Procedure, this amounts to a request to amend the Rules of Procedure, analogous to one of the proposals contained in the report by Mr Luster and cannot therefore be considered as a proposal relating to the agenda.

I ask Mr Forth not to move the request as it is out of order.

I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — I believed that I had submitted to you, under Rule 12, a request to amend the agenda duly signed by at least ten Members. I believe that request to be reasonable and right. I would contest your ruling that this amounts to a change in the Rules of Procedure, because it simply asks for something to be introduced into this session of Parliament which this Parliament may want to do. I believe, Mr President, that for you to take the line that it calls for a change in the Rules of Procedure is incorrect. If this is the case, I would ask you to put it to the vote in the normal way, with one speaker for and one against. But I am challenging your ruling, Mr President, with the greatest regret. You cannot sidestep a matter like this — a matter which requests a change in the agenda — and simply rule it as being a change in the Rules of Procedure. I do not believe that this is acceptable to the House.

President. — Mr Forth, I stand by my ruling. I am quite clear that what you are proposing would constitute a change in the Rules of Procedure and I cannot therefore accept the motion.

I will report the matter to the President and the Bureau at tomorrow's meeting and ask for confirmation of my ruling this afternoon.

I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, as you will know from the debate on women's rights, Mr Forth and myself are not normally in accord. But I must back up his interpretation in this particular case, because it seems to me that if we are talking about rules of procedure, the grossest violation occurred when the Bureau promulgated an extra meeting without bringing it

Enright

before the House. At its January part-session Parliament agreed that this should and must happen. I would therefore appeal to you, Mr President, to refer the matter back to the Bureau and bring it before this House. I cannot possibly accept that ruling under any logic whatsoever or under any of our present current Rules of Procedure.

President. — I call Mrs Dekker on a point of order.

Mrs Dekker. — (NL) Mr President, this is a point of order. A few minutes ago in the debate you pointed out, or rather noted, that no remarks had been made about putting to the vote the proposal to hold over the Luster report. I raised my hand at that point to indicate that I wanted to make a remark and was therefore asking to speak. However, you disregarded me. Sir James Scott-Hopkins raised his hand after me and was called straightaway. If you now try to prevent me from speaking on the grounds that we are voting on a point on which, as I clearly indicated before the vote, I wish to make an observation, I must say to you in all honesty, Mr President, that I do not think your conduct of this Assembly to be satisfactory. I did propose to you that this matter should not be put to a majority vote but that you as President should also have regard to the views of the minority which cannot be expressed through an ordinary vote, and the minority position is that we did not receive and could not receive this document and were not present during the discussions.

President. — That is my ruling.

The order of business is agreed.

(Protests from various quarters)

I call Mr Balfour.

Mr Balfour. — Mr President, I think it would be useful if you could guide the House as to whether any motion, such as Mr Forth has put forward, which seeks to change the agenda of a part-session can in future be ruled out of order by the President as involving a change in the Rules of Procedure. I think that you ought to take into account the fact that Mr Forth's proposal is prompted by the general feeling of unhappiness in this House by the way the President and Bureau is running the business of this House.

(Applause from various quarters)

The fact that this effort by Mr Forth is ruled out of court, because it seems to involve a change in the rules of Procedure, is frankly unacceptable.

President. — Mr Balfour, I was quite clear in my ruling. The reason why I did not put the matter to the vote is that this is a question for decision by the President. It is quite clear to me that the motion is out of order. Furthermore, it is evident that the proper procedure for dealing with a matter of this kind is through the Luster report, as it is already included in the Luster report. Therefore there can be no question of my allowing this matter to be moved, nor is there any question of my allowing any further debate. If you wish to raise a genuine point of order, Mr Forth, which actually relates to the order business of the House, please do so, but I cannot allow the debate to continue.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, how can you say that something which seeks to question the President can be ruled out of order by the President? This means that we are completely locked out, that there is no way that this House can call the President to account. You are in effect ruling out any attempt by Members of this House to question the President. This is nonsense!

President. — I call Mr Bangemann.

Mr Bangemann. — (D) Mr President, perhaps you will allow a Member who does not belong to your group to clarify your position somewhat. I am convinced that you are right. There is a misunderstanding here. The President did not reject criticism. This motion seeks rather to change our Rules of Procedure and our Rules provide that motions of this kind should pass through the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions in the normal manner. Nobody can make an *ad hoc* request to amend the Rules of Procedure. The President is therefore quite right in not allowing this motion to be discussed since its purpose is to amend the Rules of Procedure and that must be done through a discussion or motion in the committee responsible.

(Applause from various quarters)

President. — As the servant of the House and as your President, I do have certain powers designed to ensure that the debate on our normal agenda continues as rapidly as possible, without being delayed — in my view unnecessarily — by points of order.

I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — My point is very simple and very brief, Mr President. It is merely to say that if that is not accepted by the Chair then it seems to me we should vote against the entire agenda and then adjourn for this evening.

(Laughter)

President. — If you wish to move that sort of motion you must do it under Rule 12, Mr Enright, . . .

(Laughter)

. . . in which case it had to be put in an hour before, and you have not done so.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, you in fact asked whether we approved the agenda, but you did not put it to the vote. It has not yet been put to the vote. I am not proposing anything at all. I am merely going to vote against the agenda. It is a straight forward matter of for or against and therefore does not come under Rule 12.

President. — I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — *(I)* Mr President, I too shall vote against 'your' agenda because it is inconceivable that a Parliament worthy of the name can presume to vote at such short notice new Rules of Procedure which completely reform its own constitution. Our group has only eight minutes speaking time; the Group of European Progressive Democrats has fourteen minutes. This is not a debate it is an assembly of yes-men in which attempts are constantly being made to extort votes by bureaucratic expedients.

(The President seeks to interrupt the speaker)

Six minutes are not enough to speak on the Rules of Procedure. This is merely putting an end to all debate. This is not an order of the day. You can keep your disorder of the day which is nothing more than the usual disorder.

President. — We are at the moment dealing with the question that has been raised by Mr Forth. I have given my ruling and I am taking a number of points of order. I presumed you wished to speak to that, but you did not.

I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — Mr President, I sympathize with the difficulty you are having with the representative of the Roman circus, but I think some of us are indeed trying to help you. May I draw attention to the actual wording of Rule 12? It says that at least 10 Members shall have the right to propose at each part-session one alteration to the draft agenda. I do not, with all due respect, see how what Mr Forth has proposed is at variance with the Rules of Procedure of this House, and I urge the President representing the Bureau not to act as a Parliament within a Parliament but to allow this to go forward.

President. — May I say in reply to that, Mr Cottrell, that the Treaty quite clearly lays down how our Rules of Procedure are to be amended. What has been proposed is a change in our Rules of Procedure, and I stand firmly by the ruling I have already given.

(Applause from various quarters)

I would say to Mr Enright that he is, of course, quite right.

I call Mr Galland on a point of order.

Mr Galland. — *(F)* Mr President, I want to table a procedural motion and I apologize for doing so. It is incredible, Mr President, that the person who Rule 8 (2) of the Rules of Procedure requires to maintain order in this Chamber, in other words the President himself, is unable to cut off a speaker's microphone and has to use his gavel sometimes without managing to interrupt a speaker who should have sat down. I therefore ask you to make arrangements to preside effectively over our proceedings and cut off a microphone when you wish to interrupt a speaker without having to use your gavel. That is a matter of elementary organization; the appropriate possibility exists in every Parliament.

(Parliament adopted its agenda)¹

4. Action taken by the Commission on the opinions of Parliament

President. — The next item is the Commission's statement on the action taken on the opinions and proposals delivered by Parliament at its part-session of February 1981.²

I note that no one wishes to speak on this item.

5. Western Sahara

President. — The next item is a continuation of the debate on the report by Mr Lalor, on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on the Western Sahara (Doc. 1-532/80).³

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (C-D Group).

Mr Schall. — *(D)* Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have known since the days of Lenin that there are just wars which serve to extend the

⁽¹⁾ Deadline for tabling amendments — Speaking time: see Minutes.

⁽²⁾ See Annex.

⁽³⁾ See Report of proceedings of 13 February 1981.

Schall

power of Soviet imperialism and 'unjust' wars i.e. wars to defend free and independent states against socialist and communist aggressors. We are also familiar with the vocabulary by which the giant propaganda and disinformation apparatus of the Soviet Union with its worldwide ramifications sets the mood for its 'just' wars. The only pity is that there are here in Europe so many 'useful idiots' — that is not my term but Lenin's expression for the innocent and credulous among us.

The resolution on the Western Sahara drawn up so carefully by the Rapporteur and adopted by a large majority in the Political Affairs Committee after thorough examination is to be welcomed since the European Parliament is taking a position in it on a conflict and focus of crisis which has been simmering for many years in North Africa, i.e. in a country which is one of our immediate neighbours. We surely all agree on the aims of European cooperation with the peoples and nations of Africa namely on the need to maintain peace, to support the national and economic development of the African nations on a basis of growing cooperation between them and the European Community while safeguarding independence, freedom and human rights. It is therefore all the more important for us to see to the respect for those aims in our immediate neighbours in Africa on the other shore of the Mediterranean which joins us together.

Where then are these people of the Sahara who are supposedly fighting for their freedom to be found? Any of us can visit them, see them and talk to them. There are some 80 000 persons.

Since the foundation of a Moroccan state over a thousand years ago they formed part of Morocco and were only temporarily a Spanish colony. Today close on 100 percent of these inhabitants of the Western Sahara are to be found in the coastal zone. They are living peacefully and rapidly developing their country; they take their full part in the local, regional and national democratic system of the Kingdom of Morocco. I would ask those colleagues who are thinking of voting against the Lalor report to tell me why they just cannot or do not want to recognize the facts and realities?

The situation is everywhere the same. In Afghanistan, in South Yemen, in the Western Sahara and El Salvador, to name only a few examples, we are all familiar with the same old pattern. Under the pretext of national liberation, communist functionaries first lay and prepare a fire which is then topped up with dynamite and ignited when the time is favourable and the risk appears limited. Libya is a gigantic armoury. There are 2 300 tanks there. Why? Is Libya threatened? 7 000 communist functionaries are being trained in 20 camps. Their supreme boss does not answer to the name of Abdullah but to that of Boris Ponomarenko and he is a General in the Soviet KGB. No Western Saharan people live in the Oasis of Tindouf which has been seized from Morocco. On the

other hand there is a heavily armed troop of mercenaries in Tindouf; they are well paid by Libya, Algeria and the Soviet Union and trained by East Germans. There are mercenaries from Mali, Tchad, Niger, Mauritania and Algeria, but no Sahrawi people. When you visit the locality the reasons are obvious. From its base in Tindouf — separated from the Atlantic by 400 km of desert — this foreign legion known as the Polisario is obliging Morocco to defend a 350 km line with severe financial and military sacrifices and for the sole purpose of defending its peaceful population living in that area and its own national independence. Those are the facts. Almost everybody in this Parliament does, I hope, advocate peace, detente and disarmament — obviously bilateral — and the elimination of crises and focuses of tension. Here we have an opportunity to act by taking political decisions instead of merely talking. Anyone who really does advocate peace must approve this resolution which is doing no more than call for such peace. If you reject this resolution you are consciously or unconsciously playing into the hands of Soviet imperialism whose aims are obvious to us all.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Lord Bethell. — Mr President, I am sorry that the chairman and first vice-chairman of the Political Affairs Committee are unable to be here for the continuation of this debate. However, in their absence I would like to report to the House that this matter has been very carefully considered by the Political Affairs Committee and that the Lalor report was passed there by a considerable majority. In my personal capacity and on behalf of the European Democratic Group, I would like to congratulate Mr Lalor on the tremendous amount of work he put into the report and on coming, in the end, to what I think is a very even-handed and excellent judgment on the conflict in the Western Sahara.

It was only after the Political Affairs Committee had reached its decision in October, Mr President, that the most amazing campaign of pressure began to be mounted against Members of this House to induce them to vote in this way or that. It is, I think, a campaign without precedent in the history of this elected Parliament or indeed of its nominated predecessor. I trust that colleagues have put behind them any pressure that may have been mounted and will judge this report purely on its merits when we come to vote on it in a few minutes time.

It is indeed a serious matter. The Community has very close links with the area in question. We have close links with Algeria and Morocco; many citizens of those two countries live in our Community. It is a nasty little war that is causing grave economic and social damage to both countries. It is right that the Community should express its concern about the war

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in the Sahara on the borders of Algeria and Morocco. It is right that the Community should offer to mediate, should such a request be made to us. All this is contained in Mr Lalor's report which has, I think, presented a very fair picture of the conflict as it stands. Mr Lalor asks Morocco not to allow its territory to be used for pursuit into Algeria, into the Tindouf region. By the same token it asks Algeria not to allow its territory to be used as a base for attacks on Morocco. All this is fair and I commend the report very warmly to the House.

We are, I believe, all in favour of self-determination for the Sahrawi people as for all other people. But there the question must be raised: who are the Sahrawi people? How many are they and where are they? While there may be various disputes about who is a Sahrawi and who is not, one thing has emerged very clearly from the investigations that are being carried out by Members of this House and by those who have been to the area on both sides, namely, that very many of the people who purport to represent the Sahrawi area, in the Tindouf region, are not in fact from that area, but are from other parts of the world, from Mali, Mauritania, Algeria and Libya and who have no basis whatsoever for being called representatives of the Sahrawi region. These people have been set up by outside agencies purporting to represent the Sahrawi. They do not.

Let us, Mr President, try to pass this report quickly. It has been on the agenda, or nearly on the agenda, for too long. It was a pity, I believe, that we were unable to conclude this matter in Luxembourg last month. Again, it is quite unprecedented to carry a debate over to a following session in this fashion. This has never happened before as far as I know. It has also been five months since the matter was passed by the Political Affairs Committee.

Let us try to conclude the matter now and proceed to other important issues which bind us with the Maghreb region, with Algeria and Morocco, in particular the question of enlargement of the European Community. Delegates from that region are coming to Strasbourg this week and they want to talk about serious, constructive matters, involving them and all their peoples in the enlargement negotiations that are in progress at the moment.

In conclusion, Mr President, I would simply like to say that this matter has been very carefully considered by the Political Affairs Committee. I believe that we struck the right balance. Mr Lalor did a lot of very hard work on it and I think he reached a sensible, even-handed conclusion. I very much hope that this House will adopt this report.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Communist and Allies group.

Mr Denis. — *(F)* Mr President, I wish to put on record the total opposition of the French Communist and Allied Members to the report and motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Lalor. The retrograde, even indecent, nature of the positions expressed in those texts can only give rise to indignation. I have no hesitation in saying that it is indecent to claim today that we can disregard the inalienable right of the Sahrawi people to self-determination and independence. It is indecent to try to disregard the organization which represents that people: the Polisario and the government of the Democratic Sahrawi Arab Republic. The very existence of these people is being denied. As a French anti-colonialist militant this takes me back twenty-five years to the time when the governments, on the right and left alike, in my own country denied the right of the Algerian people to their national existence — a fact which did not prevent that people, with our solidarity, from winning their struggle and taking control of their own destiny. This attempt to disregard people who are engaged in a combat is a well-known practice but the Sahrawi people and their legitimate representatives cannot be ignored. The attitude followed by some people here is not innocent either: it enables a struggle for national independence to be presented as a conflict between two states: Morocco and Algeria. What is the purpose of this provocative attitude? Is an attempt being made to jeopardize the necessary cooperation between the Member countries of the European Community and Algeria? That would be turning our backs on the interests of the French people and of others. Do we want to see even greater tension in that area and damage to the cause of peace? That would be all the more irresponsible and dangerous as, only a few days ago, President Chadli Bendjedid restated the willingness of Algeria to contribute to a rapprochement between the points of view of the parties concerned i.e. between the Sahrawis and Morocco.

Yes, the struggle is between the Sahrawi people on their own soil and the State of Morocco which has claimed to annex the former Spanish Sahara, defined as long ago as 1960 by the United Nations organization as a territory to be decolonized. The UN has pronounced on several occasions by an overwhelming majority, notably last November, in favour of the unalienable right of the Sahrawi people to independence and self-determination and has asked for the Polisario Front as the representative of the people of the Western Sahara to participate in any search for a just, durable and definitive political solution. Only three days ago the United Nations Human Rights Commission deplored the continuation of the occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco which is preventing the people of this territory from exercising their right to self-determination, independence and other fundamental human rights.

I would remind you that a great many international organizations — in particular the Organization of African Unity — have on several occasions adopted

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similar positions. They were right to do so. Does this Assembly wish to stand out as the only body seeking to disregard the most obvious realities? I would add that when the Democratic Sahrawi Arab Republic celebrated its fifth anniversary a few days ago, it noted with pleasure that it had already been recognized by 45 countries, including most African nations and a great many of the ACP countries associated with the European Community.

Why then should we stubbornly attempt here to defend such indefensible theories? You are trying by all possible means to obtain the adoption of this text; perhaps that is explained to some extent by the disastrous situation of the Moroccan aggression and attempted annexation. The King of Morocco has only recently hurried to Paris seeking greater military aid. And while the Moroccan press is openly threatening Mauritania, an ACP country, we are told that the United States are sending more than a hundred additional M-60 assault tanks. Is this resolution which you are trying to make us adopt another kind of reinforcement?

As long ago as 1966 King Hassan II said: 'the whole matter is settled'; but the Moroccan war has settled nothing. A few days ago a Moroccan official himself stated to 'Le Monde' that the construction of a wall around a 'useful' area of 30 000 km² was intended to prevent the Polisario from behaving like a fish in water in the middle of the population. But that is tantamount to admitting that the combatants are on their home ground on their own land among their families. Moreover the town of Hagounia right in the heart of this so-called redoubt was, by the very admission of Morocco attacked twice in late February . . .

Yes, gentlemen, in the Sahara and elsewhere the time when the fate of peoples could be settled by gunboat politics is behind us.

Mr Herman. — (F) What about Kabul?

Mr Denis. — (F) . . . According to the principles and resolutions of the UN and OAU the only solution lies in recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, in respect for the frontiers inherited from colonial colonisation in Africa and by negotiation between the parties concerned i.e. the Polisario Front and the Moroccan government. Not only would adoption of the text now before us further discredit this Assembly as though deliberate attempts were being made to hold it up to ridicule, but it would also serve only to delay the only possible solution at the price of new suffering and grief among the people concerned since we have today received a letter from the Moroccan Embassy calling upon us to help it in this undertaking. We firmly reject this text.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — (F) Mr President, I do not wish to go into the detail of this well structured, balanced and carefully thought out report. The balanced and measured terms used enable us to adopt a unanimous position on it. I would like to congratulate Mr Lalor for bring his task to completion under difficult and often perfectly intolerable conditions.

(Applause from certain quarters)

May I draw attention now to the general concept which explains the interest that we Europeans take in this report. It deals with the complex situation affecting the whole Mediterranean basin. Beyond the historical, juridical and human justifications which are clearly highlighted in a report that there would be no point in me paraphrasing, this Europe of ours which we are seeking to consolidate is facing a pressing threat: may I remind you, if there is any need to do so, of Lenin's famous dictum: 'One day Europe will be undermined by Africa'. In the present situation it is all too easy for the Soviet Navy to establish its position in the Mediterranean. When you, Mr Denis, say that the days of gunboat diplomacy are over, I agree with you. I agree with you entirely because the Soviet vessels which I have seen in Mediterranean waters were not gunboats but Kirvak class vessels, in other words missile-launching ships which are in no way comparable to simple gunboats.

(Applause in some parts of the House)

The presence of the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean is inevitably accompanied by the presence of the American Navy which is seeking to prevent the Mediterranean from becoming a Soviet inland sea.

In this respect the Lalor report provides us not with a certainty — that is unfortunately a long way off still — but at least with a hope and, at all events, a desire to take the tension out of the situation since it concludes by stating the need for the Ten to act as mediators in an attempt to bring Morocco and Algeria closer together. That rapprochement would serve the interests of the two peoples concerned and also those of Europe which is seeking to establish or maintain with the Maghreb countries relations of trust based on cooperation. To our Moroccan and Algerian friends we can only say that the future of this war will depend on the ability on both sides to reconcile points of view and defuse hostilities: either the war will extend with the risk of setting the whole of Africa alight or it will fade out as though carried away by a Djibli — one of those sand storms which are so frequent in the desert. We place our trust in our friends and the Lalor report reflects our confidence in the desire to restore peace and cooperation.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Group of the European Progressive Democrats.

Mr Israel. — (*F*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Lalor report obviously warrants the attention which the whole of our Assembly is giving to it. Not only Morocco, not only North Africa but the whole international community has an interest in peace in this part of the world. The problem of the Western Sahara raises a whole series of difficulties. First the right of peoples to self-determination, secondly the right to take action against aggression, the policy of sanctuaries, and last but not least, the possibility open to the European Community to use its good offices. The Lalor report therefore skilfully and intelligently touches on certain essential aspects of international relations. As to self-determination, it is quite clear that all the peoples of the world have a right to that but the great originality of Mr Lalor's report resides in the fact that it raises the fundamental question of determining who must be entitled to self-determination. Should we not ask whether the individuals concerned are really a determinate body. The question of knowing whether the Sahrawi people are actually involved here is essential and can lead, in a sense to progress in international relations. What might then happen? Are the Sahrawi actually Sahrawi? Everybody hopes so but nobody really believes that. There are several signs of infiltration and that subversive elements are coming from other countries deeply modifying the destiny of the authentic Sahrawi people. Mr Lalor has therefore said that it is in the interest of the Sahrawi themselves for us to determine first of all exactly who are involved before opening the right to self-determination.

Similarly this report raises the question of hot pursuit. Is a country entitled to exercise that right when it suffers aggression from outside its frontiers? That is an imperative question and Mr Lalor concludes that this right of pursuit is not universal or essential and that Morocco cannot pursue those who attack it back to their ultimate bases. How can it be claimed that the Lalor report is not objective when it calls upon Morocco to refrain from the natural reflex of hot pursuit against aggressors? The same report also condemns the policy of sanctuaries. It calls upon Algeria not to grant asylum to those who sow disorder in countries with which Algeria maintains normal relations, including Morocco in particular.

It is vital to understand that the report now before you contains an objectives analysis and bold proposals. It proposes that the European Community should not be content with passing a moral judgment on the situation in North Africa but that it should intervene effectively, propose its good offices and, in a word, if asked to do so, play the role of an arbitor by pointing out where right, justice and peace lie. What better example of intervention by the European Community in international political life can be imagined than that

proposed by Mr Lalor. He is the Vice-Chairman of my own group and, on behalf of my group, I wish to thank him most warmly and invite you, ladies and gentlemen, to give him your support.

President. — I call the Group for the Technical Coordination and Defense of Independent Groups and Members.

Mr Capanna. — (*I*) Mr President, I am convinced that today's sitting of Parliament could not have got off to a worse start from the two-fold angle of procedure and substance.

The Lalor resolution makes no mention of the existence of the people of the Western Sahara except in the fifth recital and then only because the fifth recital lists the motions for resolutions tabled by a number of Members of Parliament. The Lalor resolution speaks at most of innocent people without determining who they are, where they are and what they are doing.

Mr President, today I have convinced myself of something else: this Parliament is becoming a home for specialists in the subtle and miserable art of evasion — a practice which consists in never referring to the decisive aspects of an issue especially when major international policy issues are at stake. We have a further example; on Wednesday and Thursday next we shall be discussing the situation in another tense part of the world in our debate on relations between Europe and the countries of the Persian Gulf.

Then too we shall have a resolution — apparently presenting the situation from the left; but that resolution refers to all kinds of things except the Palestinian resistance by the PLO. We find ourselves in a Parliament which is afraid to name names — a Parliament in which essential factors are passed over in silence when it debates certain subjects of strategic, human and political importance.

Mr President, it has not been possible to table amendments to the Lalor resolution because, in politics, ridicule is itself a more effective weapon. It is not possible to vote on a resolution like this which proposes that the Ten should act as mediators between Morocco and Algeria and says nothing whatever about the most important aspect of the conflict namely the tension and existence of a people fighting for its own self-determination under the leadership of a front for national liberation, the Polisario.

In conclusion, Mr President, may I say to the whole House and above all to the Rapporteur, Mr Lalor, that there is no point whatever in continuing our debate.

President. — I call Lord Bethell on a point of order.

Lord Bethell. — Could you please clarify for us, Mr President, when the vote on the Lalor report will be taken.

President. — We put the debate on that report at the end of Wednesday's agenda. The vote will be taken immediately after the debate.

I call Mr de la Malène.

Mr de la Malène. — (*F*) I am strongly opposed to the postponement of this matter to the end of Wednesday's agenda; I should like it to be taken at the beginning of the day after the urgent motions.

President. — Mr de la Malène, the agenda that we have just adopted envisages that this debate will be concluded at the end of the proceedings on Wednesday. The vote will be held immediately afterwards.

I call Mr Beyer de Ryke.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — (*F*) Mr President, that is a salami tactic; you are cutting the debate up into slices.

(*Applause from certain quarters*)

President. — We come back to the debate. I call Mr d'Ormesson.

Mr d'Ormesson. — (*F*) Mr President, for my part I want to extend my warm congratulations to Mr Lalor on this excellent, restrained and reasonable report. Those among us who consider the claims made by the Polisario to the Western Sahara legitimate are being deluded by the tactics of the Communist world. These claims are unfounded for three essential reasons.

In 1974 the last census conducted by the Spanish authorities showed the presence of 74 000 persons belonging to various ethnic groups in the Western Sahara. The creation within the UN of a state with such a small population would cast the ultimate discredit on an institution which surely has no need of that. Moreover, reference to the colonial era to dispute the rights of the Kingdom of Morocco to the Western Sahara is surely a strange attitude on the part of some among us who refer on other occasions to the Western democracies? Surely our real role is to help the emerging African countries to dispose of the territories which are essential to the full exercise of their sovereignty as the first condition for real emancipation! Reason and common sense show us that the Republic of Algeria already has at its disposal 2 380 000 km² comprising all the oil resources of the Sahara while the Kingdom of Morocco has only 730 000 km² including the Western Sahara.

We all of us want the bonds of fraternal and living friendship which used to unite Morocco and Algeria to be restored. A process of détente is perceptibly beginning between these two countries thanks to the mutual understanding between their heads of state. And détente is the firm hope of all among us who are worried by the wish of Colonel Kadhafi to dominate the area, Kadhafi who is the Trojan Horse of the Soviet power and force. If it were to reach the Atlantic coast of Africa and isolate Morocco in order to overturn its government, the Soviet Union would then effectively control the straits of Gibraltar.

The ultimate objective of the Soviet Union in Africa, after taking over the horn of East Africa, is surely to win its Western outpost at the very time when it is increasing pressure in Angola and Mozambique to drive a wedge between Northern and Southern Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the time of illusion and hesitation is over — the Community must now show real determination. We must send help to the emerging countries of Africa who ask us to do so and in some cases we must grant military assistance if it is required. The very survival of those countries and of our own is at stake.

(*Applause*)

President — In accordance with our agenda we now interrupt this debate. It will be continued on Wednesday with the present list of speakers, which is now closed.

6. Question Time

IN THE CHAIR: MR ROGERS

Vice-President

President. — The next item is Question Time (Doc. 1-964/80).

We shall begin with the questions to the Commission.

Question No 1, by Mr Seligman (H-529/80):

When will the Commission communicate an updated research and development programme in the aeronautical sector in general and in particular a proposal to establish a Community Transonic Wind Tunnel Facility?

Mr Cheysson, Member of the Commission. — (*F*) In its reply of March 1979 to Mr Normanton, the Commission already stated that the trans-sonic wind

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tunnel was an important and essential project for the European aerospace industry.

However, before submitting proposals to the Council the Commission wanted to ascertain its position on the aeronautical research programme submitted in July 1977. In its reply of 1979 to Mr Spicer the Council stated that it was unable to take a positive decision in favour of the aeronautical research programme. However, the Commission's proposals had been prepared in response to a request from the Council in March 1977.

The Commission therefore felt it impossible to continue to put forward proposals which were of no interest to the Council. It withdrew these proposals. For the time being it has no intention of putting forward new proposals. The four Member States participating in the trans-sonic wind tunnel project — Germany, France, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom — have been continuing their preliminary studies. The Commission has maintained contact with the steering committee and, at the last meeting of the latter on 6 September 1980, Mr Davignon informed the committee that if the project gained the benefit of Community support the Commission would be willing to explore appropriate action with it.

Mr Seligman. — I am glad to hear from the Commissioner that some new action has been taken in this matter. But he must realize that the European space industry must be given a chance to produce aircraft competitive with the USA. And in view of the fact that a transonic low-temperature wind tunnel is absolutely vital for that development to take place and in view of the fact that the Americans will have one in 1982 and that the nations that he mentioned have asked us to collaborate and make this a truly European project, will he undertake to include this item in the draft-budget when it comes to us in July?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) The four countries concerned have not yet submitted requests to the Commission. As I said just now, if he does receive such a request, my colleague, Mr Davignon, will take account of it and try to find possible sources of finance for the construction of facilities — probably through the European Investment Bank — for low temperature equipment.

Mr Turcat. — (F) Can Commissioner Cheysson tell us whether the projects which were envisaged at the meeting of 6 September 1980 and mentioned by him, are capable of bringing us up to a technological level equivalent to that of America for future products as Mr Seligmann asked?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) Nobody is better placed than the Honourable Member himself to answer that question.

Mr Fergusson. — I simply want to ask the Commissioner whether he would at least consider putting a token entry into the budget this year. We tried to get it in for the last budget, as perhaps he knows, and Mr Davignon gave us the impression that he was in favour of doing so, but for one reason or another at the last moment the idea was simply dropped. I hope he will consider putting a token entry in now simply because everybody knows that sooner or later this is going to get approval. Does he not consider that this would smooth the course of the installation of a wind tunnel for the greater benefit of European aeronautics?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) I shall certainly forward to my colleague responsible for the industrial sector the suggestion which has just been made to us. I would simply like to call the attention of Members to the heart of this problem and not to the simple budgetary aspect. The Council of Ministers does not consider that it should for the time being concern itself with an aeronautical research programme at Community level. That seems to me unfortunately more important than deciding whether or not to make a token entry in the budget. However, as I have just said, I will put the Honourable Member's proposal to Mr Davignon that this budget entry be made.

President. — Question No 2, by Mr Cousté (H-618/80):

Is the Commission aware that many exporters in certain European countries are finding it difficult to compete on international markets because of the high value of certain currencies and would it not agree that this is an unfortunate effect of the European monetary system?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (D) The European Monetary System has had a beneficial effect on exports by the Member States and on trade within the Community. Intra-Community trade in goods accounts at present for some 50 percent of the Community's overall foreign trade and has been most favourably influenced by the satisfactory functioning of the European Monetary System. This has been characterized by a high degree of exchange rate stability and limited adjustments of the leading rates. It must, however, also be stressed that the monetary system and its rules are not the only decisive factor; the trend in relative prices and costs in the individual countries also plays its part particularly as regards the competitive position of our Member States. We note that our position in relation to third countries has not been significantly influenced by exaggerated revaluations of one individual Community currency or another. A further important point for the operation and importance of our exchange rate system is that our monetary policy must be permanently coordinated in relation to the major third country currencies. I see this coordinating role as being particularly important. It is making a major contribution to a reduction in the

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Community's external trade risks. All in all the Commission is convinced that the system has had a favourable effect on the competitiveness of our Member States.

Mr Cousté. — (F) I am perfectly satisfied with that answer. I only put my question because certain journals and daily newspapers had attributed to the Commission certain statements which, as Mr Haferkamp's answer has shown, do not reflect the Commission's views.

I therefore take note of the increase in intracommunity trade and of the zone of stability constituted by the European Monetary System. I welcome that and urge the Commission to see to it that concertation with third countries continues, having regard to monetary movements affecting the Dollar in particular.

My supplementary question is this: does the Commission intend to pursue its consultations with third countries to ensure the normal play of external relations with the European Monetary System involving not only the Dollar but also the Yen?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) The Commission will continue its work of coordination within the European Monetary System, both within the Community system for the participating Community currencies and also outside the Community vis-à-vis all currencies which are important to our economic development and competitive position.

Mr Purvis. — The Commissioner is aware that several currencies in Europe are still protected by artificial exchange controls. Is the Commission taking determined action to eliminate such artificial exchange controls and to use concerted monetary and economic policies to bring together naturally the economies of Europe, the monetary policies and the currencies within the EMS?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) I believe that these controls essentially apply only in the area of capital transactions. That has been a source of constant concern to the Commission for many years. In the context of the task of setting up a common capital market alongside the Common Market as such and with a view to harmonizing and approximating economic conditions in the Community, the Commission has repeatedly, and with the support of this House, made efforts to attain that aim and it will energetically continue to do so.

President. — In the absence of their authors. Questions Nos 3 and 4 will receive a written reply¹.

I call Mr Cottrell on a point of order.

Mr Cottrell. — Do the Rules allow me, Mr President, to raise a supplementary question to the original question when its author is absent?

President. — No, unfortunately they do not, Mr Cottrell. The only safeguard against that for other Members is for them to put a question down themselves.

In the absence of the authors Questions Nos 5 and 6 will receive written replies¹. At the author's request, Question No 7 will be held over until the April part-session.

Question No 8, by Mr Pedini (H-719/80):

On 3 December 1980, the Administrative Board of the European School in Luxembourg decided, against the democratically expressed views of the majority of parents and pupils, to introduce a substantial change in the school timetable. As about 70 % of the European School budget is financed by subsidies from the Community budget, did the Commission representative take account of the wishes of those concerned and did he consult the other Institutions before expressing an opinion on the subject? Further, is such a change feasible, given the teaching and welfare (canteen, transport, etc.) provision at the European School?

Mr Cheysson, Member of the Commission. — (F) The argument dates back to 1968. There has thus been time for full account to be taken of the views expressed by the parents and pupils of the European School in preparing the decision and in the many discussions held on this subject within the administrative board of the school.

As the Honourable Member is aware, a large majority of members of that board came out in favour of the five day week considering this measure had no major drawbacks from the educational point of view, that the eight other European Schools already functioned satisfactorily with a five day week and that the change would bring organizational and economic benefits in its train. That being so, the opinion voiced by a very small majority of parents in favour of the six day week has been overruled. In expressing his position in the administrative board, the Commission representative laid particular emphasis on the energy saving aspect. A report by two independent experts showed that a fuel saving of five percent could be made, accompanied by better use of the material facilities. One reservation was, however, put down by the Commission's representative to the effect that acceptable solutions must be found to the material problems faced by the personnel of the Community Institutions and, in particular, the personnel of the European Parliament.

¹ See annex of 11. 3. 1981.

Mr Pedini. — (I) Commissioner Cheysson's answer does not satisfy me fully. It seems to me, as a teacher, that when decisions of this kind are taken, account should also be taken of the views of the pupils and I note that the pupils who, alongside the teaching staff, are the persons primarily concerned, pronounced by a large majority of about 65-70 percent in favour of maintenance of the old working schedule. For that reason the Commission representative should have shown much greater caution before giving his overall endorsement to the decision which was taken.

Secondly, I have reservations about the supposed energy savings resulting from this decision because while it is true that there may be a saving we need to know what further expenditure will be incurred in adapting the School to the new arrangements.

President. — Question No 9, by Mr Moreland (H-720/80):

In the interest of ensuring a fresh approach to the Community's problems, does the Commission believe that a Commissioner should not retain the same portfolio for a second four-year term?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) As in the past, this Commission is a mixture of solid experience and new blood. Seven of its Members are new, not new to Europe, but new to the Commission. However, the redistribution of portfolios has not been confined to the seven new Members, as two-thirds of the jobs have changed hands, with the result that only two Members retain exactly the same responsibilities they had before.

Mr Moreland. — Obviously there is no criticism implied here of the excellent work done in the past, but does the Commission not agree that having seven Commissioners doing the same or similar jobs as before is rather a lot? Does the Commission not agree that the President should review this situation over the next four years for, after all, it could be said that the President himself has had five jobs over the last two years?

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) There must be some mistake here if people believe that seven Commissioners are doing exactly the same jobs as they did before. In my first reply I said that only two Commissioners were in that position, while the others, including Members of the previous Commission, have changed responsibilities, have been given additional responsibilities or have received a different mixture of responsibilities.

Mr Welsh. — The Commissioner will surely accept that that answer is entirely meretricious because, without even trying, I can think of three Commis-

sioners, namely Mr Haferkamp, Mr Ortoli and Mr Giolitti, who hold exactly the same portfolios that they held before. In view of this, and in view of the fact that he is a new Commissioner, perhaps he would recommend to his colleagues a selfdenying ordinance that they make it a rule within the Commission to recommend to the Member States that no Commissioner holds the same portfolio in a new Commission as he did in the old one. Would he please do that?

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) I will not. But I would say, if it is pointed out that some Commissioners have retained their previous portfolios and received no extra responsibilities, that two Commissioners have kept their portfolios, Mr Cheysson, who has retained development, and Mr Giolitti, who has retained the coordination of the Community's Funds and regional policy. I could go into a great deal of detail on the additional responsibilities given to other Commissioners. For example, Mr Haferkamp has been given additional responsibilities since the last Commission, and Mr Ortoli also has a changed portfolio. Of course the honourable Member is right in saying that not all the portfolios have been radically changed, but changes have been made, some receiving new responsibilities and others having responsibilities transferred from other Commissioners.

President. — Question No 10, by Mr Fischbach (H-723/80):

Although under the staff regulations of officials of the European Communities the post of official of the European Communities is in no way incompatible with the holding of a local government office, officials are not allowed time off work to deal with local government business or attend local government meetings in the day-time.

Is the Commission therefore prepared to follow the example of the national authorities and enable Community officials to hold political offices compatible with the staff regulations by allowing them to take time off work to the extent that their office requires?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) The Commission agrees with the honourable Member that a Community official may normally hold an elected local government office and remain in active employment. However, before a decision is taken as to whether an official elected to public office may remain in active employment pursuant to the second paragraph of Article 5 of the Staff Regulations, the appointing authority has to consider the circumstances under which the office will be exercised, and any consequent disadvantages to the service involved. Several officials elected to local office have remained in active employment, and the appointing authority moreover accepts properly documented applications, granting up to 12 days per year off work to exercise such office.

Mr Fischbach. — (*F*) If I have understood you correctly, Commissioner, the officials of the European Communities concerned who hold a local government office, compatible with the duties of an official or other servant of the Community may, on request, be released from their work to the extent that the performance of their local office so requires. Is that the case, Commissioner?

Mr Dalsager. — (*DK*) Yes, the honourable Member is correct that officials are entitled to 12 days off work to perform such duties. But of course some offices in local government would be so comprehensive that they would be incompatible with employment as an official of the European Communities. I do not need to tell you that you could hardly combine the offices of Mayor of Paris and head of a directorate-general or anything of that kind. But ordinary local government office should be compatible within the existing rules.

President. — Question No 11, by Mr Vié (H-679/80):

Many investigations have revealed the appalling conditions in which child labour is employed in the countries of South-East Asia, particularly in the textile industries

Could not the Commission, in renegotiating the Multifibre Arrangement, make imports from any particular country conditional on the adoption by that country of legislation protecting children's rights?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (*D*) On the basis of negotiating directives to be adopted by the Council, the Commission will shortly be entering into negotiations on a new Multifibre Arrangement. The Commission is aware of the problem raised by the honourable Member.

The idea of including a social clause in the Multifibre Arrangement is indeed interesting and important but we must recognize two facts: firstly, many supplier countries have repeatedly made it clear that they would not accept such a clause. They see this — as they have stated during conferences and discussions in the International Labour Organization — as an intervention in their own internal affairs. They have also voiced the suspicion that a clause of this kind might be used as a lever for protectionist measures. I want to make it quite clear that in our discussions of social matters and the safeguarding of important social rights we have always stated that we had no intention whatsoever of misusing this aspect for protectionist purposes. We consider social responsibilities and social conditions to be far too important for them to be linked in any manner or form with trade problems although it is suspected in some quarters that we might do so.

Secondly, and this is a further important point, the question arises as to whether a social clause of this

kind can actually be included in an international trade agreement, i.e. in an agreement which covers only the textile and clothing industry before agreement of principle is reached in the International Labour Office on the principle of the inclusion of such clauses. Discussions took place last year on this matter in the International Labour Office and an attempt was made to pass a resolution in favour of such a clause. That attempt was blocked by representatives of the developing countries.

The Commission is of course pursuing its discussion of these matters; I would further point out that on several occasions in the past the Commission has, in its proposals to the Council of Ministers, also taken account of the need for international labour standards, international working rules and respect for basic rules in international social conditions to be respected but the Council of Ministers has not yet given a concrete answer on these points.

Mr Vié. — (*F*) I thank the Commissioner for his answer but his answer does not satisfy me.

He said that the Multifibre negotiations were conducted on the basis of directives from the governments and I deduce from that that no indication has been given at that level to the Commission to include clauses of this kind in trade negotiations. I further deduce from the Commissioner's answer that the Commission itself apparently has a highly cautious attitude on this point and I am astonished by that caution. Quite obviously there is no question of any interference in the internal affairs of the States with which we wish to develop our trade relations and also to promote their own domestic development.

If it is legitimate to demand in our trade agreements respect for technical standards in the case of products sold in the Community, is respect for the rights of children less important than a technical standard?

Mr Haferkamp. — (*D*) The answer obviously is that the rights of children and observance of fundamental social standards must take precedence. However, it is equally clear that we are involved here with negotiations and not with a situation in which we can lay down our wishes; with the best will in the world we cannot simply issue a decree on this matter. We shall have many more occasions to engage in these negotiations and consider the position of our negotiating partners. You may rest assured that we shall do everything — obviously also in cooperation with the European Trade Union Confederation and the International Trade Union Confederation — to achieve progress in agreement with our negotiating partners on these matters in these and other negotiations.

Mr Welsh. — Could the Vice-President, Mr Haferkamp, give us an absolutely categoric assurance that under no circumstances whatever will developing countries be offered improved access for their textile products under the new Multifibre Arrangements as an inducement to persuade them to accede to any of the ILO Conventions?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) I have no intention of discussing such important negotiating positions and possible means of pressure at this juncture.

Mr Albers. — (NL) Surely it makes a difference for the Commission that a recent conference of the International Textile Unions expressed a wish for this social clause to be included and the same request is supported by the union movement in the developing countries themselves?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) It would be highly satisfactory, and we would do all we can to help, if the trade unions did not stand alone on this matter. It would be extremely useful to have the support of all the governments in this matter and to see the three parties represented in the International Labour Office — the undertakings, unions and governments of our countries — adopting a common position. We should be only too happy if the ten Community governments together with the unions and representatives of the employers would follow a unified position in the International Labour Office.

Mrs Viehoff. — (NL) I understand from reports that use of child labour is also being made in the Bolivian coal mines. To avoid any semblance of protectionism in the area of textile imports we might perhaps investigate coal imports when child labour is being used in the pits. Nobody could then reasonably accuse us of protectionism since we may want to keep textiles out of the Community but I do not think that is the case with coal.

President. — Your question is out of order, Mrs Viehoff. The question relates to the Multifibre Arrangement and the textile industries.

At the author's request, Question No 12 will be held over until the April part-session.

Question No 13, by Mr Lalor (H-694/80):

What action is the Commission going to take concerning the project which won awards in the recent 'European Passive Solar Competition 1980'?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (D) The purpose of this competition was to draw the attention and interest of architects to the develop-

ment of buildings and structures which facilitate the use of solar energy. It was not our intention to use the projects which won prizes in that competition for buildings financed by us. We are currently holding internal discussions to ascertain to what extent assistance can be given to buildings with passive solar architecture. Direct financial assistance from budgetary resources is not possible at present. We are now bringing the results of this competition which we too consider highly positive to the attention of a broader public. We have exhibited the prizewinning projects together with models on various occasions and shall continue to do so. Publication of full documentation on the results of this competition and on the prize winning projects is in preparation. It will be made available to interested members of the public in a few months' time. We also intend to repeat competitions of that kind at regular intervals.

Mr Lalor. — May I first of all apologize for the absence of my four colleagues in the follow-up to this question? They are grounded because of the strike in the UK. There is no intention of insulting Parliament by their absence.

Is it not strange that the Commission should sponsor such competition without any pre-arranged positive intention of following up the outcome? Does the Commissioner not agree with me that his answer, where he talks about circulating results and other papers, represents a very unimaginative follow-up to such a creative type of competition?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) I said just now that we do not have the budgetary resources to construct buildings based on the prize-winning projects. We knew that in advance and it was indicated when the competition was published. That raises a further question: might it not have been better to drop the whole project if we knew in advance that we would not have the money to build these buildings? I do not think that is so. I believe that the competition itself in which over 200 architects took part, the interest aroused by this action and the interest aroused by our exhibitions as well as the demand for publications themselves constitute a first important step. We should be only too happy if budgetary resources were made available to us at some stage to enable us to do more than we have done up to now. But the fact that we are unable to do everything does not mean that we should abandon the little that we can usefully do.

President. — In the absence of its author, Question No 14 will receive a written reply¹.

Question No 15, by Sir Fred Warner (H-698/80):

Can the Commission confirm to Parliament that, in view of recent allegations concerning the prices paid for

¹ See Annex of 11. 3. 1981.

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cereals sent to Cambodia under the United Nations Disaster Aid Programme, it was able to obtain rice for supply to the same country under the Community's programmes at prices not substantially above those prevailing for normal transactions in rice on world markets at the time?

Mr Cheysson, Member of the Commission. — (F) In 1979 and 1980, aid in kind from the Community to this part of the world stood at 30 000 and then 35 000 tonnes of rice for the Cambodians in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. For the sake of completeness we should add the 30 000 tonnes of rice and 1 000 tonnes of milk powder for refugees of other nationalities. All this rice was purchased for the account of the Community under the World Food Programme including the quantities of rice which were subsequently distributed through other channels. To do this the World Food Programme purchased rice by public tender. It therefore paid the normal world market price of the time, ranging from 260 to 310 dollars per tonne in August 1980. The Community could not have obtained rice on more favourable conditions. At all events, given the large quantities to be supplied and the situation prevailing on the Community market at that time it would not have been able to supply such large tonnages so quickly. But the urgency of the operation made that necessary.

Sir Fred Warner. — I thank the Commissioner for that very satisfactory reply. There was considerable public anxiety at the time in view of certain allegations in the newspaper against quite another organization, and it is good to know that the Commission has proceeded with total circumspection in this matter.

I notice that the purchase were made by the *Programme alimentaire des Nations unies*. I am somewhat ignorant of the Commission's purchasing practices. Is it normal for the Commission to make its own purchases from time to time, or does it always place them through another body in this way, and, if so, why do we never purchase, for instance, food grains from our intervention stocks?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) In this particular instance it is true that purchases were made by the World Food Programme which, as Sir Fred Warner knows, is an agency of the FAO. We followed this line because of the urgency of the operation and the great distances involved. I might add that the very large quantities of rice needed for these refugees in Cambodia and Thailand could certainly not have been found on the Community market. To answer the honourable Member's specific question, our normal practice is to buy on the Community market the food supplies required by us to carry out our food aid programmes. A special derogation is needed for purchases to be made elsewhere: in Thailand in this case and on the Central American market in the case of emergency aid

for Nicaragua etc. We normally make our purchases on the Community market through the national intervention agencies. Those agencies issue the calls for tender in the light of the destinations and quantities to be supplied and of the delivery dates imposed.

Mr Purvis. — The Commissioner will recall that it is almost exactly a year since both he and we were very concerned about the tragic situation in Kampuchea. Would he take this opportunity to assess for us the situation regarding food and seed supplies in Kampuchea, relations with non-governmental organizations and the Kampuchean authorities and the impact that EEC food and seed aid has had on the situation and its part in bringing about the major improvement that has occurred?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) Everybody, UNICEF, the Red Cross and other non-governmental organizations recognize that the 1980 programme was a success to the extent that the most difficult phase was passed without a disastrous situation occurring.

What is the position today? A few large camps in Thailand are now properly organized and receive supplies from World Aid; the number of refugees has fallen sharply and there are now only some tens of thousands in the frontier regions between Thailand and Cambodia; the other refugees have gone back home. Nevertheless on the actual frontier, quite substantial aid is given to Cambodians who come with carts — the term ox-cart-bridge has been used — to receive supplies on the frontier and then return home.

Within Cambodia the distribution of seeds has enabled a harvest to take place which, without equalling former levels, nevertheless reached two-thirds of those levels. The product of that harvest has been left for the most part to the peasant population who now no longer have a food problem. That problem still exists in the towns. Our anxiety and that of UNICEF and the Red Cross, stems from the fact that the governments, aware of this improvement, may fail to see that we are still in a period of convalescence and that aid remains necessary in 1981 on a much smaller scale than in 1980, but in the absence of aid the restoration of a satisfactory situation might be jeopardized.

Mr Turner. — The title of this question is 'sales of rice to Cambodia'. Were they really sales, and not aid without any price at all? If they were sales, was it at preferential prices? He will remember that at the ACP Conference the week before last the ACP countries and many of us were anxious to establish satisfactory procedures for selling at preferential prices to Third World countries. I wondered if this was an example of that, or whether it is improperly entitled 'sales of rice to Cambodia'.

Mr Cheysson. — (F) The terminology used in this question is the responsibility of the honourable Member who was kind enough to put it, but I agree with his colleague and I think that the question should have been entitled 'rice purchases for the benefit of the Cambodians' since the question referred to the conditions under which we purchased the rice which we then distributed without charge.

President. — Question No 16 has been held over until the April part-session at the author's request.

Question No 17, by Mr Newton Dunn (H-709/80)

The Commission instructed the Committee of Experts on Pesticides to make a report concerning the herbicide 245-T.

At what date will the report be made available to the European Parliament?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) I am able to tell you that the Commission hopes to receive an opinion on the herbicide 245-T by the Committee of Experts on Pesticides by the end of July, and the intention is to submit it for the opinion of Parliament immediately afterwards.

Mr Newton Dunn. — I find the Commission's reply rather encouraging because it will have been over a year since we asked them to report on this. I am very glad it will be reported on by the end of July.

I do not wish to ask a question in view of the Commissioner's reply.

President. — Question No 18, by Mr Adam (H-727/80):

The proposed regulations, COM(80) 333 final, submitted to the Council by the Commission contained in the preamble the statement that 'the supplementary measures should aim to realise special programmes of investments which contribute to greater convergence of the economic policies of the Member States'. The supplementary measures were also seen as 'promoting convergence by improving the structures of the United Kingdom economy'

These references to economic convergence have been deleted from the Council Regulations as published in the Official Journal L 284 of 29. 10. 80, pages 4-8, Regulation Number 2744/80. Article 1 of the proposed regulations gave as one of the aims 'the reduction of regional disparities.' This has also been deleted from the Regulations approved by the Council.

What is the reaction of the Commission to the deletion of the principles of economic convergence and the reduction of regional disparities from the Council Regulations?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) The Commission can in fact confirm that the supplementary measures for the benefit of the United Kingdom as laid down in Regulation Number 2744/80, form part of the general objective of reducing regional imbalance in the Community. The Commission further believes that this Regulation contains no provision which might be incompatible with the aforementioned measures as proposed by the Commission.

Mr Adam. — There may be nothing laid down that is contrary, but in practice it is not working out that way. Is the Commission aware that the British Government has relegated the northern region of England, which on any analysis would rank as a priority area for assistance, to the third place from the bottom of the table in the allocation of these funds? Is the Commission aware that the special programme of road investments does not include any reference to improvements to the A 1 road north of Newcastle-on-Tyne, even though this has been listed as a priority by the Commission? Will the Commission therefore give a firm undertaking to re-examine the way in which the supplementary measures are being operated, with particular emphasis on the reduction of regional disparities, and report its findings on this to the Parliament?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Clearly the initial initiative for proposals must come from the British Government after which a study is made in consultation with the Commission to determine whether the measures fit in with the general framework laid down in the regulation. In that context the Commission will obviously do as much as it can to work towards attainment of the objectives laid down in the regulation but it can only do so in the context of that procedure.

Mr Griffiths. — Would the Commission care to comment on the fact that the Secretary of State for Wales has said that the money from the supplementary measures will not go on any additional programme in Wales but will help to prevent the government making cuts in its own programmes which otherwise they would have made, and could he comment on the way this was high-lighted in the *Western Mail* — one of the Welsh daily papers — that on 16 December of last year an £85 million transport assistance programme from the supplementary measures was announced and that on the following day the government announced a £65 million cut in its road building programme in Wales?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) The Assembly will realize that it is not at all easy for me to comment in detailed terms on a problem which arose in Wales. I can only say that the Commission has acted in accordance with the procedure which I explained earlier. It is not for me to determine the consequences arising from this or from other decisions in the United Kingdom.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, could the Commissioner give us an assurance under the terms of this regulation that if the British Government were to put forward projects which have definite Community interest, such as transport infrastructure proposals, they would in fact be eligible for assistance under this programme regardless of the geographical location? And perhaps I could encourage the Commission in this context to give particular attention to the inadequate road network between the West Midlands of the United Kingdom and the East Coast.

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Article 3 for the regulation with which we are concerned here lays down a number of criteria to be respected in order to obtain financing under this special programme. To the extent that those criteria are met the Commission will take account of them and make aid available whenever possible, provided of course that the British Government submits proposals to it.

President. — As its author is absent, question No 19, by Mrs Ewing will receive a written reply.¹

I call Mr Turner on a point of order.

Mr Turner. — In view of the peculiarities surrounding Mrs Ewing and other British Members, may I adopt this question? Next week there is a world conference on fish-farming in Britain which I am attending; I am most anxious to hear what the answer of the Commission is, and I shall not hear it if you send it to her in writing.

President. — No, Mr Turner, you may not, but I am sure that if you approach the Commissioner afterwards he will give you the information you require.

In the absence of its author, Question No 20 will receive a written reply.¹

Question No 21 (H-757/80), by Miss Hooper, for whom Mr Price is deputizing:

Is the Commission aware that sugarbeet refiners have a price advantage over sugarcane refiners, because the cost of raw sugarcane is considerably higher than the basic cost of beet? In view of the Council's obligation to continue refining the ACP sugarcane quota, what consideration is the Commission giving to a method of equalizing this factor and ensuring that sugarcane refiners do not go out of business?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) The Commission does not believe that sugar-

beet refiners have a price advantage over sugarcane refiners. The Communities' obligations under the Convention of Lomé require the purchase and import of ACP sugar if necessary by intervention buying, but not necessarily for refining. But the Commission takes the view that it will still be possible to refine all the raw sugar imported under the Convention of Lomé.

Mr Price. — In the light of what the Commissioner has said, how does he explain the fact that cane-sugar refining capacity is to be lost in the United Kingdom on the grounds that it has become uneconomical in view of the relative prices of beet sugar and raw cane sugar?

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) So far as I understand the situation of the sugar refining industry in the United Kingdom, the management of the factories to be closed announced that they had enough capacity to continue to refine the quantities of sugar involved here. They are therefore talking about a management measure, which I, like the honourable Member, regret, as it will increase unemployment in the area concerned. But, according to the Commission's information, it is more a form of rationalization which will allow jobs in this industry to be retained elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

President. — In the absence of their authors, Question Nos 22 and 23 will receive written replies.¹ Question No 24, by Mr Patterson (H-822/80):

On 23 September 1980, the Commission initiated proceedings against the French Government under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty regarding a possible breach of Article 37 of that Treaty in connection with the importation of bulls' semen into France.

The deadline set for a reply from the French Government was 28 November 1980.

- 1 Has the Commission yet received the observations of the French government?
- 2 What action does the Commission now intend to take under Article 169 to ensure that the alleged infringement of the Treaty does not continue?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) In January the Commission received a reply from the French Government to its representations regarding the import of bulls' semen into France. The Commission is considering this reply, which was in the affirmative, and intends to obtain further information from the French Government, after which the appropriate action will be taken.

¹ See annex of 11. 3. 1981

¹ See annex of 11. 3. 1981

Mr Patterson. — Does the Commissioner think it satisfactory that the reply from the French Government should have been two months late? In view of this fact and also the fact that there are cases pending in French courts where the action taken by the Commission could be very important, will he ensure all speed on the part of the Commission in dealing with this matter? Finally, will he also take action under Article 86 on the abuse of a dominant position by the French artificial insemination monopolies, as the Commission indicated in the rules committee of this Parliament some months ago?

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) I can promise that the Commission will take speedy action, but I cannot say in advance what form it will take. That will depend on the full clarification of the position. It is of course unsatisfactory, as the Member has said, that Member States should reply so late to our representations, but unfortunately it is not an uncommon occurrence. It is only too frequent, especially in the sector I have the honour to deal with at present. But we are dealing with the matter and I can promise the honourable Member that we are working on it with dispatch.

President. — Question No 25, by Mr Purvis (H-762/80):

What steps is the Commission taking to make good a shortfall in supplies of coal from Poland, now that the Polish Prime Minister has forecast his country's coal production at 150 m tonnes during 1981, 43 m tonnes less than Poland's coal production in 1980?

Mr Cheysson, Member of the Commission. — (F) It is quite true that the fall in Polish coal exports is affecting supplies to Community power stations and to its steel industry. However none of the undertakings concerned has complained of a difficult supply situation. This is due in part to high stock levels and also to the reduction in needs following the economic downturn; at the same time imports, in particular from America, have risen. Coal supplies fall within the sole responsibility of the undertakings concerned and the Commission cannot intervene.

Mr Purvis. — It may be that, temporarily at least — and we hope the recession is temporary — coal supplies will more or less balance demand. But on the Commission's own estimates for the future, the demand for coal in Europe is going to more than double, reaching something like 600 million tonnes by the end of the century whereas our indigenous supply will be only in the region of 250-300 million tonnes. Is the Polish situation not an example of the sort of risk we could be running by reason of our major dependence on coal imports from abroad? What steps is he taking to encourage indigenous production in the Community?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) The honourable Member has quoted striking figures and there can be no doubt that all the methods capable of enabling the Community to buy coal from third countries need to be examined in depth.

For the present the main difficulty is one of transport. Coal is available in Australia and North America but the port capacities are not sufficient; I have been told that coal carriers sometimes have to wait for sixty or ninety days at the main American ports.

A systematic effort must therefore be made in the area of transport and in that of new sources of coal supplies at economic and viable rates. We propose to examine with the greatest possible care sources available in Southern Africa, by which I mean in Zimbabwe and Botswana.

Mr Griffiths. — Is the Commission aware, or does the Commission know, if the Council has made any progress on various measures before them to support the development of our own coal industry? We have the coal in great abundance and I would therefore be interested to know if any such initiatives are in the offing.

Mr Cheysson. — (F) If my memory serves me correctly, Parliament recently held a debate on the whole subject of energy and it will certainly hold other similar debates in future. That is the appropriate forum for considering the use of coal. Coal is not after all the only possible source of an increase in our energy production to save oil; it must be set against the other possibilities open to us, not only from the angle of the quantities available but also from the economic angle.

Mr Provan. — I entirely agree with my colleague, Mr Purvis, and with Mr Griffiths on the development of the EEC's own resources. Can I, therefore, have an assurance from the Commissioner that if he develops, as he said in his initial reply, imports from North America and, perhaps, Australia, that this will be done under free and fair competition and that there will be no subsidization, such as sometimes takes place within the Community itself at present?

Mr Cheysson. — (F) Mr President, I have heard no mention whatever of any Community plans to provide subsidies of any kind on coal imports either now or in the future.

President. — In the absence of their authors Questions Nos 26, by Mr van Aerssen, 27, by Mrs Pruvot, and 28, by Mr Megahy, will receive written replies.¹

¹ See Annex of 11. 3. 1981.

President

Question No 29 by Mr Forth (H-831/80)

Can the Commission state whether all Member States of the Community are making the required payments to the Commission, as required by the Treaties and the 1981 budget, and if there is any Member State(s) failing to make such payments, can the Commission state what action it is taking, or proposes to take, regarding this violation of the Treaties, regulations and spirit of the Community?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) With reference to the 1981 budget, I am able to inform you that eight Member States made over the amounts determined by the Commission for the months of January, February and March within the specified time limit. After attempting to bring about a solution, the Commission wrote on 13 February 1981 to the two governments which had not made the payments required on the basis of the supplementary budget adopted on 23 December 1980, stating that we could not accept the arguments adduced by them. We then requested the Member States to make their payment within a month and if they were not prepared to do so to submit their observations within the specified period of one month. In the light of those observations the Commission will have to decide whether or not to continue the procedures on the basis of Article 169 of the EEC Treaty. That will be done in a reasoned opinion addressed to the Member States concerned.

Finally the Commission stated on the same occasion that, in so far as this lay within its powers, it would attempt to improve the inter-institutional dialogue connected with the budgetary procedure in an endeavour to solve the outstanding problems.

Mr Forth. — Given that the Community has a body of law enshrined in the Treaty and given that the Court of Justice has the power to interpret these laws and to make rulings, what I am really asking the Commission is whether, in the light of the fact that certain Member States have had rulings made against them by the Court in the past, it proposes to bring forward proposals to give the Court of Justice real powers of sanctions in Member States which ignore its rulings. If it does not, could he explain why it will not, because otherwise rulings by the Court of Justice can be ignored by Member States, and the Community has no effective sanction against Members who act in this way?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) It seems to me that the Commission can and must work on the assumption that judgments of the Court will be respected by the Member States.

Mr Herman. — (F) We have heard with satisfaction that eight Member States out of ten have met

their obligations in respect of the 1981 budget. Can you tell us who the last recalcitrant Member is since three countries refused at the outset and can you tell us exactly what the present position is relating to the 1980 amending and supplementary budget?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Three Member States raised objections to the 1980 budget i.e. the two which I have named and also Belgium. We therefore wrote our letter to the three countries in respect of the 1980 budget. As to the 1981 budget the Federal Republic of Germany has made representations to the Court of Justice primarily as a conservative measure, as the honourable Member no doubt already knows; this means that one Member State, besides Germany, is left formally in breach of its obligations.

Mr Price. — May I just clarify precisely which two States — as I understand it — have not made payments? There has been a reference to the Federal Republic of Germany having lodged a protest in the Court. Are we to understand that they have nevertheless paid, and which is the State concerned that has not been named and which has not paid? Also, would the Commissioner deal with the second part of what Mr Hermann asked regarding the 1980 supplementary budget? Are there any States that have not made payments, and what is the position regarding Commission action?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I thought that I had given a clear answer but since confusion has apparently arisen, I think it better for me to give precise written information to the Assembly on the situation relating to the 1980 supplementary budget and the 1981 budget. I feel that I was clear enough in outlining the Commission's actions: initial letters have been sent out. On the basis of the observations received on them or in the light of the actions taken by the Member States which are in breach of their obligations, the Commission will then decide on further actions.

President. — I call Mr Price on a point of order.

Mr Price. — Mr President, this is an *oral* Question Time when Members are entitled to expect an answer. The Commissioner has, in my view, sought to avoid giving an answer and has told us that he will provide written information later. I consider that improper, and I ask you to renew the request to the Commissioner to give us an oral answer to the question that was raised by Mr Herman and pressed further by me.

President. — I can't accept that as a point of order. Members are responsible for putting the questions but the Chair cannot be responsible for the answers. If the

President

Commission is avoiding giving answers, that is a matter than can be dealt with, if necessary, by tabling another question. I have seen more than one instance in this Chamber when either the Council or the Commission failed to give an answer to a Member's satisfaction. It is not my responsibility as to the answer that is given, and if people are unhappy, as many people can be on occasion with the Commission's answers, that is a problem you can take up in another way.

Mr Harris. — May I give the Commissioner another opportunity to answer this question and to clear up the difficulty? Can he now please name the defaulting country, and would he agree that the question of enforcement of the rule of law is really at the centre of so many of the difficulties facing this Community, and that in this case perhaps the answer is a simple one? Should not the Commission stop its payments to the defaulting nation until it meets its obligations?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I have noticed that you show a preference for short answers in this Question Time. Perhaps my attempt to keep my answer brief has caused some confusion. To remove that confusion I shall now give you a complete answer but that will take some time. I had hoped to do so in writing. But now that you insist I consider it necessary to speak at greater length so that you can be fully informed on all the points which you want to be clarified. That is how matters stand, Mr President.

President. — The Commissioner is trying to be helpful to Parliament, but he has not given the one-word reply that Members seem to be asking for. The question briefly is — which country?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I thought I had said that besides the Federal Republic of Germany one country is in breach in the case of the 1981 budget, namely France. If I did not say so I say it now, Mr President, but I thought I had already done so. Perhaps I overlooked it and apologize if that was the case. That is the answer. If that one word is sufficient I shall sit down again, Mr President.

President. — In the absence of their authors, Questions Nos 30 and 31 will receive written replies.¹

As they deal with the same topic, I call together:

Question No 32, by Mr Bettiza (H-771/80):

What stage has been reached in the financing of the Milan district heating project, scheduled to come into operation next year, which affects three-and-a-half million people and will lead so savings of the order of 700 000 tonnes of oil a year?

and Question No 50, by Mr Didò (H-807/80):

In connection with the efforts currently being made by municipal and regional administrations, particularly in Italy, to save energy by installing district heating plants, representatives of the region of Lombardy and of a few towns in that region contacted the Commission with a view to obtaining EEC financial support for a scheme to build such plants to serve the city of Milan and a number of others towns in Lombardy.

Can the Commission indicate what action was taken on the basis of these contacts, how it views the scheme and what the current position is?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (D) On 2 February the Commission discussed with the President of the Lombardy region and several local mayors the question of the development of district heating in this part of the Community and took note of the planned regional remote heating system and of the arrangements for its financing. The purpose of the project is to provide district heating for the city of Milan and its suburbs and for twelve other towns in Lombardy; this is a highly ambitious project which will take years to implement and will cost some 2 000 million European Units of Account. The commissioning of the whole system would ensure the supply of heat to an area with a population in excess of 3.5 million. Calculations put the saving of oil at some 700 000 tonnes.

I mention these details to bring the main facts to your attention since they constitute the background to the Commission's support for this project and for its advocacy of the development of district heating systems and installations where ever they are economically viable. The Commission welcomes this initiative from the Lombardy region. A number of problems of Community financing remain to be clarified. Contacts have been opened with the European Investment Bank for that purpose.

Mr Didò. — (I) I am grateful to the Commissioner for his answer but would like a further clarification: does the Commission's favourable answer have any influence, and if so what, on the procedure for making available finance from the European Investment Bank to these local authorities? Furthermore is this the only Community intervention agency or are other bodies involved in addition to the European Investment Bank?

Mr Haferkamp. — (D) The whole subject of financing will be reviewed and consideration will be given to all other possible sources of Community finance under the existing budgetary rules and having regard to available resources.

¹ See Annex of 11. 3. 1981.

President. — Question No 33, by Mr Cecovini (H-772/80):

How does the Commission intend to remedy the economic and social difficulties caused by the increasing use of flags of convenience and reflected in the low rate of expansion (70 %) of the European merchant fleet in the last 10 years, the insignificant amount (20 %) of Community trade carried by European vessels and the inadequate social arrangements for seamen?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DK) The Commission intends to take part in the discussions to be held in the Community in the near future on this complicated and controversial subject, with a view to the extraordinary meeting of the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping to be held in May 1981 on the subject of flags of convenience. The Commission believes there must be a campaign against unacceptable conditions in the shipping industry, under whatever flag, and in certain cases flags of convenience are not solely to blame for unacceptable competition. Other national rules and restrictions may serve to eliminate free competition.

Mr Cecovini. — (I) That answer was couched in rather general terms: of course we all want to do something — the point is what are we actually going to do.

These flags of convenience, these ships flying flags of convenience which are able to compete unfairly with the fleets registered properly under national flags have seriously impoverished our European fleets. My supplementary question is therefore this: could we not take more concrete action and look into the possibility of controls in Community ports? This would enable us to ascertain whether the contracts are being respected and whether the social conditions of the crews are acceptable. Action of that kind would give some protection against this unfair competition.

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) The Commission's intention is to intervene in these negotiations as forcibly as it can. But I would point out that the solutions are not as simple as the honourable Member suggests, as, in trade with third countries it is frequently stipulated that cargoes must be carried in a certain ship flying a certain flag. I shall certainly pass on this request to my colleague Mr Contogeorgis, who is responsible for shipping policy, and ask him to examine the matter to see whether the Community might possibly step up its efforts.

Mr Albers. — (NL) Has the Commission detailed information on the influence of the supposedly poor social conditions on vessels flying flags of convenience? Is that information sufficient to draw comparisons with the position of crews on ships which do not

sail under flags of convenience and the corresponding position of crews on other vessels?

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) Mr President, I do not think any comprehensive survey of the situation and the crews' social circumstances on board such ships exists. I am aware that national enquiries have been carried out, and in response to your request I shall ask Mr Contogeorgis to ascertain on behalf of the Commission how far the findings of these national enquiries can be made available to the Commission so that it may obtain a general view of the situation.

Mr Herman. — (F) While noting the Commission's good intentions with satisfaction, could we not expect rather more eagerness and precision? Could the Commission not use the important resources available to it? I have in mind for instance making the grant of refunds conditional on respect by the carrying ships of the minimum standards of social legislation.

Mr Dalsager. — (DK) I am not certain that it is always possible to impose conditions of this nature regarding the Community's external trade, but I am aware that several countries with whom the Commission and the Community as a whole cooperate do not set the same standards for social and working conditions as apply in the Community's own ships. Nevertheless, many of the countries which cooperate with the Community do not comply with social and other standards that we consider reasonable in many other fields, and we have considered another of them this evening. I shall pass on this request and confirm, all the more emphatically as it falls more directly within my own responsibilities, that we will look into this matter.

President. — The first part of Question-Time is closed.¹

7. Agenda

President. — In view of the state of the agenda for the later part of the week, I propose, as was done at the last part-session, that voting-time on Thursday should begin at 6 p.m.

Are there any objections?

It is so decided.

¹ See Annex of 11. 3. 1981.

President

To allow the Bureau to consider candidatures for committees in accordance with Rule 37, I propose that a decision on this matter be taken at 3 p.m. tomorrow.

Are there any objections?

It is so decided.

8. Agenda for next sitting

President. — The next sitting will be held tomorrow, Tuesday, 10 March 1981, with the following agenda:

- Luster report on a general revision of the Rules of Procedure

- Clwyd report on the economic, vocational and social integration of disabled persons (followed by vote)

3 p.m.:

- Motion for a resolution of the membership of committees

9. Closure of the session

President. — I declare the 1980-81 annual session of the European Parliament closed. Pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty, Parliament will meet tomorrow, Tuesday, 10 March 1981 at 9 a.m.

The sitting is closed.

(The sitting was closed at 8.05 p.m.)

ANNEX

Commission action on opinions on its proposals delivered by the European Parliament at its February part-session

1. As agreed with the Bureau of Parliament, the Commission informs Members at the beginning of every part-session of the action it has taken on opinions delivered at the previous part-session in context of parliamentary consultation.
2. At its February part-session the European Parliament delivered seven opinions on Commission proposals in response to Council requests for consultation.
3. At the part-session five reports were discussed in connection with which Parliament delivered favourable opinions on or did not request formal amendment of the proposals referred to below.
 - Report by Mr Delatte on two proposals concerning isoglucose;
 - Report on the proposal concerning the common organization of the market in cereals;
 - Report by Mr Curry on the proposal concerning the FOD's sugar quota;
 - Report by Mr Gautier on the proposal establishing a common organization of the market in fishery products;
 - Report by Mr Turcat on two Commission proposals on demonstration projects for energy-saving and the exploitation of alternative sources of energy.
4. In two cases the European Parliament asked the Commission to alter its proposals under the second paragraph of Article 149 of the Treaty and adopted proposals for amendments.

During discussion of the

report by Mr Nielsen on three proposals for regulations on the use of substances with a hormonal action and those having a thyrostatic action in domestic animals,

the Commission explained why it wanted to maintain its proposals.

In the case of the

report by Mr Nyborg on the directive determining the scope of Article 14 of Directive 77/388/EEC as regards exemption from value added tax in the case of final importation of goods,

the Commission said it was prepared to accept some of the proposed amendments.

An amended proposal is being prepared and will be sent to the Council and, for information purposes, to the Parliament as soon as it is formally adopted.

5. The Commission also expressed its views during discussions concerning it and took note of the European Parliament's opinions on the
 - Report by Mrs Maij-Weggen on the position of women in the European Community;
 - Resolution on the investiture of the Commission in 1981;
 - Report by Mrs Van den Heuvel on violations of human rights in Uruguay,
 - Report by Mr Balfour on the communication on convergence and budgetary matters;
 - Resolution on duty-free allowances for travellers within the Community;
 - Resolution on President Sadat's visit to the European Parliament and Egypt's participation in the Euro-Arab Dialogue;
 - Resolution on Community assistance for Calabria in connection with the damage caused by the recent floods;
 - Resolution on the indictment of 13 Brazilian trade-union leaders;
 - Resolution on a derogation from Community rules in respect of driving and rest time for drivers in distant islands and sparsely populated or isolated areas;
 - Report by Mr Beumer on fixed prices for books.

6. The Commission took the opportunity to tell Parliament what aid it had granted disaster victims since the previous part-session.

Following up Parliament's resolution on emergency aid for *Calabria*, the Commission has contacted the Italian Government to obtain further information on the nature of the disaster and the extent of the damage

On 25 February 1981 the Commission decided that emergency aid should be granted the *Greek communities affected by the earthquake* of 24/25 February 1981. It is now awaiting official information from the Government on the extent and gravity of the disaster before it decides on the sum to be allocated.

With reference to *emergency food aid*,

the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission, has decided to grant 250 t of skimmed-milk powder to Angola;

the Commission has decided to grant 2 000 t of cereals as aid for Salvadorian refugees in Honduras through the UNHCR;

on 18 February 1981 the Commission decided to grant 500 t of skimmed-milk powder through the UNHCR as aid for inhabitants returning to Zimbabwe.

It has been decided to grant *emergency financial aid*, as follows:

300 000 EUA to the Fiji Islands for victims of the hurricane Arthur;

300 000 EUA to Malawi;

400 000 EUA to aid organizations for the inhabitants of El Salvador.

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