

Annex

Official Journal

of the

European Communities

No 1-311

English edition

Debates of the European Parliament

1984-1985 Session
 Report of Proceedings
 from 13 to 16 March 1984
 Europe House, Strasbourg

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Appearing at the same time as the English edition are editions in the six other official languages of the Communities: Danish, German, Greek, 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: *(DA)* for Danish, *(DE)* for German, *(GR)* for Greek, *(FR)* for French, *(IT)* 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 JAQUET

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)

1. *Opening of the annual session*

President. — Pursuant to Rule 9 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, I declare the 1984/85 session of the European Parliament open.

2. *Approval of the minutes*

President. — The minutes of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments ?

Mr Bombard (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, the minutes do not record that I was present. I was, in fact, here yesterday. Furthermore, I took part in the roll-call vote on Mrs Scrivener's report.

President. — We shall take note of your remarks. *(Parliament approved the minutes).*¹

3. *Votes*²

LIGIOS REPORT (DOC. 1-1374/83 — TAXATION ON WINE)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the vote on the report (Doc. 1-1374/83) by Mr Ligios.³

We should be going on to vote on Amendment No 1 by Mrs Castle on Recital A, but I have a request from Mr Bangemann, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, that a quorum be established.

I must remind the House, however, that a request in this form is not sufficient and that it must be supported by at least 10 Members. I would therefore ask all Members who want a quorum established to rise.

(More than 10 Members rose — Having made a check, the President announced that the House was not quorate).

Pursuant to Rule 85 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, the motion for a resolution is therefore referred back to committee.

Mr Bangemann (L). — *(DE)* Mr President, I should like to say something so that Mr Ligios and any other Members who are interested in this report do not get the wrong impression.

This is the first time that the Liberal Group has ever requested that it be ascertained whether a quorum is present. We have never used this procedure before, since it is often regarded as unfair, but in the light of Mr Ligios' conduct it is the only way to restore a certain level of fairness.

(Applause)

Before the last part-session, the Hopper report was on the agenda. Mr Ligios tabled a motion to remove it from the agenda, saying it would be expedient to discuss both his and the Hopper report at the same time. They were not identical, but dealt in part with the same subject. At the time, my group supported his proposal and the Hopper report was removed from the agenda.

Then, when the Hopper report and the Ligios report appeared together on the agenda at the last part-session, a motion was tabled to remove the Hopper report. Mr Ligios stated that this was perfectly feasible, as the Hopper report could be discussed later. Thereupon the Hopper report was removed from the agenda, while the Ligios report remained.

I and my group consider this to be unfair ; this is no way to conduct our business. We do not oppose the Ligios report, we have simply ensured that both reports appear on the same agenda, which I feel is right and proper.

(Applause)

Mr Ligios (PPE), rapporteur. — *(IT)* Mr President, I am told that this is the first time that the Liberal Group has asked for such a procedure. If we followed this practice, as was done last time by the Conservatives and is now being done by Mr Bangemann, we should certainly not get very far in this Parliament, because on Fridays — as we have seen on a number of occasions — there is almost always not a quorum. We have never resorted to this practice.

I therefore reject Mr Bangemann's accusation of disloyalty on my part. I am not a member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, but I must say that the Hopper motion for a resolution, on a problem that this Parliament has been discussing for years, from 1978 onwards, and which at this moment is being studied by the Council, was such as to blow sky-high all the work that has been done so far.

¹ *Decision on urgent procedure — Topical and urgent debate (announcement):* see the Minutes of this sitting.

² See Annex I.

³ See Debates of 16 and 17 February 1984.

Ligios

My report refers to a ruling of the Court of Justice — this is precisely what the English Conservatives are objecting to — and has nothing to do with the Hopper motion for a resolution, which was to be discussed by the Committee on Agriculture, on a different occasion.

President. — The matter is now closed.

4. Discharge for the general budget

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1390/83) by Mr Price, on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, on the amendment of the Rules of Procedure with regard to the procedure for the consideration and adoption of decisions concerning the discharge to be granted to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the general budget.

Mr Price (ED), rapporteur. — Mr President, the European Parliament is the body responsible for granting a discharge to the Commission. This is one of Parliament's most important powers, yet our Rules at the moment are inadequate because they do not cover various matters and situations that could arise.

The importance of the power stems from the possibility of refusal rather than from the grant of discharge. This was underlined by the Commissioner responsible, Commissioner Tugendhat, several years ago.

In his statement of 7 July 1977 Mr Tugendhat said: 'Such a refusal would hence be extremely serious. The Commission, thus censured, would, I think, have to be replaced.' In other words, he was saying at that time — and all of us have accepted this for many years now — that if the discharge were refused, the normal consequence would be that the Commission would have to resign.

The second reason why it is important is that when granting a discharge the European Parliament can append to its discharge decision comments which, under Article 85 of the Financial Regulation, the institutions have to implement. Overall the importance of the power is that it is the European Parliament which grants discharge, not the Council of Ministers. There are very few of the powers that we exercise that occur in that sort of way.

In the course of discussion in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions the Commission questioned whether refusal could be permanent and pointed out the need to fix the figures for any year. One doubts, I must say, the urgency of doing so when we have a situation year by year where the most important item in the accounts, namely the EAGGF figures, remains to be cleared and often awaits clearance for two, three or even more years after the discharge has

actually been granted. Yet I do accept the need for figures to be fixed and I would point out that, in refusing a discharge, Parliament could include in such a refusal a fixing of the figures. In any event the figures would be fixed by a combination of the discharges for the preceding and succeeding years.

But more than that, in asserting the power of Parliament to refuse a discharge we do not have to say that that is necessarily a permanent refusal. It is always open to Parliament to go back to the matter and at some later date, when it is satisfied with the situation or if it considers it politically desirable, to grant a discharge at that time. That clearly was also considered by Commissioner Tugendhat in the same speech in which he said that refusal to grant discharge can be interpreted in only two ways: either discharge has been postponed or discharge is purely and simply refused. I do not think we need to go beyond that.

The proposal for a rule change now before the House seeks to replace Rule 52, the short rule currently contained in our rule book. This rule would no longer contain the substance of the procedure but simply authorization for an annex, and the annex is also now proposed to the House. Therefore, what we would have is something very similar to the rules governing the adoption of the annual budget. The form of procedure for discharge would be contained in our Rules in a similar way.

The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions considered this proposal, which came originally from the Committee on Budgetary Control and was initiated by its chairman, Mr Aigner. That request was put to the President of Parliament and referred to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. The committee has looked at it from the viewpoint, first of all, of ensuring that the rule matches the terms of the existing Rules and also the form of the existing Rules. Some changes of a drafting nature were made in the original proposal from the Committee on Budgetary Control. Only one change of substance was made. This crops up again because an amendment by Mr Cosentino raises it. It concerns the question whether we should state specifically in our Rules what would happen in the event of a discharge being refused and the Commission not immediately resigning. The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions decided not to say anything further about this in the Rules because it would tie us down and we think that we should adopt a more flexible approach. It is sufficient to say that Parliament has the power to refuse a discharge and to make provisions for how that should be done. We know that the normal consequence of that would be the resignation of the Commission. We need go no further.

This is an important area of Parliament's powers. We need new Rules to provide adequately for the exercise of it. I hope that the House will support my report.

Mr Saby (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, we see no objection to Mr Price's proposal for a decision. However, I should like to differ with the rapporteur and say that we disagree with one aspect of the explanatory statement. Mr Price said, talking about the substance of the problem on page 10 of the explanatory statement, that the power to grant discharge is comparable to the power to pass a motion of censure. We refute this because the discharge procedure involves both an audit of the accounts and a political evaluation of Budget No 1 or No 2.

This, Mr President, means that, if the political evaluation is incorrect and if the targets set by the budget authority (the Council and Parliament) are not achieved, there are lessons to be learned and they must be made known to the committees with a view to the drafting of Budget No 1.

We also note that the refusal to grant a discharge can be explained as a political desire that has not been respected. Where does this desire come from? From the Council of Ministers and from Parliament, the other budget authority. The refusal to grant a discharge in itself cannot and must not be likened to a motion of censure. We also note that the Commission may actually have some share of the responsibility, as, in implementing the budget, it may have been unable to apply the decisions and obtain the political effects we were hoping for.

What we say is that the refusal to grant a discharge, in fact, can serve as an analysis that can help in the preparation of future budgets by evaluating policies and that it may *possibly* lead to a motion of censure. But a discharge must be dissociated completely from a motion of censure.

I believe that is the thinking not only of the lawyers who have to discuss this point — and whom we consulted in Brussels just recently — but of the Commission too.

It seems to me to be more in conformity with the spirit and the legal framework of our institutions, and the Socialist Group wanted to point that out. This is indeed why it is proposing an amendment, in Mr Sieglerschmidt's name, which gives details and raises the possibility of a motion of censure, although the two should not be linked. There is no similarity between the two.

Those, Mr President, are the points the Socialist Group wanted to make and, having made them, it will vote in favour of the proposal for a decision.

Mr Malangré (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am speaking on behalf of my group and I can be very brief. At the present time Parliament's sparring partner is not the Commission but the Council. That much is quite clear. However, Parliament's experience over the past five years has shown us that we need a scaled-down reaction to the

Commission as a kind of tool through which to enforce one of our most important rights as it should be enforced.

As a rule we are perfectly happy to put the seal of our approval on the Commission's work by granting it a discharge. We also need, however, to retain the possibility of voicing any disapproval we may feel in a manner that will leave no doubts as to the extent of our misgivings in each particular case. We regard Mr Price's proposal therefore as a perfectly sensible one, and we are also well-disposed to the idea of the annex proposed by the Committee on Budgetary Control, which Mr Price mentioned. We feel that, in the event of the discharge not being granted forthwith, the annex would make it possible for all the parties concerned to put their heads together, both within their own institution and with all the other bodies in question, thus averting further escalation. We should like to thank Mr Price for having pointed us in the right direction. By and large we will be happy to follow his guidance.

(Applause)

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Parliament's Rules of Procedure are, of course, entirely a matter for Parliament itself, but there are, I think, issues upon which the Commission, perhaps, needs to make its position clear when, as in this one under Community law they affect relations between the institutions.

May I say first of all that the current version of the Rules contains a procedure for refusal to grant a discharge. Now the Commission has never raised any objection to this, which I hope Parliament will accept as being proof enough that it does not question Parliament's power to refuse to grant a discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget. Nor does the rest of what I shall be saying imply that the Commission has changed its mind on this point — not at all. It continues to recognize Parliament's power to refuse to grant a discharge. The reason why the Commission wished to speak to Mr Price's report is simply that by making a distinction between the postponement of a discharge and refusal of a discharge, his proposal provides for a definitive refusal to grant a discharge. I emphasize the word 'definitive', if I may, since this is precisely, in the Commission's view, what it amounts to.

The Commission stands on the provisions of the Treaties, particularly Article 206b of the EEC Treaty and the corresponding articles in the others and also Article 85 of the Financial Regulation. These provisions are crystal clear. Their authors made no provision for a definitive refusal to grant a discharge. Had they wished to, they could have written such a possibility into the texts, stating in what manner and on what grounds it could be done.

Richard

During consideration in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, some members rightly pointed out that the Treaties do provide a power of refusal in certain cases, such as that of the budget, but the purpose of discharge basically is to provide a means of evaluating the Commission's implementation of the budget in accordance with Article 205 of the EEC Treaty and checking the soundness of its financial management on the basis of the accounts and financial statements presented by the Commission for the year in question.

Discharge is the natural, final and, indeed, essential stage in the budget's life. The context in which it has to be seen, in our view, is the evaluation of financial management. The relevant provisions allow the discharge procedure to be interrupted only by postponement. This amounts, indeed, to a temporary refusal to grant a discharge for which reasons must be given. When the Commission is refused a discharge in this way, it is generally required to put its accounts in order and, once this has been done, the discharge is granted.

Mr President, in that Mr Price's new version makes a distinction, in our view, not to be found in the current Rules of Procedure between postponement on the one hand and refusal on the other hand, it clearly provides for definitive refusal, and this, as I said a moment ago, is, in our view, impossible. In terms of financial management, the budget is drafted in the year $x - 1$, is implemented in the year x and is reported on in the year $x + 1$ by the Court of Auditors with a view to a discharge being granted in the year $x + 2$. Without a discharge the process would be incomplete, for the accounts for the year x must be closed to provide a firm basis for those of future years. Moreover, the balance from a financial year is part of budgetary revenue and must at some time become a firm figure so that the balance between revenue and expenditure laid down in the Treaty can be maintained.

Lastly, all those involved in implementing the budget and preparing the accounts — authorizing officers, imprest holders, financial controllers and accounting officers of all the institutions — have major responsibilities. Of course they do, but they also have rights, including the right to defend themselves, which would be affected if refusal to give a discharge were definitive. Mr Price's proposal to that effect would seem, in our view, to be inconsistent with important Treaty rules and with the Financial Regulation, and these must continue to be observed.

The view taken by the Commission, which is that there could be no definitive refusal to grant a discharge, is still perfectly compatible with our constant concern to ensure that Parliament's powers are respected. Under the legislation to which I have referred, Parliament has every opportunity of accompanying its decisions to grant a discharge by whatever

criticisms and requests the implementation of the budget calls for politically; it has, moreover, made considerable use of this possibility in the past. The political sanctions written into the Treaty regarding evaluation of the Commission's management remain intact.

I would conclude therefore, Mr President, that Mr Price's report should be amended to eliminate any contradiction with the Treaties and the Financial Regulation by removing such provisions as would make it possible to refuse a discharge outright, definitively, as opposed to provisions for postponing it. I do not think I can be either fuller or more explicit on this point. Nothing in the Commission's view of Mr Price's proposal is intended to limit or indeed could limit Parliament's political powers. On the contrary, the Commission feels that Parliament, if it wants to react politically in a matter of this sort, has no need whatsoever to introduce into its Rules of Procedure a legal instrument — namely the definitive refusal to grant a discharge — which, in our view, would pose unnecessary problems of Community law.

Mr Price (ED), rapporteur. — I wonder whether the Commissioner, whom I sought to interrupt just before he concluded, would answer two questions. He has, Mr President, in the course of his speech repeatedly referred to a definitive refusal. Would he confirm that nowhere in the draft text being put to Parliament does the word 'definitive' occur, and that I, in my speech earlier on, made it expressly clear that in accepting this change Parliament would not be taking any position as to whether later it would return to a refusal or later grant the discharge — in other words, that I was expressly saying that that question was open? Would he also accept that clearance of the accounts could be done in a motion refusing discharge and furthermore, with regard to the bulk of the accounts, the EAGGF, that the clearance of the figures takes several years after a discharge has been granted? Would he confirm those points please?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, it seems to me that neither of those points needs confirmation by the Commission. They are matters of record. On the first of the points made to me by the honourable gentleman, what he said to the House and what is in the document, the House has heard, and the House can read. The second part is a matter, as I understand it, of Mr Price's analysis of current financial practices in the institutions of the Community. Again, it seems to me, those are matters of record which do not call for interpretation by me this morning.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken on Thursday, 15 March at 3 p.m.

5. *Destabilizing activities of Eastern countries' security services*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1343/83) by Lord Bethell, on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on the destabilizing activities of Eastern countries' security services on the territory of the Community and the Western world.

Lord Bethell (ED), rapporteur. — Mr President, I welcome the chance to introduce this report, which was initiated by Italian colleagues in the wake of the terrible murderous attack on His Holiness, the Pope. It seemed to a number of colleagues at that time that there was a crisis in relations, particularly between Italy and Bulgaria, and that it would be appropriate for the European Parliament to look into the whole question of cross-border Soviet bloc activity, of improper clandestine activity on a multinational basis moving from Community country to Community country across our little-guarded borders.

Our report is the result of an investigation and a summary of the information that has come to your rapporteur's attention. It falls under three main headings. The first is industrial espionage, and I think we have to bring in evidence, in particular the extraordinary figure of 71 Soviet officials expelled during the year 1983, 47 of them from France in one well-known, well-publicized mass expulsion and the rest from most of our Member States. There have never been expulsions of Soviet officials on this scale in any other year. I think it is no coincidence that in that particular year a former head of the KGB was briefly the political leader of the Soviet Union.

Under the second heading we had Soviet bloc attempts at disinformation, at sowing discord between Western allies, particularly between Western Europe and the United States. I have given examples of attempts to provide information — forged telephone calls, tapes, other pieces of concocted information designed to upset relations between our Community countries internally, as well as between us and our allies. There are examples of agents acting on the Soviet bloc's behalf for remuneration and of front organizations, i.e. international organizations, purportedly working on a basis of voluntary contributions but, in fact, receiving funds from foreign powers.

The third and final category is the most serious, and that is terrorism. I am not able to draw any conclusion about the attack on the Pope's life, because that is still under investigation in Italy. However, there can be no doubt that in the past there have been indirect links between the Soviet Union and various West European terrorist organizations. It is true, for instance, that the terrorists Baader and Meinhof were trained in Jordan in 1970 at a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine camp and that in the wake of that there was a series of terrorist outrages in Europe carried out by

German terrorists working together with Palestinian terrorists. There are also strong hints that there were links between the Red Brigades in Italy and the Czechoslovak authorities. One particular incident on the Austrian-Czechoslovak border, is I think an indication of this. However, the worst examples come from Bulgaria. I think it is beyond reasonable doubt that the Bulgarian secret police, probably with the knowledge of the Soviet police, have carried out murderous attacks on Bulgarian citizens in our Community countries — one in Denmark, one in France and the third in the United Kingdom. This is in line with Bulgarian law. They believe that they have the right to carry out such attacks on their own citizens outside their own borders. Their support for terrorist movements, as outlined in my report, fits in very well with their support for national liberation movements. They, of course, decide what is a national liberation movement.

I do not want to suggest that the Soviet Union and its allies are responsible for the majority of terrorism in our countries. That is not so. However, I challenge any honourable Member, including the Socialists opposite, to deny the facts in my report. This is not James Bond. These are not spy stories or detective stories. They are facts. On the basis of these facts, which I think I have outlined in a sober and restrained way, I would invite the House to vote and approve this report.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

Mr Rogers (S). — Mr President, I was very reluctant to speak on this report today, mainly because it is a nonsensical report and really of no value and no significance at all. Besides that, it is not the business of this Assembly. I do not know since when this Assembly has taken unto itself the right to judge such issues. We have seen a gradual shift of national parliaments' functions to this so-called European Parliament, and what the value of discussing matters of this kind is, I do not know. We should be getting on with our own business, discussing farm prices and solving the crisis in the Community, instead of dissipating our attention all around the world on issues which do not immediately concern us.

It is a nonsense report and my Conservative friends here really know this. If one were to substitute the USA and the CIA for Moscow or Russia everytime they are mentioned in the report, the result would be exactly the same. Both of them are playing at the same game, both are up to the same nonsense. That is why this particular report is an absolute nonsense. It starts from a basis of prejudice. Nonsense though it may be in itself, it is dangerous. It is dangerous that this Parliament should be considering this report and that Lord Bethell, the rapporteur, should be pretending that it is an objective analysis of the problems that face countries in the security field. Of course, there is a motive for this on the part of the

Rogers

right-wing parties of the European Community. We have seen a manifestation of this in our own country fairly recently. The purpose of dragging up these bogey men and finding little Reds behind every corner is so that governments like Mrs Thatcher's can tighten their grip on the societies they are trying to control. We see a successive programme of suppression of civil liberties culminating fairly recently in the removal of the right of the workers in the GCHQ to join a trade union when even most of the Conservative Party agreed that it was an absolute nonsense, and everyone on the other side would agree if they could come out from behind Mrs Thatcher's skirts. They say that they want to defend democracy by taking away civil liberties. What nonsense!

Of course, everybody knows that you only need three basic qualifications to get into the British secret service. First of all, you should have gone to a public school. Secondly, you have got to be a little strange or perhaps a little queer. Thirdly, you probably have to be a Russian spy! This is the sequence. I would like to challenge Lord Bethell to tell us how many coalminers, how many steelworkers have proved to be Russian spies. If you want to find out where the Russian spies are, go to the British public schools or to Cambridge University — a school for spies! Probably the Conservative Party as a whole with all their background have more friends in the Russian secret service than Mr Chernenko!

Mr Alavanos (COM). — *(GR)* Mr President, I would like to put a question on a point of order. It is necessary, I think, because the matter I have in mind is not mentioned in the report by our colleague, Hercules Poirot. I would like to ask whether the KGB was behind the Kiessling scandal which rocked public opinion in West Germany and the whole of Europe.

President. — Mr Alavanos, that was not a point of order.

Mr Habsburg (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, I have just listened with interest to Mr Rogers. When you reach my age, you have heard it all before. The British appeasers said exactly the same things about Adolf Hitler: it is a great shame that people never learn.

In fact, this report is very important, for a very simple reason. You should have to be blind to misinterpret the real world situation. It is a great shame that so few people read the Soviet newspapers. Those that can will know that hardly an issue goes by without some mention of world revolution. And what is this but a permanent declaration of war on all those peoples who are not yet under Kremlin domination? Of course, this conflict takes place at varying levels. Some people live in fear of the mushroom cloud or the like. I think they are mistaken. In his most recent speeches, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who really ought to

know what he is talking about, said clearly that the Third World War began long ago, but not, as some people still seem to think, with outdated weapons but with subversion, politics and diversionary tactics. We are therefore very grateful to Lord Bethell for drawing our attention to this situation and for making it clear that this is a conflict involving economic and political weapons, propaganda and subversion. This report only deals with subversion, but there are other areas, for example the whole question of East-West trade, governed by political criteria. People must realize that totalitarianism cannot be judged in terms of a parliamentary democracy, but must be seen for what it is: there is no real difference between Adolf Hitler's ideology and that of those in power in the Soviet Union today.

(Applause)

Lady Elles (ED). — Mr President, I was amazed at Mr Rogers' statement, considering the number of resolutions that have been supported by the Socialist Group on international terrorism and the activities taking place within the Community. This is exactly what Lord Bethell's report is all about. Perhaps Allan Rogers spends so much time now at Westminster that he has not had time to read the report, although he has been put up to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group. But he really should be aware of the terrorist activities that go on in Western Europe. This is precisely the function of this Parliament. I know he has abandoned this House for Westminster, but then perhaps he should not speak in this Parliament any more.

We have already debated in this Parliament one aspect of Soviet military aggression against the West, on the basis of resolutions tabled by Mr Rogers' group. On behalf of my group, I welcome Lord Bethell's most excellent and comprehensive report on another aspect of Soviet aggression which is, of course, complementary to their global policy and their global strategy. Indeed the report reinforces our understanding of Soviet strategy by pointing out that Soviet policy aims at world domination and the victory of world communism.

If we believed originally that military aggression was, as the Soviets claim, motivated by self-defence, this report makes clear what the ultimate Soviet objective is. Indeed, this Soviet objective cannot be denied. President Chandra, who is after all President of the World Peace Organization, has said that détente means intensification of the struggle, but in new forms. Lord Bethell has shown us very clearly in his report what some of these forms are. Part of this struggle — and it is not only in the Community, I would point out — is of course the subversive and surrogate activities of agents planted by the Soviet Union and its satellites throughout the world. Not only have there been depor-

Lady Elles

tations from the western community but also expulsions from less developed countries. Even Bangladesh in 1983 expelled 18 Soviet officials from its territory.

The unscrupulous methods of subversion and surrogate agents not only flout the tenets of international law, agreed both by custom and convention, and abuse the privileges accorded to diplomats but also exploit the benefits of our western democratic freedoms. The activities of spies from the Soviet Union are not confined to diplomatic goals but are aimed at the acquisition of data on technological and scientific achievement from industrial countries. This Parliament should be grateful to Lord Bethell for his courage in exposing some of the activities of which the public seems to be so unaware. It is for foreign ministers to take measures to ensure that our western freedoms are protected and not undermined by these activities.

Mr Ephremidis (COM). — *(GR)* Mr President, before us we have a text which if approved — leaving aside questions as to Parliament's competence in the matter — will drag this House down to the lowest level of disrepute and inconsistency, and this for the reason that it is a very squalid text, steeped in propaganda and cold war attitudes, based on myth, inaccuracies and conjecture by the rapporteur. For example, he is very peeved about the activities of the World Peace Council and therefore tries to blacken it by saying that it receives material support from dubious sources, and he says that for this reason it has been refused non-governmental consultative status at the UN. The facts of the matter flatly confute him, however, and I ask him to look again at what he says in his report. The World Peace Council plays a consultative role at the UN in diverse ways: it is privileged, and has the right, to speak twice a year in the General Assembly and provides the chairman and the secretariat of the non-governmental organizations. So, Lord Bethell, either you are lying or you have been badly informed and have not taken the trouble to check out your information. Furthermore, and this is something which the Bureau should look into, you seek to libel colleagues in this House and members of the national parliaments who participate in the World Peace Council. Perhaps in your next report you will ask for their immunity to be lifted so that they can be brought to book for participating in a dubious organization! I would remind you that the great Einstein was categorized by the FBI and the CIA as a Communist because of his support for peace and his opposition to the development of nuclear weapons. You are following in the tracks of McCarthyism.

Furthermore, Mr President, the rapporteur has referred to destabilizing activities involving the use of forged documents and, lo and behold, cites a Greek case, that of the alleged forged letter from Mr Clark to the American Ambassador in Greece. The letter exists

only in the realms of fantasy. And while he allows that it was not published in any newspaper, he searches around for destabilizing activity and yet ignores the glaring facts of real life. He ignores the fact that the Greek dictatorship was set up according to NATO and American plans, that the same forces were behind the invasion and occupation of Cyprus, that the provocations of Turkish chauvinism in the Aegean at present are NATO and American inspired. Do not delve about in myth, because these are the destabilizing activities. Have you no memory at all of which machinations and organizations were responsible for the killing of Allende, for the Pinochet dictatorship? Do you not remember Grenada and Nicaragua?

Finally, Mr President, the rapporteur makes reference to liberation movements and claims that in supporting them the socialist countries give succour to terrorists. But, Mr President, Mr Habsburg, that same argument against liberation movement fighters was used by Hitler, and Evren is using it today against those who are fighting for freedom in Turkey.

For all these reasons, Mr President, I do not want to get involved in the despicable provocation concerning what is said about the attempt on the life of the Pope. The facts of the case have been ascertained. The rapporteur acknowledges that the case is still before the courts but nevertheless hastens to level charges against other countries with unfounded conjecture.

Mr President, we shall vote against this report, and although we oppose the EEC and the activities of this Parliament, we shall, by voting in this way, be doing something to help you salvage a semblance of credibility and repute.

Mr Romualdi (NI). — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Lord Bethell's report, which we support, only deals with a very small part of the destabilizing activities carried out in our countries by the secret services of the countries of the Eastern bloc, and it does this moreover taking care not to raise in too direct a manner the question of Soviet Russia's responsibility, although it recognizes, as it was impossible for it not to do, that her embassies are packed full of secret agents, as are her military delegations, newspaper agencies and her various shipping and airline offices.

Lord Bethell, great English gentleman that he is, has limited himself — perhaps for fear of not discharging all the obligations that fall to the lot of a democracy, including the obligation to allow its enemies the right to prepare the weapons with which to destroy it — to recalling well-known facts, resounding cases of espionage and complicity in acts of terrorism that have been widely reported in the press and subsequently confirmed judicially — as in the case, for example, of the attempt on the Pope's life, respon-

Romualdi

sibility for which has already been ascertained by the Courts, which sentenced the attacker and ended up by showing the direct involvement of Bulgaria, whose spy network, carefully planted in delicate Italian political and trade union organizations, was dramatically exposed.

But whilst the cases reported by Lord Bethell in the explanatory statement add nothing new to what was already known — for example, regarding the links between the PLO and the Soviet Union, which were directly admitted by the PLO representative at the United Nations, Zehdi Labid Terzi; or regarding the help, including military aid, given to Joshua Nkomo's guerillas, or the case of the Danish spy Arne Petersen and his controller, Vladimir Merkulov, from the Russian Embassy; or regarding the close links between German or Italian terrorism, between Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof and Renato Curcio, etc; or regarding the attacks in London on the Bulgarians, Arnoff, Kostov, Markov — as I was saying, whilst these cases add nothing to what the world already knows, they completely confirm the existence of an impressive number of so-called active measures on the part of the Soviet Union's satellites, the danger of which is all too obvious.

Nor are we faced here solely with an unscrupulous campaign in the press and in correspondence, as occurred in Switzerland with the case of the journalists, or rather Novosti agents, who were guilty of having influenced the local peace movements in a pro-Russian, way: we have to deal with thoroughly criminal activities. In addition there is what Lord Bethell has seen fit to divulge regarding the deeds of the so-called notorious World Peace Council, whose activities, ladies and gentlemen, are those of a genuine fifth column, as is evident from the doings of its president, Rommes Chenders, who has moreover declared that his action was designed to ensure that détente took place under conditions that would be more favourable to the conduct of the fight against so-called Western bourgeois imperialism — for which he was subsequently awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1977.

Ladies and gentlemen, having said that, I should not feel that I had said everything that must on this occasion be said if — as I think of the very definitely unresolved, most serious and tragic question of terrorism in Italy — I omitted to make an appeal to the French government, which is protecting, in France, well-known Italian terrorists and terrorists' accomplices such as Scalzone, Pace, Piperno and Toni Negri. Would it not be fairer and more logical, honourable members of the French government, to take the view that the fight against terrorism is the same for us all, and to do everything in your power to hand over these terrorists to the courts in their own country?

Mr Antonozzi (PPE). — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, democratic freedom provides ample

scope for the free movement and independence of citizens who enjoy their rights to the full, allowing them the widest possible scope for the full development of personality and human dignity.

Unfortunately this tolerant regime, so peacefully open to the exercise of human rights, is taken advantage of by very small minorities bred to doctrines and philosophies that, contrary to true democracy, rely on violence against persons or institutions in an endeavour to overthrow the existing order and set up dictatorial regimes that deprive mankind of any sort of freedom.

These movements and philosophies, which have the effect of encouraging and almost forcing some people to violence, usually come from the extremist political parties. There are totalitarian States and countries that exert pressure in various ways, and encourage individual or collective action, or set in motion their secret service organizations, working under cover in roundabout ways and taking infinite care to avoid discovery as they do so.

On a number of occasions in recent years outstanding personalities in the largest democratic countries and ordinary citizens — whether in positions of authority or not — have been the victims of brutal, inhumane political violence, in an attempt to destabilize the democratic order and international equilibrium that are directed, always in the face of great difficulty, to the fostering of peace.

The assassination of Aldo Moro and of Sadat, as well as other criminal acts, including the very serious attempt on the life of Pope John-Paul II, are the fruits of growing terrorist activities which often barely conceal their links with political interests in countries near or far away that also operate through their secret services. The countries of Eastern Europe — whose citizens, lacking the freedom and guarantees of democracy, are unable to exercise any democratic control — are in the best possible position to take action of this kind which, quite often, they do quite openly.

For this reason the European Parliament very rightly took the initiative of denouncing all those who organize and practise terrorism, accusing at the same time those instigators who often cover themselves with fraudulent, inadmissible diplomatic immunity, as witness the infinite number of false diplomats that have been expelled in recent years from the democratic countries.

We shall vote in favour of Lord Bethell's report because it states this situation clearly, revealing the public and human immorality of it and the harm it does, and rejecting the way it works, which is contrary to every admissible form of communal life that sets out at the same time to be democratic.

Antoniozzi

We stand for freedom in the highest sense of the word, and against those who take advantage of that freedom in order to undermine it and attempt systematically to overthrow and obliterate it. By voting in favour of the Bethell report we shall also affirm our rejection of methods and systems that are contrary to every human principle and every proper political ideology, and which take us back to the days when mankind had not yet won the rights which we, in the European Parliament, feel ourselves to be the custodians and champions of, by virtue of the mandate that we have received from the citizens of Europe.

President. — Mr Papapietro, is it on a point of order?

Mr Papapietro (COM). — *(IT)* Mr President, I should like to correct a statement made by Mr Romualdi. In Italy, for the attempt on the Pope's life, only one Turk was found guilty. Now Turkey is a member of the Atlantic Pact, and not the Warsaw Pact ...

(Interruption by Mr Romualdi)

Mr President, I simply wanted to put the facts right and in the proper order.

President. — Mr Papapietro, that is not a point of order. It is a political comment.

Mr Møller (ED). — *(DA)* Mr President, Mr Habsburg quoted Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Hearing certain speakers from the other side of the Chamber reminds me of Solzhenitsyn's words about the useful idiots who have to be fully exploited in order to undermine the will to resist and the democratic will, in the interests of preserving peace. These useful idiots will always find excuses for what is happening on the other side of the Iron Curtain and will say that the faults are on our side of the Iron Curtain.

Let me give two examples from recent times, both of them close to the country I represent here in Parliament, examples from Norway and Sweden. In Norway an influential former secretary of State became the target of KGB infiltration and gradually influenced Norwegian policy in such a way that it became more and more neutralistic and less and less concerned with adhering to the NATO line. The second example is from the non-aligned, completely neutral and always unassailable Sweden, which tries to play safe and hold the balance between West and East. The territorial waters of this country are violated time after time by Soviet Russian mini-submarines, which sail in close to Sweden's naval bases — I don't know what they are after. These five-metre long mini-submarines, which are armed with nuclear weapons, now patrol the Swedish Skärgård, and at the same time the Danish Government and the leader of the Danish opposition, Mr Anker Jørgensen, are demanding a nuclear-free zone in Scandinavia. But we are not free from Soviet nuclear weapons: they are present in our waters. We

are witnessing military interference here and at the same time, in Norway, we are witnessing political interference in the form of attempts to influence a nation's public opinion through espionage and the bribing of high-ranking government officials.

I see these examples as typical of what is happening in our world and of what is happening also to the non-aligned nations. I am glad that the report does not just mention the NATO countries but covers the Western world in general, for Sweden does belong to the Western world. Despite Sweden's non-aligned status and its wish not to be part of NATO, in cultural respects and in its general attitude to the problems Sweden nevertheless belongs to the cultural community of the Western world. It is therefore a good thing that this question has been brought to the fore. It is not for me to discuss competence, because I am not fully acquainted with the matter. I will merely say that any assembly consisting of representatives of the European countries clearly has the right to discuss what is of concern to them and what must be of concern to their constituents.

Mr Alexiadis (NI). — *(GR)* Mr President, to the thorough, documented and irrefutable evidence which Lord Bethell has presented allow me to add the following in connection with the composition and operations of the socialist countries' diplomatic missions.

It is reckoned that 50 % of the members of Soviet and Eastern bloc missions of all kinds are agents of the KGB or of the corresponding secret services of the USSR's satellites. A comparison of the numbers of persons attached to the permanent diplomatic missions of the Eastern bloc countries in France with those attached to French missions in the communist countries gives a pointer. Russian mission, 543: East Germany, 150: Poland, 130: Yugoslavia, 129: Czechoslovakia, 102: Bulgaria, 86: Hungary, 78: Rumania, 70: Cuba, 75: Russian consulate in Marseilles, 26. In addition to these numbers the Eastern bloc information services maintain a permanent and lawful establishment of approximately 700 employees in France. Against all these France has 49 representatives in Moscow, 39 in Belgrade, 36 in Prague, 35 in East Berlin, 35 in Warsaw, 35 in Bucharest, 34 in Budapest, 12 in Havana, and 6 at the French consulate in Leningrad. A total French diplomatic establishment of 281 compared with 2 089 from the communist countries. Without the KGB, as John Baron states in his splendid work on that organization, the Russian State would be deprived of its main instrument for subversion and espionage in other countries, for the organization, promotion and development of international terrorism, for the instigation of disorder, strikes and agitation on a worldwide scale, and for the universal disorientation of international public opinion. It would also be deprived of its main

Alexiadis

weapon for defaming every opponent and for subverting every free society. The only means of defence open to the West in the face of this mammoth subversive mechanism lies in the collaboration of all the appropriate services of the Ten and in collectively informing the Soviet Union that if it does really desire international détente, it must at some stage stop violating the Helsinki agreements and the United Nations Charter.

IN THE CHAIR : MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

6. *Sexual discrimination at the workplace*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1358/83) by Mrs Squarcialupi, on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, on sexual discrimination at the workplace.

Mrs Squarcialupi (COM), rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, with this report against sexual discrimination at the workplace, and with the motion for a resolution that goes with it, the European Parliament is taking one stage further, on a broader basis, the question of civil rights and respect for the individual. The title of our report in fact indicates the frequent discrimination to which homosexuals — men and women — in particular are subjected at the workplace.

We have entered, therefore, the private lives of the citizens of Europe: the right to express their own personality and hence their own sexuality, and the right also to sexual self-determination. This is provided for, moreover, by the main Conventions that regulate communal life — such as the Declaration of Human Rights and the recommendations and resolutions of the Council of Europe on discrimination against homosexuals — to which must be added today this expression of the will of the European Parliament.

As the report shows, the motion for a resolution was adopted unanimously by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, with four abstentions. A number of amendments which would have deprived the resolution of its essential significance — that is to say, something being done by free men for free persons — were furthermore rejected by a substantial majority.

In my capacity as rapporteur I cannot conceal the many difficulties that were encountered during the debate, the disputes — some of them very heated — the proposals not to continue the discussion, the very severe views on these matters, which were certainly

very difficult in that they were foreign to many of us — such as the question of homosexuality, lesbianism — and in respect of which we nourish cultural and moral attitudes that are not easy to overcome. But in our committee civilized debate and, above all, reason prevailed.

It is moreover not the first time that the European Parliament is concerning itself with homosexuality. Almost a year ago — 17 May 1983 — a resolution on human rights in the Soviet Union was adopted (it was in fact a resolution moved by Lord Bethell) which denounced the interference of the Soviet Government in the private, family and domestic lives and correspondence of its citizens, and also called for a stop to the persecution of homosexuals, and the political police tactics of discrediting dissidents by accusing them of immorality and homosexuality. But this practice has, alas! been used — there was a case only recently — in a Member State of the Community, against someone who was a thorn in the flesh of those in power.

Inside a year, therefore, the European Parliament is turning its attention to the conditions of the homosexuals in its own countries, where legal discriminations — sometimes quite heavy ones — still exist, and where, above all, *de facto* discriminations exist that are based on prejudice and lack of culture. Very briefly, what the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment is calling for is for Member States to abolish all laws which punish homosexual acts between consenting adults, to lay down the same minimum age of consent for both sexes — as has already been recommended by the Council of Europe — to forbid any special registration of homosexuals by the police or other authorities, and to reject the classification of homosexuality as a mental illness.

In our report we ask the Commission to identify any discrimination, in the legislation of Member States, against homosexuals with regard to employment, housing and other social problems, and to draw up a report on the subject. We also call on the Commission to submit proposals to ensure that no cases arise in Member States of discrimination against homosexuals with regard to access to employment and working conditions, and to exert pressure on the WHO to delete its classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. This definition has serious repercussions, particularly where access to employment is concerned.

These, Mr President, are the fruits of our work, the fruits of our compromises, our consideration, our efforts to become involved in a human, cultural, civil problem from which we have perhaps been very remote. We ask that this consensus be shared by all those who fight in this Assembly for the cause of human rights — all those who want to overcome the ancient prejudices, and believe that in a civilized

Squarcialupi

society there must also be room for those who are 'different'.

Miss Hooper (ED), draftsman of an opinion for the Legal Affairs Committee. — Mr President, the object of the Legal Affairs Committee in considering this matter was not so much to judge whether discrimination exists: that consideration was given very fully by Mrs Squarcialupi, and I think it is clear from the evidence that there is discrimination, particularly in the field of employment. Our job was to consider whether it is within the legal competence of the European Community to take any action and, if so, what.

We considered that this legal competence is present in the matter of employment and felt that Article 117 of the Treaty does give scope for Community action on the basis of the need to improve living and working conditions and the need to promote such improvement. In any event, in this particular area there is a precedent in the measures against discrimination as between men and women which have been in existence for some years in the Community and about which there have been debates and much support from this Parliament.

It is in the area of homosexuals and the criminal law that we found we were in difficulties. The European Community Treaty and any secondary legislation limit the right to interfere in the criminal law context provided such limitations are justified on grounds of public policy, public security or public health. In any case, the actual or potential effect of the existence of such laws on the freedom of movement of persons is so minimal as not to give good grounds for Community action in this area. It was considered by the Legal Affairs Committee that any criminal law provisions in respect of homosexual activity do not so affect the free movement of persons as to give good grounds for Community action in this sense. However, the committee would wish to draw attention to the fact that the Community is a signatory to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and that this could, of course, be interpreted as giving the right to take action.

Mr Ghergo (PPE). — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, although the title does not clearly say so, the sexual discrimination at the workplace which is the subject of the Squarcialupi report concerns homosexuals. It is to them that the report refers when it calls for the abolition of any form of discrimination at the workplace arising from their sexual dispositions, and asks Member States to abolish the legal punishment and persecution of homosexual behaviour between adults.

The problem is one of the very greatest delicacy, with implications that are in the first place of a moral nature but are also legal, religious, medical, scientific and so on. The question of homosexuality is one on

which it is sometimes difficult to remain objective; it is in fact well-known — as is apparent also from the surveys attached to the Squarcialupi report — that homosexuality produces widely differing reactions from people — compassion, condemnation, and sometimes repulsion. Often the feeling that prevails is simply one of embarrassment, or a rejection of something that is 'different'. The law itself has differed and still does differ in its approach to homosexuality, which is sometimes repressed, sometimes tolerated if practised in private — and sometimes the subject of discrimination with regard to the minimum age of consent where homosexual acts are concerned.

It is as well to remind ourselves that homosexuality still figures in the WHO International Classification of Diseases. How should we in fact look upon homosexuality: as a legitimate natural sexual tendency, or an illness, or a vice? Depending on the circumstances it can probably have each or none of these connotations.

Because of the many different feelings that homosexuality arouses, and because of the different ways it is viewed by public opinion and the law, it is of fundamental importance for us to make every effort to analyse the problem as rationally as possible, keeping within the terms of reference of our report.

The subject of the Squarcialupi report is in fact not homosexuality as such, but the discrimination that takes place against homosexuals at their workplace and in their working conditions. It is from this standpoint that the Committee on Social Affairs has approached the question, and it is from this standpoint that we have to give our verdict. It is obvious, then, that the sexual habits of the individual, when practised in private, must not give rise to any form of discrimination at the workplace, or as for as housing and other social aspects are concerned.

That does not mean we have to assume a more favourable or less favourable attitude to homosexuality, which would be senseless; it simply means respecting the most elementary principles of non-discrimination enshrined in the EEC Treaty so as to give effect to the principle of freedom of movement for employees, that would otherwise remain merely a form of words.

For this reason our committee already rejected, on the grounds of inconsistency, any departure from the principle of non-discrimination on so-called grounds of 'public order': these grounds are undoubtedly valid ones, but we felt that the safeguarding of public order was a matter for the penal regulations of individual Member States.

Having once established this principle, it is as well, however, to define more clearly the extent and nature of the forms of discrimination against homosexuals that are current in Member States: with that in view the report — accepting an amendment of mine — asks Member States on the one hand to provide a list

Ghergo

of all provisions in their legislation which concern homosexuals, and, on the other hand, instructs the Commission to draw up a report on whatever forms of discrimination are identified.

In conclusion, this procedure seems to us correct, the report appears to us well balanced, and we therefore recommend its adoption by this Assembly.

(Applause)

Mr Patterson (ED). — Mr President, I listened with very great interest to Mr Rogers in the last debate, because he gave a classic demonstration of the kind of prejudice Mrs Squarcialupi is referring to in her report when he claimed that the British Secret Service discriminates in favour of homosexuals and against heterosexuals. I am sorry that Mr Rogers is not here to listen to this debate. At least he demonstrated that there are grounds for the discussion we are having at the moment.

The first matter we have to deal with is to distinguish between those areas where the Community is competent and where it is not. Here I refer to the opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee drawn up by my colleague Miss Hooper, because she points out that in the field of criminal law the Community is not competent. However, she equally points out that it is competent in the field of employment, first of all because of the free movement of labour and secondly because of those articles of the Treaty dealing with living and working conditions. The question therefore is: Should employers be able to discriminate against homosexuals purely on the grounds of that homosexuality? The Treaty very explicitly forbids discrimination on grounds of sex. Therefore it should perhaps follow that it should also ban discrimination on grounds of sexual tendencies. However, it might be argued that there are grounds for discrimination particularly in two fields — firstly in order to protect minors and secondly in order to protect the security of the State.

Here, however, I think we should make another distinction between the condition of homosexuality and homosexual acts. There is clearly no reason to discriminate against homosexuals in employment merely on the grounds of their being homosexuals. However, in the field of education, for example, it would be quite unreasonable to expect school governors not to take account, when they were making appointments, of any record of homosexual practices — for example, assaults on those under the age of consent. Likewise it would be quite unreasonable to ignore such considerations when making custody arrangements. However, we should note that the protection of minors is just as important in the case of heterosexuals as in the case of homosexuals. So what is the conclusion? First, that we should make it clear that the protection of minors is a legitimate ground

for discrimination. Secondly, that such discrimination should be only on the grounds of practices, either homosexual or heterosexual. Discrimination on grounds of homosexuality alone is not legitimate.

In order to clarify this particularly complicated argument, my group has tabled Amendment No 2. I hope that Mrs Squarcialupi can accept it as an addition to her report rather than changing any of the paragraphs.

When we turn to matters which touch on criminal law, the position is not so clear. Mrs Squarcialupi notes this, because in paragraph 4 of her motion for a resolution she merely urges the Member States to act. I would draw attention to one particular aspect of the matter highlighted in the table on page 11 of Mrs Squarcialupi's report in the English version. There you will see that the age of consent for homosexuals varies widely from country to country. It is 15 in France and 21 in Great Britain. What is more, in some countries it is the same for heterosexuals, for example, in Denmark and France, while it is quite different in others. In Great Britain, for example, it is 16 for heterosexuals and 21 for homosexuals. That is quite apart from the fact that in Ireland there is no age of consent because homosexuality is still illegal, as I understand it. Now these wide discrepancies do, in my opinion, have a significance in the context of the free movement of labour. Therefore I agree with paragraph 7 of Mrs Squarcialupi's motion for a resolution that there should be an investigation into the effects of these discrepancies on the labour market.

In summing up, my group supports the principle of non-discrimination, i.e. the elimination of discrimination against homosexuals on the grounds of their homosexuality. There are certain details of Mrs Squarcialupi's report, however, where we believe she is straying from the areas in which the Community is strictly competent. My group is therefore going to have a free vote on this matter. Mrs Squarcialupi's report is, nevertheless, an excellent introduction to this whole topic and one which, I believe, deserves much further investigation.

Mr Eisma (NI). — *(NL)* I think Mrs Squarcialupi has shown herself to be very capable in drawing up this report, although it is very sad that such a report should be needed. Every adult should be free to do what he pleases in his private life provided, of course, that he does not encroach upon the rights and freedoms of others.

The anachronistic attitude adopted by the World Health Organization, which regards homosexuality as a disease, naturally encourages discrimination against homosexuals. We therefore fully endorse the proposal that this attitude should be dropped. We should like to hear from the Commission and the Council how they can use their influence to persuade the World Health Organization to change its mind on this.

Eisma

I feel the part of the report that concerns obstacles to the freedom of establishment should also have referred to the fact that anyone who openly admits to being homosexual is barred from entering the United States. This should be seen against the background of Parliament's exhortation to the Soviet Union in its resolution of 17 May 1983 to stop persecuting homosexuals. This point is taken up in Mrs Van den Heuvel's Amendment No 1.

One form discrimination against homosexuals takes in the refusal to allow them access to certain occupations, the armed forces and the diplomatic service, for example, on the grounds that they are a security risk because they may be blackmailed. A glaring example of this was the recent case of a German general. It is forgotten that, if there was no discrimination, there would be no blackmail: something that one does not need to be ashamed of cannot become the subject of blackmail. What we have here, then, is a vicious circle that needs to be broken.

There is absolutely no proof, Mr President, that homosexuals are more aggressive or more violent than heterosexuals. Almost all complaints of being pawed at work are made by women about men, and far more heterosexual teachers make advances to their pupils than homosexuals. There is therefore no evidence to support the view taken by some people — even in this Parliament and especially in the Conservative Group — that homosexuals should not be allowed to teach.

Violent sexual offences are, moreover, almost always committed by men on women or girls. It is therefore a myth that homosexuals are more violent than heterosexuals. But how deep-rooted this myth is among reasonable people — even in this Parliament — is clear from Amendment No 2 tabled by the European Democratic Group, although we do not doubt that it has been tabled in good faith. This amendment begins by saying, and I quote, 'Recognizes the need for minors to be protected against the possibility of sexual violence'. There can be no objection to this, of course. It goes without saying. But why include this truism in a report on homosexuality? Are homosexuals automatically suspected of sexual offences against minors? Not quite, obviously, according to the European Democratic Group's amendment, because it goes on to say: 'but points out that such assaults may be of both a homosexual and a heterosexual nature'. Fortunately, then, the heterosexuals are not getting off scot free. That is what I mean when I use the word 'myth', since the implication is that homosexuals are more likely to assault children than heterosexuals. Mr President, *quod non*.

Mrs Elaine Kellett-Bowman (ED). — Mr President, Mr Ghergo referred to his amendment. We have not got it in English, and I wonder what the amendment is.

Mrs Squarcialupi (COM), rapporteur. — (IT) I should like to make it clear to Mrs Kellett-Bowman that the amendment referred to by Mr Ghergo was adopted by our committee, and it is not therefore a new amendment.

Mrs Van den Heuvel (S). — (NL) The Socialist Group — and in this respect I agree with what Mr Eisma has said — also feels somewhat ambivalent about the report now before us.

It is in fact embarrassing and very sad that discrimination against homosexuals should have to be discussed in this directly elected European Parliament in 1984. What right have the leaders of this world, whether or not they are considered to be heterosexual, to presume that they can pass judgement on others because of their different sexual tendencies and because they want to experience sex in a different way?

On the other hand, we of the Socialist Group are happy with Mrs Squarcialupi's report because it is a fact that homosexuals are still discriminated against. We must realize this, and we must base a policy on this fact.

In some countries sexual intercourse between consenting adults of the same sex is still illegal, and Mrs Squarcialupi names these countries. Not all our countries stipulate the same minimum age for heterosexual and homosexual contacts. In some countries homosexuals are still required to register as such. Homosexuality is still listed as a mental illness by the World Health Organization. That is very sad, but it does prove that today's debate is necessary.

Mrs Squarcialupi welcomes the fact that certain prejudices are beginning to disappear among young people. That is true, and in my country we are rather proud that we are fairly advanced and tolerant about the individual's sexual tendencies. But even in my country we still have a very long way to go before we overcome a situation in which a person applying for a post in the Royal Household is rejected because he is a homosexual. According to the answers given by the then Prime Minister to parliamentary questions on this, the man concerned was rejected not because he was a homosexual but because he did not disclose the fact in his application. But I ask you, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, how often are people criticized for not revealing in their applications that they are heterosexual? It is strange, to say the least, that that is evidently considered unimportant.

We still have the situation where in one of our Member States there is an enormous outcry — Mr Eisma referred to this as well — when a general is accused, I repeat, accused of having homosexual contacts. I ask you, what is so incriminating about that? Why should all but heterosexual contacts be excluded? What is incriminating here? And I ask you

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why it is that the whole of the debate in the Federal Republic of Germany on General Kiessling — because that is what I am, of course, referring to — concerned the legitimacy of the accusation — and I stress the word 'accusation' — rather than the question of whether it is really acceptable for someone to be considered incapable of occupying a military post at this level because of his homosexual tendencies.

I think this shows only too well that tolerance in our Member States still leaves a lot to be desired. And we of this European Community, consisting of Member States which are so proud of their tolerance and respect for human rights and have made a joint statement with the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council emphasizing respect for all fundamental human rights, should all be ashamed that today's debate is still necessary. But we must certainly waste no time in adopting Mrs Squarcialupi's resolution, which marks a small step towards greater justice and honesty. We shall then have atoned for a small part of our guilt.

Mrs Van Hemeldonck (S). — (NL) Mr President, this report was prompted by a resolution tabled by the chairman of my group, Mr Glinne, and myself in early 1982 as a result of a case involving a women teacher, a technical engineer, who had had an exemplary career at one and the same school for 30 years. She then took part in a television programme on homosexuality, during which she said in a very dignified manner that she had had a relationship with a woman of her own age for the last 20 years. She was immediately suspended and eventually dismissed. This is one of many examples of what has happened in other countries as well, in education, the armed forces and the diplomatic service, from which people have been dismissed because of their sexual preferences.

I completely agree with Mr Patterson that this is a matter for labour legislation. An employee sells his labour under a contract of employment, but nothing else. Only slaves sell their private lives as well. It is because everyone has the right to work that we are against aspects of an individual's private life being considered in the relationship between an employer and an employee. This applies to such cases as the *Berufsverbote* in the Federal Republic, whereby people who make a given political choice in their private lives are barred from certain jobs, to the dismissal of teachers and employees of Catholic organizations because they opt for a certain life style and to the dismissal of people because of their sexual preferences.

Sexologists tell us that one in twenty members of the general public is more attracted by members of his or her own sex. They could form a sizeable group in this Parliament. The reason given for restricting the right of a section of the population to work — homosexuals

are child-molesters — is completely unsubstantiated. It is an argument that is refuted by the different age limits imposed on heterosexual and homosexual relationships. The danger of heterosexual teachers using their authority to take advantage of their pupils has already been stressed by Mr Eisma.

It is said that homosexuals are more susceptible to blackmail and therefore constitute a security risk. But this is only possible if homosexuality, heterosexuality or other factors are considered repulsive. Any kind of discrimination is, in our view, fundamentally wrong and, as regards labour legislation, this Parliament has a duty to condemn it in no uncertain terms.

Mr Halligan (S). — Mr President, it is often argued that the European Parliament is no more than a useless talking shop. Yet there are occasions when open discussion is the most relevant political action in which one can engage. In Ireland male homosexuality is banned completely, and it is most unlikely that either House of the Irish Parliament will debate it as an issue in the foreseeable future. The European Parliament is therefore the only parliamentary forum where an Irish politician can debate this issue in public.

For my part I wish to say at the outset that I support the Squarcialupi report, particularly as regards the main provisions for ending the criminal status of homosexuality and eliminating discrimination against homosexuals in places of employment. These two major moves will require on the part of society a re-evaluation of human sexuality and a newer understanding of sexual preferences. These are requirements which some societies may not wish to meet. Certainly, I suspect that Irish society is not yet prepared to address itself to the reality of homosexuality, because it has failed and refuses to come to terms with this aspect of human behaviour.

Until we cease to regard homosexuality as repugnant to human nature, as morally unacceptable, as a disease, and see it as a freely chosen state, we can expect to have laws which make homosexual acts a criminal offence and we can equally expect discrimination against homosexuals in all facets of life. We must undergo a mental and intellectual revolution in the way we ultimately regard the homosexual. We must regard the homosexual as being no less human than the heterosexual, as no less a person than those of us who describe ourselves as — and I put this in quotes — 'normal'. The category of human — and again I use quotes — 'normality' must be enlarged on ground of justice, equity and fairness. Therefore, paragraph 4 of the motion for a resolution must be supported in its entirety, calling as it does for the abolition of all laws which make homosexual acts between consenting adults liable to punishment, a ban on police records on homosexuals and the rejection of the classification of homosexuality as a mental disease.

Halligan

Equally, we must support the call to the Commission to ensure that dismissals do not occur on the grounds of the homosexuality of an employee. I equally welcome paragraph 6 which requests the Commission to identify all forms of discrimination in the areas of employment, housing and private life, so that the homosexual can be at last admitted as an equal into society.

I welcome this report as a humane and compassionate statement which reflects great credit on this Parliament be seeking to end discrimination against a section of society which requires our protection rather than our moral condemnation.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, may I start off by saying that I found this an extremely useful, interesting and in some ways quite fascinating debate to listen to. I am impressed, first of all, with the unanimity of views that exists in the House on this particular issue. Such divergencies as have arisen have really been on matters of mechanics rather than matters of principle or substance.

Secondly, it seems to me that Parliament can play an extraordinarily important role in helping to mould attitudes which at the end of the day are probably more important in this whole area than pieces of individual legislation. I was especially impressed with Mr Halligan's point, which I am bound to say had not occurred to me — though it should have perhaps — that this is the only forum in which an Irish elected politician can make a speech on this particular subject — or rather, if what he said was true, then I was extraordinarily impressed with the argument. But perhaps this is a domestic argument between two Irish politicians which it would be bold and somewhat venturesome for somebody from the rest of the British Isles to venture into.

Mr President, we have noted with interest the report by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee on sexual discrimination at the workplace. The Commission has been contemplating a measure on individual dismissals since the adoption of the directive on collective dismissals in February 1975. The new directive would be based on Articles 100 and 117 of the Treaty and would pay regard to the standards enunciated by the ILO in 1982. Specifically it would set out to harmonize national dismissal procedures and limit the grounds of dismissal. Sexual preference would not fall within these grounds, and such dismissals would therefore be unlawful. The Commission fully intends to introduce a proposal on individual dismissals as soon as there is a sufficient improvement in the labour market and the economic situation to make it, in the opinion of the Commission, susceptible of being adopted.

Turning to discrimination in hiring and working conditions, the Commission feels it is unacceptable that homosexuals should be refused employment or suffer victimization and harassment at work on account of their private lives. Indeed, it is unacceptable that any group of persons identified on the basis of their private lives or conduct should suffer such discrimination. However, there are significant practical, legal and political problems in this area, and I am sure the House would not wish to shirk any of these difficulties. It has to be recognized that the law alone cannot change deeply entrenched prejudices and deeply entrenched attitudes, though it may attempt to modify behaviour. As I say, this is not an argument against having a legal framework, quite the contrary, but it is, I think, necessary to recognize the limitations on the efficiency and efficacy of such a framework if, in fact, it exists.

As for the Treaty, there is no provision which specifically authorizes such a law. I have to say in answer to Miss Hooper and the Legal Affairs Committee that the Commission does not feel that Article 117 is a sufficient legal basis on its own, and we note, indeed, that for that reason Article 117 has never been so used. A proposal, we think, would have to be based on Article 235, which would require the Council to be convinced that it was 'necessary to attain, in the course of the operation of the common market, one of the objectives of the Community'. The Council accepted this with regard to the analogous equal treatment directive of 1976. As a matter of practical politics, as I hinted a little earlier, Mr President, the Commission does not see a further measure being acceptable on this basis, at least in the immediate future. For these reasons, and especially in the light of the severe financial constraints under which we are at present being forced to operate, I have come reluctantly to this conclusion, may I say, but I am reluctant to commence the study of the national treatment of homosexuals requested by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

Can I make two final points? First, the Commission shares the view of the Legal Affairs Committee that there is no question of unlawful discrimination on the ground of nationality here, contrary to the principle of free movement of persons. Secondly, the Commission notes that all the Member States of the Community are members of the Council of Europe and parties to the European Convention on Human Rights. Parliament might well take the view that in the present situation the Council of Europe and the Convention are perhaps the most suitable fora in which to pursue the protection of homosexuals against discrimination. Again I am not attempting to shift the obligation on the part of the Commission to some other multilateral institution or multilateral bodies. It is, however, a fact that particularly its work in the field of human rights might make the Council of Europe particularly suitable to conduct some of the investigations and to initiate some of the enquiries called for in this report.

Richard

So, in sum, I think this has been a useful debate. I think, as I say, it has revealed a unanimity of view. The Commission is sympathetic to the aims and objectives of the resolution. As I say, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion at this stage that perhaps it would be an unnecessary duplication of general work in this field were the Commission to initiate the sort of work and the sort of report that Mrs Squacialupi is calling for.

Perhaps I should finally just say this about it, that I do not have a closed mind on this issue and that I have reluctantly come to that conclusion purely on the grounds of administrative and financial constraints. It may be that at, I hope, a not too distant date in the future, some of those constraints at least may be removed, in which case I should certainly be prepared to look again at the possibility of conducting the sort of enquiry that the House is calling for.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

7. *University cooperation in the Community — Recognition of diplomas*

President. — The next item is the joint debate on :

- the report (Doc. 1-1351/83) by Mrs Péry, on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on higher education and the development of cooperation between higher education establishments in the European Community ;
- the report (Doc. 1-1354/83) by Mr Schwencke, on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study.

Mrs Péry (S), rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it was with great interest that I worked on this report on higher education and the development of cooperation between higher education establishments in the European Community.

As it stands, the text is, of course, a compromise and I should like to extend my warmest thanks to my colleagues on the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for their participation.

Bearing in mind the tradition of autonomy and competition between establishments of higher education in the majority of the Member States and the many projects for reform currently being implemented, we have laid down a certain number of guidelines which should, we feel, shape the development of higher education in our Community.

There are too many proposals for me to list this morning, but I should like to mention one or two. Higher education has to ensure the development of the humanist, scientific and creative heritage proper to the tradition of European universities. We must fight against failure at school, but we must also open higher education to the maximum number of young people and adults desiring it on the basis of the requisite aptitude and qualifications and not social criteria or wealth, as training and culture are key factors for the future of the Community.

Higher education, however, must also create a dynamic social environment capable of adapting, fighting unemployment amongst the student population and accepting changes in society.

The universities must develop their ability to adapt, now and in the future, by introducing new disciplines, particularly in the advanced technologies, by establishing closer relations with the working world and by improving knowledge of the social and economic environment. It is a matter of extreme urgency, we feel, to develop cooperation and regular exchanges between the establishments of higher education in the Member States. This cooperation would ensure that we can obtain the maximum from the Community's scientific potential and that higher education is efficient when it comes to research and training high-level researchers to take up the challenge of the leading industrialized nations, such as the USA and Japan, and the technological challenge of the third industrial revolution.

Why not encourage the establishment of a European electronics and informatics college or even European chairs of physics and chemistry? The Commission encourages this cooperation between institutes of higher education, and I strongly support the joint study programmes in which more than 500 universities of Europe are currently involved. These programmes make for genuine mobility of both students and teaching staff and should be developed. I also very much hope that these pilot projects will lead up to a proper Community policy warranting another budget.

Lastly, it would be desirable to establish closer cooperation between higher education establishments in the Community and the ACP States and also Latin America.

Mr President, I very much hope that this House will vote for this report and show its interest in culture, as, going beyond the economic matters that we deal with every day, it is true that Europe will only thrive and develop its real personality in a cultural enterprise.

(Applause)

Mr Schwencke (S), rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, despite all the data on cooperation mentioned in this, the first thorough debate in this Parliament on higher education, it cannot be denied that European higher education is in a crisis, which is not, as certain Conservative circles would have us believe, due to too many untalented students, but is part of the European economic crisis and the general disorientation of our society.

I would like to begin by making three points. First, the standard of living is falling for ever more students. Secondly, it cannot be denied that there is a tendency to go back on many reforms, more particularly those of the sixties and early seventies, and to turn the universities back into the preserve of the upper classes. Thirdly, more and more students who complete their courses of study successfully have less and less opportunity of finding suitable employment.

I do not wish to comment on higher education policies in general. The report which I have the privilege of submitting on behalf of the committee deals with one major aspect of higher education namely, the mutual recognition of diplomas and certificates.

The preamble of the Treaty of Rome declares that '... the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe' should be established and 'the economic and social progress of their countries' should be ensured 'by common action to eliminate the barriers which divide Europe.'

Article 3(c) goes on to state that the activities of the Community shall include 'the abolition, as between Member States, of obstacles to freedom of movement for persons, services and capital'. Article 49 obliges the Council to 'issue directives or make regulations setting out the measures required to bring about ... freedom of movement', while Article 57(1) requires it to 'issue directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications' in order to 'make it easier for persons to take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons.' The Commission is required to submit appropriate proposals for directives or regulations (Articles 49 and 57). Finally, Article 128 obliges the Commission and Council to propose and lay down, respectively, general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy.

The Treaty's declared aim of ensuring economic and social progress in Europe therefore requires both freedom of movement for Community citizens and the actual exercise of the right of establishment and right to provide services guaranteed in the Treaty. The mutual recognition of certificates and periods of study by the Member States is hence one of the crucial requirements, or put the other way round: lack of mutual recognition limits freedom of movement within the Community.

I have quoted as such length from the Treaty to make it clear that we are obliged by the terms of the Treaty to solve the problem of mutual recognition of diplomas and certificates and, unfortunately, we are still nowhere near reaching a solution. Any Member who discusses this problem with his constituents will appreciate that this is not an abstract issue but has a real effect on everyday life. One of the first questions often asked is: What use is my German diploma, say, in France? Or students ask us: Where will my intermediate qualifications be recognized?

The problems connected with recognition are of immediate concern to ordinary people. Progress must be made as a matter of urgency. Hardly a week goes by without the Council and Commission receiving oral or written requests on this subject. Even the European Court of Justice has on more than one occasion had to deal with problems of this kind.

What is the present position? Generally, we can say that some progress has been achieved over the last 25 years, particularly as far as industrial, commercial and skilled professions are concerned. There are now a dozen directives dealing with the problem of recognition, some of which are not being fully complied with in all the Member States. Secondly, for the medical professions there has been some progress as regards mutual recognition, whereas for the legal profession there has been little or none and for technical professions none at all.

But if we look at the more difficult questions concerning mutual recognition that still have to be solved — and I accuse no one of illwill — we can soon see that bureaucratic, pedantic methods of quantifying and classifying will get us nowhere. It is nonsense to want courses of study to be the same everywhere, i.e., to stipulate that a lawyer in every Member State should study for the same length of time, should have the same qualifications, take the same intermediate examinations and have the same final qualifications.

Total harmonization takes the principle of mutual recognition *ad absurdum*. Europe's higher educational establishments profit from variety, not uniformity. We must ensure that at the level of higher education there is greater mobility of students and teachers between one country and another, otherwise freedom of movement cannot be guaranteed.

My report attaches importance to two aspects: latitude and flexibility in recognizing qualifications on a decentralized basis, i.e., a decentralized system of mutual recognition with a central information office. Recognition of courses of study, intermediate and final qualifications, etc., should take place where they matter and where they can be decided competently, i.e., in the university concerned. In addition, we need a central office at the Commission where comprehensive information on courses, intermediate and final

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examinations is available and where some sort of general picture can be obtained. We therefore demand decentralized decisions with a centralized information facility.

(Applause)

Mrs Boot (PPE), *draftsman of an opinion for the Legal Affairs Committee.* — (NL) The Legal Affairs Committee regards this opinion as one of the most important delivered in the last four years. Why, Mr President? Because what we are dealing with here — and this is also a response to Mr Schwencke's concluding remark about decentralization — is an aspect of Europeanization. What we want above all, Mr President, is mobility for our children during their education. The problem of recognition, Mr President, is a secondary one.

In the Legal Affairs Committee we have found sufficiently sound legal bases for a number of proposals for directives from the Commission, which can be followed by decisions of the Council of Ministers, in the form of directives or regulations. Amendments have been tabled to this effect and, as I understand it, the rapporteur endorses them.

I would draw your attention for a moment to paragraph 14 of the resolution. What it asks is in essence already laid down in the European Treaties and above all the 1953 Treaty and the Unesco Treaty. The Legal Affairs Committee has therefore decided to concentrate its amendments on this aspect. These amendments request, firstly, that the procedures for assessing the equivalence of university qualifications be analysed and specifically that a list of existing procedures be compiled, that it be established what common criteria, standards and working methods exist and that they be taken as a basis for a European or Community procedure. In other words, a Community procedure of this kind may pave the way for the recognition of national diplomas throughout Europe. We want what already exists at European level to be joined by European recognition of national diplomas. It may be — and I think Mr Gerokostopoulos will agree with me — that, given about 70 % equivalence, a European diploma can be awarded. And we believe that this European diploma might in the first instance exist in its own right.

Turning to paragraph 15, I think it would be very useful if the Commission started compiling lists of all diplomas and qualifications recognized at bilateral and multilateral level.

I now come to paragraph 20 (c), which calls on the Commission to establish a data bank. I think that is a good proposal, Mr President, but it will not be effective unless the bank is at the disposal of the authorities referred to in subparagraph 20 (a) and (b).

Paragraph 21 once again appeals for common curricula. I believe — and this is my personal opinion, Mr

President — that it would be very interesting if a subparagraph (d) was added, calling for a common curriculum that has hitherto been bilateral to be developed into a European curriculum. That would mean that any university might experiment and that the Community would play a stimulating role.

In addition, Mr President, I believe we need a European government.

Mr Arfè (S). — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Community measures in the fields of education and cultural organization go on becoming more and more numerous and more densely packed, but the Community still has no cultural policy. There are even those — even in this Chamber — who contest the right of the Community to be concerned with culture.

Although up till now there has been no general debate on these matters, our Parliament has, I believe, made an important contribution to identifying the problems which are the crux of the matter, and it has given guidelines that I consider deserve to be taken up and gone into in detail.

The report of Mrs Péry, and the other report of Olaf Schwencke, which is associated with it, constitute chronologically the last of the important contributions that Parliament has been able to make. Today, the subject is the university. In every country in Europe the university system has for many years now been going through a long period of crisis.

At the roots of this crisis, as one of many different factors, lies a process of transformation of society which has also affected the universities. The difficult problem is to adapt what is traditionally an 'elitist' school to the needs of the modern mass society, developing new selection criteria, new methods of education, safeguarding the quality and integrity of the teaching, and in no way diminishing the strictness of research. And it is a crisis that is still largely unresolved. The demolition of the old has not been matched by the construction of the new.

Our Community is also at a critical stage. Underlying its crisis there is not only, but also, the lack of any policy in the fields of education and the organization of culture and research.

I think I am not very wide of the mark when I say that two quite different factors — the delay in the collective awareness of the historical need for European Union, and Europe's technological backwardness compared with countries outside Europe — are due in part to the crisis in higher education and university teaching. The Péry report has the merit of having grasped and emphasized these links, and having placed in this perspective the proposals on which we are voting today.

These proposals take into account social factors, avoiding selection on the basis of taxable income, and

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other measures that are directly and indirectly discriminatory, and that still exist in many quarters. They are intended to make the organization of study more flexible, less topheavy and more diverse, to enable it to cope with the needs of a fast-developing society — short courses, open universities, continuing education, etc.

These proposals also tackle the problem of the informal 'Europeanization' of the universities, through the liberalization of regulations, the stepping-up of exchanges of students and professors, the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study — to which Mr Schwencke has devoted his most valuable report — and the preparation of joint study programmes.

A further point that appears to me to be worth careful consideration in this field is the call for the setting up of European higher education institutions that will become research centres capable of mobilizing and organizing brain power and using it to best advantage, thereby also putting a stop to the brain drain from our Continent which is, in my view, assuming alarming proportions.

The question of cultural cooperation with the ACP countries is also part of this picture; it is a problem that has already been the subject of studies and initiatives on the part of our Parliament and, on Parliament's behalf, the competent committee, which has done excellent work in this field.

I should like to deal with some of these proposals in detail, but time does not permit. I hope that the adoption of this report will not fail to be followed by concrete action, and that the Commission will do all in its power to make it operative, in that spirit of collaboration with Parliament that has so far characterized relations in this field.

The Group to which I belong, and which unreservedly supports both the Péry and Schwencke reports, will do its very utmost to ensure that there is no dragging of feet along this road, and that these problems are tackled with the necessary energy and with the determination to get to the very bottom of them.

(Applause)

Mr Pedini (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is said, with every justification, that the Community is going through a deep crisis. In reality it is not a crisis, it is a change in the very nature of the Community, which, compared with years gone by, has today to cope with new competences and new problems and which, above all compared with the past, has increasingly to involve itself in the problems of modern man, and of his culture, his reason for belonging to our society. That is why we thank the competent committee and the rapporteurs. Their reports come at a very opportune moment today, and the discussions are very closely connected. Is it not perhaps true that the university and the exercise of the professions will create the dimension of a new

man, capable of living in a community, competent not only to tackle the problems of agriculture and the iron and steel industry but also the whole range of modern social life?

We of the PPE Group warmly congratulate the two rapporteurs who have debated the university question, and who are putting pressure on the Commission and Council of Ministers to respect the Treaty of Rome as far as the academic recognition of diplomas and the freedom of movement of academics is concerned. Mrs Péry has produced a truly masterly survey that gives us the entire picture of higher education in Europe. On behalf of my Group, whilst waiting for other members to speak, I should like just to deal with some aspects of the resolution, not forgetting however to express our thanks to Commissioner Richard and his colleagues, because — we must admit it — in the field of higher education and education generally the Commission has done everything it could. We acknowledge, for example, that the joint study courses that have been developed in recent years have been a very valuable experience which — and I agree with Mrs Péry — must be multiplied and their scope expanded. If you would allow me, Mrs Péry, only to observe that in your resolution, which we fully approve of, we also interpret your reference to the university as a stimulus to free competition down to the last person in the university. Every university has its own personality, and the action of the university must also spring from the freedom of initiative of the cultural and scientific groups in our countries. We must, in a certain sense, become like the United States of America: active in a university service in which, instead of the monotony of structures that are all the same, it is the commitment to the competitive spirit in research and in the training of mankind that prevails. In this sense the university, in a Europe that is tackling the biggest issues of modern life, will become the centre of culture and research, and will breed an executive élite. That is why this Parliament must vote for governments to allocate to universities the necessary resources for a research programme that is more valid than has so far been the case. We agree with you, Mrs Péry, in emphasizing the question of the mobility of teachers and students within the Community, straightening out also the question of access by students from Third Countries, who find the regulations in Italy different from what they are in France, when instead the Community needs to present a single image to third countries, especially bearing in mind what we have hoped for here — greater cooperation in the training of executives for the developing countries. But the social commitment, too, must be broadened. And with this in view I recommend to Parliament's attention projects such as the British Open University, which tackles not only the problem of educating the young but also refresher courses for professional people and — God willing — also the problem of the so-called 'third age'.

Pedini

With regard to the Schwencke report, this also has our full agreement and support.

In this work the Committee on Youth Culture, Education, Information and Sport leaves behind an important heritage for the Parliament that will follow us, but it aims also to stimulate the Commission and the Council of Ministers to take steps to regulate whatever concerns the freedom of movement of the professions and, as a result, the harmonization of our university systems, so as to make that freedom of movement for the professions possible. The call for the Commission to set up a central information office is excellent, Mr Schwencke. It is not sufficient for us to recommend our governments to ratify the appropriate agreements that are worked out by the Council of Europe: the information is so confused that the young student who wishes to change from one university to another, or the professional person who wants to know whether, and if so in what way, his diploma will be recognized, are up against a cloak of obscurity that must absolutely be removed.

On the question of recognition of degrees and diplomas, and especially on the freedom of movement for the professions, Mr Schwencke, I could perhaps hope that the professional categories could also be involved, since they also have to deal with human problems and are undoubtedly in a position to give substantial support to the action taken by the European Parliament to ensure that the Europe of tomorrow will increasingly be a Europe of citizens and men who invest in Europe's future.

(Applause)

Mr Papapietro (COM). — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like first of all to congratulate Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke on their excellent reports. I think that Mrs Péry's report is the first joint study made by this Parliament on the question of higher education which, over the last few decades in Europe, has been central to the dual phenomenon on growth and economic crisis.

The students' revolt of 1968 was only the more evident manifestation of the way in which higher education is involved in the circumstances accompanying a growth trend that led to the unprecedented expansion of the opportunity to study, at the same time as the progressive European economic crisis was reducing the number of job opportunities for the holders of diplomas and degrees, and at the very time when science was playing an increasingly important part in production, with the consequent need for manpower of a high intellectual standard.

This explosive contradiction has made higher education central to the social history of Europe during this stage of expansion, crisis and economic recovery. Attention to this question cannot therefore be considered a matter of secondary importance in this Parlia-

ment, or indeed a luxury, or even — as it is viewed by some members — something illegitimate.

It seems to us on the contrary that this is a first fundamental step towards making education the subject of a common policy, and laying the foundations for this policy by developing cooperation on the basis of the principles and proposals that are so sapiently listed and explained in the Péry report, and on which I shall not dwell for that reason. Instead, it is the Council's action in this connection that is too slow and full of hesitation. May these two reports do something to speed it up.

There is another element that is important in this context, and that is the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study as professional qualifications, which is necessary not only in order to put into effect the principle of the freedom of movement of employees, but for other reasons also. When the Treaty of Rome was signed, this was the fundamental aim: it was a time of expansion, and freedom of movement would have contributed to the creation of a Europe without barriers. Today that still remains the problem, of course, but there is now another one as well, more intimately linked with the problems of European economic recovery. It has often been stressed in this Chamber that Europe can only be made competitive once again *vis-à-vis* her great international competitors, Japan and the USA, if her productive apparatus is highly qualified technologically. But no European country can tackle this task on its own. Technological development brings us automatically back to the question of Europe: it is one of the reasons underlying the need for Europe. The sharing of technology is a vital necessity for the European economy, and it is bound up with the adoption of a common policy for education that can draw up a list of appropriate skills and qualifications, and will give proper academic and professional recognition to the diplomas that are proof of such qualifications. All this applies not only to technology but to every sector of science and culture that benefits from mobility at European level.

There is finally a third feature of interest in paragraph 2 of the Péry report, which was already dealt with in the Fanti report: and that is the development of the humanist, scientific and creative heritage proper to the traditions of the European universities and European culture, founded on the formation of character and the universality of reason, which is the most valid foundation for a united Europe.

This opens up questions of reform, and of the ability of higher education to conform to the rapid changes in society; and first of all it raises the question of a socially fair education policy that combines the recognition of merit with the recognition that those who come from the less well-off sections of society also have a right to education.

Papapietro

With regard to these questions, the proposals contained in the Péry report are important, as are those in the Gaiotti de Biase report that we have already adopted. For these reasons we support the two excellent reports that have been submitted to us, and we shall vote in favour of them.

Mr Bøgh (CDI). — (DA) Mr President, I have to agree with the authors of the two reports on higher education that our institutes of higher education are faced with challenge, upheaval and crisis as almost never before in their history. This applies to their research, their position in the social structure and their economy. But I emphatically reject any suggestion that the problems can be resolved by the involvement of business and industry, by the interference of governments in the autonomy of institutes of higher education, let alone allowing the Community to influence the work of these teaching establishments through directives and economic aid.

There is a tradition that the universities should, as far as possible, be self-governing and that the public authorities can only set limits to that freedom by way of appropriations. That is the nature of research, and without it there is no research. And it is of quite special importance at a time when the power of the state and blocs of states formed under the influence of the superpowers take on political and ideological objectives, as is happening now.

One gets a feeling of alienation in a discussion on the problems of science, when the reports introduce all the Community's bombastic union ideology as a dimension in the functioning of institutes of higher education, and one gets an uncomfortable feeling when the EEC seeks to secure influence over the development of institutes of higher education by means of appropriations and scholarship funds, which in the last analysis come from the pockets of the taxpayers in the Member States. A remarkable thing about this Parliament is that there are always power-political perspectives behind its actions and plans. Why should the sovereign expressions of the human spirit in art, culture and science always be put to this or that use? These are things which will not be used. The word university means that which is all-embracing, in both quality and quantity. It cannot be clamped into an ideological framework, as is advocated by the EEC power bloc, for example.

Finally I would once more draw your attention to the fact that cultural policy activities, according to the interpretation of the Treaty of Rome which was put before the Danish electorate in 1972, are not a Community matter. I still cannot see that the broad and general declaration of intent which is quoted as a legal basis has any relevance in this area.

Mr Eisma (NI), draftsman of an opinion for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment. —

(NL) My opinion is based on Mr Pedini's resolution. We submitted our opinion to Mrs Péry, but I feel that the planning of a report such as hers and the work of the committees asked for their opinions could be coordinated rather better to enable greater account to be taken of the opinions in the final report. This is not a criticism of Mrs Péry's report as such, but in general Parliament's working methods could be better organized.

In my opinion I refer to the open university, an open university to which admission does not depend on diplomas and where the students draw up their own curricula. They can interrupt their studies and revise their plans when they like, and the time they take is also adjusted to their individual circumstances. Open universities also allow for teaching by correspondence and television. These are the qualities peculiar to open universities, which are less well developed in the southern countries of the Community than in the north and in the United Kingdom in particular.

Open universities provide opportunities for the very people who have not had access to this level of education in the past. It is a form of continuing education, which pursues two aims, one socio-economic, the other socio-cultural.

It was mainly the socio-economic aim, where the emphasis is on the relationship between the open university and the work process, the satisfactory operation of the labour market and good vocational qualifications, that prompted the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment to draw up an opinion. But the second aim — personal development and participation in social life — is at least as important an aspect of the open university because, at a time when a high level of structural unemployment means that millions of Europeans are looking for work, it is at least as important as the first, even though it is not directly related to the work process.

I do not have the time to discuss the relationship between the open university and the redistribution of work. But educational leave, in which the open university has a role to play, would enable work to be better distributed. People could spend a short time away from the work process to take courses of further education at the open university, and their jobs could be done by others.

To conclude, Mr President, I ask the Commission in my opinion, in view of what we of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment have said in the resolution on the open university, to produce a communication. And I say this not only on my own behalf but also in the name of the whole of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

Mrs Viehoff (S). — (NL) Mr President, there has been talk of a common European industrial policy to help Europe overcome the crisis. We call for coopera-

Viehoff

tion in the area of research and development to prevent duplication of effort and thus a waste of money. Every day we hear that we are lagging behind the United States and Japan in scientific research. The unemployment figure in the Community has almost reached 13 million, but the Member States are still not cooperating closely in higher education, and the mobility of teachers and students is still too limited.

The EEC Treaty requires the mutual recognition of diplomas and curricula. This Treaty has been in existence for quite some years, 26 to be precise. But we still do not have mutual recognition. At the moment we are confronted with serious financial problems in the Community and problems in the transport field. The Community is regarded by many of its citizens as being no more than a customs union. The Community could and should now be using all kinds of selective financial and creative injections to encourage the development of new courses for Europe to follow.

Despite the slow speed at which many things proceed in Europe, young people in particular now have more in common in Europe than past generations. There are few barriers now dividing young people. They get to know each other's ideas and, outwardly at least, they look increasingly alike. They also have a growing choice of food and clothing and of architecture and art to admire. Europe could be happy with this trend were it not for the fact that a general feeling of unease in expectations of life and ideas can just as easily spread. I am thinking in particular of the expectations young people have as regards their future working lives, their freedom and their security. I do not need to digress further, because we are all thinking of nuclear weapons in Europe.

This last aspect adds to the responsibility the Community has to the younger generations, culminating in reflection on new contents and strategies in education and training. The education system is facing a growing demand, not only among young people but also among many adults, for what has come to be known as 'second-chance education'.

This brings me to my amendments Nos 18 and 19, which call for the establishment of an open European university for peace studies, which should also include chairs of emancipation, development, education on human rights and education on Europe, because peace and security are not only threatened by an intolerant attitude towards a given political system in the various countries. The threat to peace and security stems for the most part from economic, political and social inequality, economic exploitation, the unequal distribution of knowledge and the unequal distribution of the basic essentials of life. The Third World problem is one of the problems that will undoubtedly have to be discussed in this context.

Other factors are social inequality and the situation of women. And we have not yet mentioned social

discrimination on the grounds of colour, creed, culture, political persuasion and social background.

The open university is one aspect covered by Mrs Péry's report, and I very much hope that we can give it substance in the way I have proposed. In the Netherlands a committee has been formed to look into the establishment of a university of this kind. I am not saying that we should have a similar committee, but I can certainly let the Commission have the committee's findings and the plan it has drawn up.

I should just like to point out that there are two mistakes in amendments Nos 18 and 19. I did submit corrigenda, but they have obviously not been distributed. Firstly, the word 'open' has been left out of both amendments and secondly, I should like the two amendments inserted as two new paragraphs, not as subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 29.

IN THE CHAIR : MR NIKOLAOU

Vice-President

Mr Beumer (PPE), *chairman of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport*. — (NL) Mr President, Article 2 of the Treaty of Rome states the purpose of European cooperation very clearly. If we think about it very carefully, we will realize that it means far more than just economic cooperation, as is abundantly clear from today's debate.

What would come of economic cooperation if there were no cooperation in education, especially — and these are the specific subjects we are discussing today — higher education — referring to Mr Schwencke's report — and the mutual recognition of diplomas and curricula? The close links between the economy and education, Mr President, and other areas too are a further indication of the integrative nature of Article 2 of the Treaty.

Mr President, my group is very pleased that these reports, these impressive reports, are now before us, if only because at this time of major economic problems we have a greater opportunity to think about activities of this kind, since this is not just a question of funds but above all of stimulation, which is not always necessarily related to funds.

There is already an impressive programme of action concerning curricula and exchanges between universities, 269 in number, and I believe the benefits reaped will be considerable, even if they are not always easy to measure. But we feel this important integrative aspect of European cooperation could be much improved if the legal position of university teachers were harmonized. This is an area, I feel, in which progress could be made far more quickly. The systems for financing university courses, which for no good reason still differ so widely, and above all policies on

Beumer

admission to universities could be extensively harmonized.

Mr President, the Schwencke report should not only be linked to Article 2 of the Treaty of Rome: the Treaty itself emphasizes that there must be mutual recognition. If we then look at what has been achieved in the past, we cannot say that progress has been very rapid, although we must not overlook the major problems that have been raised by the considerable heterogeneity in the expansion of the various education systems, including the higher education system. This is, of course, partly a result of cultural diversity, which must be respected as far as possible. But I believe that things could be done far more effectively, while respecting everyone's views and cultural differences, if there were closer cooperation in a number of practical areas. We feel that in this respect the Council in particular could be more active and adopt better and clearer directives. That is something we should very much like to see, Mr President. I also believe, for example, that there might be one point of access to the various universities. That would surely make for better and easier organization, as would the recognition of final diplomas, although it would again create major problems.

I agree with the rapporteur that it would be useful to decentralize the universities. Here again, practical circumstances might yield important suggestions. We also agreed with the rapporteur's proposal that this should be evaluated by a permanent working party set up by the Commission and that proposals for directives should be based on its findings.

To conclude, Mr President, what these reports contain are not so much completely new suggestions but an extensive catalogue of the most important problems and most important opportunities. I hope that this debate will help to ensure that more thought is given to the existing opportunities, which should be seized now.

Mr Adamou (COM). — *(GR)* Mr President, the Péry and Schwencke reports both highlight important points about the state of higher education in the countries of the Community.

The most important of these is that higher education is becoming ever-increasingly class-orientated. Only the children of the rich — and I stress this — of the leading class of each country, and less and less the children of workers, of clerical staff, of small and medium-size entrepreneurs can afford to attend universities and higher-level schools without any trouble. And this because the costs of attendance have risen sharply and are on the increase year by year, while at the same time workers' incomes are falling, the army of the unemployed is growing and inflation and the cost of living are soaring, with the consequence that every quest for higher study by people of the working class remains an unfulfilled dream. So unless unemploy-

ment and poverty are tackled first, there is no point in talking about mass university education.

All the same, Mr President, I fear that the main object of the two reports is to inculcate the so-called 'European consciousness' in the student body as well. The ideology of the Community's monopolies, that is. And we do not think that any real basis for cooperation exists when the countries concerned have such hugely different economic levels and when education in each of them is very differently structured and has differing objectives. With this opportunity I would also like to add that the two motions by my compatriot, Leonidas Kyrkos, run counter to the views of the Greek student movement, which is seeking for the Department of Public Administration at the Pantios School to be strengthened rather than for the establishment of some other separate civil service college, and that the cooperative specialization be made available in the existing universities instead of setting up a separate cooperative school.

In finishing, Mr President, I want to say that, in spite of our grave reservations, we shall vote for both of the reports because of all the positive points they contain and with the hope that they will contribute to the development of science and research and ease the employment situation of the Community's hard-pressed scientists.

Mr Vandemeulebroucke (CDI). — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall be referring primarily to the report drawn up by Mr Schwencke, whom I congratulate on the approach he has adopted and the content of his report, with which I entirely agree. I would say that the Community has procrastinated over this whole question far too long. As regards the mutual recognition of academic degrees, for example, we have got virtually nowhere because in this respect we are a quarter of a century behind the times. The situation is even worse where the equivalence of qualifications of proficiency is concerned, but this will undoubtedly be discussed at a forthcoming part-session. Nor is there an accurate list of the equivalence procedures, and what might be considered common standards and criteria have still not been identified.

I fully agree with Mr Schwencke's proposal that we should advocate a decentralized approach. Furthermore, we should not confine ourselves to the recognition of academic diplomas and degrees, necessary though this is. In this context, I should like to discuss a number of aspects which may not have received sufficient attention in the past.

For example, not only the universities but all equivalent levels of higher education must be considered. In my country, for instance, there is not only university education but also university-level education that is officially recognized but does not involve attendance at a university.

Vandemeulebroucke

A second aspect is the nomenclature used for degrees. In Belgium, for example, there is the title *licenciaat* and in the Netherlands *doctorandus*. Other countries do not have these titles at all. It is important that we should be able to produce a comparative study of the abbreviations used for academic titles, such as 'engineer'. The titles civil, industrial and agricultural engineer have completely different meanings in four of the Member States, being an academic title in one and proof of vocational training at secondary level in another.

A third aspect concerns various practical problems connected with freedom of establishment on the completion of a course of study. Levels of education and the access they give to occupations must be socially recognized. An example here would be a diploma in homeopathy, others might be occupations with a social bias, particularly in the medical sector. The person concerned must obviously also have a good command of the language of the community concerned.

Finally, I should like to thank Mr Schwencke for including my motion for a resolution on the recognition of diplomas held by members of our German-speaking community in Belgium. These people often have to go to Germany if they want to study in their own language, and at present their diplomas do not entitle them to hold public office until they have been officially recognized in Belgium, and that takes at least two years.

I believe that, come what may, we must act very quickly — and the Commission might make a start on this straight away — to ensure the flexible use of the term 'recognition' in intra-Community frontier areas where the same language is spoken on both sides of the border. If the Commission intends at long last to make progress with respect to the equivalence of diplomas, it might start with frontier areas where the same language is spoken on both sides of the border. This would at least mean that something practical is being done and signify a considerable step forward not only culturally but also with regard to social legislation.

Mrs Dury (S). — (FR) I should like to deal very briefly with three ideas.

First, although the universities are indeed centres of research and creativity, of learning and the transmission of knowledge, in a period of crisis, one sometimes has the impression that they are wide of the mark and often lack imagination in relation to social problems, political problems and the problems of increasing contact between education and working life. They may lack the means, but, in any case, if they cannot solve the problems by themselves, they could at least formulate them properly. I think we should support the attempts that certain universities in many

Member States are making to be more open and that the idea of open universities should get European backing and coordination.

The second thing I wanted to say is that in her report Mrs Péry suggests European grant allocation criteria. I personally believe that the essential issue is, first and foremost, access to the university. The Belgian universities, in particular, have different admission fees for Belgians and other Europeans and people from developing countries. However, I think this is due to the fact that many German students, for example, attend Belgian universities near the German frontier because they cannot obtain places at home. This is discrimination of course, and I think it would disappear if the conditions of university entrance were standardized.

The third thing I wanted to say is that, although it is a good idea to set European targets — greater contact with the trade unions and the worlds of politics and economics, technological research, informatics and exchanges and discussions by students and teachers — they cannot be reached if the universities do not have the means of reaching them. In many countries of the Community, mine in particular, the universities are having to make drastic savings in teaching and research. If we had a message to give to our governments today, it would, I believe, be to ask them to give the universities the means of achieving the ambitions we have just defined.

Lastly, I should like to say that we should also make an effort with the ACP countries. I think that two of the Community countries — the United Kingdom and Belgium, that is — oppose the idea of universities being opened to students from the developing countries. Since we have so much to say about cooperation and aid for the development of the Third World, we ought to put into practice what are all too often only words and pious hopes. The foreign students in our countries have many problems — of university entrance and subsistence — at the moment, and I think that we, as partners of the ACP States, should urge our national governments to make a particular effort here.

Mr Hahn (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank both rapporteurs, Mr Schwencke and Mrs Péry, for their valuable reports.

The debate on the mutual recognition of qualifications is now reaching some sort of conclusion. This matter has come up in Parliament time and again. The Péry report comes at the end of this debate, and I welcome the fact that attention is again being directed at higher education. There was, however, some uncertainty as to exactly what the report was about owing to the translation, as in French the subject was *éducation supérieure*, in English *higher education*, similarly in Italian, whereas in German it was: *Das Hochschulwesen*.

Hahn

The former refers mainly to education in the tertiary sector, with the main emphasis on social aspects and education. The latter places the emphasis on the institutions themselves. As a former Minister for Science and former Rector of a leading university, the University of Heidelberg, I would like to deal particularly with the institutions.

The importance of the universities for European culture cannot be overestimated. Other major institutions, the theatre, museums, perhaps the Volkshochschule, cannot be compared with the universities in terms of their cultural impact. The universities are, and must remain, the creative spirit of our culture, and if this spirit does not function, then the whole body of society will no longer function. And the universities are currently undergoing a serious crisis.

A university has various tasks: on the one hand to provide a broad academic education and on the other hand the selection of high-fliers within the broad academic spectrum. This involves no contradiction. Even a democratic society needs high-fliers, chosen not because of their social background or financial means, but because of their achievements, founded on ability, which the individual can develop and strives to develop. And another important aspect is to ensure that scientific research remains competitive.

On this point, I cannot entirely agree with my honourable friend, Mr Schwencke. During the last twenty years the universities have expanded rapidly. I could quote exhaustive figures, but to save time I would just mention that the number of students in Germany has increased tenfold during the last twenty years. The same is true — to a slightly lesser extent — of France and Italy, and in fact all the Member States. The universities have not been able to cope, and the creation of an elite within the universities has suffered. Our major efforts must lie in this direction.

I would like to give just one example: biotechnology. Two hundred patents have been applied for throughout the world during the last five years. One hundred and sixty-five of these were American and Japanese, only twenty-five came from the European Community. This will not do; we must do everything in our power, and this includes cooperation within the European Community, particularly in an atmosphere of economic crisis and thrift, to ensure that the universities are able to produce first-class results. This is of immeasurable importance for the whole of our society.

The universities must be a moving force in our society, which at the moment they are not, perhaps because of the very real crisis they are in. They must enable us to play a role in the world on equal terms with the USA, Japan and the other major states. The

whole of society, including its weakest members, would benefit as a result.

(Applause)

Mr Pasmazoglou (NI). — *(GR)* Mr President, I want to express warm support for the principles enunciated and the thoughts expressed in the motions by Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke, whom I congratulate on their two very distinguished reports. I also want to congratulate the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport.

Heightened awareness of our cultural ties will give impetus to the move towards European economic and political integration, which is urgently necessary for the progress and security of our peoples, and help it towards a successful outcome. The strengthening and intensification of European cooperation in educational and cultural matters, especially in the field of university education, will reinforce the sense of the age-old common heritage and experience which binds our peoples.

Concerning the problems mentioned in these two reports, I want to emphasize the need to remove all barriers and invidious discriminatory practices which stand in the way of students who wish to study in a country of the Community other than their own, and the need to harmonize diplomas and regulate enrolment or transfer procedures for young people moving from one educational institution to another across internal Community borders. Both of these problems are causing serious difficulties for the young people of my country.

The other matter I wish to remark on is the importance of joint research programmes in the applied sciences and technology, which are, of course, of prime significance for the technical progress of Europe as a whole. But I would like to add, Mr President, that there is also a need for programmes covering the theoretical sciences, classical and modern languages, letters, history and the arts. While we should vote for them — by a big majority, I hope — my criticism of these reports is that they do not provide for a concrete and sufficiently forceful procedure for following up this important work. I want to recommend three things:

Firstly, the formation of European committees or working parties made up of representatives of the universities, or of teaching staff and the student body.

Pesmazoglou

Secondly, that the Commission set up a special agency to monitor these matters on a thoroughly systematic basis.

Thirdly, that the Education and Culture Council examine and formulate a specific plan of actions for promoting these matters in the area of scientific cooperation.

Mr Ouzounidis (S). — (GR) Mr President, I ought first to congratulate my colleagues Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke on their very important work. Because of the time limit on my speech I will confine myself for now to just two issues.

Firstly, that touched on in paragraph 8 of Mrs Péry's resolution concerning discrimination against students who are nationals of other Community countries through special enrolment fees. I have in mind the precedent of at least one country of the Community, with regard to which our Parliament has adopted an appropriate resolution calling for an end to this unfair treatment. Nothing has been done about it as yet, however, and the Commission has been forced to take this state to the European Court of Justice. I would like to address a plea to the Council of Ministers and to the Members here who represent Belgium — because that is the country involved — to exert every possible influence in order for us not to have to wait on a decision by the Court, something which would not reflect well on the Community.

Secondly, the question of the equivalence of diplomas. I view this as a very important prerequisite for the upgrading of education and the improvement of cooperation in the field of higher education. As well as this, it is an important factor in facilitating the free movement of academics between the Member States of the Community. It is generally accepted that in the field of education and research Europe lags behind the USA and Japan. The proper utilization of investments in this problematic sector is hindered by the various restrictions and legislative barriers which exist in the Member States, with the result that many academics are forced to seek work in areas alien to their specialization or remain unemployed. In my view, therefore, this hindrance must be got rid of as quickly as possible, and this will have a beneficial effect on the future of the Community.

Mr President, the union of Europe is without doubt a long-term and difficult prospect best pursued through forms of cooperation and with methods which can bring the peoples of Europe closer together in a spirit of mutual understanding. Education free of social restriction and economic barriers and the proper utilization of the existing intellectual manpower are necessary conditions for every form of union and cooperation, as well as for enabling Europe to cope with any certainty with the ever-increasing cut-throat competition in the scientific field and to stand on its own feet with hope in the future.

(Applause)

Mrs Gaiotti De Biase (PPE). — (IT) I should like to thank Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke for the excellent work they have done. This closes an important chapter in the joint work done by the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport during the life of this first elected Parliament, which was also the first time such a committee has been set up.

These two important reports form part of the philosophy that we have put forward and which has been pursued up to now by this Parliament; a philosophy that states that it is not possible to set serious objectives such as economic integration and recovery unless account is taken of the growing interdependence of cultural and economic policies. Other Members have already reminded us that the questions of the freedom of movement of the employee, on the one hand, and economic recovery linked to technological research, on the other, are the two key points that are crucial to the very existence of the Community.

To those who object that these matters are not within the competence of the Community, we would only say that they are referred to by the Treaties; the reservations of those who are strictly faithful to the letter of the Treaties can only strengthen the need for the reform of the Treaties themselves, which will make this even more explicit than it already is.

The recognition of diplomas has had a paradoxical history in the life of the Community. The Treaties took it for granted where employed workers were concerned; they were quite explicit on the subject in the case of the self-employed, and put forward a more complex procedure with regard to the medical professions, in view of the delicate nature of the subject. It is quite striking that, where the procedure was complex, that is where progress has been made. What does this indicate? Probably that the system of agreed or bilateral recognition is not the right one, and that we must have the courage to commit ourselves to the policies which the recognition of diplomas requires — that is to say, greater 'comparability' of school curricula and a joint definition of aims without detracting in any way from the independence of the Member States and of the universities, but through the joint revision of curricula which technological advance makes essential, instead of doing it individually, each country for its own account.

All of our educational systems, including the universities, are facing the challenge of change, the response to which must be a joint one. Of course, to do this we need appropriate institutional instruments; we have proposed the European Foundation, and we are also in favour of the universities being responsible for cooperation between universities, through Chancellors' meetings, for example: it should however be said that, whilst cooperation is part of the history and nature of the European universities, there was more

Gaiotti De Biase

such cooperation in the Middle Ages than we have now in our Community.

Mr Gerokostopoulos (PPE). — (*GR*) Mr President, in speaking in the joint debate on the reports by Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke, on higher education and the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study respectively, I too wish to extend warm congratulations to both rapporteurs. They have shown great insight in dealing with the subjects under debate and have had real success. The subjects are of special importance, because dealing adequately with them is a fundamental precondition for the drafting of an integrated Community plan for the implementation of the measures which are called for in the sensitive areas of education, social and employment policy.

Mr President, time allows me to refer only to Mr Schwencke's report. I make this choice not, of course, because I attach less importance to higher education but because, in my opinion, failure to solve the problem of the academic recognition of diplomas will have adverse repercussions on higher education and will, above all, delay the achievement of basic objectives in the Treaty of Rome, such as, for instance, demolition of those barriers which divide Europe, the union of our peoples and the removal of obstacles to the free movement of our citizens.

Mr Schwencke analyses every aspect of the problem most fully in his well-documented and splendid report and strongly emphasizes the regressive effects of a fragmented approach to the problem on European unification, and therefore I shall not go into the problem myself in any depth. Nevertheless, Mr President, I must repeat that the main responsibility for the continuing state of disarray must lie with the Council of Ministers because, as the rapporteur rightly points out, it has been tardy in carrying out its important obligations under Articles 3, 49, 57 and 128 of the Treaty.

The motion for a resolution points the way to effective and beneficial lines of action for alleviating the harmful and negative effects on the lives and prospects of the thousands of European citizens who are suffering as a consequence of the delay in getting to grips with the problem. What has been said and put in writing has served to give the House a full acquaintance with the problem, and I will therefore just affirm my complete agreement and list a few of the things proposed which deserve special mention.

Firstly, an appeal to those few Member States which have not done so — regrettably my country amongst them — to ratify immediately the Council of Europe conventions of 1956 and 1959.

Secondly, the creation of a central information office at the Commission to gather and disseminate information and data pertaining to the recognition of diplomas.

Thirdly, the further development and implementation of common curricula. The present successful programme must be expanded and given Community backing.

Fourthly, an appeal to the relevant authorities in the Member States to show the greatest possible generosity and flexibility in the recognition of diplomas and periods of study.

I wind up, Mr President, with the confident expectation that the motion for a resolution under debate will win our Parliament's unanimous approval, and I hope that the Council and the Commission will respond to our resolution as they should and that this will be the starting point for tackling the so vital issue of the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in a swift and proper manner.

Mr Estgen (PPE). — (*FR*) Mr President, hardly an hour goes by in this House of late without us having to complain to the Commission or the Council about the Community treaties being inadequately applied or not applied at all.

It is quite grotesque if you consider that our President made a pilgrimage to the capitals of Europe to preach about our new draft treaty on European Union, which aims to go further than the merger treaties. Yet the provisions of the latter are at present not even being adhered to. It is grotesque, above all, if we are led to deal with such topics as the harmonization of studies and the mutual recognition of diplomas and periods of study, a kind of harmonization which costs nothing, or practically nothing, other than a little good will and mutual confidence and the abandonment of a certain national intellectual style. And it is grotesque to the highest degree if you think of the benefit that could be derived from the recognition of studies and diplomas not only by the interested parties — our students, our research scientists and our citizens — but by the Community as such in taking up the challenges facing it, particularly in science and technology.

So I offer my warmest congratulations to Mrs Péry and Mr Schwencke, the authors of these two reports, on their very good work, which could ensure that students really can move about freely, be admitted to the universities of their choice and continue their studies in all the countries of the Community. In my opinion, this is an essential corollary of our democratic system and our society founded on ideological and philosophical pluralism. The socio-cultural impact of the free movement of students is not a negligible one. Direct European integration of migrant workers should not be confined to one particular section of society and exclude the intellectual workers.

Estgen

If we try and improve opportunities for young people in the Community, if we do our utmost to point out the advantages of a social and cultural mix in the Community, it goes without saying that cooperation in higher education must be to the fore in this socio-cultural undertaking of ours.

That is why the recognition of periods of study is every bit as important as the recognition of diplomas, and I envisage a European students record card that would be recognized by the universities in the Member States being introduced along the lines of Amendment 9 by Mrs Boot.

There is clearly no question of standardizing the different types of training and making them equal, but of recognizing equivalent results which can well be obtained from different training courses. We have a good opportunity to cooperate with the Council of Europe, which has, very fortunately, got a start on us here. On this point too I entirely agree with Amendment 8 by Mrs Boot.

What we are doing today should also ensure that the citizens of the future European Union really do have the right of establishment in all the countries of the Community and freedom of professional movement in fields where Europe is falling behind the USA and Japan today and may even fall behind the Soviet Union and China tomorrow.

This measure will also be in the interests of the consumers of intellectual and university services, which will be applied in ever-widening fields and particularly in technology and ecology.

Finally, I see the mutual recognition of diplomas as a very important forerunner, a vital one even, of genuine cooperation in scientific research and technology between the regions and nations of the Community. This is the context in which I have advocated regional and cross-frontier cooperation between universities and university institutes with a view to the creation of transnational European diplomas that are recognized by the Member States. This could be a real innovation in higher education and in sectors, such as micro-electronics, biogenetics and biotechnology, where we are behind the USA and Japan.

Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg have a model to give us in the environmental sector, and it should encourage us to extend this pilot experiment to other fields and other regions. Is it not scandalous that the Member States of Europe individually invest almost three times what Japan ploughs into scientific research and that our output is not even 30 % of Japan's in some fields?

No later than yesterday we discussed the barriers to passenger and goods transport. Well, the barriers to the free movement of our intellectual potential are at

least as scandalous an anachronism that we have to try and do away with as quickly as possible.

(Applause)

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, may I start off by congratulating Parliament, and in particular its Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on these two important initiatives with regard to higher education. We have had a number of speakers in this debate, which has gone on, I suppose, for about an hour and a half, and I think it would be foolish of me to try and answer the points of detail that have been raised by various parliamentarians. What I shall try and do is to expose the Commission's own thoughts on this matter. I hope that when I have done so, the rapporteurs of these two excellent reports will see that on most of the issues, if not almost all of them, the Commission's views and their views would seem to be very much in line with each other.

I believe this is the first time that the European Parliament has discussed the wide-ranging field of higher education inside the Community. The decision to do so now perhaps reflects a steadily growing awareness that the Community, both in the political sense and in economic and social terms, can only be successfully built if it is based on the full development of what is after all its major asset — namely, its human potential. The quality and the flexibility therefore of higher education in the Community are key factors for our joint success.

Hitherto, in the framework of the Action Programme in the field of education of 9 February 1976, the Commission has been engaged in the field of higher education in a number of ways but on a very modest scale in terms of personnel and financial resources. Nevertheless, practical cooperation has been initiated between about 500 individual departments in higher education institutions in different Member States in order to exchange students and professors. Students in the Community have been kept informed by three consecutive editions of the student handbook which gives practical information about study in other Member States. In the related field of academic recognition of diplomas national information centres have recently been designated in all Member States, better information about the equivalence or the recognition of qualifications being extremely important in this whole affair.

Cooperation in higher education in the Community has therefore got off to a good if modest start. The Commission considers that the resolutions now before Parliament will provide a new and a strong impetus for further Community action in this field. In particular, free movement in higher education is of major concern to us. The fathers of the Rome Treaties in their wisdom devoted a whole section to free move-

Richard

ment of workers, services and capital. The Commission believes that it is important, if young people being prepared for working life are to be well trained for their jobs, that those providing services in the education field are free to offer them to all Community citizens who are interested.

How could high research standards in Europe be developed and maintained if a young postgraduate student could not continue his education at the very best higher education institution? If the impression exists that Europe is lagging behind in scientific and technological development, I believe that this is not because individuals here are more or less intelligent than they are anywhere else in the world but because they are perhaps better trained in certain other parts of the world. Training facilities, for instance, in the United States are very open to anyone who can prove his or her ability. If a student wants to go to the United States, the message usually coming is 'yes, please come, and we'll see what we can do'. If the same student wishes to go to another Member State within the European Community, the message very often is 'Well, yes, it is very interesting but...'. We have to overcome those 'buts', and this resolution seems to me to be an excellent initiative designed to overcome some shortsighted dogmatic obstacles with a dose, if I may say so, of refreshing pragmatism.

We have tried to develop some practical models through our joint study programme scheme, which I am pleased to see has received a warm welcome in the report and the resolution. I am most grateful too for Parliament's initiative in creating a special budget line, 6302, in 1984 to help cover the operational costs of individual projects in the scheme. We have decided to use this budget line to help those students who are unable to cover all the supplementary expenses of travel and subsistence when studying in the framework of a joint study programme in another Member State.

You will appreciate that the first allocation of 400 000 units of account is a mere drop in the ocean. In the educational field, however, I am afraid we are accustomed to such drops in the oceans as far as our budgets are concerned. We are optimistic that the interest of this House in the key role of higher education in the Community will steadily grow. The rich diversity of the higher education facilities available in the Community is in part wasted if students cannot take advantage of the full range offered in all Member States. It goes without saying that closer cooperation between the 3 000 higher education institutions which the Community is fortunate enough to have is necessary to facilitate this. This can only come about if there is a high level of mutual understanding between them. It is for this reason that I welcome your initiative for a permanent dialogue between national higher education organizations, institutions and systems.

We will take up this proposal very seriously. We will try and develop simple mechanisms to achieve the results that you and we want. May I answer to one specific point that was put in this respect. I was asked about the possibility of a register of higher educational diplomas in the Community and whether we would study this. The answer is yes, we will and we hope to publish it in due course.

Let me come back for a moment to academic recognition, which represents another difficult subject in the context of free movement in higher education. I welcome Mr Schwencke's report and I welcome the motion for a resolution. I must at the same time register my disappointment at the fact that it has taken a few weeks less than three years for this subject to reach the floor of this House. The Commission transmitted its original communication on the subject to the Council as long ago as 29 April 1981. It is perhaps only fair to add that substantive progress in this area is itself necessarily slow. Decisions cannot be imposed easily from above. The process is an organic one. We need a good measure of political will combined with a generous and open-minded attitude and a fair amount, too, of mutual trust in order to break down the barriers which face the individual Community citizen seeking to obtain due and just recognition of his or her academic qualifications.

The information centres on the academic recognition of diplomas that I mentioned earlier will obviously help, but it is clear that it is still taking far too long to obtain decisions on recognition and on equivalence in individual cases, which causes much hardship and frustration for individuals and incidentally does nothing at all for the reputation of the Community.

Some other means already exist, as your rapporteurs have rightly pointed out. There are the Conventions in the Council of Europe and there is Unesco. These agreements, which have been signed and ratified by the majority of the Member States, provide a starting point. If they were duly and properly implemented, it would certainly go a long way towards improving the situation. Whilst the question of the mutual recognition of qualifications for the liberal professions is catered for in various directives deriving from Article 57 of the Treaty already adopted or currently before the Council and the question of the comparability of non-academic vocational training qualifications — which was another question I was asked in the course of the morning — is the subject of a proposal for a decision currently before the Council, no such instrument has been proposed by the Commission in respect of the academic recognition of diplomas and of periods of studies. Could I say that I well understand why the Legal Affairs Committee is asking for precisely that: a Community directive to remove tech-

Richard

nical and administrative obstacles to free movement of students, teachers and researchers. I am confident too that honourable Members will, for their part, understand why the Commission has not been prepared — and I have to say still is not yet prepared — to make such a proposal.

The perennial problem of delimiting Community competence in the field of education may however see some clarification this year. Parliament can be assured that the Commission will in any case always seek to make the best and the most of whatever competence it has in this area. We shall, moreover, continue to argue that in the particular matter before the House today, it is to a large extent simply a question of the full application of a basic principle in the Treaty, namely, that of free movement.

I would conclude by reiterating my congratulations to the two rapporteurs for the excellence of their reports. I think they are helpful documents. They will give a new impetus to discussion of this issue at the level of the Council of Ministers and I am grateful, indeed, to have had the opportunity of taking part in the debate.

President. — I call Mr Deschamps for a personal statement.

Mr Deschamps (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, although I have been in this Parliament for 10 years, I have not yet got used to this 'personal statement' procedure, and this, I think, is the first time I have used it. I should have preferred not to do so, in any case, in a debate of the level and standard of the one we are having now. Furthermore, Mr Ouzounidis — and it is he I want to talk about — did not mention me by name, but I was the only Belgian present when he addressed the Belgians in the House. I am also an administrator of one of the greatest Belgian universities, the Catholic University of Louvain, so I felt personally concerned and, under the circumstances, I believe I am entitled to proceed in this way.

Mr Ouzounidis attacked the Belgian universities because, he said, they discriminate against students from outside the Community in the matter of registration fees.

I think Mr Ouzounidis has forgotten that Mrs Péry's excellent resolution contained a paragraph 9 inviting the Commission to make proposals to the Council for common solutions to the problems posed both for students and their host countries by the so-called *numerus clausus* system operating in some Member States.

What I wanted to stress, Mr President, was that the sooner the Commission and the Council take the necessary measures to prevent the continued use of the *numerus clausus* system, which causes large numbers of students to go to countries like Belgium — too many for the country to provide for materially — the sooner the Belgian universities will be in a posi-

tion to provide students who freely and without constraint deliberately elect to follow courses there with the open, generous welcome they extend to all their national students.

That, Mr President, is what I wanted to emphasize.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

8. Freedom of education in the EEC

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1456/83) by Mr Luster, on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee on the freedom of education in the European Community.

Mr Luster (PPE), rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this report on freedom of education in the European Community arose from a motion for a resolution by a member of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, our French colleague Mr Vié. His motion for a resolution dates from 1981. Motions for resolutions of June 1983 by Mr Sassano and Mr Horgan were combined for discussion with Mr Vié's original motion for a resolution. I would like to point out, given that the question arose yesterday, that this topic was originally scheduled for debate today and that this was agreed at the meeting of committee chairmen on 13 February this year. What would have been surprising is if the topic had not been discussed *now*, not *that* it should be discussed at all.

The Vié motion for a resolution is mainly based on the Charter of the United Nations and the Human Rights Convention. The motion for a resolution was therefore referred to the Legal Affairs Committee as the committee responsible for consideration of the legal aspects, although this cultural topic might be considered to fall within the purview of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, which was asked to deliver an opinion.

During the whole of the first legislative period of the directly elected European Parliament, the question of the guarantee and protection of human rights has been one of the areas to which Parliament has attached the utmost importance. This report represents, to a certain extent, a rounding off of Parliament's work. As part of the groundwork for the motion for a resolution and this report, the rapporteur requested a number of public and private institutions in the Member States for information on the legal basis in the Member States for the establishment of state and private schools, on methods of financing these schools, statistics on the distribution of pupils between different types of school and on school leaving qualifications. The results of the survey are shown in detail, with comparative figures for individual Member States, on pages 13 to 80 of the report.

Luster

The general findings are as follows: the school systems in each of the Member States reveal variety and a particularly marked pluralism. All Member States permit private schools. As far as upper and grammar schools are concerned, the distribution of pupils between private and state schools varies considerably. In the United Kingdom, Greece and Denmark, private schools account for some 5 %, whereas in Italy and West Germany the figure is approximately 10 % and in France 20 %. In the three Benelux countries some 70 % of secondary school pupils attend private schools. Ireland represents a special case. Nearly all secondary schools belong to a particular religious denomination, even when, as in most cases, they are entirely state-run or financed.

The legal basis for the operation of private schools is also very varied. In Belgium, for example, the principle of freedom of instruction is enshrined in the Constitution. The French Constitutional Council ruled in November 1977 that the principle of the freedom of education is a basic tenet recognized by the laws of the Republic, confirmed by the preamble of the 1946 Constitution and given constitutional status by the 1958 Constitution.

A number of other constitutions guarantee freedom of instruction in different forms. There are also considerable differences as regards state subsidies for private schools. Greece provides no subsidies, whereas in Holland and Ireland private schools receive the same support as state schools. Other countries offer a mixed range of financial arrangements. In France, a distinction is made between schools that have concluded an association agreement and those which merely conclude a so-called simple agreement.

Before the rapporteur began his work, and prior to detailed discussion of the motion for a resolution, the Legal Affairs Committee established whether there was an adequate legal basis for Parliament to concern itself with this topic. Despite reservations on the part of a number of members, the committee decided on each occasion by a majority that there was. The Legal Affairs Committee regards this motion for a resolution before the House as an affirmation and confirmation of basic principles solemnly declared in this Chamber.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 1948 states: 'Everyone has the right to education'. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of December 1966 contains the words: 'The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents to choose for their children schools other than those established by the public authorities'. Article 2, second sentence, of the Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human

Rights of March 1952, which has been ratified by all Member States, provides as follows: 'In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions'.

The European Court of Human Rights, in its judgment of December 1976 in the case of *Kjeldsen and Others*, laid down the following fundamental principle: 'The second sentence of Article 2 of the Protocol aims at safeguarding the possibility of pluralism in education, which possibility is essential for the preservation of the "democratic society" as conceived by the Convention'. In the Common Declaration by Parliament, the Council and the Commission on fundamental rights of April 1977, the importance attached to the Convention is documented in the following words: 'The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission stress the prime importance they attach to the protection of fundamental rights as derived in particular from the constitutions of the Member States and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms'.

Paragraphs 1 to 9 of the motion for a resolution seek to define the principle of the right to freedom of education, which I would summarize as follows: Every child shall have the right to education and teaching without any discrimination. Parents shall have the right to decide on the type of teaching to be given to their children. The only duty of the State is to permit the establishment of state or private schools. In accordance with the right to freedom of education, Member States shall be required to provide the financial means whereby this right can be exercised in practice. Section II of the motion for a resolution recommends certain action on the part of the appropriate authorities to implement the above principles.

In view of the brief time at my disposal, I should like to sum up by saying that it is possible that the report and the motion for a resolution may be thought to refer to specific political situations in certain countries. We have attempted to formulate the motion for a resolution and the report in such a way that they safeguard the right to freedom of education in all Member States at all times and protect this right from attack.

(Applause)

Mr Beumer (PPE), *draftsman of an opinion for the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport*. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to begin by thanking the draftsman initially appointed, Mr Fajardie, for the major contribution he made to the collection of information for our opinion.

Beumer

Our opinion particularly concerns freedom in the education of young people, a subject which falls within my committee's terms of reference. The opinion emphasizes the wisdom of discussing the role the state should play in education. It makes it clear that it is for the state to lay the foundations, and they are very important. It must provide education where other arrangements have not been made. The main thing is that education should be provided in a flexible and decentralized manner, with particular emphasis placed on the role to be played by parents. Parents have different opinions and also want their children to be brought up to be independent in the way they consider best for their children, and value judgments are therefore a significant factor in this respect.

We believe, Mr President, that costs must not be allowed to become an insurmountable obstacle. Nor would we say that on no account should parents wanting a certain type of education for their children be allowed to make a contribution of their own, but children should not be refused admission to a given school because of their parents' incomes. That would be a very reprehensible view, and it would strike at the very roots of the freedom of education.

Mr President, ideological considerations may be more important for parents, and they also consider them important for their children. Parents may also attach importance to the type of education their children receive; some children learn more easily if they are taught in one way rather than another. Latitude must be allowed for decisions of this kind. Parents must therefore have a choice, and material circumstances must not stand in their way.

The opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport points out that ideological education need not and in fact should not be dogmatic. It should also be critical and investigative, it should be open to the views of others and it should respect diversity. Not, then, education simply in the form of engineering, in which no more than mere figures are taught and values are completely submerged. The most important thing of all, of course, is that the child itself should be able to derive as much benefit as possible from its education. The question of the freedom of education must not, as the opinion says, be rated more highly than the debate on the basic content of education.

What is the best education you can give a child to enable him to stand on his own two feet in a society while ensuring that the final results he achieves are recognized? In this respect, the history of Europe shows that education has developed in different ways, that children have been able to take advantage of this and that there is nothing to show that this has done any harm. On the contrary.

The opinion also says that in the countries of Europe the tradition of conventional education runs parallel with the education tradition itself and that to cast this tradition aside would be, as it were, to break with part of our European history and our culture. There is no reason for that, because this link has proved its value in every way.

Our conclusion is that legislation must recognize the freedom of education and parents' freedom of choice, that appropriate economic conditions must also be created, that there must be sufficient autonomy with respect to the content of education and that diplomas must be recognized. That, I believe, will enable us to acquit ourselves of all our obligations as free citizens.

Mr Sieglerschmidt (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this report deals with absolutely fundamental human rights, with the right of parents to determine their children's education. But it also deals with children's rights, with children's welfare, and I shall come back to this later.

I hesitate to say that religious freedom is also involved. As I see it, the basic philosophy underlying the report is not principally to permit denominational schools, it goes further than this and would have the State as a non-privileged sponsor of schools, i.e. that autonomous sponsoring organizations of all types of school — not only denominational schools — should have the same equality of opportunity as state schools. Under this system denominational schools would naturally also have freedom of opportunity.

I have been asked why Parliament has considered this matter, what it has to do with the European Community. We are, of course, dealing here with fundamental rights. But it is equally clear that there is no need for regulations on a Community basis. We intend to submit amendments to this effect, since we are of the opinion that protection of fundamental rights in the Member States — as long as Community law is not involved — is not the concern of Community authorities. In some cases the report goes too far!

Otherwise, this report concerns the European Parliament as much or as little as, for example, the report on conscientious objectors. I would like to ask those colleagues who intend to support this report to be consistent on the question of conscientious objection and not to regard it as an exception, but as a right as valid as the right to attend private schools.

As I mentioned in passing earlier, parental rights and children's rights must be carefully balanced. One of the problems is the question of who is to decide what is best for the child. Children's rights, at any rate in the abstract, are just as important as, if not more important than parental rights, for example when conflicts arise. In addition, freedom of education and instruction must also ensure that equality of opportunity for education and training is always maintained.

Sieglerschmidt

I cannot agree with the rapporteur that we all knew what was on the agenda. The point is not whether the committee chairmen agreed, but that this report did not appear on the agenda and that we were taken by surprise.

(Interruption)

I am not criticizing the rapporteur. I am criticizing those responsible for the fact that the groups have not been able to do justice to this thorough report, which is based on long and extensive discussions in the Legal Affairs Committee. If, Mr President, I may be allowed to offer a piece of advice to the new Bureau of the new Parliament, of which I trust you will be a member, then I would ask you in future, when drawing up the agenda, to bear in mind that less is sometimes more.

Mr Pflimlin (PPE). — *(FR)* Mr President, honourable Members, the Group of the European People's Party will vote for this report. I am grateful that Mr Luster emphasized just now that this is not a circumstantial report inspired by problems or controversies that may have arisen in any of the Member States. Freedom of education is currently the subject of public discussion in France, it is true, but, although I am French, I shall not spend time on this aspect of the problem. I shall confine myself to the hope that the present problems will be settled, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance, by means of reasonable compromises.

The problems in fact — this is very clear, as Mr Sieglerschmidt has just emphasized — are extremely important problems of principle and they are of general scope, going far beyond circumstances and opportunities. Freedom of education is one form of freedom of thought. I have here a copy of the European Convention on Human Rights — it is mentioned in the Luster report — which says that everyone has the right to 'freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religious belief, in worship, teaching, practice or observance'. That is very clear.

Systems which give the State a monopoly on education may oppose freedom of education. Far be it from me to say that the State is not qualified to deal with teaching. On the contrary, it is one of its duties, even, to organize public education. But it is clear that an educational monopoly, be it *de jure* or *de facto*, is a dangerous thing that can lead to totalitarianism.

Totalitarian systems, be they left or right, try to ensure that they keep their hold in the present and in the future by attempting to mould the minds and souls of the pupils — and, alas, they to a very large extent succeed. If we want to avoid all risk of slipping or deviating into totalitarianism of this kind, we have to state

our attachment to freedom of education very clearly, not just for confessional schools, but for other independent schools as well. But, and here I am replying to what Mr Sieglerschmidt said, a certain number of precautions must be taken to ensure that those who wish to teach are educationally and morally qualified to do so. I also think — and here I join Mr Beumer, who spoke on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport — that the fact that some schools are based on particular doctrines should not lead them to turn out sectarians. On the contrary, respect for the individual, respect for what we now call the right to be different, must always be taught.

What seems to me obvious is that, in our democratic societies, freedom of education is perhaps the most important form of pluralism. It is in the schools that the future of our societies is shaped. And so it is vitally important that pluralism, pluralism for the benefit of the parents, be respected in these schools and by these schools. Mr Sieglerschmidt said that children also have rights, but I would reply that it is difficult to see how young children can exercise them. It is perfectly true that, once they are adolescent — as we can see all around us today — young people, whatever schools they have attended, exercise freedom of choice. There is no question of touching that. But in the early years of education, it is up to the parents to make the choice.

Honourable Members, we live in a society where young people are subjected to all kinds of influence by the mass media and by literature. At all events, parental influence is now having to fight with a whole series of other influences and for many parents this is a source of considerable concern, as they often see even their very young children slip out of their control and go other ways. So let us leave parents this right and this fundamental possibility of guiding their children by choosing the school that is best for them. This, honourable Members, and I should like to see general agreement if not unanimity on this point, is the best way of guaranteeing that our societies keep their essential character, which is, I repeat, one of democratic pluralism, now and in the future.

(Applause)

Mr Tyrrell (ED). — Mr President, first I should pay tribute to the enormous amount of work done by the rapporteur on this subject. We spent many hours — perhaps 10 hours — in the Legal Affairs Committee debating this vital matter, and his patience and perseverance were an inspiration to us all.

His motion sets out, in Part I, the principles that we eventually arrived at in the Legal Affairs Committee. I shall not go through them all. I would like to take up first the last point that Mr Pflimlin so persuasively made. The most important principle in this report is

Tyrrell

the emphasis it lays on the freedom of choice in education, the choice being that of the parents until the pupil is old enough to decide for himself.

Then I would like to take up another point that Mr Pflimlin made, also persuasively, and add to it the reflection that the lessons of history, both ancient and contemporary, teach us how great is the power exercised by a state when it alone can dictate not only where a child should be taught but what it should be taught. Freedom of choice is an essential characteristic of a democratic society and an essential bulwark against tyranny. Furthermore, freedom of education impinges on another essential freedom — that is, freedom of religious belief and religious expression. The practice of the former depends to a large extent on the existence of the latter. The two are inseparably related.

I would also like to remind the House how deeply this issue is felt by the public at large in the Community. It so happens that in my own constituency at Redbridge a major review of the school system is at present taking place.

The overriding aim is to enlarge parental choice as widely as possible. The crucial question is how far that can be done, having regard to the requirements of quality and economy. If I may say so, those questions have aroused very deep emotions amongst the parents, the teachers and all kinds of people in that part of London.

Part II of the motion for a resolution sets out the action that the Community could normally take. We have some misgivings about Community legislation in this area, even though we recognize the importance of achieving mutual recognition of educational qualifications if the ideals of Article 57 are to be realized. In this context I should say that I listened with interest to what Commissioner Richard had to say about that in the previous debate, and we shall follow the developments which he anticipates with great interest.

In order to deal with these misgivings an amendment has been tabled in the name of representatives of a number of groups in this Parliament which I hope is going to enable us all to join in the vote at the debate, one which underlines the principles and which points to action which we all agree can usefully be taken in the Community.

Mr Chambeiron (COM). — *(FR)* Mr President, I should not like to start a polemical debate with Mr Bangemann, in view of the fact that he is not here. It is, obviously, always highly disagreeable to talk to someone who is not there. But I just wanted to say that yesterday, when I objected to the Luster report being on the agenda, I had the feeling that people did not understand me.

Above all I should like to reassure Mr Bangemann. When there are human rights and freedoms to defend,

the group to which I belong is always there — without any mental reservations or ulterior motives. I noticed that Mr Bangemann said he was convinced of our constancy in defending human rights. I do not doubt that his words will be remembered by many honourable Members as being, no one will deny, a backing to which it would be difficult to object.

There were two reasons for my action. First, the report in question has only just been distributed, most of us have not had time to read it and the groups have not had the opportunity to discuss it. It is a pity to have to vote on a subject of this kind at a speed I find scarcely compatible with the serious approach we are entitled to expect of this House.

The second reason is that, although the report claims to be on freedom of education and teaching in the Community, it is in fact only an instrument intended to support the campaign which the right-wing parties in France are leading against the policy of the French Government.

I am not saying that this is Mr Luster's personal intention. He explained just now. All I am saying is that the rapporteur, whether intentionally or by design, has been a vehicle for political propaganda. Although there is no legal basis for a Community education policy — the speakers have just said as much — we, for our part, would have had no objections to this European Parliament starting a discussion on certain aspects of education in the countries of the Community, particularly better training for young people and giving them a place in tomorrow's world. But everyone realizes that this is not the intention. The idea is in fact to back up an internal policy operation in France started by those who have failed to accept the changes in my country since 1981.

It is not by chance that the proposal for a resolution on which the report under discussion is based comes from the Group of European Progressive Democrats.

For nearly three years now, this House has been a platform for the adversaries of the present French Government. Government. is somewhat strange that it is the very people who claimed to defend France's interests in Europe in 1979 who are the most eager to use an international institution as a forum in which to attack the policy of their own country. We cannot be accused of having used such methods.

We are entirely in favour of freedom of education — if that is really what some of the honourable Members are concerned with. We have said so repeatedly over the decades, but we are well aware that certain people have something completely different in mind. No one in France is thinking of attacking freedom of education. There is consultation going on between the government and the representatives of private education on the problems of education at the present time.

Chambeiron

We think that consultation between the interested parties is the right way to go about it and we hope it leads to practical solutions that are acceptable to everyone.

This is why we shall denounce those who, by sectarianism and for electoral motives, are trying to thwart the hopes placed in these negotiations. This is why, Mr President, although we once more state our attachment to freedom of education and educational pluralism, with respect for individual beliefs and freedom of parental choice, we shall be voting against the Luster report which is, I repeat, aimed less at furthering freedom of education than firing a political campaign and dividing public opinion in my country.

(Applause from the left)

Mr Galland (L). — *(FR)* Mr President, honourable Members, the Luster report and our debate are important. This is not a circumstantial debate as Mr Pflimlin indeed said. But it is important because it is painfully topical in France at the moment. It is significant that the French Communist Party, through Mr Chambeiron, tried to prevent this report being discussed in the House again yesterday, as Mr Chambeiron himself has just reminded us. Once again the Communist Party has shown its duplicity and its curious conception of freedom. And it is nothing more than indecent to call yourself a champion of human rights, as you have just done, Mr Chambeiron. And yesterday you said that the matter was being settled. We in this House were right to vote massively in favour of the report being discussed today. First, because in France — and this morning's papers bear this out — even if consultation, which we are in favour of, is required, nothing has been settled. But above all, this report and our debate go well beyond the French problem. We are touching on one of the major functions of the Community here and doing so in an exemplary manner. We are at the very heart of our European commitment. Europe, a symbol of freedom — freedom of enterprise, freedom to hold meetings, freedom of the press and, the subject of Mr Luster's excellent report, freedom of education, in the European Community.

Yes Rudolf Luster, we shall put both hands up in favour of the principles expressed in your report. Yes, to: 'The parents shall have the right to decide on the type of education and teaching to be given to their children of school age'. Yes, to: 'It is the parents' right to choose a school for their children until the latter can do so for themselves'. And yes to: 'In accordance with the right to freedom of education, Member States shall be required to provide the financial means whereby this right can be exercised in practice and to make the necessary public grants to enable schools to carry out their tasks and fulfill their duties under the same conditions as in corresponding State establish-

ments, without discrimination as regards administration, parents, pupils or staff'.

You are right to underline the fact that the appropriate Community authorities must ensure that freedom of education is guaranteed in the Member States.

There were 800 000 of us supporting consultation at Versailles a week ago. We were calm but totally determined. And that is why today 75 % of French people say no to private schools being integrated, without contracts, into a unified lay system. That is why they say no to the existing laws being repealed and no to State financing being withdrawn from independent schools.

That is why we are very much on our guard, as we cannot forget what the French Socialist plan for education — the Mexandeau report — says. And I quote: 'School is both a forum for and a stake in the class struggle'.

The Socialist Party would be better advised to take its inspiration from the French Radical Party, whose name is still bound up with the defence of lay education, but which has just pointed out that the first job of the State is to guarantee tolerance, neutrality and freedom.

The Radical Party, which is more attached than ever to the role and standards of state education, fully recognizes that private schools have the right to exist and that maintenance of them is an expression of the pluralism and diversity that are conditions of democracy.

Honourable Members, freedom of education and teaching is a European problem. And today, the prime threat to this freedom is, alas, in France. You will understand that we cannot, in our country, be content with sketchy intentions. This is why, in voting massively for the Luster report, you will be demonstrating your support for European will and solidarity in this common fight for genuine freedom in education and teaching.

(Applause)

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

IN THE CHAIR : LADY ELLES

Vice-President

Mr Curry (ED), chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — Madam President, the House will recall that yesterday I drew its attention to the fact that a compromise at the level of the Council of Ministers on a number of agricultural questions looked like it was in the making and that this could have implications for the debate we were to hold in

Curry

this House tomorrow or the day after. That has now happened. We understand that on the milk question there is a Council agreement, and although it has the status of a non-paper to go up to the summit, it is an agreement, and in this House we do not wish to hold a non-debate on a non-paper. I know that tomorrow morning the President of the Commission or the Commissioner responsible intends to make a statement to this House. Might I ask the President of this Parliament to ensure that when we have the statement, it includes a categorical statement as to whether or not the Commission intends to revise its own proposals in conformity with the agreement at the level of the Council and that the President of the Council himself informs us in precise terms as to the nature of this agreement. It is not satisfactory to have to glean the fragments of an agreement from press releases, newspaper reports and listening to bad reception on the radio in the morning. That is an unsatisfactory way for this House to be informed about events.

Therefore, Madam President, would you please ensure that we are in particular given a clear statement as to what the legal position is, because I wish to reserve the right, in the light of that statement, to call my committee together in order to decide whether we wish to take into consideration the new situation. I am most anxious to save this House the work and labour of proceeding to a lengthy vote on proposals which are or are about to be made redundant. It will not be satisfactory for the statement simply to say that the thing is under consideration, we are reviewing the position, or that something may happen. We wish to know what the Commission intends to do in precise terms so that we can discharge our function in precise terms, and hopefully clear the way for the summit meeting which we all recognize is extremely important and which takes place in less than a week from now.

President. — Thank you, Mr Curry, for making that very important point of order. I know that there are representatives of the Commission here who have heard what you have said and who will pass on your message to the President. I must, however, inform the House that the Council is still sitting and we do not know at what time they will terminate, so, clearly, I do not think you could expect any undertaking from the President of the Commission at this stage. Nevertheless, your request has been taken note of and will be passed on to the relevant authorities.

Mr de la Malène (DEP). — (FR) Madam President, I should like to take up the important things which the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture said when he addressed the Commission.

Tomorrow we shall be beginning one of the essential debates of the year for Parliament and the farmers. We want our Parliament to make clear commitments. That is to say we want to decide in the light of the

treaties, acting on the Commission's proposal. Tomorrow we want the Commission to tell us at the outset what its position is and we shall state our opinions in the light of that position alone and not of any agreements that we hear have been reached elsewhere. It must be understood that tomorrow the Commission will tell us where it stands on farm prices so that the Committee on Agriculture, under the chairmanship of Mr Curry, can give its opinion — otherwise one of Parliament's essential functions will be short-circuited. So I should like the Commission, at the request of the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, to tell us tomorrow on which text we shall be giving an opinion.

President. — Mr de la Malène, I think that what you and Mr Curry have said has been noted by the Commission, and we hope that tomorrow it will act accordingly.

9. Topical and urgent debate (announcement)

President. — Pursuant to Rule 48 (2) of the Rules of Procedure, the list of subjects for the topical and urgent debate to be held on Friday, 16 March 1984 has been drawn up.

(The President read out the list of subjects)¹

Pursuant to Rule 48 (2), second subparagraph, of the Rules of Procedure, any objections to this list, which must be justified in writing and submitted by a political group or at least 21 Members, should be tabled before 3 p.m. tomorrow. The vote on these objections will be taken without debate at 3 p.m.

Mr Haagerup (L). — Madam President, I have no intention whatsoever of challenging what has just been announced about the urgencies, but may I just express some mild puzzlement over the way matters are sometimes organized. I happen at the moment to be chairman of what we call the coordinators group in this Parliament. At the very same time that the political masters of our groups decided what was going on, we were discussing how best to advise them as to what we should do with the various urgency motions. Be that as it may, we recognize that the political masters, of course, can decide what they wish and I have no intention of challenging that decision. May I just ask one small question on a point of order? What will happen to the three human rights motions for resolutions that deal with specific cases and are very urgent, and which the committee of which I am chairman suggested we should adopt if possible without a debate?

President. — Mr Haagerup, I fully appreciate the point you have made, namely, that the chairmen of the political groups happened to be meeting at the

¹ See Minutes.

President

time that the coordinating committee, which you chair, was meeting. I think it was most unfortunate. But I am happy to say that we are not ruled by our political masters; it is the House that determines the agenda. You have the opportunity at 3 o'clock tomorrow to object to the proposals made by the chairmen of the political groups and put back on to the agenda, with the agreement of this House, any motions for resolutions which have been tabled. So it is up to the House to decide what we debate on Friday morning, and not the chairmen of the political groups.

Sir Peter Vanneck (ED). — You have told us when we shall have the opportunity to object to the three items which have been chosen for discussion by the chairmen of the political groups. However, I should like to know why it has been decided not to proceed with a very topical motion of mine on the Straits of Hormuz, whereas Nicaragua — which is some way away from us — seems to be ruling the roost. Could I ask if it is possible to obtain any information as to how this decision was arrived at since, although both are miles away from us, one is of immense topical importance to this Community?

President. — I am sorry, Sir Peter Vanneck, I cannot answer that question. You have to ask the chairman of your political group why this decision was taken at that meeting. But, at I said already in reply to Mr Haagerup, you have an opportunity to object to the way this list was drawn up and to insist on the subject which you have tabled being debated, provided it is done on behalf of the group or with the support of 21 Members of this House and is adopted by the majority of the House tomorrow at 3 o'clock.

Mrs Baduel Glorioso (COM). — *(IT)* Madam President, I make no objection when the office of the presidency gives a ruling on some priority or other. I only want it to be emphasized and included in the Minutes that no priority is attached to the fight against the racism that is developing afresh in Europe, and against the xenophobic demonstrations against foreign workers from the Third World, on which three reports have been presented — one Ceravolo report, which is Document 1-1557/83, one Krouwel-Vlam report on behalf of the Socialist Group, which is Document 1-1573/83, and one Bonaccini report, which is Document 1-1574/83. I shall be grateful if you will include my statement in the Minutes of today's debates because, with our elections only three months off, Europe's role in the world seems clear to me now: for us, technical obstacles are more important than foreign workers!

President. — Mrs Baduel Glorioso, your remarks will be included in the report of today's debates.

As I have already stated it is up to this House to decide at 3 o'clock tomorrow which subjects are to be debated.

Lord O'Hagan (ED). — Madam President, I am horrified at Mr Haagerup's modesty. Could I ask you whether it would be in order for the coordinators for the different groups in the Political Affairs Committee to table the agreement reached in the coordinators' committee as an amendment to the proposals? As the first chairman of this coordinating committee, I think that we in this House, before we start lecturing other institutions about how they should treat us, should organize our business better. I would therefore suggest that you give a ruling as to whether it would be in order for the coordinators of the different groups to table an amendment to overrule what our very respected — though sometimes not wholly perfect — group chairmen laid down in advance while they were meeting.

President. — Lord O'Hagan, it will not be necessary for the coordinators to table anything, because we have the opportunity, through the chairman of our political groups — and I am sure you will be approaching yours on this matter — or 21 Members of this House, to put down any amendment to the list which I have read out. I leave it to the House and to the good sense of the political group chairmen to act accordingly.

10. Question Time

President. — The next item on the agenda is Question Time (Doc. 1-1/84): questions to the Commission.

Question No 1, by Mr Prag (H-663/83):

Subject: Failure to apply EEC Treaty provisions — cost to UK

Has the Commission calculated the current annual cost to the United Kingdom or any other Member States of the failure to achieve:

Freedom to supply the full range of insurance services, under Articles 63 and 64; freedom to supply the full range of banking services, also under Articles 63 and 64; freedom to transport goods by road to any destination in the Community and to pick up return or intermediate (cabotage) loads within the Community (under Articles 74, 75, particularly 75, 1a and b)?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Commission refers to its reply to the honourable Member's Written Question No 1711/83. The Commission is not in a position to quantify costs, weighing additional expenses incurred against potential business lost by the Member States' industries, arising from lack of progress in the area of freedom of services or capital movements for insurance undertakings and credit institutions.

Richard

Similarly, as regards the road transport sector, the Commission is unable to calculate exactly the annual cost to national economies of the restrictions on the freedom to carry goods by road between Member States or the prohibition of cabotage in road transport. It readily admits, however, that such hindrances are a major source of cost which has to be borne by the Community as a whole. The virtues of which their advocates boast are hypothetical rather than proven.

Mr Prag (ED). — I am not really convinced that in that reply the Commission has shown that it is fully aware of the discontent in certain Member States with the failure by other Member States to allow genuine freedom to supply services in these fields of insurance, banking and transport. So little progress has been made that one really wonders at the goodwill of the Member States. Of course, we do not expect the Commission to be in a position to make accurate calculations. Nobody does and nobody ever did. However, will the Commission make a sensible estimate of the costs involved for the Member States concerned?

Mr Richard. — I am a little surprised to hear from Mr Prag that we are not now asked to make a calculation, when the question starts off, 'Has the Commission calculated . . .?'. What I am not prepared to do is to guess in the air and give figures to this House, which might in retrospect turn out to be fallacious. As far as the strength of feeling is concerned, of course the Commission is well aware of it and is doing its level best to try and deal with it.

Mr Purvis (ED). — I would first of all like to raise a point of order, if I might. It seems strange to me that on this particular question, which covers areas of internal market and competition policy, we have in the House the Commissioners who are responsible for those two areas and yet a third Commissioner responsible for the social affairs of the Community is responding. I appreciate it is a college and all that, but would it not have been more appropriate for one or other of the two Commissioners responsible to be responding on this particular subject?

I have a question as well, but I would like to get that cleared up first.

President. — Would you put your supplementary question at the same time so that you can have a reply?

Mr Purvis (ED). — Right — well, maybe to the appropriate Commissioner.

(Laughter)

It is not just in relation to the services. We would like to know the cost to the Community of the exclusive agency system that is infringing the rules of fair competition enshrined in the Treaty. We know about motor-cars, but there are all sorts of other sectors —

agriculture, pharmaceuticals and all the rest of them. Could the Commission perhaps, if not today, prepare an assessment of the cost to the individual and to the Member States of all these infringements of the Treaty of Rome that have carried on now for nearly 30 years and should be put an end to at the earliest possible moment?

Mr Richard. — I am afraid that Mr Purvis will have to put up with me yet again. The reason why I am answering it is very simple: it is that the appropriate Commissioner to whom, I think, the question was addressed was Mr Tugendhat. Mr Tugendhat is not here and therefore asked me to take the question, so I do not think there is anything unusual at all as far as procedure is concerned.

As for making the sort of estimate that Mr Purvis wants me to make, I am afraid I can only give him the answer that I gave to Mr Prag: the Commission is not prepared to guess in these very difficult areas, particularly now that Mr Purvis wants my guesses to go back over 30 years. I must say to him I think it is much more important that we concentrate on the fact that there are at the moment certain proposals before the Council of Ministers designed to try and deal with some of these problems, and perhaps it would be appropriate if everybody, including the honourable gentleman who asked the question, were to urge the Council of Ministers to act on our proposals.

Mr Purvis (ED). — The Commissioner said that Mr Tugendhat was being addressed by this question. It is quite patently a question on the internal market and competition policy. I was not aware that Mr Tugendhat had taken over this portfolio, but if he has, could we be advised?

(Laughter)

Mr Richard. — What the question actually asks for, although we have drifted a long way from it, is a calculation of the current annual cost to the United Kingdom and any other Member States of the failure to achieve certain targets that the Commission has set itself. If anything were pre-eminently a matter for the Commissioner that is dealing with some of these issues before the Council of Ministers and, indeed, is the Commissioner responsible for making that sort of calculation, if it is possible to make it, it is surely this.

President. — Since they deal with the same subject I call Question No 2, by Mr Gerokostopoulos (H-636/83):

Subject: Proposal for a regulation (COM(81) 423/final) laying down detailed rules for application of Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty to maritime transport

Although the above proposal for a regulation was submitted by the Commission to the Council almost two and a half years ago, no concrete steps have yet been taken towards adopting it.

President

The proposed regulation should be issued as a matter of urgency, particularly now that Unctad's code on scheduled lines and Regulation No 954/79 have entered into force.

Can the Commission explain why there has been a delay of almost two and a half years in adopting the proposed regulation? Can it also state whether it has undertaken an examination of the above matter and, if so, can it indicate at what stage the procedure has now arrived and suggest a time when the regulation is likely to be adopted?

and Question No 3 by Mr Gontikas (H-638/83):

Subject: Drawing up regulation on merchant shipping competition

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the draft regulation on merchant shipping competition is drawn up in its final form as soon as possible?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) The proposal for a Council regulation defining the method of applying Articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty of Rome to sea transport and thus, of course, the introduction of the rules on competition into sea transport was forwarded to the Council on 16 October 1981. It was first discussed by an *ad hoc* working party on the rules on competition in sea transport on 19 January 1982. The discussions in this working party have since continued under the changing chairmanship of Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Greece.

A number of amendments have been proposed during the discussions. This was particularly the case in November 1982, when Denmark had the chair. The Commission said it was prepared to consider some of these amendments provided they did not seriously affect the proposed regulation. As I have said, the proposal has been discussed at numerous meetings of the Council's working party. It has emerged, for example, that certain Member States contest the legal basis of our proposal, claiming that it should be based entirely on Article 87 of the EEC Treaty. Other Member States have problems with the extraterritorial effect this regulation may and, in practice, will have.

The Commission obviously considers it very regrettable that no more progress has yet been made in this important area, all the more so as the United Nations' code of conduct for liner conferences has meanwhile entered into force.

As you know, the programme of a Council working party is decided by the Council's Bureau and the Commission's influence in this respect is comparatively limited. As far as it is able, the Commission does exercise such influence, and it has therefore consistently referred the Council to the need for progress in this matter, the last occasion being the meeting of the Council of Transport Ministers in

December 1983. Very recently thought was again given to the question of how we might try to ensure that this discussion proceeds smoothly, but I am sorry to say that nothing concrete and positive can be said about this at the moment.

Mr Gerokostopoulos (PPE). — (GR) I thank the Commissioner for his protracted and detailed review of a matter which the labyrinthine bureaucracy in the Council is making more difficult to settle.

The Commissioner has said that the Commission is unable to influence the order in which matters before the Council are dealt with, and he assures us that only last December he tried again to get the matter settled. I would like to ask him therefore whether, with a view to filling a huge void and getting rid of a blatant absurdity, the Commission is prepared to put new pressure on the Council by citing the pressure from Parliament.

Secondly, I hope that the Commissioner has read the reply which the President-in-Office of the Council gave me during the last part-session, a reply which I was not at all satisfied with because it was an evasion. And I would like to use this opportunity to ask the Commissioner to make up for the President-in-Office's omission.

Is the Commissioner of the opinion that the Conférences constitute a cartel and are thus in breach of the Community's anti-monopoly provisions, and that, precisely because of the Conférences, it is imperative that the Commission's proposal for a regulation be adopted forthwith?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I gather from what the honourable Member has said that, in view of Parliament's interest in this subject, he wants the Commission to bring renewed pressure to bear on the Council to make progress in this matter. I promise to do so, and I shall again urge the Council to continue its discussion of this subject.

Mr Gontikas (PPE). — (GR) I thank the Commissioner for this albeit incomplete reply. My question is whether and to what extent the Commission intends to apply the provisions of Articles 85, 86 and 87 of the Treaty in the area of maritime transport, and what has it done in this respect thus far.

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) As I do not dispose of the instrument I am endeavouring to create in the form of this regulation, Madam President, it is extremely difficult actually to apply in practice the articles which are formally applicable. Hence the attempt to establish the legal basis we are discussing. Once the legal basis has been established, the two articles will naturally become applicable, with allowance made, of course, for the — I admit, fairly generous — exemptions for which the regulation provides.

Mr Seefeld (S). — (*DE*) Commissioner, you have said that some of the Member States dispute the legality of the regulation and that there are other problems. You have expressed your regret at the lack of concrete progress to date and have asked the Council to take action. I would ask you: How has all this happened; what action have you taken; what compromises, if any, have you suggested and who is preventing you from finding a solution? I am not satisfied with a vague reference to certain Member States.

Mr Andriessen. — (*NL*) I have referred to a number of problems, the most serious ones that have been discussed in our contacts with the Council. I should like to add that the problems that are under discussion also concern legal questions, for example, whether it is possible to include very general rules on exemptions without the capacity to exercise a reasonable amount of supervision or whether general exemption rules should be laid down if they entail the risk of certain forms of cartel emerging. The area of legal interpretation and controls that we are discussing with the Council is quite large. Not so very long ago I gave the parliamentary committee rather more detailed information on this subject. I am, of course, prepared to do the same again in the future if developments indicate the need. But I hope the House will appreciate that, given the nature of these discussions, I cannot give all the details here in Parliament. I believe that is an established practice, although it may not always be accepted.

Mr Pasmazoglou (NI). — (*GR*) The essence of the matter is that certain undertakings are engaged in discussions with a view to controlling the market. Is not the refusal of these undertakings to admit undertakings from another Member State to these discussions a breach of the rules on competition? And if so has not the Commission the power and the duty to investigate the anomaly and in all likelihood take the matter to the Court of Justice?

Mr Andriessen. — (*NL*) I fully agree that the Commission must be given the opportunity to apply the rules on competition to sea transport. As I have said, we need a supplementary legal instrument for this purpose. For the creation of this instrument I depend on the Council's cooperation, just as I, of course, needed Parliament's opinion on this matter. You may rest assured that I am doing my utmost to ensure that real progress is made in the time left to me as a Member of this Commission. But until the instrument is available, it will be difficult to do in this sector what we consider perfectly normal in other sectors.

President. — Question No 4, by Mr Balfe (H-641/83):

Subject: Doorstep milk delivery

Is the Commission aware of the importance and popularity of doorstep milk delivery in Britain?

Will the Commission use its powers to enable this to continue?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Commission is aware how attached consumers in the United Kingdom are to doorstep deliveries of milk. However popular it may be, this traditional form of distribution is liable to be affected by new features of drinking-milk resulting from technical progress. The Commission does not think that it could take any action to influence consumers' freedom of choice in the United Kingdom.

Mr Balfe (S). — Is the Commissioner aware that, with a milk problem in the Community, 35% of the milk drunk is in the United Kingdom and 84% of this is delivered to the doorstep by an industry which is responsible for 75 000 jobs? The older people and also those with young children would be disadvantaged by any withdrawal of doorstep deliveries of milk. Can the Commission give me an assurance that it will cease what is widely regarded as a persecution of the doorstep delivery?

Mr Richard. — I really must say — even to Mr Balfe — that the idea that the Commission is persecuting the milkmen, with great respect, does not add up to anything that I have seen during my time on the Commission.

What is happening is not confined to the UK — indeed, in a sense, the introduction of this new type of milk, particularly UHT, has resulted in far more of it being drunk in countries other than the United Kingdom. What is happening quite clearly is that, with the introduction of UHT milk, there is a convenience in the product which does not exist in fresh milk. I do not see why in those circumstances the Commission should interfere with the consumer's freedom of choice between UHT milk and fresh milk in the UK — or indeed in any other part of the Community. I can give two or three figures on this. The share of UHT milk in the total consumption of milk in the EEC is now estimated at as much as 23%. What is interesting is that of that 23% the amount as a percentage of the total that is consumed in the UK is only 0.9%. So what I am saying is that if, in fact, the technical developments are resulting in a product which is more attractive, then quite clearly it is a product which, on the face of it, the consumer is entitled to make his choice as to whether he wants to buy.

Mr Seligman (ED). — Does the Commissioner not agree that French UHT milk is no more a threat to doorstep delivery than British WHT milk, which has been on the market for some ten years? What French UHT milk may do is reduce the price of milk to the British housewife, which at 22p a pint is the highest in Europe.

Mr Richard. — I do not think I should speculate about the precise effects on the British domestic market of the introduction of an as yet unspecified and unknowable amount of milk coming in from France. I think it is, however, worth underlining the point which was made by the honourable gentleman, namely, that UHT milk is not a French invention which is new on the British market. It has been available in Britain for some considerable time, and I have little doubt in my own mind that if it was not coming in from France, no doubt those people who think they can make a profit by selling it in Britain would themselves be producing it in Britain, rather than bringing it in from outside.

Mrs Ewing (DEP). — Does the Commission not agree that those who attack the Milk Marketing Boards and the doorstep deliveries are really attacking something that we hold as dear as our grandmothers, enshrined as it is in health campaigns going back to war shortages, and would it not be more appropriate for the Commission to encourage other Member States to have doorstep deliveries of whatever kind of milk, so that they drink more milk? Could the Commission start the campaign by ensuring that the Commission shop in the Berlaymont stocks fresh milk, so that their staff do not have to buy it from a small Italian shop round the corner?

(Laughter)

Mr Richard. — I am bound to say to the honourable lady that I respect my grandmother more than I respect the local milkman.

(Laughter)

I must also say to her that if the Commission puts fresh milk in the shop in the Berlaymont, how that can have any effect whatsoever on deliveries to the doorstep I do not quite understand.

Of course the British are attached to doorstep deliveries. One knows why and one understands why. It is a method of convenience shopping. All I am saying is that, as far as the Commission is concerned, if consumers wish to take advantage of a convenience which is different, then I do not think we should interfere to stop them; that is my point.

President. — I now have two requests for supplementaries — one from Mr Lomas and one from Mr Seal — so I leave it up to them to decide who is going to put the supplementary.

(Interruption by Mr Seal)

Mr Seal, this is the procedure we have been following for the last two years. We take one language from each political group, and I may inform you that this works hardest against my own group. I must follow the same procedure for any other groups that I have followed with my group.

Mr Lomas (S). — I know the Commissioner does understand. It is very difficult for the old and the infirm particularly who are totally reliant on the doorstep delivery to get milk. While I accept the figures he has given he will, of course, understand that this is a threat, there is no doubt about that. There is a threat from the cheap imports and it is a problem. It has led to the normally undemonstrative milkmen themselves demonstrating in my constituency.

Could not the Commission, instead of always subsidizing the farmers, on this occasion perhaps consider a subsidy to the consumers by subsidizing the actual price of the pint of milk? This would at the same time help to safeguard the deliveries, it would help to sell more milk and it would help to get rid of the milk lake. Would the Commissioner consider that question?

Mr Richard. — The honourable gentleman will understand that at this precise moment the idea of having additional subsidies in the agricultural budget is not one which I think would find automatic favour with the Commission. On the other hand, I am perfectly prepared to accept that there may be social problems arising from the introduction of a new type of milk and a new delivery system — that is perfectly true. What we can do about those social problems, not only in relation to milk but in relation to textiles or shipbuilding and other industrial sectors, is something which concerns the Commission a great deal and upon which, in relation to some sectors, we have made specific proposals to the Council of Ministers which regrettably have not yet been taken up.

Mrs Baduel Glorioso (COM). — *(IT)* First the children, and then the aged, if I have understood aright. Previously, children were given free milk in Great Britain; if I am not mistaken — and I call on the Commission to confirm this — cases of tuberculosis have again been recorded since free milk was abolished. And then we have to consider the pensioners, who benefit most from these facilities.

Well, since the Craxi government follows Mrs Thatcher's government in many respects, I am very concerned for Italy in view of the precedents of the British Government. I ask the Commission whether it cannot take steps to help British children and pensioners, so as to avoid any possible repercussions in Italy of the measures adopted in Great Britain.

Mr Richard. — I note what the honourable lady has to say. The implications of a change in the pattern of distribution of milk in the United Kingdom on the Italian economy is, I am bound to say, something that I have not perhaps reflected on sufficiently yet. But in view of what the honourable lady said, I will undertake to do so.

Mr Maher (L). — Could the Commission help to ensure that the British Milk Marketing Board observes the rules of free trade, thus making it possible for Irish fresh milk to be imported into the UK market and thereby giving the British consumer not only a wider choice but also the opportunity to buy a more nutritious product than any that is available in Britain?

Mr Richard. — I daily marvel at the ingenuity of Members of Parliament and the way in which a question, which on the face of it appears innocent, is extended to cover major issues related to the common agricultural policy.

As far as the milk marketing boards are concerned as with all other agencies in the Community, the Commission is naturally anxious and will do its best to ensure that Community rules and regulations are properly observed.

Mr Seal (S). — On a point of order, Madam President, I would like to lodge a strong objection to your arbitrary method of limiting questions to political groups. Are you not aware that the Socialist Group is twice as big as the European Democratic Group and therefore should get twice as many questions, and much bigger than some of these small fringe groups whom you are allowing to ask questions?

President. — Mr Seal, it is a great pleasure to have you among us today for perhaps the first time, but those who have been attending regularly at Question Time will know that it is the task of the President taking questions to rule on the admissibility of supplementary questions and to limit their number so that each Member who has put down a question may receive an answer to it. Now, I have that duty to the House, and when I first undertook to preside during Question Time it was agreed by this House that we would take one speaker from each language from each political group, whoever asked a supplementary. I would advise you that Mr Gautier has now asked to put a supplementary, and that will be two Members from your group to one from the European Democrats. So your question is answered and your question has been honoured.

Mr Gautier (S). — (*DE*) Commissioner, have you noticed that a number of amendments have been submitted to this year's report on farm prices, including some by Mr Seal, which aim to lower the price of milk in particular, to the benefit of the consumer, and that in Great Britain precisely this action has in fact achieved this aim?

Mr Richard. — I find it difficult to answer that question as, I must confess, I had not noted the precise amendments that Mr Seal had put down, but now that the amendments are drawn to my attention, naturally I will have a good look at them.

Mr Harris (ED). — Madam President, on a point of order — further, in fact, to the ill-informed point of order made by Mr Seal — you rightly referred earlier to the difficulties which your ruling does pose for Members of my group. I wonder if you could give me some advice on how you select supplementary questions. Do we have to go up beforehand and whisper to members of the secretariat and give our names, rather as in the case of speeches? Or do we have to try and catch the President's eye in the traditional manner? I do not mind which way it is, as long as we know.

President. — It is not for me to make that kind of ruling, Mr Harris. It is for Members to use their own ingenuity. As long as I have the name in front of me given by the staff of Parliament, I follow the list. How you get your name onto the list is not for me to say. I am ready to catch anybody's eye at any time.

Question No 5, by Mr Berkhouwer (H-643/83):

Subject: Cigarettes in France

By a ministerial order made on 30 December 1983 for implementation on 9 January 1984, fixing new cigarette prices, the French Government has imposed an additional tranche of a surtax considered by the Commission to be illegal (see reply to written question No 16/83).¹ What steps is the Commission taking against France to rectify the situation with regard to the arbitrary fixing of cigarette prices and the continued implementation of the surtax?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Commission endeavours to create healthy competition within the Community in the field of manufactured tobacco. For this reason Council Directive 72/464/EEC of 19 December 1972 on taxes other than turnover taxes which affect the consumption of manufactured tobacco provides for the harmonization in the structure of such taxes.

The Commission has commenced infringement proceedings against France under Article 169 of the Treaty for non-compliance with Articles 2 and 4 of the tobacco directive. The grounds for the proceedings are, on the one hand, that the special levy on tobacco recently introduced by the French Government cannot be regarded as an excise duty as specified in Article 2 of the directive, and, on the other hand that the basis of assessment for the proportional element consists of the price before the levy is imposed and not the maximum retail selling price. In addition, the method of calculating the levy distorts the relationship between the specific element and the total tax charge arising from the proportional excise duty, the specific excise duty and the VAT charged on cigarettes in the most popular price category as laid down in Article 10 (b) (2) of the directive.

¹ OJ No C 243 of 12. 9. 1983.

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Furthermore, the levy in question is not included in the taxable amount for VAT as provided by Article 11 (a) (2) of the Sixth VAT Directive, which stipulates that the taxable amount should include all taxes, duties, levies and charges excluding VAT itself. This aspect is, therefore, also covered by the infringement proceedings.

A reply to the Commission's Article 169 letter was received on 9 November 1983, but the Commission considered that the explanation given by the French Government was not satisfactory and therefore decided to issue a reasoned opinion to France.

As far as the increase in the price to consumers is concerned, the Commission would inform honourable Members that the French Government is continuing to fix and limit officially the retail price of cigarettes instead of allowing manufacturers and importers to establish freely the price of their products in accordance with Directive 72/464. France is condemned for this system of price-fixing in a Court of Justice ruling of 29 June 1983. To date, despite the Commission's reminders, the French Government has taken no steps to apply the ruling and eliminate the infringements. The Commission has therefore decided to take the necessary further legal action.

Mr Marshall (ED). — The final part of the Commissioner's answer is most welcome. However, would he not agree that his answer today, and past answers in respect of the misdeeds of the Italian tobacco monopoly, show what a nonsense it was for the Commission to suggest to this House and to the Council that we should move to a further stage of tax harmonization in tobacco when both France and Italy have been breaking the rules time after time, allowing their state monopolies to trade unfairly with imported cigarettes? If he wants any confirmation of the evil ways of the French monopoly, I suggest that he goes to the kiosk in this Parliament to find that imported cigarettes are 50 % dearer than cigarettes produced in France.

Mr Richard. — The Commission does not agree that we have been wasting our time. On the contrary, we regret very much the lack of political will on the part of Member States for progress in this field. The Commission's proposal, unfortunately, has as yet met with no agreement from the Council. This we regret, because we wish to move forward in this field and not stand still.

As far as the comparison with Italy is concerned, I note what the honourable gentleman has to say. As far as the price of cigarettes in the building is concerned, I suppose that is a matter of practical experimentation which any of us can make.

President. — We now come to four questions which I understand the Commission will be answering together.

Question No 6, by Mr Seefeld (H-647/83):

Subject: Unilateral environmental protection legislation by the Member States

As things stand, it is likely that the Council of Ministers for the Environment will continue to find it impossible to reach agreement; does the Commission therefore consider that it would be compatible with the EEC Treaty for one Member State, in order to protect its citizens and flora and fauna, to adopt unilaterally various provisions designed to reduce drastically the pollutants in emissions from motor vehicles and, more specifically, the lead content of petrol by 1986?

Question No 7, by Mrs Weber (H-648/83):

Subject: Reduction in pollution caused by emissions from motor vehicles

Following the total failure of the Council of Ministers for the Environment on 29 November 1983, does the Commission still seriously believe that the Council, which is constantly failing in its role as a Community institution, will summon up the political determination to put the health of the citizens of Europe before certain industrial interests and adopt measures to bring about a drastic reduction within the next three years in the pollution caused by vehicle exhaust fumes?

Question No 8, by Mr Klinkenborg (H-649/83):

Subject: Reduction in the exhaust emissions of motor vehicles

Does the Commission still intend to submit to the Council in April 1984 proposals concerning a reduction in the exhaust emissions of motor vehicles and, more specifically, a reduction in the lead content of petrol?

Question No 9, by Mrs Seibel-Emmerling (H-650/83):

Subject: Positive effects on the Community as a whole of unilateral national environmental protection measures

Does the Commission share my view that the unilateral adoption by one Member State of regulations imposing a drastic reduction in the pollutants emitted by motor vehicles and in the lead content of petrol would in no way disrupt intra-Community trade since, were this to happen, the other Member States would in point of fact be forced in their own economic interests (tourist sector and the car industry) to bring their own legislation into line with such measures, which are necessary in the interest of the health of all the Community's citizens?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Since these four questions deal with the same topic, I would first of all like to say that there is not the slightest doubt that the Commission is determined to introduce lead-free petrol as quickly as possible, for health and environmental reasons. Mr Seefeld has put a hypothetical question. Nevertheless I would like to point out that, as you will all be aware, last June in Stuttgart the European Council took fundamental political decisions on air pollution, with particular emphasis on the urgency of accelerating and strengthening measures at national, Community and international level.

Regarding the problem of possible unilateral national measures, I would like to point out that Community law and in particular regulations concerning the free exchange of goods and competition must be adhered to. Recourse to Article 36 requires proof of its applicability to a specific case. As far as regulations on the lead content of petrol are concerned, the Council directive of 29 June 1978 on harmonization of the legislation in the Member States on the lead content of petrol, as published in the Official Journal of 22. 7. 1978, is still in force.

In reply to Mr Klinkenborg I would like to assure him that the Commission still intends to submit proposals to the Council by 15 April on the general limitation of pollution by vehicle emissions and on the elimination of lead in petrol. It therefore follows that we cannot judge whether the severe criticism in Mrs Weber's question of the Ministers of the Environment is justified until meetings of the Council of Environmental Ministers after this date.

Finally, I would like to reply to Mrs Seibel-Emmerling's question. Political initiatives are always very welcome in all areas and at all times, particularly in the field of environmental protection, as this enables us to draw up the most efficient regulations to protect the environment based on the broadest possible consensus within the Community. Particularly in the light of its most recent experience, the Commission believes, more firmly than before, in the existence of this consensus in the Member States. I would again like to refer to the fundamental decisions taken by the European Council in Stuttgart which I mentioned at the beginning. The appropriate agreement between the Ministers of the Environment a week or so in advance paved the way for these decisions.

Mr Seefeld (S). — (DE) Commissioner, thank you for your reply, but it was couched in somewhat legalistic terms and I would ask you to be more specific: What happens if one of the governments does not do what you want? You have said that the Commission is in favour of lead-free petrol. What action would you take?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) Mr Seefeld, the situation you have postulated does not exist, as far as I can see. We will, in the course of preparatory work in this field, be open to the possibility of such a situation arising.

Mr Pearce (ED). — Is the Commissioner aware of the statement by the President of the Degussa Company, Europe's main manufacturer of three-way catalysts, that the technology proposed in the Commission's thinking has a life of no more than 10 years and is therefore, I would say, already outdated, even though the current proposals regarding vehicle emissions advanced by Germany are coercing the European motor and petroleum industries into an irreversible and enormously costly course of action, having permanent effect on employment in Europe's automobile industry, producing vehicles for home and export markets, on the basis of unproven evidence regarding damage to health and the environment?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) The Commission does not intend to commit the car industry to specific processes. The Commission merely intends to formulate certain norms and to leave it to the industry to develop suitable processes to enable them to meet these requirements.

With regard to your second point, I would like to say that Europe is lagging seriously behind Japan and the United States with the introduction of lead-free petrol. We consider there is enough proof to justify the introduction of lead-free petrol if we wish to pursue a responsible, preventative environmental policy.

Mr Sieglerschmidt (S). — (DE) Commissioner, why should it be contrary to the spirit of the Community for one Member State to fulfil Community aims in the area of environmental protection better than others, i.e. to introduce stricter standards? Why should directives of this type not be based on minimum standards, but as an encouragement specifically contain a clause permitting improvements?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) Mr Sieglerschmidt, I cannot accept your demand for the general introduction of minimum standards, because — depending on the individual case — maximum fulfilment of minimum standards could lead to trade distortions. There is greater benefit to the Community's internal market from uniform standards. Should the situation you mention arise, we should only be able to accept it provided there were no import ban involved.

Mrs Schleicher (PPE). — (DE) Both Mr Seefeld, Mrs Weber and Mrs Seibel-Emmerling have criticized the Council's total failure. At the time these questions were tabled, this criticism was justified. However, in the meantime, there has been another meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Environment and I wanted to ask whether Parliament's proposals and the pressure we have put on the Council of Ministers have

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provoked any sort of reaction. Has there been any progress since the last meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Environment and are there any grounds for hope that something will be achieved? Is there any chance that the Council of Ministers of the Environment will reach decisions on the basis of Parliament's demands?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) As regards, first of all, the last meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Environment: with one exception, all the problems awaiting decision were solved and enormous progress was made.

Secondly, I have the impression that the four questioners were influenced by a misleading report of the November meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Environment. The question of the lead content of petrol was not on the agenda at this meeting. The only point that arose was whether a general declaration on environmental matters should be issued — as it were from the conference table — in preparation for the Athens Summit. In the course of late-night discussions on this general declaration, which were more of a philosophical, academic nature, the participants were unable to reach agreement and gave up the attempt towards two o'clock in the morning.

All this coloured the press reports, but has no bearing on how the Council of Ministers of the Environment reaches decisions. On the contrary, the penultimate sentence of my reply was couched in more optimistic terms, in the light of the success of the last Council of Ministers meeting, when the Ministers of the Environment accepted our environmental framework regulation on air pollution, including the difficult question of the control of vehicle emissions and the standards for the control of fixed plant. These standards were set at the lowest level, so that all attempts to go beyond this and to exclude wide areas could be blocked.

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling (S). — (DE) Madam President, you kindly asked whether, as questioner, I wished to put a supplementary question. I did not. Following the reply by the Commissioner, I would have liked to use my right to put a question as a member of my group. Could you explain why you refused my request?

President. — Mrs Seibel-Emmerling, after the Commission replied to your question, I asked you if you wished to put a supplementary question. As you did not wish to put a supplementary question, I followed the usual procedure of calling one speaker from each language in each group. Mr Sieglerschmidt, your German colleague, put a question. So I do not think it would be correct to call you again. Can we now close this discussion and carry on with the questions?

Question No 10, by Sir Fred Warner (H-664/83):

Subject: Elimination of milk surpluses in the Community

The US Government has devised a scheme to limit production of milk by paying producers to reduce their sales below their normal 'marketing history' amount. It is estimated that this could eliminate the entire milk surplus in the USA. Could the Commission consider implementing a similar plan within the Community?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The United States Government's short-term scheme to pay for non-production of milk is, as the Commission understands it, aimed at the short-term reduction of stocks. Such a scheme cannot, unless it is continued indefinitely, eliminate a structural surplus of the dimensions we have in the Community. The Commission's proposals have the object of reducing permanently the level of surplus production and thereby, equally on a continuing basis, the build-up of stocks. Current United States dairy policy includes a range of measures with the same object. The Commission is considering structural aids to assist farmers to abandon milk production. It is constantly adapting its disposal policies to make them more efficient and more cost-effective. Budgetary constraints prevent the Commission from considering at this stage a major short-term programme of stock reduction.

Sir Fred Warner (ED). — In view of the fact that agricultural policies pursued by the Community for the last 20 years have undoubtedly brought a great deal of marginal land into production and have given rise to a lot of very marginal production at the top rate on good land, has the Commission ever done a careful and profound study of the comparative costs of a system which provides, as at present, money for all food produced as opposed to a system which discourages marginal production?

Mr Richard. — I hope Sir Fred Warner will forgive me if I say that the supplementary that he has just put is really an extraordinarily long way away from asking for the Commission's comments on a scheme introduced by the United States Government in order to deal with the present short-term stock situation of milk in the United States of America.

I do not know — this is the short answer to him — whether the Commission has in fact carried out the study that he has referred to. I can only tell him that if the Commission has carried out such a study, it would of course have been both careful and profound.

(Laughter)

Mr Seal (S). — Is the Commissioner aware that 33 million pints of milk a day are consumed in the United Kingdom? Is he also aware that 84% of these are delivered by doorstep delivery? If this delivery is reduced, not only will a valuable social service be lost to the old people and to people living in rural areas but the milk surpluses in the EEC will not be diminished but actually increased.

Mr Richard. — The Commission is aware of the figures given by the honourable gentleman. We are aware, as I have said before, that the United Kingdom is very attached to doorstep deliveries. We are aware that they are a considerable convenience to a number of people. We are aware that if they were to disappear, no doubt that convenience would disappear also. We are indeed aware of all those things, but I am grateful to the honourable gentlemen for drawing them again to our attention.

President. — Question No 11, by Mrs Lizin (H-665/83):

Subject: Early retirement in the Liège iron and steel industry

Can the Commission say if it is planning to finance early retirements in the iron and steel industry in Liège, and is there any likelihood of the age at which it would take effect being somewhere around 50/52?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — In formal terms redundant steelworkers benefiting from early pension arrangements in Belgium have been treated as unemployed workers entitled to tide-over allowances under the existing scheme of readaptation benefits agreed with the Belgian Government. All steelworkers over 50 are able to receive the maximum 20 months of benefit jointly financed by the European Coal and Steel Community. As under the 1981 social *volet* for steel, the new social support scheme which the Commission has proposed envisages supplementary aid covering a maximum pre-pension period of three years for beneficiaries aged 55 and over. In addition, we would be prepared to contribute towards early retirement for those aged 50-55 who are medically unfit or have been working in particularly arduous conditions. For those not qualifying on this basis there may be the possibility of a contribution of 2 000 units of account in place of the reintegration premium to which they would be entitled under the Commission's proposal if they found alternative jobs. The social support scheme is currently under discussion in the Council's working group. The Commission hopes for at least a preliminary Council decision this month.

Mrs Lizin (S). — (FR) Yes, I think it was already hoping the same thing two months ago. But the situation is still deteriorating and the Cockerill-Sambre plans for Liège and Charleroi are currently being negotiated.

I should like Mr Richard to give me an estimate, if he can, of how much money might be coming to the Walloon iron and steel industry from social measures and to tell me if he would agree — and this is a proposal I am making him today — to receive the leaders of Seraing, one of the hardest-hit communes in the Liège area, where the closures are having an extremely

bad effect on the local budget. There too I think responsibility falls on the ECSC.

Mr Richard. — As far as the first of those two questions is concerned, obviously it is not possible for the Commission to make an estimate of what it is going to cost because we do not yet know precisely how many people would therefore qualify for the benefits which the Commission hopes it would be in a position to co-finance. Judging from the plan drawn up for the Belgian Government by the consultant Mr Gandois, job losses in the Liège area may be of the order of 4 000, I am told, of which some 1 500 could result from plant closures and the remaining 2 500 from productivity improvements and modernization of the remaining plant. Of the 4 000 workers affected, 2 700 may qualify for early retirement from the age of 55 onwards.

Taking account of natural wastage, it might be that 1 000 workers would need to be dealt with in other ways, whether by reducing the qualifying age for early retirement or by promoting re-employment in other economically sound activities. But one does not know these figures, so it is very difficult therefore for me to give any firm estimate of how much it is going to cost.

As far as the second part of the honourable lady's question is concerned, I was not aware that I had been asked to meet a deputation from this particular commune. If the honourable lady would like to get in touch with me, certainly this is something that I would be pleased to consider.

Lord O'Hagan (ED). — In the context of early retirement, could the Commission confirm that it is, in its view, still the official policy of the British Labour Party to retire early from the European Community, which would destroy the British dairy industry and eliminate doorstep delivery? If that is the case, which the Commission can tell us, does it not make quite clear the hypocrisy of British Socialist Members in constantly moaning on about doorstep delivery in this Parliament?

Mr Richard. — I do not think the honourable gentleman should provoke me into commenting upon the political views of any of the parties represented in this House.

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Commissioner, I assume that your reply to Mrs Lizin also applies in principle to West Germany. In connection with your statement that the Commission would be prepared to co-finance early retirement from an age of 50 to 55 for those who are medically unfit or have been working in arduous conditions, I would like to ask whether a directive or regulation to this end is envisaged? What percentage of the costs would the Commission contribute in such a case?

Mr Richard. — I am afraid the honourable gentleman has not got it quite right. These arrangements for early retirement or tiding-over allowances are in large part a direct result of negotiations and discussions between individual Member States and the Commission. What we try to do is to assist the Member States in implementing the policies that they think are proper in relation to unemployed workers in their coal or steel industries. The answer I gave is therefore technically confined to the discussions that have taken place between the Commission on the one hand and the government of Belgium on the other hand in relation to its steel problem. Obviously, if there are questions that the honourable gentleman would like to ask about the comparable arrangements — if there are comparable arrangements — between the Commission and the Federal Republic, he might care to put a question down and I will certainly see that it is answered.

President. — Question No 12, by Mr Seligman (H-696/83):

Subject: Measures concerning imported cut flowers

The Commission has acknowledged the important effect of the proposed measures to prevent distortion of the market for cut flowers by excessive imports from third countries, which the market cannot absorb.

Can the Commission give help to producers within the Community by stating a date by which they will be able to announce definite proposals and put them into force?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) At the meeting of the Council of Agriculture Ministers on 17 and 18 October 1983 the Commission undertook to submit a report containing proposals concerning the regulation of imports of certain cut flowers, particularly roses and carnations, so that a decision might be taken before the start of the 1984/85 marketing season.

Very recently the Commission submitted to the Council proposals designed to provide a clearer insight into and more accurate information on the situation in the market as regards both domestic production and imports. These proposals also provide for the monitoring of imports of the products concerned from third countries so that the necessary action can be taken when the market is disturbed by an increase in imports of products which the Community market has difficulty in absorbing if the incomes of our own producers are not to be seriously jeopardized.

Mr Seligman (ED). — I thank the Commissioner for that reply. The growers of cut flowers will be very pleased to hear that he is doing something about the

matter. However, the resolution adopted last October was intended to do something in time for the 1984/85 season, and that starts next month. I see with dismay that the draft regulation from the Councils says 'this regulation shall enter into force on 1 November 1984'. That is much too late. A lot of companies are going to go bust before then. So, will the Commission please try and advance that date, provided Parliament does its stuff and gets the regulation through? It is now on Parliament's desk. If we can get it through quickly, will the Commission and the Council get it through quickly in time for this season?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Once the relevant opinions have been forwarded, I am quite prepared to call for the matter to be dealt with as quickly as possible in the Council.

Mr Marshall (ED). — As one who is young enough to still enjoy buying flowers for his wife, may I ask the Commission to take account of the views of consumers of flowers, and may I also ask the Commission to look at the serious plight in which their proposals could place suppliers of flowers to the Community. Many of these supplying countries are much less well off than we as a Community are. So it would seem to me to be immoral to pauperize them, and it seems to me wrong to make the customers of the cut flower industry suffer so that there can be a little bit of protectionism amongst the poor people of West Sussex.

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Like many people in this Assembly no doubt, I like buying flowers from time to time. I am afraid that I cannot do precisely as the honourable Member has requested. I have just expressed myself very carefully on the conditions the Commission believes must be satisfied before it takes action. The Commission certainly does not think that it should take action at all costs. It believes action should be taken only if, for example, the market is having difficulty absorbing total production and imports and the incomes of the producers concerned are at serious risk. I feel we must strike a balance between producers' and consumers' interests. Exporting developing countries are clearly in a different position and certainly cannot be made subject to import duties.

Mr Balfe (S). — As someone who likes flowers — bouquets — may I for once agree with Mr Marshall and ask particularly that the Commission pay a special regard to the effect that could be had on Third World countries by virtue of any import restrictions. This Community is often criticized for its attitude towards the Third World in this particular regard. Certainly in the area of cut flowers I should think that we could show a fair degree of leniency, and I would like the Commission's assurance that they will look sympathetically on Third World suppliers.

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I willingly give this assurance. I repeat that I chose my words very carefully and said that the Commission wants to be in a position to take action if the market is disturbed, and I have also described the conditions governing such action. This does not mean that the Commission will take action at all costs, but only if these conditions are satisfied. They naturally allow for an assessment of the legitimate interests of third countries which are in a difficult position.

President. — Question No 13, by Mr Lomas (H-338/83/rev.):

Subject: European companies in South Africa

A report has been published in a British newspaper, *The Observer*, stating that the following companies in South Africa are breaking the EEC Code of Conduct, by paying wages below even the EEC's rather modest minimum recommendations:

British Electric Traction,
Quinton Hazell (of which the British Prime Minister's husband is a director),
Dunlop,
GKN,
Lonhro,
Low & Bonar,
Turner & Newall,
Wimpey.

Does the Commission propose to take any action to remedy this state of affairs?

Mr Purvis (ED). — On a point of order, Madam President. This question is dated 17 August 1983. It has appeared on this order paper every month since then, the questioner has not been present at any of those sittings, and it has never been taken up. It has merely been an attempt to defame certain companies and certain individuals who have not had a chance to defend themselves. After all these months, seven months of constant republication in our order paper, I think there ought to be a ruling by the presidency as to whether it is permissible for a named person to be defamed without an opportunity to respond.

President. — Mr Purvis, I must inform you that a similar question had been tabled by Mr Lomas and that he used an adjective which was found by Members of the European Democratic Group to be unacceptable in accordance with the Rules of Parliament. Mr Lomas's question was therefore deemed at the time inadmissible. He wrote to the President of Parliament and that decision was upheld. Mr Lomas has put down this revised question. It is not the same question. He has deleted the offending words, and I cannot but accept the question that he has put down as it is now worded. I therefore ask the Commission to reply to Question No 13.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Code of Conduct of companies with subsidiaries, branches or representations in South Africa is a result of concerted action between the Member States within the framework of political cooperation. The Commission participates in the work of political cooperation, but it has not been asked to administer the Code. The Commissioner is informed that certain Community firms are not complying fully with the Code's provisions on pay. The Commission is not in a position to take the kind of action referred to by the honourable Member. The Commission would like the Member States to continue their efforts to ensure the widest possible compliance with the Code's provisions and welcomes the cooperation and encouragement of Parliament to that end.

Mr Lomas (S). — I accept what the Commissioner says, but does he not agree, none the less, that this is a deplorable state of affairs? Even if the Commission itself cannot do anything in a direct way, despite the fact that yet again someone in the British Prime Minister's family is involved in disreputable business affairs, could he not at least ask the British Government to intervene and try to stop companies from paying starvation wages in South Africa?

President. — Mr Lomas, I really must remind you that we are in the European Parliament and that any defamatory statement concerning anybody, whoever they are and whoever's son they are, is not acceptable. It is outside parliamentary practice.

Mr Richard. — I entirely accept the generality of the proposition, which is that as far as firms operating in South Africa are concerned, it is highly desirable that they should obey the provisions of the Code. On the other hand, it is very difficult for the Commission — in a case in which we do not have the competence to intervene directly and in which the responsibility for enforcing the Code is not with the Commission but with the Member States — to go further than the general observation which I made at the outset, which was that we do look to Member States to ensure that the Code is properly complied with.

Mr Maffre-Baugé (COM). — (FR) Mr Commissioner, does the Commission not think that the Community's credibility is suffering in the minds of large sections of public opinion in Africa due to its countenancing the investment of European capital in South Africa on terms involving wages that are lower than the EEC's minimum requirements?

Does the EEC not also think that the governments should be encouraged to put the official condemnation of apartheid into practice in political and economic fields?

Mr Richard. — I do not think that the credibility of the Community is threatened. The credibility of individual firms that may be paying wages below the minimum is certainly called into question, and I hope that Member States will do what they can to ensure that the Code and its provisions are complied with by firms that are at present not doing so.

Mrs Ewing (DEP). — Could I suggest to the Commissioner that the credibility of the Community is indeed in peril? I have just come from a meeting with the ACP States where I took part in a debate on South Africa. The attitude of our 63 ACP partners is of growing cynicism as they watch more and more businessmen from more and more companies in many of the Community's Member States do more and more business. Could I ask the Commissioner if he does not feel that his answer has indicated too passive a role? Is there nothing between control and passivity that he could suggest, such as listing the companies which are offending? Surely they are not all, for example, in the United Kingdom? Could we not at least be told? Could the Commission not do something here to help, because we really are losing credibility in the eyes of our Lomé partners?

Mr Richard. — I am afraid that it is very difficult for me at the moment to go any further than I have already gone in relation to the Commission's competence. So far as the standing of the Community in the eyes of the Third World is concerned, I can only say that I note the report that the honourable lady gives about the reception that the Community seems to have had at the recent ACP meeting.

Mr Normanton (ED). — Would the Commissioner not agree that wages paid by industries come solely within the jurisdiction of the countries in which those industries operate? After all, wages in the Community are not within the purview of the Commission, and any movement to fix wages in, for example, South Africa at the level of those paid in, say, Germany would be the surest way to destroy any expectation of viability in world markets. That surely cannot be the wish of anyone in this House.

Mr Richard. — I do not share the honourable gentleman's view that the wages paid by European companies operating in South Africa are purely a matter for those companies. The Member States have, after all, accepted a Code of Conduct in which they say that companies should assume a special responsibility as regards the pay and conditions of employment of their black African employees. They should formulate specific policies aimed at improving their terms of employment. Pay based on the absolute minimum necessary for a family to survive cannot be considered as being sufficient. The minimum wage should initially exceed by at least 50 % the minimum

level required to satisfy the basic needs of an employee and his family.

With respect, it is not the Commission that is urging this upon companies in Member States. That is what the Member States themselves accepted when they accepted the Code of Conduct. It does seem to me, as I said right at the outset, that in those circumstances there is an obligation on the part of Member States to make sure that their companies operating in South Africa live up to the Code. I am not asking them to do anything else except live up to the Code which they not only accepted but helped to draft.

Mrs Viehoff (S). — (NL) Perhaps the Commission might investigate the personnel policy pursued by Wimpy in the Member States. It is suspected — and I emphasize very strongly, it is suspected — that this firm employs part-time workers on a large scale, particularly schoolchildren during the holidays, and that they are not always paid the statutory wages or even the wages prescribed by the EEC Code, which are surely very modest.

Mr Richard. — I cannot clarify the hiring or wage practices of Wimpy. They are not within the control of the Commission. I have no special knowledge about it. I have no doubt that the British Government, which may know more about it than I do, would wish, having heard what the honourable lady has to say, to clarify the matter directly with her.

Mr Balfe (S). — With the blessing of the TUC I visited South Africa last summer and had an opportunity of talking to a number of people about this Code of Conduct, including the Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg. Is the Commission aware that it is a widespread opinion that only Britain and Germany have labour attachés properly monitoring this Code at all? Might it not be appropriate for the Commission to suggest that either Parliament or itself should look again at this Code and advise the Member States that it needs updating?

Mr Richard. — I think that the point the honourable gentleman is making concerns not the substance of the Code but the way in which Member States are choosing to monitor it and enforce it inside the Republic of South Africa itself. I am sure that Member States will note what the honourable gentleman has just said. I really do not think that it is for the Commission, frankly, to comment either upon the exclusivity which was implicit in the honourable gentleman's question or indeed upon the suggestion that we should be urging Member States specifically to do things in relation to their diplomatic representation in the Republic of South Africa, again a matter over which we have absolutely no competence and no control.

President. — Question No 14, by Mr Cousté (H-525/83):

Subject: French aid to the textile industry

Could the Commission tell us what stage has been reached in the infringement proceedings instituted against the French Government concerning the French plan to give aid to the textile industry?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) On 15 November 1983 the Court of Justice of the European Communities stated — and I quote:

‘that the French Republic, by reason of the fact that it has not complied within the stipulated period of time with Commission Decision 83/245 of 12 January 1983 concerning an aid regulation in favour of the textile and clothing industry in France, has *failed* to fulfil one of its obligations arising out of the Treaty.’

In other words, the Court of Justice of the European Communities has said that the Commission has acted correctly in this matter.

Mr Cousté (DEP). — (FR) I think my question called for an answer that did more than repeat a known fact — which is why my additional question will be very simple. Since then, I believe — and this is fortunate — there has been an agreement between the Commission and the French Government. I should like to know whether this really is the case and, if so, for how long.

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) Since the Court of Justice made its statement, intensive discussions have been held with the French Government. Initially, they did not result in an agreement acceptable to the Commission. I now have reason to believe there is a chance of full agreement being reached. If that is in fact the case in the very near future, I shall stop the proceedings. The agreement then reached will, of course, apply to the whole period of the validity of the arrangement concerned.

Mr Seal (S). — Would Commission time and, therefore, Community money not be better spent in allowing and encouraging Member State governments to aid and maintain their textile industries as the French Government is trying to do, rather than instituting legal action and proceedings which destroy the textile industries so that it becomes necessary to give aid to the textile areas adversely affected by these legal proceedings?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) It is not, of course, the Commission's intention that its activities should have the effect to which the honourable Member has just referred. That is certainly not the case. May I point out that, in some cases in which amended systems of aid to the textiles and clothing industry have been

permitted after negotiations with the Commission, the situation has since improved, in some instances appreciably. The Commission's activities should have the effect, firstly, of creating a sound basis for the continued existence of the textile and clothing industry, of enabling it to keep its head above water at this difficult time, which means that there must be restructuring, and secondly, of not disrupting the competitive relationship among the various Member States, with one Member State, which grants aid to its industry, passing its problem on to another. The Commission has been given the powers needed to prevent this, it exercises these powers, and it is pleased that the Court of Justice supports it in these activities.

Mr Hord (ED). — It seems to me that the French Government is tending to indulge in protectionism. This case involves a complaint about aiding the French textile industry. There seems to me to be a whole range of areas and industries which the French Government sees fit to support, particularly in the agricultural sphere. I think that overall the French Government is exploiting the system.

Would the Commission accept that the high incidence of national aids, particularly in France, is very worrying and would the Commission be prepared therefore to investigate exhaustively what appears to be a case of unfair competition?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) As regards the last question, I can tell the honourable Member that, once it has been notified by the government concerned or obtained information through some other channel, the Commission undertakes investigations whenever it is suspected that State aid is being granted in contravention of the provisions of the Treaty. This applies not only to France but, of course, to all the Member States of the Community as and when such incidents occur in those Member States. I cannot deny that the Member States differ as to the intensity with which this phenomenon occurs.

As for the honourable Member's first question, I do not think I can say that the Member State we are now discussing occupies so special a position in the Community that special measures would be justified. As I have said, if and when the Commission has reason to believe that the Treaty is being contravened, it tries to take action with a view to achieving the objective I have indicated in reply to this question.

Mr Rogalla (S). — (DE) This follows on from what the Commissioner has just said. I should like to ask Mr Andriessen whether he agrees with me that, irrespective of this particular instance, systematic checks should be carried out in the industries involved in all the Member States because this particular instance does not seem to me to offer sufficient clear evidence. A systematic study should therefore be made of all

Rogalla

Member States. Does the Commissioner agree? And secondly, is there a legal basis other than the provisions of the EEC Treaty relating to competition, such as decisions by the Court of Justice, which would make talks with the culprits easier?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) A general, systematic investigation into aids granted in the Member States is a practical impossibility because of the limited number of staff available to the Commission. None the less, the Commission constantly discusses the development of the aid policies of the various Member States with them and, of course, regularly considers this subject matter in the context of both regional and sectoral problems and these problems as they affect crisis-hit sectors, such as shipping, textiles in some situations and steel. I do not therefore think that we have any immediate need for a systematic investigation of this kind.

However, under the 'transparency directive' adopted some years ago the Commission is initiating an investigation into the financial relations between Member States' governments and State-owned undertakings. I believe that this in itself will give the Commission sufficient insight to enable it to take action when necessary. I am not saying that I always have the feeling that I have enough staff to tackle all the cases adequately and quickly, but that is a general problem which cannot, of course, be solved in the context of this question.

By applying general texts which set out the conditions governing the granting of aid, the Commission is doing its best to ensure a degree of transparency in aid policies, which might help to bring about a relationship with those who want to grant aid rather than taking action against them on the grounds that the Treaty has been infringed. I feel that is at least a partial answer to the honourable Member's last question.

Mr Nordmann (L). — (FR) I should like to leave the field of general aid and return to the more specific subject of aid to the textile sector, in which the Commission has run a survey. Two months ago, I asked the Commission if we could have the results of this survey, which had in theory been completed some months previously. I was unable to obtain an answer. Now, two months later, is the Commission able to provide more details?

Mr Andriessen. — (NL) I am afraid that I cannot say at the moment whether the findings of the investigation to which the honourable Member has referred to are now available. If you will allow, I suggest I provide you with written information on this as soon as I am able.

President. — Question Time is closed.¹

¹ See Annex II.

I should like to thank those Members of the House who have agreed to abide by the decision that the House itself took with regard to self-discipline in putting supplementary questions. I would ask Members to tell their fellow group members, some of whom have now disappeared from the Chamber, that 67 oral questions have been tabled to the Commission to be answered, hopefully, by the end of this Parliament's term of office. As we shall only have two more part-sessions where it will be possible to put questions to the Commission, Members will understand why self-discipline must be exercised if we wish to get through even some of these questions before the June elections. We have taken 14 today in an hour and a half, but that leaves another 53 questions which have still to be answered by the Commission. I do hope that Members will pass on this remark to their colleagues and explain why we will only get through even some of these if Members do exert self-discipline in putting their supplementaries. I am grateful to those who have done so and who will cooperate in the next two months.

11. *Action taken by the Commission on the opinions of Parliament*

President. — The next item is the statement by the Commission of the European Communities on the action taken on the opinions and resolutions of the European Parliament.²

Mr Purvis (ED). — I am referring to the list at the back, of food aid and other items. In the urgent and topical debates last month, we adopted a resolution calling on the Commission to provide food aid of 33 000 tonnes to North Yemen because of the drought there. I see the list does not include this, although I can understand that the most recent date is 15 February and it is therefore, perhaps, too soon. Could I have some assurance from the Commissioner that this food-aid grain will be sent to North Yemen?

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) I cannot give any assurances on this matter. The Commission is busily engaged in studying the whole question at the moment. As soon as some decision has been arrived at, we shall certainly let Parliament know as soon as possible.

IN THE CHAIR : MRS CASSANMAGNAGO
CERRETTI

Vice-President

12. *Freedom of education in the EEC (continuation)*

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the report (Doc. 1-1456/83) by Mr Luster.

² See Annex III.

Mr Vié (DEP). — (FR) Madam President, honourable Members, the final paragraph of the preamble to the Treaty of Rome gives the EEC an unambiguous aim, and I quote, 'by pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty'. And there is more. The joint declaration of 1977 establishes a basic principle which commits all our States through the Council which signed it. The Community, it says, respects and even, the text says, will continue to respect not only the Treaty and the law derived from it, but the general principles of law and, in particular, the European Convention of 1950 on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

So today's debate — *pace* — has an unimpeachable legal basis. Freedom of education is a fundamental freedom and the States of the Community must respect and continue to respect it.

So, people will say, what is the point of this debate as everything has been said. Because freedom, even solemnly proclaimed, is only a fake, something added for the sake of appearances, if the material means of exercising it are missing. Because if freedom in any field is only reserved for those who can obtain it, then it stops being a common, fundamental thing and becomes something that is sold to the highest bidder and that is totally unacceptable, because *de facto* freedom is like water — it can only be seen and enjoyed if it is contained and, therefore, defined.

It is to the great credit of Mr Luster, the rapporteur, that, after a remarkable piece of work on comparative law, he has managed to define the content of freedom of education in his motion for a resolution. So his content is not an empty word any more. It is a reality that stands out against the background of our lives.

In view of the motion for a resolution on this subject that I tabled on my group's behalf in 1981, I am behind this debate today. Some people — as was said this morning — saw this as a little trick on my part to interfere with the plans the French Government had and still has in this field, a sort of appeal to the European conscience to condemn France's wanderings. Others, often the same people, thought it smacked of clericalism and this hymn to freedom was only a hypocritical way of enabling a religious power to win back the consciences that a lay education had mercifully freed...

If you will allow me to say so, it is doing me little credit to think I am as stupid and as dishonest as that. My reason for tabling this motion — as I have already had the opportunity of saying here — is that the European Community and the countries anxious to join it make up a tiny island of freedom that is lost in the sea of totalitarian systems around it. This island of freedom gets smaller every day — which is why the most urgent thing every day is the political work of defending these freedoms by defining them.

Fundamental freedoms are threatened from the outside and fragile on the inside and they need every effort we can make if they are to constitute an irreversible achievement of our Community law. That they are threatened from the outside is obvious, as State totalitarianism and religious fanaticism are tearing the world apart. That they are threatened from the inside is less obvious and less visible, but it is more insidious and therefore perhaps more dangerous. Any political power has a natural tendency to expand and dominate. And what opposition is there? A legal organization that all our States accept — the separation of powers. But this is not adequate if the citizens renounce their personal share of freedom and hand over more and more of their responsibilities to a welfare state which says: 'Forget all your worries. I will do the rest.'

Whatever the political colour of the governments of our countries, the situation is identical and relatively new. Faced with the States' covert desire to annex powers in this way, we are gradually signing a series of what I would call little Munich agreements — which represent large losses in terms of individual rights. In this way the State loses its nature, which is to be a fundamental guarantor of freedom, security and independence. It is us, it thinks for us, it acts for us and it replaces us. If I wanted this debate, it was because it is so exemplary. It leads to an assertion, through what is certainly a fundamental problem, education, but I hope there will be more debates in the future. No, the State is not a father confessor. The State is not a teacher or an entrepreneur or the holder of the truth we must believe or not believe or know or not know. Yes, the State is the structure we rely on to ensure we have complete freedom of belief, education and enterprise and freedom to be informed and to live. In a word, total freedom, with, I repeat, a whole series of specific material means.

It would be seriously diverting this debate from its true meaning to turn it into yet another example of a completely sterile and pointless opposition of black and white. But it is fulfilling it to make it an opportunity for a personal awakening to the dangers threatening us all — the abandonment of our personal sovereignty to an all-powerful State. This House is outside the traditional political differences that all too often divide our States and it can and must be a forum for a debate of this sort. It will fulfil its mission if, day after day, it builds this area of free and responsible life without which man would lose his very nature.

Mr Fajardie (S). — (FR) Madam President, we are in the middle of a debate that is both serious and complex. Serious because the way we deal with it commits the future of coming generations and complex because the educational situation in each of our countries is the result of a long historical process, a reflection of philosophical and cultural trends that it

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would no doubt be dangerous to try and standardize, and of the educational structures in each of the nations that make up the European Community and which derive from the movement of ideas that developed there and the institutions to which it has given rise.

This is the background against which the problem of independent education has come before Parliament today. On the question of substance, everyone, naturally, is free to open a school or send his children there. There is no question of attacking freedom of education. But it is certainly not reasonable, particularly in a period when human, scientific and technological knowledge is developing extremely fast, to imagine that education systems that do not, in particular, involve a search for coherence in the syllabuses and the status of the teachers, can last forever. The real question is that of relations between the States and the private schools and, more precisely, of the rules which are naturally attendant on the use of public monies.

The Socialists are aware of the importance of this debate and are always ready to participate in it in an open-minded manner. But such a debate necessarily involves an assessment of the oft-discussed right of the family to choose the kind of education that best suits its own philosophical and religious ideas for its children.

It also raises the matter of the freedom of individual conscience. As far as we are concerned, freedom of conscience must be respected in adults and children alike. So we feel that we should avoid fixing over-strict rules in education that do not take account of the child's right to get from his training an open-minded attitude to the different philosophies and religions without any of them being forced upon him at school.

As we see it, the best system of education is the one that unites rather than divides. This means it must not attack any faith, cultural or racial identity, conviction or attitude of mind. It must profit from the differences and link the process of learning tolerance to the process of obtaining freedom.

It is a debate that must be run with generosity and circumspection, having, first, a desire to give the best possible training to the child or the adolescent. And Mr Luster's report reflects a choice which goes far beyond the bounds within which this House should keep, I believe, on such a subject, bearing in mind the diversity of situations.

This is why we shall reject it, being convinced that a major debate of substance is now being thrown open to the European conscience and stating that we are ready to dialogue with you, on the one condition that no religion, philosophy or politics should come into the teaching of any school whatsoever to restrict the unchallengeable right of the men and women of tomorrow to freedom of choice and thought.

(Applause)

Mrs Gaiotti De Biase (PPE). — *(IT)* Madam President, as has already been said, we should avoid falling into the trap of linking this debate too closely, on one side and on the other, to current political agreements or electoral events. When a problem is pushed to extremes, it becomes more difficult to solve it. And a problem such as this, which has over a century of ideological conflict behind it, does not need pushing to extremes.

Moreover, I should like to remind those who have seen this debate entirely from the French standpoint that the present situation in Italy is worse, with an interpretation of the Constitution that excludes the use of public funds to finance private schools, with a few exceptions in the case of nursery and elementary schools. And the Luster resolution might perhaps prove providential, more for Italy than elsewhere. As Italians we envy those European countries such as Belgium and Holland where civil and democratic maturity have made possible a state of peace in the education world that is satisfactory for everyone.

In fact, the question of freedom of education ought to be tackled in a different way than by treating it as a clash between Catholics and non-Catholics, as we have tried to make clear in the opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport with substitute amendments from Mr Marck and myself, which led to the resignation of Mr Fajardie.

Of course, it is true that the rights of the family must be respected. Equally, it is true that the freedom to teach must be guaranteed in the forms proposed by the Legal Affairs Committee. We reject the picture that some people paint of education in denominational schools — as Mr Fajardie said again just now — almost as if, in denominational schools, the child's freedom of conscience were not respected; almost as if it really were a system that divides, and not one open to research. Education in denominational schools — as we said in the opinion delivered by the Committee on Youth and Culture — like any other system, develops a critical approach, trains young people for research, enhances awareness, encourages a dialogue with other cultures and instils respect for the different choices made by individuals. It is a safeguard against education that is limited to the spread of information and technical knowledge.

But, quite apart from the question of rights and, I would like to say, through the problem of rights which is part and parcel of it, there is a problem that concerns the development of educational systems and the *rapprochement* of the philosophies that are at the base of the various educational structures in Europe. In the past, Europe has had two main models: the Latin centralist tradition, and the more flexible, decentralized tradition of the Anglo-Saxon model. The

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development of the function of education, the education of the masses, the call to have a say in how the schools are run, and the need to make education more dynamic and more variable, so as to be able to adapt to the increasingly varied demands of society — all of these factors lay the centralist systems open today to severe criticism. The claim for freedom of education — which has today been solved virtually in Italy alone, and has been rediscovered in France — is a demand that reflects the need for general modernization of the educational system. It must be upheld — and not only in relation to Catholic schools, which still represent the largest sector statistically — because doing this also means taking a fresh look at how the State schools are managed.

I would like the parties of the Left in my country and other countries as well to take note of an increasingly burning question. In the present economic crisis, with the temptation to reduce social expenditure, a trend might develop — and is perhaps already developing, in some countries — towards privatization — a rush by the privileged to set up their own exclusive fee-paying schools, to satisfy the right to education. If the present free Catholic-oriented schools are to be left without economic support, there is a danger that they will become just such a place of class division, a facility only for the privileged. The great majority of them were founded for the very opposite reason — they were founded, some of them, many hundreds of years ago, to offer education to children from the poorer classes. And even those that, in the past, were schools for the elite are now, after the Council, carefully reviewing their vocation. In Italy — where unfortunately, because of the opposition of the parties of the Left and secular Centre, support from public funds is still not guaranteed — many institutions which were once typical of the upper classes have variable fees depending on the parents' income, so as to be able to accept pupils from every environment.

But these are not the right solutions. New legislation is needed, a new recognition of the individual's rights, which must guarantee the right education for everyone, leaving society free, and leaving it with the power spontaneously to work out the new solutions which the new culture needs.

Mrs Cinciari Rodano (COM). — *(IT)* Madam President, in the first place I deplore the way in which this subject has been put on today's agenda, and I think it a pity that such a complex report, which was discussed at very great length in committee and which involves a number of fundamental questions — as some Members have emphasized — should have turned up so unexpectedly. It would be fair to suspect — especially after what Mr Galland said — that it was decided to move the debate to today for the internal political reasons of a Member State, which is deplorable, because of the very importance of the matter.

I am personally convinced that a restrictive interpretation of the Treaties where education is concerned is wrong and harmful to the development of the Community, and I am afraid that the introduction of such a delicate, contentious matter — even though it is on the grounds of fundamental human rights — will end up not by helping but by putting back the work of the Community in the educational and cultural field, strengthening resistance and opposition to it.

On less debatable questions we have been marking time for years — I have in mind the recognition of diplomas and periods of study, of which we spoke this morning; equality of access to education, the teaching of the Community languages, the application of the directive on migrants' children, and the problem — which can no longer be shelved in view of the introduction of new technology — of coordination between school education and vocational training.

On the face of it I doubt — whatever Mrs Gaiotti may think — whether the Luster resolution is compatible with what is laid down in the Italian Constitution, which recognizes the freedom to teach and to open educational institutions, provided there is no charge on the State. Moreover the Christian Democrats, in the Italian Parliament, tackle the question very differently, without financing private schools generally from public funds, as Mr Luster proposes.

Secondly, I do not think that the question of education can be reduced simply to a matter of family choice. That certainly has an important part to play, but the person that is fundamentally concerned with education, the real holder of the right to be educated, is the child, who is not the property of the parents. The history of our country shows us the importance of State action, in view of the fact that in many regions in our country, after the country was united, it was the parents who wanted to keep their children in a state of ignorance.

It is a fundamental interest of the State to guarantee the child's primary right to education — that is, the possibility to acquire knowledge and the critical ability to take one's place freely in productive, cultural and social life, and to exercise the rights and duties of the citizen of a democratic State. This aim makes the State school a place for the pluralistic comparison of ideas, and this is obviously the kind of education that is to be preferred. Of course, there is still room for private initiative. It has a useful function in providing a greater choice of education; on the condition, however, that it is part of an integrated educational system — coordinated and programmed, that is, by the government, so as to avoid the waste of resources. Because of the complexity of the problems that are involved with the new developments that face us today, I believe it is necessary not to see this freedom of choice as an abstract concept, because it cannot be

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assumed that all the possible options will be available in a given territory, and all of them run by the State. For these reasons, we consider that the Luster resolution is unacceptable.

(Applause from the Left)

Mrs Veil (L). — *(FR)* Madam President, I am delighted that we are discussing education today, although, paradoxically, the treaties do not expressly mention education or culture as coming within the jurisdiction of the Community. Yet we observe that the Community has indeed been led to deal with it, even if only to be able to implement the right of establishment. How could this be done without diplomas being harmonized first? We can hope that our previous discussions will enable us to take long strides along the path to a real Community.

But, as Mr Richard has also emphasized, the fact that these educational problems have been brought up clearly shows that Parliament is aware of the need for an accompaniment to the progress of the Economic Community in a political Europe. I am somewhat surprised, here, at the recent speech by Mrs Cinciari-Rodano, who is sorry we are dealing with education through the freedom of education issue with the idea that it might make the notion of Europe lose ground. I am particularly surprised that it is often our colleagues in the Communist Group, who asked to talk about human rights in the Community, who are surprised at us saying as much about human rights outside the Community, as they do not wish to deal with that issue. I have also noticed, in the Legal Affairs Committee, that when we talked about human rights in the Community, professional bans in this case, the Communist Group was against the debate being held in plenary. So it is clear that there are two sorts of freedom, one that suits them and one that does not.

Yes indeed, Mr Chambeiron, that is exactly what happened!

So, bearing in mind what I think is the extremely important matter of making headway with an economic Europe, I feel it is essential to assert, as we are doing today, that the Community is above all a democratic area with the same values and the same conception of civil rights, private rights, fundamental rights and freedoms.

On a number of occasions our resolutions have expressed the existence of this Community on which our hopes and our desire for a united Europe are founded. All we are doing is applying the principles which the Heads of State or Government have confirmed so many times — and I shall only remind you of the case of the Human Rights Convention and the desire to see the Community accede to it, the

abolition of the death penalty, conscientious objection, the desire for a European legal area and voting rights for Community citizens in local elections.

The Legal Affairs Committee, which I have the honour of chairing, took a very active part in devising what could be called a Community charter.

Today the question is one of a fundamental right, perhaps the most important one because what ultimately is at stake is our future — freedom of education. I must admit to being surprised that the debate was not held any sooner and that we have not reasserted an essential principle — perhaps because it asserted itself — which seemed so obvious that we had to wait until this right and freedom was under threat in one of our countries to think about reasserting it so clearly in this report.

When I say that it should be obvious, it is because we ourselves have voted — as I would remind you, honourable Members, very many times — to assert not only every citizen's educational rights but also the right of minorities as being something which must be taken into account when education is being organized, giving way to a system that is adapted so as to be linked to everyone's traditions. Mr Luster gave us a timely reminder of a decree from the Court of Justice. We are concerned about minority rights. How could it be otherwise when we are particularly anxious to assert the rights of those who are an integral part of the national community and only want to have their freedom of choice respected? What does the Luster report do? It reasserts essential principles — freedom of choice and the provision of conditions in which this freedom may be exercised, as there is no right and no freedom if there is no possibility of enjoying them.

Here, I think, I should once again stress how much we extend democracy today when we seek not just to assert this right, but to find out how it can be exercised. Mr Sieglerschmidt emphasized this in relation to conscientious objection. I believe that it is very important not just to claim our rights, but to know how we are going to exercise them.

I for one think the European Parliament is an excellent forum in which to discuss questions of this sort, as it is here that we, with our own national traditions, our cultural traditions and a very wide range of parties, can open a profoundly democratic debate and achieve a freedom that takes on its whole meaning in a field which poses questions for us all, because we know that our future depends on the education of our children and that we must, with a tolerance proper to the democracy we represent, run the debate so that freedom is clearly asserted in a European and democratic spirit.

(Applause)

Mr Alavanos (COM). — (*GR*) Mrs Veil is chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee, but from what we know she also heads a party list for the European elections in France. The connection between the motion for a resolution and the well-known happenings in France surrounding education is plain for all to see, and we do not think it right that the European Parliament should be implicated like this in national political struggles.

We think that the title of this Luster motion for a resolution on freedom of education is misleading. In point of fact it denies the right of Member States to follow their own line in education policy and would see imposed a Community policy which would effectively favour private education to the detriment of public sector education. This interference by the European Parliament in the field of education has no basis in law and even as far as the EEC's own treaties are concerned it constitutes a piece of legal acrobatics. It challenges the right of each country to evolve its own policy on education and conflicts with the constitution of the Hellenic Republic which says that in Greece the fundamental objective to provide education lies not with the European Communities but with the Greek State. I underline this because we are talking about the constitution and not any old piece of paper which the European Parliament can throw into the waste-paper basket any time it feels like it.

I also want to make another relevant comment. We do not agree with the implication in the Luster resolution that the freedom of private education, which in essence it supports, safeguards the right to education free of discrimination. On the contrary, it institutionalizes and consolidates discrimination in education on grounds of class, weakens public sector education which caters for the vast majority of children who come from working-class homes, and places a huge financial burden on working people. It is estimated that in Greece expenditure on attendance at private general education and language cramming institutes alone amounts to 10 billion drachmas annually.

For these reasons those of us who belong to the Communist Party of Greece — which supports the gradual abolition of private education in Greece, without, of course, wishing in any way to impose this on other Member States — will vote against the Luster motion for a resolution.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — I have listened, I must say, with great interest to this debate on the freedom of education. It is undoubtedly an important subject, if at times the debate has seemed to me to be faintly abstract, somewhat removed from current concerns about the development of cooperation at Community level in the field of education. Our action programme in this area, dating from the 1976 resolution of the Ministers for Education meeting within the Council, does not provide for joint

consideration of what might be called the fundamental principles of education. In the Commission's view, shared, I think, as it would be by Member States, the human-rights dimension of this question should be more appropriately taken up within the framework designed for that specific purpose — namely, the European Convention on Human Rights.

As regards the specific suggestions made regarding action at Community level, I noted the rapporteur's attempts to establish a link between the mutual recognition of school-leaver diplomas and Article 57 of the Treaty. It should, perhaps, be pointed out that Article 57 relates to the right of establishment in other Member States for self-employed workers, and I am bound to say to Parliament that I do not think it is very relevant to the questions that have been raised during this debate.

Similarly, it is difficult to argue that a regulation under Article 235 of the Treaty is an appropriate means of ensuring equivalence in the content of school-leaving certificates. In the Commission's view, this is inconceivable both from a legal and from a policy point of view. Questions of equivalence within Member States are of a totally different order from equivalence between Member States. It is not with the latter that you can hope to deal with the former. Responsibility for the content of school certificates is exercised by a very wide variety of bodies in the Member States, and harmonization *per se* is certainly not an objective of Community policy.

Finally, Madam President, on the question of the Commission's instituting proceedings against Member States which might be in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights, I should like to remind Parliament that this is not something which the Commission has the power to do. The Convention provides its own procedures for appeals and proceedings, and these would clearly have to be followed.

I have been struck, in the course of this debate, by the number of speakers who emphasized what they saw as the human-rights aspect of this whole matter. Time and again, it was the right to education, the right to a choice, that was being emphasized by a large number of the speakers that took part in the debate. While the question of freedom of education is one of great importance, it is not one for the Commission. It would seem to me that the appropriate forum for raising these great issues of human rights is the framework of the human rights machinery established by the Council of Europe — namely, the Convention on Human Rights and the Court of Human Rights. I should in conclusion therefore confirm that the Commission, for its part, does not envisage any specific follow-up at Community level to this debate. We shall not, therefore, be taking any specific initiatives in this particular field in the foreseeable future.

President. — The debate is closed.

The deadline for tabling amendments expired today at 12 noon. Since it has not been possible to have the texts of these amendments distributed in all the official languages, the vote will be taken at 5 p.m. tomorrow.

13. *Chemical and radioactive waste*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1413/83) by Mr Eisma, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the dumping of chemical and radioactive waste at sea.

Mr Eisma (NI), rapporteur. — (NL) Madam President, I have just come back from the official presentation by Vice-President Estgen of an award for the best film shown at the 1983 environment festival, which went to the environmental organization Greenpeace. The film is very closely connected with the subject of my report, which we are now about to discuss. Recently 50 Danish and German fishing boats demonstrated in the mouth of the Weser against the discharge of acid waste by the Kronos-Titan titanium dioxide plant. As an example of the seriousness of the situation as regards the dumping of waste at sea, this company is allowed to discharge 440 000 tonnes a year. The result is that 30 % of the fish caught in the German Bight are in such a poor condition that they have to be thrown back. Mussels caught off the Belgian coast are inedible because of dangerous substances dumped at sea. Where the waste discharged by Kronos-Titan is concerned, the German authorities admit that fish are being poisoned by the acid that has been dumped. There are many similar examples of this in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Britain. What is even more important is that we do not know what irreparable damage the dumping of waste today will cause in the future. We must therefore put a stop to the dumping of harmful substances at sea as soon as possible.

The 440 000 tonnes I have referred to are almost nothing compared to the total of 9 million tonnes of industrial waste, 9 million tonnes of sewage sludge and 111 million tonnes of dredged spoils that are dumped at sea every year with official authorization. As a result, inadmissible quantities of harmful heavy metals and organic chlorine compounds find their way into the sea.

In the report before us I, and therefore the Committee on the Environment, draw the following conclusions :

- 1) No more radioactive waste should be dumped at sea and direct discharges from nuclear power stations, such as Windscale, should be stopped.
- 2) After 1 January 1986 no more 'blacklist' substances should be dumped except as traces. Even the

dumping of substances which occur as traces should be subject to limits on both concentration and the total quantity of these 'blacklist' traces in other substances.

Amendments which tamper with the essence of these conclusions strike at the heart of the resolution and have therefore been rejected by the Committee on the Environment.

There are a number of international conventions which impose limits on the dumping of waste by ships at sea : the London, Oslo and Marpol Conventions. If every country adhered strictly to these conventions, the situation would be considerably improved. They contain blacklists of the most dangerous substances, including mercury, cadmium and organohalogens. They may not be dumped unless present in other materials as traces. What we need now is a limit above which a substance is no longer regarded as a trace and the material concerned may not be dumped. Negotiations on this aspect are in progress. I should like to see the Commission, which has observer status in respect of these conventions, making a positive effort to spur on these laborious negotiations. The Community should also be a signatory of these conventions. Only then will it be able to make its presence felt.

In the report I therefore call on the Commission to ensure that the Member States introduce national legislation at an early date to implement the conventions, establish programmes for various harmful substances, pursue a strict policy on authorizations, detect cases of illegal dumping and prosecute those responsible.

To conclude, I should like to say a few words about radioactive waste. The conference of the London Convention countries, which is now taking place, has decided to extend the ban on the dumping of low- and medium-level radioactive waste for another year, until the end of 1985. Direct discharges from nuclear power stations such as Windscale are, of course, fundamentally wrong unless they meet the strict radiation limits laid down in international standards.

I also have a personal comment to make. I am not therefore now speaking as rapporteur. Highly radioactive waste is not dumped at sea. It is now being said that this waste should be dumped 40 metres below the seabed. You will appreciate that we are very much opposed to this. We could never get at it if something went wrong.

Secondly and finally, my attention has been drawn to the fact that the burning of waste substances at sea can give rise to harmful oxidation products and chlorine, which may eventually find their way into the sea. Burning should consequently be equated with dumping. I therefore hope that the House will approve Amendment No 9, which I have tabled on this subject.

(Applause)

Mr Bombard (S). — *(FR)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, it really is my life's work to talk about the dumping of toxic and radioactive waste at sea. About 30 years ago, I had to oppose the dumping of sludge, red sludge it was called, in the Mediterranean and, on that occasion, I said something absurd of which I no longer have any reason to be proud. The sea is not a dustbin, I said. Well the sea is a dustbin. All running water ends up in the sea sooner or later. The whole point is to find out what the dustbin is going to have in it — and its contents certainly must not be a threat to life.

As things stand, there are two completely separate kinds of pollution for which different names should be found. The first is a general movement of elements in relation to the earth. Air moves round the earth and water moves round the earth and they move matter a long way. While it was natural, non-industrially produced matter, it was pollution as the pen runs. But it was the sort of pollution which Lavoisier described when he said that nothing is created, nothing is lost and everything just changes.

Today we are creating pollution that will be a burden to the children of the future and here I shall pay particular attention — since we talked about waste in connection with the Squarcialupi report just now — to the problem of nuclear waste. Into the sea, we put nuclear waste with a much longer life than that of the containers in which it is sealed. Take strontium. The half-life of strontium, Honourable Members, the half-life of a radioactive element, is the time it takes to half destroy itself. That is to say that at the end of the first period of its life, half is left, at the end of the second period of life, a quarter is left and so on. And 20 periods of life are said to be needed for waste to be completely eliminated. Nuclear power stations contain radioactive strontium, which has a half-life of 34 years, after which half is left, and after 68 years, a quarter of it is left. So 20 periods, 680 years that is to say, are required to make it completely disappear. The concrete or the steel containers dumped in the sea do not last that long, so they will come open and the radioactive waste — and here I am talking about a radioactive element with a short life and not, say, cesium, which lasts thousands of years — will escape. So our grandchildren are in danger of eating fish that will harm their health once the containers break open.

That is why I insist on the importance of Mr Eisma's report on a total ban on dumping. Unless there is effective protection — and it exists, but it is expensive and involves vitreous silica or silica glass being included — I insist that we ban the dumping at sea of any radioactive waste in containers that have shorter lives than the radioactive waste they contain.

(Applause)

Mr Ryan (PPE). — Madam President, I should like to express our thanks to Mr Clinton and Mr McCartin

and indeed colleagues from all groups who have tabled motions expressing their grave concern at the lack of effective control over disposal of radioactive waste. Parliament today demands yet again even at this late hour that the Council of Ministers listen to the plea of concerned European people that there should be no further dumping of chemical and radioactive waste at sea. It is no longer acceptable that any State should scatter its own pollution into man's common resource of pure seas. It is bizarre that some States which are rightly agitated at the amount of transnational boundary pollution on the land of Europe are nonetheless engaged in abusing the maritime environment for all by dumping dangerous wastes which cause provable damage to plankton, other living organisms and sediments, fish life, the quality of sea water and fauna in coastal areas. Carelessness and indifference on the part of man is the greatest menace to man's own environment. Sadly, the Irish Sea illustrates this point, and if I take the Irish Sea it is not to diminish the anxiety of people on the shores of other seas within Europe. The once pure Irish Sea now has areas of water and shorelines polluted by urban sewage. Safe passage of ships and fishing activities, and indeed human life, are endangered by underwater movement of submarines, and the health, well-being and life of children, men, women, animals and plants are being put at risk by the discharge of nuclear waste from the Sellafield (once called Windscale) plant of the United Kingdom — a distance of a mere 60 miles, or 100 kilometres, from my own European parliamentary constituency of Dublin in Ireland.

There have been too many accidents at the Sellafield plant. We know that pollution of sea water and plant life far exceeds expectations. Medical research points to the possibility that wind-carried pollution from the Sellafield installation contributed to an extraordinary incidence of handicapped babies on the east coast of Ireland. Accepting that the level of radioactivity in the Irish Sea is not yet so serious as to harm fish, there is, nevertheless, the possibility that dangerous levels could be reached, either because of further accidents or for want of sufficient knowledge.

In a mere three months the people of Europe will be going to the polls to re-elect the European Parliament. It is important that the people of Europe, worried about the inactivity of the European Economic Community in the field of control of dangerous wastes, should know where the blame lies. The Council of Ministers are the culprits. More than eight years have passed since Parliament and the Commission asked the Council of Ministers to adopt a directive to control dumping of chemical and radioactive material at sea. The Council of Ministers has criminally failed to act. There are tens of international conventions, nearly as many resolutions of this Parliament and innumerable pleas from the EEC Commis-

Ryan

sion to the Council for effective Community action on various matters relating to waste control. From the Council there has been a deafening silence, except for a request that there be studies until 1990 of the effect of radioactive dumping!

How many people will meanwhile become victims of the Council's neglect? How much further damage to the environment have we to tolerate before action is taken? The European Parliament has done, and I am sure will continue to do all it can to push the final lawmaking organ of the EEC — the Council of Ministers — into action to stop nuclear waste dumping at sea. From this forum we should send out an appeal to our fellow parliamentarians in their national assemblies to press their governments to ratify and implement all relevant international conventions on the matter and to oblige their national ministers in the EEC Council of Ministers to take collective action at Community level to rid us all of the frightful risk of a radioactive or chemical disaster resulting from ineffective waste control.

Mr Sherlock (ED). — Madam President, in the time available I can do very little except to say first of all that my group is in general agreement with the nature and the substance of Mr Eisma's excellent report, which again is an own-initiative report.

The areas in which I have objections are fairly clearly shown by the amendments I have tabled, and the first one is the generalized assertion that disposal on land is always under all circumstances in all places preferable to disposal at sea. This ignores very radical differences in geography, circumstances and conditions from one Member State to another. There is no doubt that large sea areas can deal adequately and safely with certain wastes when they are dumped under carefully controlled and monitored conditions. Our best way of achieving this is for all the Member States to ratify and adhere strictly to the terms of those international conventions which already exist.

The second point is the dumping of radioactive material. There is no high level radioactive material dumped anywhere in the world. It is all low radioactive high volume material, almost all of it coming from a very few research institutes, mostly from hospitals. What are you going to do with this very high volume of very low radioactive material? Put it in steel drums, put great hunks of concrete around it and sink it to the bottom of the sea. Even if it were all dispersed, there would be a mere one-tenth of one per cent of the level of exposure recommended by the International Confederation on such exposure matters. You acquire the same dose in making an airflight between Paris and London, and some of you do this fairly often.

I must repeat, particularly for Mr Ritchie Ryan's benefit, that the discharge of Sellafield is controlled by

an entirely different set of regulations. But all dumping done by the UK is in full compliance with international obligations. We follow the rules and guidelines contained in the London and Oslo Conventions. If everybody else was strict about it, there would be infinitely less anxiety.

Mr Brøndlund Nielsen (L). — (DA) Madam President, we are dealing here with a very important matter. The previous speakers have pointed out the seriousness of the situation and have voiced concern, and I would say that it is also a matter in which Parliament's role should be emphasized. We shall soon have elections, and the question has been raised in a number of quarters what value a parliament has to the Communities. Parliament justifies its existence precisely in situations such as this, in which there is genuine concern among the population for the environment and the future and in which it may perhaps be difficult for established opinion in the many institutions to agree on long-term solutions. That is where there is great value in having a forum in which the population at large immediately feels, one might say instinctively, that things which are serious in the long term are taken in hand. We might wish that Parliament had much more influence in such matters, so that it might be possible to get things moving in the face of the many established interests which perhaps find it difficult to look so many years ahead at a time of economic crisis.

Indeed that is the crux of the matter. The least concerned of the speakers was Mr Sherlock, and it is always reassuring to hear a sober-minded statement. But when comparison is made with an airflight from London to Paris, I must say that that is not really what we are talking about here, for you can refrain from making that flight. But if one fine day so much deadly poison has accumulated in the sea that it constitutes a danger to life, there is nothing you can do about it — you cannot refrain from being endangered. You simply cannot escape. That is what is dangerous, even if perhaps only small units of radiation and chemical poisons are dumped in the short term.

I would support what has been said about the incredible danger in the emission of particles of nuclear radiation from the British Windscale plant, now called Sellafield. It is possible that some will say the amounts are small, but they can be measured as far away as in Danish waters. It is absolutely essential that it be stopped as soon as at all possible.

We are dealing with a field in which it is vital to tackle the problems on a transnational basis and in which the Community must be the proper forum. We must have the will and the resources to ensure that this area is covered by a policy geared more to long-term safety, and the Liberal Group will strongly support it.

Mr Nyborg (DEP). — *(DA)* Madam President, I will start by congratulating Mr Eisma on his report, which I think is excellent and by and large reflects the broad opinion here in Parliament. The large number of reports from the Environment Committee — and there are even more in the pipeline — clearly reflect the pressure of public opinion in our Member States on questions of protecting and conserving the environment. As a Parliament, it is natural, indeed it is democratically necessary for us to try and translate words into deeds. The increased environmental consciousness we experienced in the 1970s should be followed up by concrete deeds, by practical action. As a Parliament we are in an excellent position to take on the role of watchdog and conscience in this very important area.

In my homeland, Denmark, we have several times now seen fishermen blockade the toxic waste disposal vessels in the harbours. I will not stand here and defend illegal acts but, on the other hand, is it not possible to understand the fishermen resorting to these forms of action? I find it quite natural in these matters that the fishermen should be the first to sound the alarm, for the sea is their place of work, and they know better than so many others, better than those who stand and make speeches and who sit at office desks, where their troubles lie.

This is also relevant to the subject Mr Eisma deals with in his splendid report, and we do indeed have conventions governing dumping at sea. But the conventions have had very little effect, as Mr Eisma notes. Certain Member States do not observe the conventions, and so Mr Eisma reaches for the universal solution we have considered in the past here in Parliament: let the Commission take on the role of policeman. Let the Commission carry out inspections to check that all the Member States are observing the conventions in question. I have some sympathy with the idea, but I am afraid that it is not quite as realistic as we would like it to be. Let me therefore end with the explicit hope that we can get out of the present dead waters on the environment issue. Otherwise there is a risk that the North Sea, for example, will become a dead sea.

Mr Vandemeulebroucke (CDI). — *(NL)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I must begin by congratulating Mr Eisma on his excellent report. I agree with everything the report says, mainly because the country from which I come, Belgium, is far from being a classic example of respect for directives on waste. They are certainly not being properly enforced in Belgium, and this has resulted in the Belgian authorities being taken to the Court of Justice.

The London Convention has been ready for ratification these last fourteen years, and yet the port of Zeebrugge is not only notorious as a centre of the

international arms trade: it is also a port for the transshipment of radioactive waste.

Mr Sherlock has just argued that a great deal of radioactive waste in fact originates from hospitals. I will quote him the official figures issued by the Belgian Government: 43% of radioactive waste originated from nuclear power stations, 35% from radium factories, 9% from the European nuclear centre at Mol in Belgium, a small proportion from miscellaneous industries and only 7% from laboratories and hospitals.

There is no sign of the present situation changing. At the moment the Belgian Chamber of Representatives is considering a proposal for a resolution seeking an end to the dumping of radioactive waste at sea. But we need not deceive ourselves in this respect, because during the discussion in the appropriate committee last week the Liberal State Secretary for Energy called all the talk about the dumping of nuclear waste worthless and pessimistic grousing. This contrasts with alarming reports that describe the North Sea as Europe's dustbin and refer to the end of the North Sea.

I am not saying that the apocalypse is nigh, but we surely cannot help feeling that the recent talk of environmental pollution is, to say the least, very alarming. This is therefore an area in which a transfrontier, international approach must certainly be adopted. What good is it, for example, if the Netherlands stops dumping radioactive waste while its transshipment continues to flourish at the port of Zeebrugge?

The Commission has an extremely important part to play here as the pre-eminent Community organ and as a contracting party: it must inform, inspect, study and, if necessary, punish. This Parliament has adopted many resolutions on transfrontier environmental damage, on the pollution of the Meuse and the Rhine, on acid rain, on the request made to Belgium, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Switzerland to stop dumping waste at sea. On 28 October 1982 the Netherlands imposed a moratorium on dumping.

It is our task to call all the more strongly for a general and therefore a Community approach to the fight against international pollution. Two resolutions on the dumping of waste at sea have already been adopted in the European Parliament by the urgency procedure. The approval of the Eisma report may represent another major step towards persuading the Council of Ministers to waste no more time in taking action.

Mr Petronio (NI). — *(IT)* Madam President, we shall vote in favour of Mr Eisma's report because we consider that it provides a spur, through the Commission, to the Council and to Member States to make them accede to and sign the various conventions — from Oslo to Helsinki — and to ratify the Bonn

Petronio

Agreement and subsequent London Conventions, and also the Marpol Convention — concerning these problems, or at any rate issue a Directive that will make up for the absence of initiative on the part of Member States.

One point on which I feel I must comment specifically is Article 11 of Mr Eisma's motion, in which it is stated that, whether it is necessary or not to dump radioactive waste in the sea depends on whether or not there is a satisfactory waste storage system available on land. And this is a fundamental problem, because this waste must be dumped somewhere or other, unless we wish the nuclear energy industry to come to a standstill. The more nuclear energy there is, the more waste there will be, and the greater the radioactive danger. On the other hand we have to consider the disadvantages attached to conventional methods of generating power. A coal-fired power station, for example, emits carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, and benzopyrene, which produce changes in the climate, acid rain, serious respiratory diseases, damage to the soil and carcinogenic effects. A nuclear power station, on the other hand, whatever one says, does produce harmful waste, but millions of times less of it. A 1 megawatt power station produces only 2 cubic metres of highly radioactive waste in a year. Its harmfulness, moreover, is controlled by modern medicine.

The problem is therefore where to bury, for ever, this waste. Recent studies tell us that it must be buried underground at great depth — about 600 metres — where the existing rock structures already have in themselves a higher level of radioactivity — because of the uranium, thorium, potassium and other radioactive materials it contains — than the equivalent level of all the waste dumped, for example, by the entire American nuclear industry in a whole year. Work is now being carried out on special glass, and on stainless steels, for making containers to be buried in the ground 10 metres apart, dissipating their heat with further treatment. It is not necessary, therefore, to dispose of this waste in the rivers, which would have serious consequences; nor in the sea, nor in the wind-borne dust, with all the serious consequences of inhalation and ingestion. It is necessary, as I have said, to work on the ultra-deep rocky formations at a depth of 600 metres, but in places where these formations are geologically stable, as well as being far removed from water tables, and not subject to earthquakes.

At this point there is also a problem of cost. It is indeed true that in this way we are imposing on our descendants costs for storage and final burial, but otherwise they would end up by having to bear the even heavier cost of the impoverishment of mineral resources of high value that we are at present exploiting. We are now burning oil, coal and methane, that they will no longer be able to find; we are burning raw materials such as copper, tin, zinc, mercury and lead, which they will no longer have

available. Taking all of this into consideration, the storage costs that will fall upon them will be many, many, many times lower than present costs. What we have to do therefore is to produce more energy, so as to derive from it more technology, and so that this technology can be used to form new materials and new energy which, coupled with inventiveness, will open up wide possibilities for future generations in all fields.

Mr Halligan (S). — Madam President, I would like to congratulate Mr Eisma on his report because deliberate pollution of the environment seems to me to be one of the craziest and most irresponsible of all human actions. By doing so we consciously and wilfully place at risk our ability to survive as a species on this planet. This is particularly the case with regard to the dumping of nuclear waste.

Now industrialists by and large regard the environment — the land, the sea and water — as one vast dustbin into which they can pour poisonous, noxious, toxic and radioactive waste with impunity and without any regard to the consequences of their action. They can only be prevented from pursuing this wantonly irresponsible violation of the environment by the most detailed and strictly enforced legislation designed to protect the air, the land and the sea.

I speak from first-hand experience as one who worked as a chemical technician in this area, an experience which has left me with a most jaundiced view of the polluters, their apologists and their so-called experts. The Eisma report on the dumping of chemical and radioactive waste at sea is one of the most important and, indeed, one of the most frightening documents to come before this Parliament, and it should rivet public attention on this appalling problem.

Two points leap out from the report. Ten years ago the Council declared that marine pollution constituted one of the most dangerous forms of pollution because of the effects it had on the fundamental biological and ecological balances governing life on this planet. Yet, incredibly, a decade later, there exists no substantial corpus of Community legislation to deal with pollution in general and marine pollution in particular. And that is the second point of concern in the Eisma report.

What are the consequences? Well my constituency of Dublin is washed by the Irish Sea. It is almost an enclosed lake and it takes about 3 years for self-renewal. It is the worst international site for the dumping of low-level radioactive waste at sea. Yet Windscale, on the adjoining island, which has been described as the world's nuclear dustbin, discharges low-level liquid waste every day into the Irish Sea — more than from all other similar plants in the world. Its standards of industrial safety are notorious and a recent unplanned discharge unmasked by Greenpeace, has led to an official British inquiry, the findings of which are a total indictment of British Nuclear Fuels.

Halligan

So, consciously, as a matter of management policy, and unwittingly as a result of managerial incompetence. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. daily increase the radioactive levels in the Irish Sea to the point where fish landed in the Republic of Ireland contain twice as much radioactivity as fish caught off Iceland. And, in addition, the solid radioactive waste produced by Windscale is dumped off our south-west coast without our permission and against our express opposition. Dumped radioactivity enters the food chain. It threatens not only this generation with cancers and genetic defects, but it also threatens generations stretching on into the future. It must be stopped and it must be stopped now. The Irish Sea has been turned into a radioactive Irish stew by British negligence and indifference. This must cease and they must pledge never again to engage in such lunacy.

Mr Lalor (DEP). — Madam President, I would like to thank the rapporteur for his well-researched and constructive report on the dumping of chemicals and radioactive waste at sea. I say 'Hands off the Irish Sea'. Stop dumping in the Atlantic off our south coast, and while you are at it keep your submarines out of Irish waters.

The Irish Sea is the most radioactive sea not only in Europe but in the world. The responsibility lies fairly and squarely with the United Kingdom authorities at the Sellafield nuclear processing plant, and with the Commission for failing to supervise its work. It is time for Europe to wake up. There is no such concept as safe limits of radiation. It is time for European action to stop transfrontier radioactive pollution from nuclear reprocessing plants. We believe in the principle 'the polluter pays' and there are international agreements on this.

Cases of cancer are linked to the existence of the Sellafield — formerly Windscale — plant. The birth of six Down's syndrome babies on Ireland's east coast is being linked to toxic emissions from Sellafield. One million gallons of effluent including plutonium residues are discharged into the Irish Sea every year. Sellafield has been in the business of nuclear disposal for over 25 years. Is it any wonder that we in Ireland are extremely concerned?

Under the circumstances, can we accept that the Irish Sea should become Britain's or anybody else's dustbin? Keep your nuclear and toxic waste to yourselves! We do not want it! People in Louth, Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford do not want it! Why is it that discharges from Sellafield are much higher than those from France's plant at the Cap de la Hague? Will the Commission make a statement on it? Will the Commission investigate this? Some months ago we called for an independent EEC inquiry into Sellafield. We renew that call today. Nobody knows or will say where radioactive wastes

from this same plant, following a serious accidental discharge, have gone. Will the Commission investigate?

Finally, will the Commission demand of the Irish Government an explanation for its siting of a proposed toxic waste centre near Baldonnel, County Dublin? Studies have been carried out, but no information has been made available to the public and I think we need that information.

Mr Ewing (DEP). — Madam President, I will not rehearse what Mr Lalor has said, I shall just accept it and go on from there to say that one of the problems about the dumping of radioactive waste is the secrecy which very often shrouds it until somebody discovers the area into which it is to be dumped. Presumably the justifiable annoyance about making the Irish Sea into a kind of wasteland will simply mean that this waste will be dumped in other places where perhaps there are fewer people to object. I object to that secrecy. The sea concerns all of us. We have spent years trying to get a common fisheries policy and it will all really be wasted if we go on polluting our oceans.

The second point I would like to make concerns the behaviour of sub-standard tankers. It seems to me regrettable that quite a number of the Community's Member States have not ratified conventions on this subject. I remember this Parliament adopted a resolution I tabled concerning a code of conduct for sub-standard tankers, many of which are serious offenders where dumping is concerned. Yet when a port such as one in my area called Sullum Voe decides not to receive a sub-standard tanker, it can be sued for a million pounds. In some countries like Canada the State will back up a port that takes very clear action against sub-standard tankers. Yet this Community leaves it to the port authority, to do so. Really and truly it is not good enough, when the code I proposed was that if one port in the Community blacklists a tanker for bad behaviour or for being sub-standard in some way, that tanker should not get into any port. It is in the interest of all of us to follow these lines.

In the meantime, it is in the interests of all the Member States to ratify these conventions. The problem of radioactive waste, raises the whole question of whether it is acceptable to have any radioactive waste at all, because no one knows what to do with it or where to put it.

Mr Collins (S), Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. — Madam President I want to intervene in this debate because I think it is important to assert not the concerns of individual Member States but rather the interests of the Community as a whole on this particular matter.

Collins

The discharges of waste material into the oceans and seas come from very many countries, not just from Ireland, not just from the United Kingdom, not just from Germany, but from very many countries. They come from many sources and the effect of their discharges is international. It follows therefore that any legislative framework that purports to deal with the problem must also be international, or else action by individual States will lead merely to inequalities in competition in the affected industrial sectors and to needless conflict. Therefore, this is the area of importance for the European Community.

I must say that when Mr Eisma was drawing up his report — I support Mr Eisma's report and I congratulate him on it — I was impressed by the fact that the various industrial lobbies of the European Community could be divided into two or three categories. There were those who might well have been able to find an argument in favour of still sending small boys up chimneys to clean them. There were those who might have still been able to find an argument in favour of the slave trade. And there were those who had a responsible view of the future of European industry. I must say that we were accused in the Environment Committee of being anti-industry.

I want to make it clear to this Assembly, and to Europe in general that the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection is not opposed to industry. We are against irresponsible and for forward-looking industry, because, quite simply, if industry is to take the view that Europe has a future, that the planet has a future and that our children have a future, then it must realize that discharges of radioactive or toxic waste into the oceans must be strictly controlled. In this respect Mr Eisma's report is to be supported, not only by our votes here today but also by the action that we, each and every one of us, take at home in our constituencies in the run-up to the European elections. If we do not do that, then we shall be looked upon by future generations as profligate fools who have known the price of everything and the value of nothing. The environment is too important to be left to industry, the environment is too important to be left to the experts, and that is why Mr Eisma's report on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection is to be supported this afternoon.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR : MR KLEPSCH

Vice-President

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Thank you, Mr President, for the opportunity of winding up this debate. First of all I would like to

thank the rapporteur for his thorough, responsible and constructive report on a very wide-ranging and difficult topic. The Commission wholeheartedly accepts the political aims of the motion for a resolution, both accession to agreements on the prevention of marine pollution and an early ratification of the Bonn Agreement.

With regard to the proposal for a Council directive on the dumping of waste at sea, the Commission intends to submit a new proposal to the Council in the middle of the year which will take account of the above demands. With regard to the various requests that the Commission should be more active in control and coordination and should take over more in the way of drawing up reports, I would like to point out that our staff and facilities are very limited.

As far as the question on scientific investigations is concerned, I would like to inform the Irish members, who all asked this question, that the Commission intends to initiate an investigation on radioactive waste at sea. The question of safety when dumping nuclear waste at sea will be the subject of a report that the Commission intends to submit to Parliament at the end of March, in connection with the report by Mrs Lentz-Cornette.

The motion for a resolution calls for no more radioactive waste to be dumped at sea after 1 January 1984, including direct discharges from nuclear power plants sited on the coast. At a meeting in February 1983 of the parties to the London Agreement a decision was taken to ban the dumping of waste for two years, in order to enable an independent scientific investigation of the effects of dumping radioactive waste to be carried out.

This investigation is now being carried out, and the specific problems to be investigated were defined at a meeting of the contracting parties in London from 20 to 24 February 1984. The results of this investigation will be considered by the various parties in the course of 1985. If the Commission is to coordinate the draft directive 76 with this investigation then the results must first be available before we can re-draft the directive on radioactive waste. This should be during the second half of 1985.

I would like to make the following point on other hazardous wastes : When the Council has adopted the Commission proposal for a regulation on transfrontier transport of hazardous waste, then it should be possible to control these wastes, from their creation to elimination. The progress that was made during the discussion of this proposal at the Council meeting on 1 March 1984 suggests that it will be adopted at the Council meeting on 28 June 1984.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

Mr Curry (ED). — On a point of order, Mr President, I have some information which I am sure will interest this House. This afternoon the British Chancellor of the Exchequer presented the British budget to the House of Commons. He announced a substantial cut in the excise duties on wine, an increase in the duty on beer and spirits. The United Kingdom is now fully in conformity with the ruling of the European Court of Justice. I hope this House will welcome the fact that we keep our promises and that we have undertaken our obligations.

The British Government has secured from the Italian Government a promise that it will act to remove the discriminatory duty on whisky, and we look forward to the announcement eventually from our Italian colleagues that they have fulfilled their promise.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

President. — That was not, of course, a point of order, but it was a piece of information for which the House will be very grateful and which will give us all a great deal of pleasure. The only thing I would ask, however, is that we do not now have a repeat of the debate which will certainly have followed this announcement in the British House of Commons.

Mr Balfe (S). — Mr President, I should never imagine that Mr Curry and I would go to the House of Commons — it is much more fun here. May I just say that complying with European Court directives is not the prerogative of one party: I personally, although my party may have some differences, welcome this decision.

(Mr Collins asked for the floor)

President. — Mr Collins, do you have to?

Mr Collins (S). — Since you ask the question, obviously the answer is 'yes'; otherwise I would never have asked for the floor.

(Loud laughter)

I have some reservations, but since Mr Curry raised the question in the first place, I have no objection whatsoever to the harmonization; however, I do think the House ought to be aware that there was another option open to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. That other option was not simply to increase the price of beer but to reduce the price of

wine, and that would have been much more acceptable to the people in the United Kingdom.

President. — Tomorrow and the day after we shall have plenty of opportunities to debate all these agricultural questions.

14. Votes¹

PERY REPORT (Doc. 1-1351/83 — UNIVERSITY COOPERATION IN THE COMMUNITY)

Motion for a resolution

Mrs Pery (S), rapporteur. — *(FR)* Mr President, I am going to make a short statement that holds good for all 24 amendments.

This text is, of course, a compromise. Now the 24 amendments that have been tabled are new and have not been discussed in committee. Wherever I feel therefore that they endanger this compromise, I shall propose that the vote be against.

After paragraph 29 — Amendments Nos 18 and 19

Mrs Viehoff (S). — *(NL)* I should just like to repeat what I said this morning, when the whole House was not present. Two amendments have been tabled in my name. They contain two mistakes. I submitted corrigenda in good time, but they have not been distributed. Firstly, I am asking for the insertion of two new paragraphs, not of subparagraphs 29(a) and (b). Secondly, 'new university' should read 'open university'. In other words, 'new' should be replaced with 'open'. I can assure you that I submitted these corrigenda in time, and I do not know why they have not been distributed.

President. — We shall take note of that at the proper time.

After the vote on the resolution as a whole

In view of the lateness of the hour, we shall now interrupt the votes.

*(The sitting was closed at 7.20 p.m.)*²

¹ See Annex I.

² Agenda for next sitting: See Minutes.

ANNEX I

Votes

The Report of Proceedings records in an annex the rapporteur's position on the various amendments as well as explanations of vote. For details of the voting the reader is referred to the Minutes of the sitting.

**LIGIOS REPORT (DOC. 1-1374/83 — TAXATION ON WINE): REFERRED
BACK TO COMMITTEE UNDER RULE 85(2)**

* * *

BAUDIS REPORT (DOC. 1-1355/83 — ROAD SAFETY): ADOPTED

The rapporteur left all the amendments to the House.

* * *

**BETHELL REPORT (DOC. 1-1343/83 — DESTABILIZING ACTIVITIES OF
EASTERN COUNTRIES' SECURITY SERVICES): ADOPTED**

The rapporteur spoke:

— IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 1 and 2.

Explanations of vote

Mr Rogers (S). — I am going to vote against this report. As I said this morning, I think that it is a nonsense report. It is extremely prejudiced and biased. All you have to do in this report is substitute CIA for KGB and you have exactly the same sort of report. It is very remiss that there is no objectivity in this report. One of the problems of a report like this is that it is very dangerous in that it pretends to present an objective view of the situation, while, of course, it is not at all objective.

I was quoted in the Strasbourg notebook as having said this morning that Cambridge University was 'a school for spies' and that the British Secret Service was primarily made up of 'public school educated Russian spies with homosexual tendencies'. I did not say that. What I did say this morning was that there were three criteria for the British Secret Service. First of all, you should have gone to public school. Secondly, you have to be a little strange or queer. Thirdly, you probably would have to be a Russian spy, because, as we all know, the British Secret Service is neither British, secret nor a service. It is sheer hypocrisy for a Tory, a cahoot fan of Mrs Thatcher, to present a report like this after what she did over the GCHQ issue.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr Adamou (COM). — *(GR)* Until today I knew that titled men live lives of idleness, that they never lift a finger and live off the toil and sweat of others. So I was surprised to find that there are titled men who do actually take a turn at work, men like Lord Bethell who has written a piece of fiction in the marvellous James Bond idiom. It is only natural

that the men with assorted titles, those of the Habsburg dynasty and the rest of the reactionary bunch from the past, should be unhappy that the workers of capitalist Europe are fighting to change their fate and to live like human beings. But gentlemen, it is you yourselves, with your exploiting, anti-worker, anti-common people and inhuman policies, which are leading the working class millions into unemployment, poverty and deprivation, who are steadily undermining your own system over the course of time, day by day and without let up. It is obvious that provocative and vulgar fabrications such as that by Lord Bethell are designed to work up a cold war climate in order to justify the deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles, which the aspiring world rulers from across the Atlantic are siting all over the place, to the peoples of Europe who have risen up in anger. That is your prime objective, so we shall be voting against the fabrication by Lord Bethell with real indignation.

(Protests)

Mr Caborn (S). — First of all, I will be voting against this report. I am also saying very clearly that I am against terrorism and against destabilization. However, if this House wants to be taken seriously in the international arena, then quite clearly this type of gutter report ought never to be going out of this Assembly carrying the power and the integrity of this Assembly, as it is such an unbalanced report.

When one talks about infiltration, I would remind my British friends opposite that there are three senior officials in the Monday Club — a very esteemed body within the Conservative ranks — who have resigned because of infiltration by Fascists. This has been clearly exposed on British television and is now the subject of a very serious report by the Chairman of the Conservative Party.

(Protests from the Right)

If you want to balance the Bethell report, then surely you must have a look at the question of the CIA and the American involvement in El Salvador. This is the only way to make the report at least credible in the international arena.

This report, and the biased way in which it has been drawn up, will not further *détente* nor promote the friendly relationships that we as an international institution are trying to develop. Indeed, it will set that back.

(Applause from the Left)

Mrs Boserup (COM). — *(DA)* The widely ramified and highly refined espionage networks and espionage methods of the two superpowers are part of the reality we live in, and a motion for a resolution such as this one will not change that reality. It calls upon the foreign ministers meeting in political cooperation to discuss the activities and methods of one superpower and one only. Colleagues, I am convinced that this is something the foreign ministers have already found out about for themselves, without us having to tell them. In addition, the resolution cannot contribute anything new at all, anything positive. By its one-sidedness it can certainly only contribute to a worsening of East-West relations, which we so often say we would like to see improve. That wish is perhaps not meant seriously. Also I have a nasty doubt as to its quality. The only example mentioned which I know something about, namely the case of Arne Herløv Petersen, is presented in a highly distorted manner and, if the other examples are of the same quality, no self-respecting assembly can adopt such a resolution.

Mr Ripa di Meana (S). — *(IT)* Mr Jiri Pelikan and I will vote in favour of Lord Bethell's report and resolution ...

(Applause from the Centre and Right)

... not only so as to be consistent with the motion for a resolution tabled by the Italian Socialist and Social-Democratic Members on 4 January 1983 — and I will quote from the text of the Zagari Motion — on 'destabilizing activities in the territory of the countries of

the West', but also because we have known about this activity in Italy for many years, and it has been denounced on a number of occasions by the Italian President, Sandro Pertini, and by the Minister of Defence (up till August 1983), Lelio Lagorio. It is amply documented with an abundance of information in the books by Claire Sterling and Jiri Pelikan, published in Italy and in France. We know about it in connection with the case of Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, and it emerges with blinding clarity from the interrogation of Luigi Scricciolo, a Bulgarian agent, and from the evidence on the subject that was collected by the Italian Courts in connection with the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II by Mehmet Ali Agca.

(Applause from the Centre and the Right)

Mr Balfe (S). — I shall vote against this report. I really think Lord Bethell has moved into a fantasy world. He is certainly not a cold war warrior, he is more like a cold war cub padding through the undergrowth and living in a complete fantasy world, which is revealed in this report and which is fortunately so biased and so unbalanced that no one could possibly believe it. It does nothing whatever for *détente*, it does nothing whatever for truth and it is full of suppositions and innuendos. If you look, to take just one point, on page 9, the report says that though there is no conclusive evidence linking the Soviet Union with the Provisional IRA, there is little doubt that the Soviet authorities encourage Irish terrorists with inflammatory statements.

That's as may be, but the money for their arms comes from the United States and you know it. If you want to write about Ireland, you maybe should have said that. Let us remember that all of our major traitors have come from the upper middle class. Burgess, Maclean, Philby, Blunt, all of them to a man representatives of the public school upper-middle class establishment, personified by the Tory party that was mainly famous for colluding with Fascism throughout the thirties until they were forced to fight it. The Tories stand condemned.

Mrs Squarcialupi (COM). — *(IT)* I have the impression that Lord Bethell was trying to imitate the thrillers of Agatha Christie with his report. When faced with crime, with destabilizing activities, suspicion is immediately directed at those who appear most logically to be guilty; in this case the Soviet Union, the Eastern bloc countries and — why not? — the pacifist movements.

But Agatha Christie's thrillers always have a surprise up their sleeve. That is to say, the guilty person is always to be found amongst those who are not suspects. I am therefore awaiting part two of this Agatha Christie thriller. I should not be surprised if Lord Bethell himself, or some friend of his, were amongst those responsible. That would have been truer to British style. Your thriller, Lord Bethell, is undocumented and not up to date. And as far as Italy is concerned, he is unaware — but then, a number of Italian Members are also unaware — of the part played by the Italian Secret Service in making the Pope's attacker 'talk'. Allow me to say, Lord Bethell, that yours is a rotten thriller, and it will never become a best seller. My vote against is directed more at the thriller than the political resolution, because I do not consider that a resolution such as this one deserves a vote.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr Vankerkhoven (PPE). — *(FR)* Lord Bethell's report on destabilizing activities of Eastern countries on Community territory is a timely one. It quite rightly emphasizes the fact that moral and material encouragement for terrorism, campaigns to disrupt the Western alliance and the recruiting of Community citizens for the purposes of spying or subversion all constitute violation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is a timely invitation to foreign affairs ministers meeting for the purposes of political cooperation to adopt the common attitude to these practices that is so clearly called for. The explanatory statement in the report before us is an eloquent illustration of the fact that the activities in question are part of an overall strategy that is being doggedly pursued for the benefit of Soviet expansionism.

Those, and I am one of them, who have long denounced the infiltration, disinformation and subversion used by the USSR and its allies can unreservedly support the Bethell report in the hope that it will contribute to the vital awakening of the Western conscience.

(Applause from the Centre and the Right)

Mr Gerokostopoulos (PPE). — *(GR)* I want to register a complaint, because quite some time ago I asked to speak on a point of order and I come back to it now. Can you please tell me whether the explanations of vote that have been made have, in fact, been proper explanations of vote in line with the Rules of Procedure or, as seems to have been the case, some sort of exercise in detective story criticism?

President. — As to the form in which explanations of vote are cast, Mr Gerokostopoulos, that is something that must be left to each individual Member. My only concern is to see that no one speaks for longer than 90 seconds.

Mr Gontikas (PPE), in writing. — *(GR)* I intend to vote for the Bethell report which I regard as objective and a full statement of the facts.

The assiduous infiltration of Russian agents of all kinds into the countries of the Community is undermining its capacity for working towards peace and is unacceptable. It poses a threat of the first magnitude to the Community's future.

In my view the pursuit of *détente* cannot be, nor should it be, a one-sided affair. Moscow has got to understand that there are those in our democratic world who are determined to fight for the survival of free institutions and for the rejection of all forms of violence by every means. Communist terror is the worst form of violence that our world has ever known.

The Bethell report exposes the strategy and methods used by the Communists to undermine democracy in Europe and it is this which makes it an important document, especially for the younger citizens of the Community. Every free and democratically minded citizen has therefore a duty to endorse it.

SQUARCIALUPI REPORT (DOC. 1-1358/83 — SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE): ADOPTED

The rapporteur spoke :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendment No 1,
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 2 and 3.

Explanations of vote

Mr Habsburg (PPE). — *(DE)* Moral decay has always been a symptom of the decline of a civilization. It is very striking that just as this report appears, one of the leaders of the sexual revolution, Germaine Greer has published a book *Sex and Destiny* where she calls for a return to traditional moral values. We have taken a further step down the path that has always led to the decline of nations. This is why I — and many others with me — will vote, with a deep sense of conviction, against this report.

(Applause from the Centre and the Right)

Mr Ryan (PPE). — I would like to correct an impression created by the speech of my good friend, Mr Brendan Halligan, a Socialist Member from Dublin, when he implied that homosexuality could not or would not be discussed in the Irish Parliament. There is no such bar to it being discussed. In fact, it has been discussed in the Irish Senate, and I am glad to report that free speech and democracy is alive and well in Ireland and particularly in the Irish Parliament. But I am saddened that an Irish Member, particularly one for whom I have a very high regard, should use this forum to criticize, I believe unfairly, Irish society and Irish public life.

It may be that Mr Halligan was implying that because most people in Ireland are not preoccupied with homosexuality, it is unlikely that the topic will receive much attention. So be it. The Irish people are entitled to observe their own moral code and this Parliament has no right to dictate otherwise. I wish the European Parliament would mind its own business. The EEC has no competence to decide the moral attitudes of society or the pattern of criminal laws in the Member States. The EEC would be a much better place if all its institutions — Commission, Council of Ministers and Parliament — concentrated on matters they are competent to deal with, such as unemployment and industrial policy. This Parliament would command more respect if it stopped wasting time on matters with which it is incompetent to deal.

My Irish Christian-Democratic colleagues and I from Fine Gael will abstain on the vote as a protest against Parliament's irregular interference with Member States' jurisdictions. In doing so we are being consistent, as we have taken a similar stance in the past when Parliament presumed to exceed its Treaty of Rome competences.

(Applause from the Centre and the Right)

Mrs Maij-Weggen (PPE). — *(NL)* I am speaking on behalf of the Christian-Democratic Group. The last two speakers were therefore speaking on their own behalf. I feel that should be pointed out.

I should first like to explain why we are opposed to the Conservative amendment. This amendment was worded as follows: 'Recognizes the need for minors to be protected against the possibility of sexual violence or similar offences'. We are, of course, in favour of minors being protected, but there can surely be no denying that adults must also be protected against sexual assault and similar offences. It is this one-sidedness ...

(Interruptions)

... — and the wording is very important particularly where women are concerned — which prompted the majority of my group to vote against this amendment. Otherwise, we shall approve Mrs Squarcialupi's resolution. We think it is a good resolution, not a provocative one. It is a resolution that has been written with great dignity. This Parliament has a very good name to protect when it comes to combating discrimination, not only discrimination on religious grounds, not only discrimination because of a person's political beliefs, not only discrimination because of the colour of his skin, but also discrimination on the grounds of his sexual tendencies, and the majority of my group will therefore be voting for this resolution.

(Applause)

Mr Halligan (S). — I am sorry for intervening at the close of explanations of vote, but I really cannot allow my good friend — and he remains so — Ritchie Ryan to distort what I had to say this morning in this House. We have already discussed what I had to say in a radio interview which can be heard tomorrow morning on Irish radio and on which he took a completely different line to that which he has taken just now. I could not have said, nor did I say, that the Irish Parliament could not debate this matter, since I was present in one of the Houses when the issue was last discussed in 1976. What I did say was that it was very doubtful whether either House of the Irish Parliament would have the moral courage to discuss this matter. And Mr Ryan's intervention has made it quite evident that I was correct.

President. — That was a personal statement and should have come after the final vote.

* * *

PERY REPORT (DOC. 1-1351/83 — UNIVERSITY COOPERATION IN THE COMMUNITY): ADOPTED

The rapporteur spoke :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 5, 10, 12, 13 and 24 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 1 to 3, 6 to 9, 11, 14, to 17 and 20 to 23.

Explanations of vote

Mr Forth (ED). — Not only do I have grave doubts as to whether this House can pronounce on educational matters, but the vote that we have just had and the addenda to paragraph 29 showed the extent of absurdity to which we have descended. We rejected an amendment which called for an Open European University for Peace Studies and we went on to pass an amendment which said, 'Pending the establishment of such an institution . . . ' so we now have a document which refers to an institution which does not exist, and if this is not the height of absurdity and the depth of pathos to which this institution has descended, I have yet to hear better.

I have a further objection and that is this : yet again, in paragraphs 21, 25, 26 and 28, we have called for further expenditure by this Community without specifying how much that expenditure is, without specifying where it will come from, without specifying whether there are budget lines to cover it, and without telling anyone how the money will be funded. If this institution wishes to be taken seriously, it must examine the texts of the amendments which it passes, it must consider their consistency one with another, and it must offer to the public an explanation of where the money that we most generously wish to spend on other people's behalf is coming from. Until we do that, I for one, will not support such proposals as this, I am going to vote with enthusiasm against this document.

Mrs Tove Nielsen (L). — (*DA*) I vote for this report with the greatest of pleasure. Everyone in Parliament knows that we in the Liberal Group tabled an amendment to the budget for 1984 to promote cooperation between the universities and institutes of higher education in our Member States. We did that because we firmly believe that it is necessary for us to see ourselves in the Community as a unit, in the field of cultural and educational policy too. We need to encourage all establishments to provide teaching in as many subjects as possible, also those fields of production in which the Community needs to have more people trained. That is why this cooperation is necessary, and that is why the citizens of the Community should be encouraged to take up residence in cities and countries other than those they come from. I think it is gratifying that the Committee has laid emphasis on better conditions with regard to mobility for, if there is something we need in order to survive here in the Community, it is respect for spiritual freedom, for traditions, so that we can all advance as far as at all possible, for it will be to the best advantage of us all.

Mr Prag (ED). — I am used, of course, to hearing explanations of vote from my colleague, Eric Forth, along those lines but as far as I know, when there is an inconsistency like that in the text, it is ironed out when the final text is drawn up. I do not think he need have any worries on that score.

I shall vote for this report, even though in some parts it goes further than I would in the field of harmonization. I am not sure that European criteria are necessary for grants as proposed in paragraph 15 (b) or harmonization under 15 (c). But I have the example of my own education authority in my own constituency, which is one of the most progressive in the United Kingdom where the teaching of languages and European studies are concerned. Yet because of financial restrictions it has now withdrawn the facilities for its grants to be used in other Community countries. I now get many letters from students who suddenly find themselves without the funds they need to pursue their studies in other Community countries.

I would vote for this report even if it only contained paragraph 15 (a) on making grants available throughout the Community and paragraph 15 (d) encouraging teachers to move around the Community. This would give the term 'university' the reality it once had in Europe when universities were open to all those with suitable qualifications from any part of Europe.

ANNEX II

Questions to the Commission

Question No 15, by Mrs Le Roux (H-540/83)

Subject : Pollution of water by nitrates

Could the Commission indicate the stage reached by any studies it may have initiated on the pollution of water by nitrates, a problem which arises in many areas of the Community?

Answer

Council Directive 80/778/EEC of 15 July 1980 relating to the quality of water intended for human consumption provides for a maximum admissible concentration for nitrates of 50 mg/l. This is on account of the risk to human health and for reasons of environmental protection. With regard to the risks of pollution of groundwater by nitrates, the Commission carried out a study in 1980. Preparation began recently on a working paper which will provide a scientific basis for a proposal to the Council to include nitrates in Council Directive 80/68/EEC of 17 December 1979 on the protection of groundwater against pollution caused by certain dangerous substances. The document should be ready by the end of 1984.

* * *

Question No 16, by Mrs Dury (H-703/83)¹

Subject : Aid projects for refugees

How many applications from NGOs for funds to help finance aid projects for refugees were received by the Commission in 1983? How many of these requests were turned down or had no action taken on them?

Is it true that a large number of these requests were turned down or had no action taken on them solely because there were not enough staff to process the applications, which otherwise met all the qualifying conditions, despite the fact that the necessary funds were available?

Rather than allow this state of affairs to continue, and given that aid projects for refugees exist, does the Commission not consider that using the services of staff in other agencies, such as the EAC, would allow it to pursue a more effective aid policy in this particularly important area?

Answer

1. In 1983 the Commission received 34 applications for refugee aid projects under the funds available for co-financing development projects with NGOs (Article 941 of the Budget) and three applications from NGOs for emergency aid for refugees (under Article 950 of the Budget and Article 137 of the Convention of Lomé).

Of this total of 37 applications, five had to be rejected since they were deemed inadmissible for various reasons. A positive decision was taken on 23 applications in 1983. Of the nine others which were being considered at the end of 1983, three had been approved by 21 February 1984.

2. The inadmissibility of the five rejected applications was due to reasons other than the lack of staff in the Commission's departments.

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-127/83) converted into a question for Question Time.

3. It is out of the question to make use of the EAC in administering this kind of operation. The task of the EAC has always been to aid the Commission in the recruitment, installation and administration of delegation staff and technical assistants and in the administration of scholarships and traineeships for nationals of developing countries.

This role was clearly reiterated by the Council when it adopted Regulation (EEC) 3245/81 of 26 October 1981 setting up a European Agency for Cooperation acting in conformity with Community law to replace the present European Association for Cooperation acting in conformity with Belgian law.

* * *

Question No 18, by Mr Hänsch (H-720/83)¹

Subject: Education of children of migrant workers

Paragraph 6 of the European Parliament resolution on the education of the children of migrant workers (Doc. 1-329/81) states: Takes note of the provision in the Council Directive which requires the Commission to submit a report to the Council one year after the entry into force of the directive; asks for a report to be submitted to the European Parliament at the same time.

1. Why has the Commission not yet fulfilled this requirement?

2. When will the Commission submit the required report?

3. Is the Commission acquainted with the 'Memorandum on mother-tongue tuition in the Federal Republic of Germany' drawn up by the working party on mother-tongue tuition of the Federal Associations and Clubs of Foreign Workers, the embassies and bishops/delegates of the national churches of the foreign workers in the Federal Republic of Germany; how does it view this initiative and how will it take it into account in its future work?

Answer

The Commission's report on the implementation of Directive 77/486 was forwarded to the Council on 15 February 1984 and to the European Parliament on 24 February 1984.

The Commission has studied with interest the memorandum to which the Honourable Member refers. It took part in the public debate on the memorandum in Mülheim on 25 and 27 November 1983.

It will follow the activities of the study group that produced the memorandum which, in the Commission's opinion, is all the more important in that, to the best of its knowledge, it is the first time that associations and institutions representing migrant workers in a Member State have adopted a position on the problems involved in the teaching of the mother tongue and culture to the children of immigrants.

* * *

Question No 20, by Mr Denis (H-633/83)

Subject: Dumping on the ball bearings market

For several years now the European ball bearings market has suffered from a very high level of foreign penetration, particularly from Japan, which is posing a serious threat to

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-133/83) converted into a question for Question Time.

production and employment in the sector in question. It is a vitally important sector for French industrial development and, above all, for the automobile industry. This explains why the workers employed by SKF d'Ivry have fought for many months to prevent the closure of the undertaking. The degree of penetration was made possible by the lack of protective measures and by the pursuit of unfair practices which, following a request from the French Government in July 1983, are being investigated by the Commission with a view to introducing anti-dumping measures.

Could the Commission describe the initial results of its investigation and state what measures it intends to adopt to expedite its completion and what action it proposes to take?

Answer

Following consultations within the advisory committee provided for in Article 6 of Regulation (EEC) No 3017/79, the Commission's services have carried out a detailed monitoring investigation of price undertakings accepted from Japanese producers of ball bearings having an outside diameter of more than 30 mm. The results of the investigation are now being discussed with the interested parties and consultations are taking place within the advisory committee.

In addition, an anti-dumping proceeding is in progress concerning imports of ball bearings having an outside diameter of up to 30 mm from Japan and Singapore. The investigation was carried out concurrently with the monitoring investigation and consultations on the provisional results obtained are also taking place within the advisory committee.

The Commission will decide the appropriate action to be taken in connection with these investigations in the light of the consultations now in progress. In accordance with its normal practice, full reasons will be published for any decisions taken.

* * *

Question No 22, by Sir James Scott-Hopkins (H-652/83)

Subject: Forecast of retail price inflation

What is the European Commission's forecast for the level of retail price inflation in each of the ten Member States of the Community, Japan and the USA in 1984? Do not these projections indicate the pressing need for a number of Member States to bring down significantly the level of price inflation in their country if they are to remain competitive in world markets?

Answer

The Commission prepares forecasts for the implicit deflator of private consumption in the Member States, which is a more meaningful variable for economic analysis than the retail index.

The latest forecast for the deflator of private consumption in 1984 was made at the end of January 1984. The rise in the level of the deflator in 1984 over 1983 was estimated to be as follows:

Belgium	6,5 %	Ireland	9,0 %
Denmark	5,3 %	Italy	10,5 %
Germany	3,3 %	Luxembourg	7,7 %
Greece	19,2 %	Netherlands	3,1 %
France	7,2 %	United Kingdom	5,5 %

There has been a movement towards convergence of inflation rates in the Community over the past two years and this is projected to continue through 1984 with inflation falling in high inflation countries and stabilizing in low inflation countries.

Neither the deflator of private consumption nor the retail price index are the correct measure of changes in competitiveness because they include elements which only affect domestic consumers (e.g. different levels of value — added tax). Comparing more meaningful measures such as wholesale prices or unit labour costs corrected for exchange — rate movements, it is clear that, in terms of price competitiveness, all Member States are, at present in a relatively favourable position *vis-à-vis* the other main trading blocs (USA and Japan).

Although convergence of inflation rates towards a low level is a desirable objective for other reasons, as long as differences in inflation rates are to some extent compensated by exchange-rate changes there will be no loss of price competitiveness.

However, the recent weakening of the U.S. dollar (—8% against the ECU between end-January and 6 March 1984) is a reminder that such a favourable position is not necessarily permanent and that Community exporters could face a more difficult task in future. Nevertheless, a fall in the US dollar would have a beneficial anti-inflationary impact on import costs in national currency terms, which would undoubtedly contribute to reinforcing the emerging recovery.

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Question No 23, by Mr Pearce (H-657/83)

Subject: Visit to the Caribbean

How many officials from the Council, the Commission and national administrations participated in the recent tour of the Caribbean by the EDF Committee, which ACP States were visited and for how long, what was the total cost of this tour to Community, national and EDF budgets and could not the purpose of the tour have been achieved by a visit by one or two Commission officials?

Answer

The seventh fact-finding mission to the ACP States by the EDF Committee took place from 21 January to 5 February 1984 and included visits to the following six Caribbean ACP States: Guyana, Barbados, St Lucia, Dominica, Antigua and Jamaica. Twenty-three people participated in the mission: two representatives per Member States (except Ireland which sent only one representative), two Commission representatives, one from the EIB and one from the Council's General Secretariat. Since the mission took place only very recently it is not yet possible to indicate the total cost exactly, but the figure must be somewhere between 80 000 and 100 000 ECU, chargeable to the Community budget.

The purpose of the mission by the EDF Committee is to give the members of that committee a better understanding of the conditions in which the projects on which they have taken decisions are being prepared or implemented and to enable them to discuss the projects with the national authorities. This fact-finding mission is likely to increase the effectiveness of the committee's work in the future.

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Question No 25, by Mr Notenboom (H-758/83) ¹

Subject: Aid granted to Boch

On 16 February 1983 the Commission adopted a decision² which declared that the aid granted to Boch was incompatible with the common market and must therefore be withdrawn.

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-146/83) converted into a question for Question Time.

² OJ L 91 of 9 April 1983.

1. Is it true that the Belgian Government has failed to comply with this Commission decision ?
2. If so, what measures does the Commission intend to take to put an end to the continuing distortion of competition resulting from the aid granted to Boch ?

Answer

1. It is indeed the Commission view that the Belgian Government has not complied with the decision of 16 February 1983 that the aid granted to the undertaking in question must be withdrawn.
2. The Commission has therefore decided to refer the matter to the Court of Justice in accordance with Article 93 (2) of the EEC Treaty.

* * *

Question No 27, by Mr Marck (H-691/83)

Subject : Programmes linked to the co-responsibility levy in the dairy sector

The Commission of the European Communities is reported to be freezing certain programmes financed from the receipts generated by the co-responsibility levy in the dairy sector in 1983. The programmes concerned are campaigns promoting dairy products in the Member States for the period from 1 April 1984 to 31 March 1985.

Since an interruption of the current programmes would be damaging to the promotion campaigns, the funds concerned originate from the 1983 levy and are therefore available and the producers' agreement has been obtained, what are the reasons why the Commission has decided to freeze these programmes ?

Answer

1. As a result of the critical financial situation of the Community and especially of the common agricultural policy, it has been necessary for the Commission to take a very close look at the advisability and effectiveness of all measures, particularly in the case of renewal or extension. In this general context the Commission has not yet taken a decision on all the measures listed in the eighth programme.
2. The Commission would remind the honourable Member of the concept of the co-responsibility levy which is explained in the notes to the budget adopted by the budgetary authority, i.e. that the co-responsibility funds are to be used partly to finance specific measures under the annual programmes mentioned in the honourable Member's question and partly to meet expenditures as a result of existing and priority measures.

* * *

Question No 29, by Mr Cecovini (H-699/83)

Subject : Community imports of wood products

Is the Commission aware that uncontrolled imports of wood products from the countries of eastern Europe have created serious problems for small and medium-sized undertakings in Friuli-Venezia Giulia that manufacture chairs, furniture and other semi-finished products ? Is the Commission planning to fix quotas in order to prevent distortions of competition detrimental to small and medium-sized undertakings in this sector ?

Answer

1. The information which the Commission has about the situation of the wood and furniture industry in Italy does not provide details of the situation in individual regions. It is not sufficiently clear from the honourable Member's question which products give rise to the problems he mentions.
2. Neither the Italian authorities nor undertakings in the affected sector in Italy have as yet submitted complaints to the Commission on the negative effects which might be caused by imports of the products in question from state-trading countries.

* * *

Question No 30, by Mrs Schleicher (H-704/83)

Subject: Air pollution caused by nitrogen oxides

Apart from sulphur dioxide which is the most important factor responsible for acid rain and a potential cause of the death of forests, attention is being increasingly focused on nitrogen oxides as a possible cause of environmental pollution.

It is possible that nitrogen oxides emitted by aircraft at a height of approximately 9 000 metres survive for considerably longer periods of time than they would normally in the atmosphere and are thus a more potent cause of air pollution. Aircraft are responsible for approximately 1% of the annual world production of nitrogen oxides. So far little is known of the possible effect of other pollutants from aircraft produced, for instance, by fuel additives.

Is the Commission prepared to include these two issues in its updated research programme on environmental pollution and climatology?

Answer

1. The composition of aircraft exhaust gases is broadly the same as that of motor vehicle exhaust gases, although in quantitative terms they account for only a small percentage of total emissions. There is at present nothing to indicate that aircraft emit hitherto undetected pollutants.
2. Between 8 000 and 12 000 metres in the atmosphere chemical reactions occur basically as they do at lower levels. The increased formation of ozone which can be expected is less important with regard to effects near ground level than with regard to interaction with the stratosphere; in this connection the honourable Member is referred to the study by the Federal Environment Office in *Monatsberichte aus dem Messnetz* (Monthly reports from the measuring network) No 8/83, January 1984. A connection between the emission of aircraft exhaust gases in the upper troposphere and damage to forests cannot at present be established.
3. The Commission is promoting extensive research into the chemistry of the upper troposphere and the stratosphere and will in this context encourage further work on this as part of the programme on environmental pollution and climatology. At the moment, however, there are no grounds for research into the specific problem of aircraft exhaust emissions.

* * *

Question No 32, by Mr Calvez (H-705/83)

Subject : Professional secrecy

Because of economic development and social progress in the Community people have to cope with increasingly complex problems in their private lives, for instance in the medical, paramedical, legal and financial fields. It is now more essential than ever rigorously to protect the right to professional secrecy, one of the main aspects of the fundamental freedoms and rights of man. Can the Commission state how things stand as regards professional secrecy in the Member States and what steps it intends to take to safeguard individual freedoms.

Answer

The protection to a certain degree of a person's private life, home and correspondence may indeed be regarded as one of the fundamental rights of man and in fact the European Convention on Human Rights includes such a provision in its Article 8. The Commission considers in general that human rights should be respected under any circumstances and takes care to ensure such respect in the acts which it takes.

The respect however of these rights by authorities other than the Community institutions themselves is, in principle, not a matter for Community law. Except where a violation of such fundamental rights is at the same time and in itself a violation by a Member State of a specific provision of Community law, the powers and duties conferred upon the Commission do not permit it to intervene.

The matters covered in the question, namely professional secrecy in the medical, paramedical, legal and financial fields, cover an extremely vast area. The Commission does, however, dispose of certain studies of the Member States' rules in the legal field as a result of the AM & S case, No 155/79, the subject of the Court's judgment of 18 May 1982. The Advocate General's conclusions in this case reproduce a large amount of these rules.

It does not, however, have detailed information in the other sectors. It would nevertheless point out that in the draft report No PE 89, 134 of 10 February 1984, prepared by the Legal Committee of the Parliament concerning a draft resolution deposited also by Mr Calvez, the preparation by the Committee is foreseen of a summary of more than twenty pages of the Member States' rules. The Legal Committee's discussion of this subject on 1 and 2 March last is to be continued at its next meeting on 21 and 22 March, when such summary may then be to hand.

With regard to the Commission's own investigation of documents in the competition sector, the Court of Justice in its judgment in the AM & S case¹ recognised that certain written communications between lawyer and client constitute an exemption from the wide powers of investigation of the Commission and are protected by the principle of confidentiality. The Commission now carries out its investigations in accordance with the principles laid down in that judgment.²

With regard to the free movement of persons between Member States, it should be remembered that the Treaty rules concerning the freedom of establishment and the freedom to provide services do not aim to set up co-ordinated professional rules for the various non-salaried activities, but rather to harmonize the national rules in so far as this is necessary to enable a national of another Member State to accede to, and exercise, such profession or activity.

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¹ 1982 ECR 1575.

² For further details see Twelfth Report on Competition Policy p. 39, point 33 and pages 52-55, points 50-54.

Question No 33, by Mr Plaskovitis (H-722/83)

Subject: Material and financial aid for Greece

Can the Commission state whether it has granted to Greece between 1981 and the present any material or financial aid for regions affected by natural disasters as provided for under the relevant appropriations of the Community budget? Can it also state which Community countries and regions affected by natural disasters have received special material or economic aid in the last three years and specify the amounts involved?

Answer

In April 1981 the Commission granted emergency aid amounting to 3 000 000 ECU for the inhabitants of the regions of Attiki and Korinthia, who had suffered as a result of an earthquake in the area. Following that earthquake, on 14 December 1981 the Council decided, on a proposal from the Commission, to grant Greece:

- (a) loans of up to 80 m ECU out of Community funds raised by borrowings under the NCI or by the EIB;
- (b) 3 % interest rebates for a maximum period of 12 years, chargeable to the General Budget;
- (c) approval of the loans being used to rebuild housing, a statement to that effect being included in the Council minutes.

(Council Decisions 81/1013/EEC, OJ, L 367, 23 December 1981)

On 3 February 1984 the Commission granted 350 000 ECU in emergency aid for the inhabitants of departments in the north of Greece who had suffered following snowstorms in the area in December 1983.

During the past three years the Commission has granted emergency aid to disaster victims in a number of Member States and regions of the Community. A list of those measures will be sent direct to the honourable Member. I would, however, draw the honourable Member's attention to the fact that the grant of such aid, of which Parliament is kept regularly informed, depends on the consequences of the disasters for the communities affected and not on any allocating among Member States or regions.

* * *

Question No 34, by Mr Purvis (H-708/83)

Subject: Memorandum of Understanding on Fast Reactors

Five Member States have signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding for Co-operation in the Field of Liquid Metal Fast Reactors'. Does the Commission welcome this move in that it appears to be outside the purview of the European Atomic Energy Community, and what role is foreseen for Euratom in this area of research and development?

Answer

1. It is correct that the collaboration agreement on Fast Breeder Reactor Development, signed on 10 January 1984, between five member countries (B, F, D, I, UK) was concluded outside the institutional Community framework.
2. The Commission was officially informed of the content of the agreement prior to its signature.
3. The Commission welcomes the agreement in its scope which is in line with the Community policy on Fast Reactor Development as it was outlined in a Council Resolution on Fast Breeder Reactors of 18 February 1980.

This Council Resolution underlined the importance of Fast Breeder option for the future energy supply of the Community, stressed the importance of continuity in the effort of developing and demonstrating the system, reaffirmed the paramount importance of safety as an objective of the development and demonstration effort and called upon the Community to lend support for the above objectives.

4. The agreement brings all member countries executing a LMFBR R & D programme together and offers a good possibility to reduce the expenditures still necessary to bring fast breeders to their commercial maturity.

5. The agreement is also to be seen in the light of the recommendations made at the Summit of Versailles for a reinforcement of the international collaboration in the field of fast breeders.

6. As far as the role of the Commission (Euratom) is concerned, it is premature to give a definitive answer, as the agreement defines only the principle of the collaboration, its implementation is still to be agreed between industries, research agencies and utilities.

The Research Action Programme on the development of nuclear fission energy (1983-87) foresees a shared cost action and a Joint Research Centre programme which together represent a substantial package of research topics which are relevant to the fast breeder programme of the member countries.

* * *

Question No 35, by Mr Patterson (H-709/83) ()*

Subject: Management of the European Social Fund

Will the Commission confirm that it took a decision on 22 December last year to continue the financing of the European Social Fund on a calendar year basis, against the wishes of almost all representatives of Member States' administrative authorities in this matter, and will the Commission give in detail its reasons for rejecting a financial year basis? Will it further justify the claim that funding over a financial year would pose problems of financial control of the European Social Fund and finally, will the Commission publish its decision on the management of the Social Fund, or allow Members of the European Parliament to have sight of this decision?

Answer

The Commission decision 83/673/EEC of 22 December on the management of the European Social Fund provides for the Community financial year, which coincides with the calendar year, to be used in future as the basis for granting aid from the Fund.

This decision, which was published in the Official Journal No 377 of 31 December 1983, also provides for final payment claims to be lodged with the Commission within ten months of the end of the period of operation for which Fund aid is granted.

Taken together, these two provisions were designed to ensure that the Commission would in future be able not only to disengage but also to recommit any unused commitment appropriations. In accordance with the Community's financial regulations, recommitments can only be made during the financial year following the year in which appropriations were initially committed.

The reutilisation of all available appropriations in this was not possible under the previous ESF management provisions. Substantial amounts, currently totalling about 100m ECU per year, have in effect been lost to the Fund. Modifications were therefore clearly necessary, as requested on several occasions already by both the Audit Court and the Parliament.

(*) Former written question (No 2041/83), converted into a question for Question Time.

The Commission is aware that the new management provisions, whilst correcting outstanding problems connected with the financial management of the Community budget, may create certain difficulties for applicants to the Social Fund. It is therefore considering the feasibility of reintroducing some flexibility for instance in the provisions governing the period of financing, which could become applicable as from the 1985 financial year.

* * *

Question No 36, by Mr Blumenfeld (H-711/83)

Subject: Accession of Spain and Portugal

When does the Commission intend, in line with its commitments, to invite Israel, Morocco, Tunisia and other southern Mediterranean countries affected by the accession of Spain and Portugal to enter into negotiations to determine the adjustments required to the various trade agreements (particularly as regards Mediterranean farm produce) in view of the enlargement to the south?

Answer

Adjustments to association or cooperation agreements with the Mediterranean countries ought to be negotiated during the interim period of enlargement, i.e. between the signing and the ratification of the acts of accession. These adjustments will be the subject of talks carried out by the Commission on the basis of negotiation guidelines to be given by the Council.

The Commission has not yet been required to invite these countries to start negotiations. However, in view of the tremendous importance which enlargement will have for the operation of the Mediterranean agreements and also because of certain fears expressed by the countries in this area, the Council decided on 25 January 1983 to ask the Commission to hold exploratory talks with these countries in order to identify the problems encountered and possible measures to remedy them with a view to establishing the political guidelines and the possible decisions which would seem necessary for the adjustment of association or cooperation agreements.

Talks were held during 1983. The outcome will be an important element when the Commission comes to draw up its recommendations for the negotiation guidelines mentioned earlier.

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Question No 37, by Mr Vgenopoulos (H-712/83)

Subject: Dried grape imports from the USA

According to press reports dried grape producers in California are determined to launch an offensive to capture the European Community market. It is moreover claimed that this will be achieved by reducing prices at a cost of 75 000 dollars while a further 25 000 dollars will go to sales promotion.

Since the American Government has not reached a decision, how does the Commission intend to react, before we are faced with a *fait accompli*, to such policies which pose a threat to Community products?

Answer

The Commission is aware of the export policy which was recently introduced by dried grape producers in California. It is also aware that this policy has become possible thanks to financial resources provided by both the producers themselves and the US Department of Agriculture.

However according to the information available to the Commission, the export prices to be set by the American producers in the Community market should not be lower than the minimum import price which was set by the Community on 14 October 1982 as part of the safeguard arrangements. This price was introduced to ensure that Community production would not be threatened by low-cost imports from third countries. If the minimum price is not observed, a compensatory levy is automatically applied to the imports.

In the circumstances the Commission is paying careful attention to market trends, particularly with regard to imports.

* * *

Subject: Action to counter swine fever

In view of the alarming news of the outbreak of the dangerous disease, swine fever, in Germany, the Commission is requested to state what action is being considered to halt the spread of the disease and to eradicate it completely in the long term. In view of the catastrophic impact of the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Denmark in 1982-83, the Commission is further asked to state what precautions will be taken to counter new outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease.

Answer

1. Community legislation requires compulsory slaughter and disinfection of infected pig herds in case of outbreaks of classical swine fever. In addition a protective zone is established around the herd, and pigs may not leave this zone except for immediate slaughter. Furthermore, in view of the serious situation now existing in the Federal Republic of Germany, a Commission decision has been taken introducing additional protective measures in relation to intra-Community trade:

- prohibition of trade in live pigs from all infected areas (Kreise)
- prohibition of live pigs and fresh pig meat originating from some heavily infected regions.

The Commission has also proposed to the Council the introduction of more strict rules for the emergency vaccination in high risk areas.

In accordance with Community legislation a national plan for eradication of classical swine fever in the Federal Public of Germany is applied which includes financial aid from the Community.

2. The Commission has already proposed to the Council a directive on harmonized emergency measures to be taken by Member States in the case of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Until the adoption of these measures, the Commission has only the possibility of taking measures against foot and mouth disease by establishing common restrictions to intra-Community trade and third country imports of live animals and meat.

* * *

Question No 39, by Miss Hooper (H-715/83)

Subject: Public opinion poll on attitudes to women and developments in the situation of women

In April/May 1983, the Commission carried out (in conjunction with Euro-Barometer) a public opinion poll on the attitudes of European men and women to the situation of women, and to Europe and the forthcoming direct elections.

In view of the resolution on the situation of women in Europe adopted by the European Parliament on 17 January 1984, and the relatively short time remaining before the European elections next June, will the Commission immediately inform Parliament of the

conclusions of this poll, indicate to Parliament when the results of the poll will be printed *in toto*, and ensure that these be made available in good time to be of use in the campaign preceding the elections?

Answer

As the Commission representative assured the Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe on 19 December 1983, the findings of the public opinion poll on 'Attitudes of men and women in Europe in 1983' will be published in good time for the European election campaign. A summary of the report will be available during March, in at least two languages, and the full report will be published shortly afterwards in French and English. The summary of the report will appear in all the Community languages in one of the supplements to the publication entitled 'Women of Europe'.

Without going into detail here, and taking only the socio-political aspects of the study, the results indicate a positive trend compared to previous polls in a number of areas. For example, the prejudice that politics is 'a matter for men rather than women' is much less widespread in 1983 than it was in 1975, particularly among men. Similarly, the percentage of those interviewed who said that they would have more confidence in a man than a woman as their Member of Parliament is declining.

However, the replies to questions concerning interest in politics, the frequency of political discussions, degree of involvement in a political party, etc. show that women are still lagging behind men, whatever their age group or level of education.

With regard to attitudes to Europe and the European Community, there are only minor differences between men and women, and these are generally tending to disappear, there are virtually no differences in the attitudes of young people aged between 15 and 24. Variations in the replies depended far more on the nationality than on the sex of the person interviewed.

On the question of whether or not those interviewed intended to vote in the European elections, it would appear that in countries where voting is not compulsory, women, are, as a rule, slightly less inclined to cast their votes than men. However, here, too, the difference is only slight when compared with the differences attributable to other factors, such as nationality or involvement in political affairs.

* * *

Question No 40, by Mr Halligan (H-717/83)

Subject: Community Action in the Cultural Sector

The Community has examined, from time to time, the situation of cultural workers. For example, the Parliament unanimously adopted the Interim Report on the social situation of cultural workers in November 1980, Document 1-50/80. In addition the Commission submitted to both the Council and the Parliament on 12 October 1982 a communication on 'Stronger Community Action on the Cultural Sector'. In the light of these communications and previous studies of the Cultural Sector, does the Commission intend to submit draft regulations or directives in this area, with particular reference to the situation of cultural workers. If so, will the Commission indicate what areas will be covered by the draft legislation and the timetable to be adopted? If the answer is in the negative, would the Commission please indicate the reasons why it intends to take no action?

Answer

1. I can assure the honourable Member that the Commission will be putting forward as soon as possible the draft proposals designed to improve the situation of cultural workers.

As he is aware, the most direct action possible is to provide increased investment and employment in the Arts. The Commission has therefore said it will give increased attention to cultural projects amongst applications to the Structural Funds, providing these projects meet normal fund criteria.

However, because of the legal as well as financial limits on Community's action in the cultural sector, the Member States themselves will remain the major source of direct financing. The Commission for its part will be concentrating its action on new Community legislation which will simplify the legal and fiscal framework in which cultural workers operate.

2. As far as *social security* is concerned, the Commission intends to call on those Member States which have not already done so to resolve the two main issues still outstanding in this connection namely :

- the limit placed on earnings through the employment threshold fixed for those in paid employment,
- the payment of the 'employer's contribution' required of self-employed cultural workers.

* * *

Question No 41, by Mr Seeler (H-718/83)

Subject : Voluntary restraint agreement with Japan on the export of video recorders to Europe

Last year the Commission concluded a voluntary restraint agreement with the Japanese Government on the export of video recorders to Europe. This limits the number of video recorders exported to Europe to about 3.9 million a year and fixes a minimum retail price for these recorders on the European market.

Has this agreement had the expected stabilizing effect on the European video market and can it say what impact the fixing of a minimum price has had on that market ? Further, is the Commission prepared to increase the fixed quota by the amount required by European manufacturers of video recorders to secure a market for their own output of VHS video recorders ?

Answer

As a result of an anti-dumping suit by European manufacturers regarding Japanese exports of video recorders to the European Community and in view of the Commission's concern at the threat to the survival of the European industry caused by the rapid growth of Japanese exports, the authorities in Japan gave an undertaking in February 1983 to limit exports of video recorders to the Community for a period of three years and to introduce a system of minimum export prices.

In November 1983 the Japanese authorities confirmed the undertakings given earlier in the year and at the same time adapted them to take into account in particular, the development of video recorder manufacture in Europe by firms using Japanese technology. These firms meet certain industrial cooperation criteria by incorporating a substantial percentage of value added in Europe and they can thus import the parts they require for production.

In spite of the fact that market conditions have been less favourable than expected, these arrangements helped to stabilize the market in 1983, as regards both quantities and prices.

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*Question No 43, by Mr Tyrrell (H-738/83)**

Subject: Draft directive on additional training for general practitioners

In view of the Commission's repeated assurances to the European Parliament of the urgency it attaches to the publication of the draft directive on the additional training of general practitioners and its statements that the draft will be produced at an early stage, will the Commission state why it has still not appeared and what assurances it can give to the Community's medical profession that this situation will soon be remedied?

Answer

The Commission maintains the view it has repeatedly expressed in the House, namely that it is a matter of importance and urgency that the proposal for a directive on the further training of general practitioners should be submitted as soon as possible. In the outline programme it submitted on 15 February 1984, the Commission again announced its intention of completing the work on this proposal during the current year.

The Commission fully understands the impatience not only of the medical profession but also of those Member States that have already made provision for the further training of general practitioners or are currently drafting such regulations. However, it would at the same time point out that this is a proposal that would make further training compulsory for all medical school graduates who wish to become medical or general practitioners, as from a certain date. Such a far-reaching reform requires meticulous preparation.

However, I should not wish to conceal the fact that in recent months, one of the principal reasons for the delay in submitting the Commission proposal has been the shortage of staff in the department concerned. Following a change in priorities in the autumn of 1983 (higher priority for the standards' project), it was necessary to transfer a number of staff within the Directorate-General for the Internal Market and Industrial Affairs, thus creating an unavoidable temporary shortage of staff in the department responsible for the directive on medical practitioners.

This case demonstrates very clearly how few staff the Commission has in many specialist fields. If an official is transferred, urgent and important work — such as the drafting of the proposal for a directive on the additional training of general practitioners — can only be carried out at half speed and with considerable delays. Despite all the criticisms levelled at it, it is not true that the Commission has too many staff, rather it has too few.

* * *

Question No 47, by Mr Alavanos (H-745/83)

Subject: Measures to protect Greek dried grapes

Dried grape producers in the USA in collaboration with the US government, exploiting the Community's policy on dried grapes which imposes little or no duty on dried grape exports from non-Community countries, have decided to make substantial cuts in the prices of the dried grapes they export to European markets. This is having a considerable effect on the production of dried grapes in Greece, which is in fact the only dried-grape-producing country in the Community. Since it is already difficult to find markets for Greek dried grapes — of 105 000 tonnes of sultanas produced this year only 18 000 tonnes have been sold, plus stocks of 53 000 tonnes of the 1981 crop which were withdrawn, plus stocks of 8 000 tonnes of the 1982 crop, while of the 75 000 tonnes of currants produced this year only 8 000 tonnes have been sold — can the Commission say what steps it proposes to take to combat the 'invasion' by American dried grapes, at artificially low prices, to find markets for Greek dried grapes, to protect producers and all those working on the dried grape circuit (processing, marketing, etc.) and to apply Community preference to dried grapes?

* Former oral question without debate (0-160/83), converted into a question for Question Time.

Answer

Imports of dried grapes to the Community must comply with the minimum price of 1 120 ECU per tonne which was set by the Commission as part of the safeguard arrangements introduced on 14 October 1982. If the minimum price is not observed, a compensatory tax is levied.

According to the information which is available, the measures taken by American producers of dried grapes are not resulting in supplies from that country at prices below the minimum price. If this were to occur in the future — which seems unlikely in view of the prices which have been announced by producers for the coming months — the compensatory tax would naturally be levied.

Furthermore, the Commission has taken measures to control the internal market (selling at a price fixed in advance) so as to ensure the disposal of Greek dried grapes from the 1983 harvest in the light of the price level of dried grapes from third countries which has been set by the minimum import price. Since the start of the marketing year the disposal of Greek dried grapes in the Community market has followed a pattern which corresponds to the quantities of dried grapes from Greece which normally find a market outlet and which are in line with the threshold guarantee of 80 000 tonnes of sultanas which the Commission suggested the Council establish. It is true that these quantities are below those produced in 1983, a year in which the harvest was particularly good.

Also, following a Council decision permitting the disposal of dried grapes from the 1981 harvest for specific purposes, the Commission has taken the necessary implementing measures and quantities of dried grapes are now being disposed of. As for the remainder of the 1982 crop, the Commission intends to submit to the Council a proposal to dispose of these stocks in the same way as the 1981 stocks were disposed of.

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Question No 48, by Mr Adamou (H-746/83)

Subject: Exports to Greece by EEC Member States of meat unfit for consumption

The tonnes of meat unfit for consumption imported into Greece from the Member States of the EEC (Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, etc.) are a danger to public health; the exporters in those countries are exploiting the inadequate checks and the absence of quality specifications in Greece.

Can the Commission say how exactly the fitness for consumption of meat exported by the EEC Member States is checked, and what measures it intends to propose for dealing with the dangerous situations which have been created?

Answer

The Commission is not aware of the facts to which the honourable Member refers. However, under Community rules there is a procedure which can be followed in the event of the discovery by a Member State of imports of this kind. The Community rules are based on the principle of checks at the place of origin. These take the form of certificates of fitness for consumption signed by an authorized veterinary surgeon of the country of origin.

* * *

Question No 49, by Ms Quin (H-728/83)

Subject: *Juste retour*

What exactly does the Commission understand by the expression *juste retour*? Does it mean 'fair returns' or 'unfair returns'?

Answer

The Commission has always opposed the application of the notion of *juste retour* to the Community budget. Such a concept is not consistent with the idea of a Community spirit and is in any case highly problematical. The Commission prefers therefore to avoid provoking further debate on the *juste retour* by going into definitions of the type requested.

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Question No 50, by Mr Pranchère (H-731/83)

Subject: Protectionist measures taken by the United States

The American authorities decided to prohibit imports of meat and poultry from fourteen countries as from 1 January 1984. Can the Commission say what repercussions this decision will have on Community exports and what retaliatory measures it intends to take?

Answer

It is true that the United States has decided to ban imports of meat and poultry from a certain number of countries, including three Member States of the Community. According to the information available to the Commission, negotiations between the American authorities and the Member States in question produced a favourable result. Exports could thus begin again.

* * *

Question No 51, by Mr Martin (H-732/83)

Subject: Harvest declarations in the wine sector

The Commission recently decided to recognize the validity of harvest declarations in the wine sector which give no indication of yield per hectare. Does the Commission not think that this decision is likely to penalize certain wine-growers and prevent the proper application of certain provisions of the rules governing the wine sector?

Answer

Although the Commission submitted its proposal for a regulation to the government experts in June 1983, Regulation (EEC) No 2408/83 on harvest and stock declarations relating to wine-sector products was not formally adopted until 25 August 1983. One of the main features of this regulation is that for the first time harvest declarations should contain various information regarding the calculation of yield per hectare on holdings.

The Member States whose national regulations made no provision for such a requirement were faced with various administrative problems in connection with the printing and distribution of the new forms and implementing circulars. These problems were worse in areas where wine was produced by traders who purchased part of the wine harvest and in Member States where cooperative undertakings were previously required to submit an overall declaration for all members. Consequently, many producers were not able to gather the necessary information in time to submit complete declarations. In the circumstances, and also because the figures appearing in the forward estimate which was prepared on 15 December 1983 did not justify compulsory distillation under Article 41 of Basic Regulation (EEC) No 337/79, the Commission felt that it would be fairer to relax the provisions which were originally adopted in order not to penalize wine-growers who were having problems.

The Commission would point out that this derogation is exceptional. It refers only to the 1983-84 marketing year and is without prejudice to the proper application of the new arrangements in future years.

* * *

Question No 52, by Mr Harris (H-750/83)

Subject: Extra import charge on fish

What action is the Commission taking to bring about the lifting by Spain of the extra import charge it has imposed on fish from the Community, which has resulted in an increase of some 400 per cent in the import 'tax' charged on certain species?

Answer

First of all, the Commission wants to inform the honourable Member, as well as all other Members of Parliament, that as from 1 March of this year the extra import charge on fish in Spain, which was imposed in the form of variable compensatory amounts, has effectively been withdrawn by Spain.

From the moment of imposition of these measures until their withdrawal, the Commission has at all levels and in every appropriate framework pointed out to the Spanish administration that such autonomous decisions by Spain to increase the import charge on Community products do affect mutual relations and that this should be avoided in the spirit of close cooperation between Spain and the Community.

* * *

Question No 53, by Mr Provan (H-751/83)

Subject: Enlargement: fisheries task force

Will the Commission please report on the work of the task force?

Answer

The task force set up by the Commission with a view to preparing the negotiations for the accession of Spain and Portugal in the field of fisheries became operative in November 1982.

As from that date the Task Force carried out the necessary preparatory work on the basis of which the Commission adopted on 29 February 1983 a Communication to the Council concerning the accession of Portugal.

A draft Communication concerning the accession of Spain is currently being prepared with a view to its submission to the Commission before mid-March 1984.

* * *

Question No 55, by Mrs Duport (H-755/83)

Subject: Regulation concerning the offer or delivery of certain imported wines for direct human consumption

Regulation (EEC) No 337/79¹ on the market in wine makes no provision for the wine-making processes allowed in the exchange of letters of 26 July 1983 between the EEC and the United States. A new regulation will therefore have to be drawn up. Can the Commission state the date on which Parliament will be called on to give its view of a new regulation concerning the offer or delivery of certain imported wines for direct human consumption?

¹ OJ L 54 of 5 March 1979, p. 1.

Answer

After seven years of intensive bilateral consultation the Community and the United States gave a mutual undertaking in the letters of 6 and 26 July 1983 to amend and to complete their provisions on wine-making processes.

The American authorities have given a formal undertaking to ban a large number of wine-making processes, hitherto allowed by American regulations, and especially processes the use of which is not entirely free of risks to human health. With regard to the wine-making processes which are still covered by the American regulations, the Community stated that it was ready either to recognize that they were equivalent to Community processes or to allow a derogation from existing Community regulations by allowing the provisional or definitive importation of American wines which have been subject to wine-making processes which are not allowed in the Community. In this connection the Commission will in due course submit to the Council a proposal for a regulation on the basis of Article 51 (1) of Regulation (EEC) No 337/79. There is no provision for consulting the European Parliament under this procedure.

* * *

Question No 56, by Mr van Hassel (H-757/83)

Subject: European Parliament resolution concerning disruption to frontier traffic as a result of clearance delays and strikes

In view of the latest severe disruption to traffic in France, which has also spread across the French borders, it may be recalled that the European Parliament adopted a resolution by a large majority on 16 February 1984, which, at the instigation of Mr Kai-Uwe von Hassel, called on the Member States involved to open their frontiers in the event of clearance delays or strikes to allow vehicles free passage.

What steps has the Commission taken, in response to the severe disruption to traffic between France, Switzerland and Italy that broke out immediately following the adoption of the resolution containing my amendment in the European Parliament on 16 February 1984, with a view to making a serious effort to prevail upon the countries involved to keep their frontiers open in the event of national strikes and, in addition, to accelerate and ease the passage of frontier traffic to a considerable extent by significantly increasing clearance facilities?

Answer

1. Promptly after learning of the strike action by Italian customs officials — which led to the subsequent blockades by European lorry drivers in France, Italy, Austria and Germany — the Commission sent several telexes to the Italian Government urging it to take every step to reestablish as quickly as possible the proper conditions for troublefree customs clearance and the unhindered free movement of goods. The Commission also took the opportunity of outlining its position in detail to the European Parliament at the meetings of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs on 24 February and of the Committee on Transport on 27 February.

The Italian Government responded to the Commission's appeal with a telex from the Finance Minister on 7 March. The Italian authorities informed the Commission that they were taking every measure to ensure the troublefree clearance of vehicles under the Community transit procedure. The authorities further gave an assurance that border clearance of vehicles under the Community transit procedure would be guaranteed at all hours, while the actual clearance of goods would be ensured at least during normal working hours.

2. On 2 March and between 5 and 7 March the Commission sent officials on fact-finding visits to both the Mont Blanc tunnel and Brenner Pass border crossings in order to get first-hand information about the actual circumstances at these two crucial locations. As a result of this on-the-spot investigation the Commission presented an *aide-mémoire* to the Italian Government representative at the meeting of the Internal Market Council on 8 March. This communication contained precise requests for the Italian Government to ensure a lasting improvement of clearance procedures at Italian frontier posts.

For its part the Italian Government explained at the Council meeting that it firmly intended to introduce legal measures which should lead to a lasting solution of the recurrent border problems. In this connection the Italian representative also made special reference to the fact that his government was making definite efforts to implement on time on 1 January 1985, and possibly even before then, the Council Directive of 1 December 1983 on the facilitation of physical inspections and administrative formalities in respect of the carriage of goods between Member States¹. The Italian representative also promised to inform the Commission as soon as possible of the response of his government to the *aide-mémoire*.

3. In connection with this the Commission would like to mention the statement by its own representative at the meeting of the Internal Market Council on 8 March. The Commission strongly urged the Council to delay no longer in approving the concrete proposals which have been ready for some time and which seek to strengthen the Community internal market. At the same time the Commission announced new initiatives for the removal of border formalities. This statement will be sent to the honourable Member immediately.

4. Finally, with regard to the matter of whether and in what manner the Commission can act in the event of national strikes in order to uphold the principle of the free movement of goods, it must be pointed out that this is a tricky legal and political problem which needs closer examination. It will need careful consideration of the scope of the right to strike which is recognized in every Member State, and also of the application of the principle of the free movement of goods which is enshrined in the EEC Treaty and which must therefore be adhered to by all Member States. The Commission will consider this difficult matter at a forthcoming meeting and decide on the basic position to adopt.

* * *

Question No 57, by Mr Maffre-Baugé (H-759/83)

Subject: American wine imports into the Community

The Commission has recently drawn up a proposal for a regulation on the marketing or delivery for direct human consumption of certain imported wines which have been the subject of wine-making practices not laid down in Regulation (EEC) 337/79.

How can the Commission justify its failure to consult the organizations representing the various professional groups and consumers as it states in its explanatory memorandum?

Answer

It should first of all be made clear that the document in question is still being drawn up and that it is the Commission's intention to forward it to the Consumers' Consultative Committee in its final form.

The Member States have been closely involved. At the preparatory stage, therefore, government experts on wine matters were aided by government experts on public health and quality control. American wine-making practices were examined in the light of the FAO/WHO provisions.

The Commission departments dealing with consumer protection and the relevant professional groups were also involved in drawing up the proposal and indicated their agreement.

* * *

¹ Council Directive 83/643/EEC, OJ L 359 of 22 December 1983.

Question No 58, by Mr Clinton (H-763/83)

Subject : Operation of the Milk Marketing Boards in the UK

Can the Commission state the amount of Community funds received by the Milk Marketing Boards in the UK from the EAGGF through the illegal operation of the relevant regulations for each year from 1.1.78 to 31.12.83 and has not the Commission the right and the responsibility to demand reimbursement of these funds, and if so, does it intend to seek reimbursement?

Answer

Payments by the EAGGF are not made directly to the economic operators but to the Member States which allocate them to the different paying agencies; these in turn pay out the amounts to the individual beneficiaries. As the Milk Marketing Boards are not the only beneficiaries of EAGGF funds, figures such as those requested by the Honourable Member of Parliament are not available at present.

Within the framework of the clearance of the EAGGF accounts of 1978 and 1979, the Commission has decided that for these two years expenditure by the United Kingdom in the dairy sector shall not be rejected because of the operations of the Milk Marketing Boards. There are therefore no grounds for claims for reimbursement against the Boards at this stage. Future action in this respect will depend on the decisions the Commission will take when clearing the accounts from 1980 onwards. These are currently being prepared by the Commission's services.

* * *

Question No 60, by Mrs Boserup (H-767/83)

Subject : Public availability of summary records of advisory committee meetings

In its reply to a question by Mrs Lenz published in Official Journal C 359 of 31 December 1983, the Commission stated the following: '... The summary records of the Committee's meetings — like those of other advisory committees — are documents internal to the Commission'. (OJ C 359, page 8).

I have previously put a question to the Commission and tabled two motions for resolutions pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure concerning public insight into administrative proceedings, and would therefore like to know from the Commission:

- (a) why it adopts this secretive manner and regards summary records of meetings of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and of other advisory committees as internal documents and
- (b) whether or not it takes the view that the public should be fully informed as quickly as possible about the Commission's work since, in the final analysis, it is the taxpayers' money that finances it?

Answer

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men as well as the other existing advisory committees are not autonomous bodies but internal instruments which are intended to assist the Commission in its daily tasks.

The fact that the summary records of these committees are documents internal to the Commission and are not made available to the public protects, on the one hand, the Commission's advisors' freedom of expression and, on the other, guarantees greater freedom of action to the Commission.

The fact of being financed by taxpayer's money is true of any public administration and could not in itself be considered as a sufficient cause for making available to the public all internal documents.

* * *

Question No 61, by Mr Schmid (H-771/83)

Subject : Restructuring plans for the steel industry

In the negotiations towards the end of December 1983 on Regulation (EEC) No 216/84¹, why did the Commission acknowledge the existence of a restructuring plan for the steel industry in the West Palatinate-Saarland region but not for the Eastern Bavarian mining region although it must have been aware of Maxhütte's structural plans including the cutbacks in capacity and jobs because of the notification for research aid in 1982? Did the West German Government draw attention to this?

Answer

The *final* restructuring plan of Arbed-Saarstahl was in hand when the Council adopted Regulation EEC No 216/84, whereas the final restructuring plan for Maxhütte was submitted by the German government to the Commission only afterwards (end of January 1984).

As regards the cutbacks in capacity and jobs which, in the view of the honourable Member of Parliament, should have been known to the Commission because of the notification of investment and research aid in 1981, it should be noted that these aids concerned only a first stage of the Maxhütte restructuring plan, whereas the overall plan which was notified to the Commission by the due date of 30. 9. 82 was subject to the procedure under Article 8 (3) of Commission decision ECSC No 2320/81. This procedure was closed on 29. 6. 1983 on condition that a final detailed restructuring plan be submitted to the Commission by 31 January 1984.

* * *

Question No 62, by Mr Adam (H-772/83)

Subject : Redundancy, payments to opencast coal workers

The British Government discriminates against opencast coal workers in that the Redundant Miners Payments Scheme provisions are restricted to underground coal workers only.

Does the Commission consider this attitude justified under the provisions of Article 56 of the ECSC Treaty, has the Commission raised the matter with the UK Government recently and with what results and has the Commission any further initiatives in mind?

Answer

The Commission most recently raised this matter formally with the UK Government in April last year. The Government have consistently taken the view that they would not be justified in extending the national Redundant Mineworkers Payments Schemes to the opencast mining sector. The Commission recognizes that to do so would involve the UK in granting benefits to far more workers and for far longer periods than are covered by arrangements under Article 56 of the ECSC Treaty. A scheme in line with that operated for workers in opencast iron ore production, however, would be less costly and would in principle open up the possibility of ECSC benefits for workers in the opencast coal mining sector.

¹ OJ L 27 of 18 January 1984, p. 9.

In order for the workers to qualify in practice, however, redundancy would need to arise from fundamental changes in market conditions for the coal mining industry which compelled the undertaking concerned to cease or reduce production. We believe that this Treaty requirement is generally unlikely to be met in opencast coal mining.

* * *

Question No 63, by Mr Newton Dunn (H-774/83)

Subject: Article 431 of the 1984 Budget

Having regard to the Tripartite Agreement concerning new expenditure lines in the budget how soon may we expect progress towards the earliest possible implementation of Article 431 of the 1984 Budget?

Answer

How to make the most effective use of Article 431 of the budget is under active consideration within the Commission. Recent studies completed on behalf of the Commission, one on medical assistance at sea¹ and another on accidents at sea and safety measures², have provided most helpful guidance.

Detailed proposals for spending are now being drawn up, following the necessary consultation of the social partners. I have every hope that the Commission will be able to present to Parliament the actual results of some of this expenditure before the end of 1984.

* * *

Question No 64, by Mrs Van Hemeldonck (H-776/83)

Subject: Fire regulations for cinemas

Recent fires in cinemas in Turin (64 dead) and Brussels (5 dead) have demonstrated the inadequacy of fire precautions in cinemas in the Member States. Does the Commission not believe that a total ban on smoking should be imposed in all cinemas in the Member States and is it not also convinced of the need for uniform regulations to be drawn up on the materials used for (emergency) exits and extinguisher systems?

Answer

The Commission shares the honourable Member's concern regarding safety regulations in cinemas, with a view to eliminating accidents once and for all. With regard to the proposal for a general ban on smoking throughout the Community, it may be pointed out that regulations of this kind do in fact apply everywhere in the Community. They were introduced partly for safety reasons and partly for reasons of public health.

As for stricter technical regulations concerning buildings and specifically emergency exits, the Commission is at present considering concrete steps. A document on hotel safety has been prepared and was recently submitted to the Council in the form of a proposal for a recommendation. It would well be that a solution might then be found to the problem raised by the honourable Member.

Another starting-point might be the draft guideline directive on building materials. Measures to protect cinema audiences might also be considered in this connection. Unfortunately the Council has not yet adopted the document.

¹ V/1033/83 by Dr Lemarchand.

² V/1755 by Mr Dorval.

Finally, there is little point in cataloguing all the national regulations which exist. The fact is that the problem is to a large extent the compliance with and strict application of national regulations. Inasmuch as the Community is involved in this area, the extent of its supervisory capacity will always be to check whether national law is in line with Community law. The Member States will in any case remain responsible for inspection by the police.

* * *

Question No 65, by Mr Vetter (H-777/83)

Subject: Appearance of the Official Journal of the European Communities

Is it true that by letter of 25 October 1983 the Publications Office of the European Communities asked the management of the *Saarbrücker Zeitung* newspaper what measures it intended to take in the light of the imminent wage negotiations in the German printing industry to ensure that the Official Journal appeared on schedule — a move which could only be regarded as an attempt at intimidatory interference and as questionable in terms of constitutional law — and that the Commission is not able to answer a letter of 1976 from the International Graphic Federation now that a European arrangement ensuring the punctual appearance of the Official Journal has been offered?

Answer

It is true that the Publications Office sent a letter to the management of the contract printers who have the specific responsibility of producing two daily series of the Official Journal of the European Communities.

A labour dispute which prevented certain texts from appearing in the Official Journal could have serious repercussions in various sectors of the economy and in Member States which were not at all involved in the dispute. The Publications Office is bound to be concerned about any circumstance which might halt the legislative process of the Community. In this instance, there was even more reason to be concerned since the last interruption of work at the contract printers was the result of a lockout by management and not of a strike by employees.

The Commission is not in possession of a letter of 1976 from the International Graphic Federation offering an agreement to guarantee the appearance of certain issues of the Official Journal in the event of labour disputes.

* * *

Question No 66, by Mr Treacy (H-779/83)

Subject: Emergency aid for sheep farmers in South Tipperary

Is the Commission aware of the disastrous situation confronting the mainly small sheep farmers in the Galtee mountains, South Tipperary, where more than a thousand sheep have died as a result of severe snowstorms in recent weeks; will it state what emergency aid it can make available to this already disadvantaged area, and will it agree to give a favourable response to any requests from the Irish authorities for emergency aid?

Answer

The situation described by the Honourable Member in which over a thousand sheep died as a result of severe snowstorms in South Tipperary in recent weeks, a matter on which the Commission has no additional information, does not, in its view, qualify for assistance under Article 690 of the Budget, which is intended to enable the Community to give emergency relief to victims of natural disasters. Eligibility for assistance requires circumstances recognized as being exceptionally extensive and serious for the local inhabitants.

* * *

Question No 67, by Mr Keating (H-780/83)

Subject: Incidence of Down's Syndrome as a result of radiation from accident at Sellafield Nuclear Processing Plant

Is the Commission aware of the recently published scientific reports on the incidence of Down's Syndrome in babies born to women from the East Coast of Ireland who had previously been subjected to radiation as a result of an accident at the Sellafield Nuclear Processing Plant (formerly Windscale); will it state if existing Community legislation offers any redress to those put at risk or provides any guarantees against a recurrence, more especially in the light of recent official British reports indicating incompetence and mismanagement in the administration of Sellafield?

Answer

The Commission has noted a report published in the British Medical Journal of 12 November 1983 pointing out the exceptionally high incidence of Down's Syndrome in babies born to women who had been pupils at an Irish boarding school and indicating as one of the contributory factors the accident that occurred at the Sellafield nuclear processing plant (formerly known as Windscale on 10 October 1957).

However, a subsequent issue of the Journal, published on 14 January 1984, pointed out that the data used by the authors of the first article did not justify the hypothesis of contamination in Ireland caused by the Windscale accident. On the contrary, all the available evidence suggests that contamination did not spread in that direction. Neither can it be claimed with any certainty that Down's Syndrome could be caused by radiation.

Consequently, the question of compensation does not appear to arise, and this would in any case be matter for national law exclusively.

It should also be pointed out in this connection that the accident at Sellafield in 1957 did not occur in the reprocessing plant but in a reactor of a type that is no longer in operation; it is, therefore, extremely unlikely that a similar incident will recur.

Further information on this subject is given in the answer to oral question H-561/83 by Mr Pattison.

ANNEX III

Commission action on European Parliament opinions on Commission proposals delivered at the January and February 1984 part-sessions

This is an account, as arranged with the Bureau of Parliament, of the action taken by the Commission in respect of amendments proposed at the January and February 1984 part-sessions in the framework of parliamentary consultation, and of disaster aid granted.

A.I. *Commission proposals to which Parliament proposed amendments that have been accepted by the Commission in full*

Report by Mrs Scamaroni on the Commission proposal (COM(83) 405 final) for a directive on fuel rationing for commercial transport between Member States

An amending proposal is in preparation (under Article 149).

Commission's position at debate : Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, pp. 306-7

Text of proposal adopted by EP : Minutes of 17 February 1984, pp. 46-47

A.II. *Commission proposals to which Parliament proposed amendments that have been accepted by the Commission in part*

1. Report by Mr Turner on the Proposal (COM(81) 483 final) for a regulation on the particulars to be furnished by Member States' customs authorities in connection with goods classification in the customs nomenclature

The amending proposal to be sent to the Council this month will include the amendments accepted by the Commission, namely amendments 1, 9, 10 and 12-15.

Commission's position at debate : Verbatim report of proceedings, 19/20 January 1984, p. 353

Text of proposal adopted by EP : Minutes of 20 January 1984, pp. 65, 69

2. Report by Mrs Scrivener on the proposal (COM(82) 690 final) for a draft resolution regarding a second European Communities action programme on safety and health at work :

The Commission authorized Mr Richard to inform the Council orally of its views concerning the amendments proposed by Parliament, though it did not formally amend its proposal. This proposal was adopted by the Council on 27 February 1984.

Commission's position at debate : Verbatim report of proceedings, 19/20 January 1984, pp. 325-6

Text of proposal adopted by EP : Minutes of 20 January 1984, pp. 32-33 by Mr Tyrrell on the Commission proposal (COM(82) 861 final) for a regulation on the security to be given to ensure payment of a customs debt

The amending proposal will be sent to the Council this month. It will include the amendments accepted by the Commission, namely amendments 1, 2, 5 and 9 (partially accepted).

Commission's position at debate : Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, p. 348

Text of proposal adopted by EP : Minutes of 17 February 1984, pp. 113-115

4. Report by Mr Bombard on the Commission proposal (COM(82) 527 final) for a directive on the use of sewage sludge in agriculture

The Commission accepted the amendments proposed by Parliament except for those relating to the following two questions :

- (i) the lapse of time between sludge spreading and authorized grazing,
- (ii) the use of fresh sludge buried directly in the ground.

Commission research (COST 68) has not brought to light anything that would enable the Commission to meet parliamentary wishes on these points.

The Commission would confirm that it has undertaken studies on sampling analyses and methods, other means of sludge disposal and the other limits (items 6, 7 and 8 in the resolution).

Commission departments are preparing an amended proposal under the second paragraph of Article 149.

Commission's position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, pp. 319-20

Text of proposal adopted by EP: Minutes of 17 February 1984, pp. 63-65

5. Report by Mr Dalsass on the Commission proposals (COM(83) 155 final) for:
- (i) a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 358/79 on sparkling wines produced in the Community, as defined in item 13 of Annex II to Regulation (EEC) No 337/79,
 - (ii) a regulation laying down general rules for the description and presentation of sparkling wines and aerated sparkling wines

The Commission is preparing an amended version of its proposal.

Commission's position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, p. 329

Text of proposal adopted by EP: Minutes of 17 February 1984, pp. 78-82

6. Report by Mr Prag on the Commission proposal (COM(83) 482 final) for a decision on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community

The Commission is in the process of amending its proposal. Parliament will be informed in due course.

Commission's position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, pp. 322-23

Text of proposal adopted by EP: Minutes of 17 February 1984, pp. 70-73

- B. *Commission proposals to which Parliament proposed amendments that the Commission has not felt able to accept*

Report by Mr Poniatowski on the Commission proposal (COM(83) 669 final) for a regulation on the apportionment of the quantities of cereal scheduled under the Food Aid Convention for the period 1 July 1983 to 30 June 1986

The amendment Parliament proposed has not been accepted by the Commission, for the reasons it gave at the debate. Therefore, no action is called for. The fact that Parliament subsequently voted on and adopted an opinion shows that it regards the consultation procedures as being closed.

As for Parliament's request that a *new basic regulation* on food aid be drawn up (paragraph 7 in the resolution), the Commission does not feel there is any need for such a change as things stand at present.

Commission's position at debate: Verbatim report of proceedings, 16/17 February 1984, p. 316

Text of proposal adopted by EP: Minutes of 17 February 1984, p. 57

C. Commission proposals in respect of which Parliament delivered favourable opinions or did not request formal amendment

Report by Mr Herman on the consolidation and completion of the European Monetary System in line with the proposals made by the Commission in March 1982 (COM(82) 133 final)

It should be noted that, for purposes of the Council session on Economic and Financial Affairs on 12 March, the Commission has just sent the Council a communication (Five Years of Monetary Cooperation in Europe*) reviewing the operation of the EMS over a period of five years. The analyses the communication contains largely agree with those in Mr Herman's report and support the line taken in the Commission's 1982 proposals.

Commission's position at debate : Verbatim report of proceedings, 16 February 1984, pp. 258-61

Text of proposal adopted by EP : Minutes of 16 February 1984, pp. 44-50

D. Disaster aid supplied since last part-session

Emergency aid within the Community

Nil

Emergency aid for third countries

Financial aid

<i>Country</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Distributed by</i>	<i>Date of decision</i>
Mozambique	1 300 000 ECU	drought and hurricane	EEC Delegation (Swaziland)	1. 3. 1984
Mauritania	500 000 ECU	drought	LICROSS	9. 2. 1984
Ethiopia	500 000 ECU	Sudanese refugees	UNHCR	8. 2. 1984
Mali	160 000 ECU	drought	Médecins sans frontières (Belgium)	23. 2. 1984
Ghana	500 000 ECU	drought	Dan Church Aid	28. 2. 1984

Food aid

<i>Country</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Date of decision</i>
Tunisia	40 000 t cereals	food situation	15. 2. 1984
Haiti	2 000 t cereals	emergency food aid	15. 2. 1984
Nicaragua	1 000 t cereals	emergency food aid	15. 2. 1984
Peru	300 t skimmed milk powder	emergency food aid	15. 2. 1984
Mali	5 000 t cereals	emergency food aid	15. 12. 1983
Senegal	400 t skimmed milk powder	emergency food aid	15. 12. 1983

* COM(84) 125 final

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 14 MARCH 1984

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IN THE CHAIR : MR MØLLER

Vice-President

(The sitting opened at 9 a.m.)

1. *Approval of the Minutes*

President. — The Minutes of Proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed.

Are there any comments ?

Mr Moreland (ED). — Mr President, on page 29 of the minutes, referring to the debate on sexual discrimination at the workplace, it states that Mrs Maij-Weggen spoke on behalf of the EPP Group and that she spoke in favour of that report. As the voting shows that a majority of the EPP Group voted against or abstained, indeed by a comfortable margin, I am wondering if the remark 'on behalf of the EPP Group' should be there.

President. — Mr Moreland, Mrs Maij-Weggen spoke as indicated in the Minutes — that is to say, on behalf of the EPP Group. Whether she had a majority behind her is a matter for the EPP Group.

Mr Barbi (EPP). — *(IT)* Mr President, I would ask our colleague of the Conservative Group to concern himself with his group's affairs. I will see to the internal matters of my group !

(Parliament approved the Minutes)¹

2. *Agricultural regulations*

President. — The next item is a joint debate on the following reports :

— by Mr Marck, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1370/83), on

the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-940/83 — COM(83) 586 final) for

I. a regulation amending Regulation No 974/71/EEC, particularly in respect of the system of neutral margins and the gradual dismantlement of the monetary compensatory amounts applying to certain agricultural and processed products ;

II. a regulation amending Regulation No 2773/75/EEC, laying down rules for calculating the levy and the sluice-gate price for eggs ; and

III. a a regulation amending Regulation No 2778/75/EEC, laying down rules for calculating the levy and the sluice-gate price for poultrymeat ;

— by Mr Goerens, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1507/83), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation introducing a tax on certain oils and fats (Doc. 1-894/83 — COM(83) 562 final) ;

— by Mr Woltjer, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1470/83), on

A. the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-893/83 — COM(83) 548 final) for

I. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 804/68, on the common organization of the markets in milk and milk products ;

II. a regulation laying down general rules applying to the milk-sector levy specified in Article 5 (c) of Regulation (EEC) No 804/68 ; and

III. a regulation laying down general rules applying to the milk-sector levy specified in Article 5 (d) of Regulation (EEC) No 804/68 ;

B. the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-996/83 — COM(83) 611 final) for

I. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1723/81 as regards the possibility of granting aids for the use of butter in the manufacture of certain foodstuffs ;

II. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1411/71 as regards the fat content of drinking-milk ;

III. a regulation laying down general rules on the granting of aid for concentrated skimmed milk and concentrated milk for use as animal feed ; and

IV. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1269/79 with regard to the terms for the disposal of butter at reduced price for direct consumption ; and

C. the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1113/83 — COM(83) 644 final) for

a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1078/77, introducing a system of premiums for the non-marketing of milk and milk products and for the conversion of dairy herds.

— by Mr Vitale, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1514/83), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-772/83 — COM(83) 480 final — Part II) for a regulation laying down special measures in respect of olive oil ;

¹ For documents received, see the Minutes of Proceedings of this sitting.

President

- by Mr Battersby, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on control problems in the olive-oil sector (interim report, Doc. 1-1537/83); and
- by Mr Stella, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1515/83), on

the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-998/83 — COM(83) 596 final) for

- I. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2601/69, laying down special measures to encourage the processing of certain varieties of oranges;
- II. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1035/72, on the common organization of the market in fruit and vegetables; and
- III. a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 516/77, on the common organization of the market in products processed from fruit and vegetables.

Mr Thorn, President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as you know, today's debate is essentially on agriculture, but since we are only five days away from the European Council I would like to give a brief outline of the Commission's feelings about the progress made in the preparations for the European Council. I believe this is what most of you were hoping for.

Of course, nothing is certain yet, but we can at last be a little more optimistic, as the Member States seem willing to work together for an agreement on the essential points, instead of being content simply to put things off until a later date, as they have all too often done in the past — something you have frequently deplored.

Looking at the Council's work and the informal contacts — there have in fact been a number of informal meetings in the past few days — we at last have the impression that things are moving again. One sign of this very symbolic change of climate and character was the Council's adoption of the Esprit programme, but fortunately progress is also being made in other fields, such as the internal market. The latest Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs also demonstrated that a broad consensus exists on the approach to be adopted on the structural funds and new policies. And now an agreement on the rules and procedures necessary to curb budgetary spending is taking shape.

The Commission thinks it particularly important that such an agreement be established, as you requested, strictly within the terms of the Treaties and the powers of the individual institutions, including this House. The central difficulty remains — on that we are all agreed — the need to find a lasting solution to the problem of the distribution of financial burdens and the problem of new 'own resources' and the

ceiling to be set upon them. But these two questions will plainly have to be settled in the final stage by the Heads of State or Government themselves. Finally, it is an encouraging fact that the Agriculture Council has at last begun real negotiations on the reform of the CAP, something we have been asking it to do for so long.

Mr President, according to the general rule which we all know and apply, that as long as there is no agreement on all points there can be no real agreement at all, it is not yet possible to speak of an agreement. Moreover, the Agriculture Council is to continue its work next Friday at 10 a.m., in the hope of making some progress on all the issues confronting it before the meeting of the European Council. My colleague Mr Dalsager will shortly give you a more detailed picture of the progress made and will inform you of the bases for an agreement which are apparent at the moment. These are centred on the Commission's proposals, which you will be debating today and tomorrow. These proposals will not be formally amended by the Commission unless it is quite clear that this is necessary, indispensable or in any case of some use in enabling an agreement to be reached, in accordance with our aims. If the Commission does have to amend its proposals on some point or other, it is good that this should be a result of today's debate and inspired by the advice which Parliament will now give it...

(Mixed reactions)

... but let's debate it together if you like. We are made up of ten governments and one Commission, and we have to do our work. It is not always easy...

(Applause)

... Ladies and gentlemen, we have deplored the Council's inability to take decisions so often that we cannot but rejoice at the first signs of agreement, based on proposals put forward by the Commission, even if for some, who may well be right, it is too cautious, or for others it goes too far.

The fact that the outline of an agreement is emerging is largely due to the persistence and commitment to the European idea of those chairing the negotiations, particularly the President of the Council. I consider it important to pay him this tribute since we can at last see glimmering on the horizon a chance of ensuring the survival of the CAP and the guarantees which it gives to Community agriculture, something which you have no doubt hoped for as much as we have, while the continuation of the stalemate at the Council gave rise to a growing fear, with which you are familiar, that its survival could no longer be ensured.

If the agreement on the reform of the CAP is concluded in the next few days, as we hope it will be, we shall have turned an important corner. There may be some undesirable short-term budgetary implications, and I shall come back to these in a minute, but

Thorn

it is vital that this corner be turned, since we all know, and have known for some time, that the CAP cannot continue to run on the basis of unlimited guarantees.

I must also draw Parliament's attention to the Community's present budgetary situation. You should keep this in mind, irrespective of the decisions that must be taken for the future, for example on new resources or budgetary restraint, about which I have just spoken. This year we are managing the budget with our backs to the wall, as since 1983 we have practically reached the ceiling on our own resources. You are familiar with the causes of this situation. In 1981, the rate of utilization of VAT was still 0.7% — that is the same level as in 1979. Thus, three years ago we were at a comfortable distance from the ceiling on our own resources, but two factors caused us to approach it rapidly during 1982. The first was the sudden deterioration in the agricultural situation, which resulted in a sharp increase in agricultural spending since no decision was taken on the Commission's proposals for a reform of the CAP. Remember that in 1982, after two years of relative calm in the agricultural budget, not to say relative stability, spending under the EAGGF (Guarantee Section) suddenly rose by 20 % at the end of the year, primarily as a result of the fall in world prices.

The second factor was the introduction of a new element into the budget, with which you are only too well acquainted, that is compensation to correct imbalances in the budget. In the last two years, in 1983 as in 1982, compensation swallowed up more than a tenth of a VAT point. I simply wanted to remind you of this. Moreover, I would like to point out that if we had not had to pay this compensation we should not yet have reached the ceiling on our own resources but had in fact a rate of utilization of VAT of 0.91%, to give you the precise figures.

That being so, the Commission reacted to the exhaustion of our own resources by attempting to create a safety margin. This was done by deciding on a series of economy measures, which, despite their balanced character, gave rise to numerous objections from nearly all the governments. These savings, based on tighter management, will not of themselves be sufficient to keep agricultural spending within the 16 500 million ECU allocated in the 1984 budget. As the year progresses — and we are after all in only the third month at present — a number of factors that will push up spending are emerging. Firstly, there is the expenditure carried over from the 1983 financial year to 1984. At the close of the 1983 financial year, we seemed justified in thinking that such carry-overs would be in the range of 300-330 million ECU. In fact, now that the Member States have passed on to the Commission all the documents that had been in the pipeline, it appears that the total carry-overs are more than twice the initial estimate — that is, 675 million ECU, this higher figure being partially also attributable to policies pursued by the Member States.

Secondly, we must take into account the deterioration of the agricultural situation since May of last year, when the budget proposals for 1984 were drawn up. We tend to forget just how far in advance estimates have to be prepared. The delays in making a decision on the reform of the CAP are partially responsible for this deterioration. Considering how long we have been debating publicly the level at which guarantee thresholds should be fixed and the possibility of reducing intervention prices, it would have been surprising if agricultural producers had not taken advantage of this period to increase their production as much as possible before the reform of the present CAP arrangements and the fixing of reference thresholds.

Be that as it may, the deterioration is particularly noticeable in the milk sector, which as you know accounts for 30% of our farm spending, and in the beef-and-veal sector, where there is a marked cyclical increase, to judge from the spending increases by the intervention agencies in the last two months. According to our estimates for the end of this month and for April, there is reason to fear that agricultural spending in the full year will exceed budget appropriations by between 800 million and 1 300 million ECU.

This overshoot ought, for the most part at least, to have been covered by the savings brought about by the adoption of document COM(83)500. But, as you know, it now seems that the Council is likely to opt for a compromise that may not bring in all the savings proposed by the Commission.

I must point out here that the Commission does not judge agreement on agriculture merely by budgetary criteria, even if budgetary stringency is, under the present circumstances, constantly at the forefront of our thoughts. We can accept the fact that an agreement may have a negative effect on the budget in the short term, provided that such an agreement includes a formal undertaking to carry out structural reforms which would at least show results in the medium term. Nevertheless, efforts to reach an agreement, even a good agreement, must not make us lose sight of budgetary restraints, which, as I have just reminded you, have never been tighter.

As I pointed out, agricultural spending in 1984 will be pushed up by carry-overs of 675 million ECU and additional costs of between 800 and 1 300 million ECU, together making up a sum of between 1 500 and 2 000 million ECU. And this does not take into account any further expenditure which could arise. In order to cover this extra spending, the Commission will, of course, step up its drive for economies in the running of the CAP. However, Mr President, let us not delude ourselves on this point: the effects of such measures will be marginal. It should also be clear, and I want to emphasize this, that the Commission does

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not intend to sacrifice the non-agricultural policies in order to cover overspending on the Guarantee Section of the EAGGF...

(Applause)

Besides, I think it is obvious that Parliament would reject any proposal for the transfer of funds for that purpose. I wanted the members of the Council to be fully aware of this obvious fact, and that is why I mentioned this possibility when addressing you on the Commission's programme for 1984. Your reaction has no doubt helped to dissipate any illusions that some people may have entertained in this regard.

Finally, the Commission considers it would be unwise systematically to carry over an expenditure which cannot be covered by this year's budget to 1985, which will be a difficult year in any case. Such solutions should only be used as a last resort, and, what is more, only for sums which do not significantly exceed the sums that have been carried over in the past.

Under these circumstances, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I conclude by saying that it is up to the Member States to bring the 1984 budget into balance by making supplementary payments. You may rest assured that, when the time is right, the Commission will propose the necessary means and the appropriate legal bases.

(Applause)

Mr Barbi (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, we are faced with a new situation arising from the Council's 'prior agreement' and from the attitude now adopted by the Commission, according to what President Thorn has just told us. In these circumstances, I should like to propose that the sitting be suspended to allow the Committee on Agriculture to assess the new situation and the political groups to decide on their political attitudes.

I would add that it seems to me advisable that before the suspension a very short debate should be held with, say, one speaker per group, so that the House can react immediately to the Commission's proposals.

President. — Mr Barbi, we must first hear Mr Dalsager's statement: then we can decide on your proposal.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — *(DA)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, you have now received a report from the President of the Commission on the general situation we are in at present, in anticipation of next week's meeting of heads of state and government. I should like to give you a brief run-down of the agricultural negotiations seen from the Commission's point of view. I know that each Member of Parliament wishes to be as well informed on these matters as possible before entering into your important debate today and tomorrow.

The progress made by the Council in the past few days in the area of agriculture is very encouraging.

The Commission has done its part, and I wish to emphasize that the President of the Council, Mr Rocard, and the other agriculture ministers have shown the degree of responsibility the situation requires. The Council of Agriculture Ministers met on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday and will be continuing its work at 10 o'clock on Friday. Up to now it has discussed prices, monetary compensatory amounts and milk, and on all these points real progress has been made; but a difficult discussion remains on the other products, to complete the dossier before the European Council.

I must stress that the political decisions have not yet been taken at top level. We must all realize that the European Council next week has to consider the farm-price package which forms part of the general reform of the Community's policy.

Up to now, the Council has not taken any formal decisions and cannot, of course, do so before Parliament has given its opinion. The Council has merely clarified the basis on which a decision will be possible on the agricultural questions. Before we go any further, the Commission and the Council must take account of what Parliament has to say this week. For my part, I hope that your opinion will go in the direction of reaffirming and emphasizing the common agricultural policy on the basis proposed by the Commission.

I will now give you some information which you may like to have on three important points — namely, prices, the monetary compensatory amounts and milk. In its proposal on agricultural prices, the Commission has worked out a modulated proposal involving a freeze for some products and a limited rise for others. In the present market situation, the Commission does not think that it can do otherwise. A restrictive price situation is absolutely necessary. The discussion in the Council has confirmed our views on this, and I think that the rapporteur on the price proposal, Mr Woltjer, has proposed to Parliament a view which corresponds to that of the Commission. He says that the price decision must take account of the objective method, but in such a way as to take into account the special conditions prevailing on the agricultural market.

There has not been any great pressure in the Council for larger price increases in ECU. Lower price increases have even been mooted. The basis on which the Council is currently working includes the following scale for the common prices: a 1% reduction for grain, sugar, olive oil, beef, pigmeat and sheepmeat; a freeze on milk; and very limited increases for other products such as rice, cotton and durum wheat. This scale of prices in ECU must be assessed against the background of the Council's work on the monetary compensatory amounts. This work is geared to a combined solution the winding up the existing monetary compensatory amounts and for avoiding the introduction of new positive monetary compensatory amounts in the future.

Dalsager

Let me first deal with the existing monetary compensatory amounts. According to the ideas currently on the table, the price decision will involve a transfer of 3-point positive monetary compensatory amounts to negative monetary compensatory amounts and a subsequent winding up of the negative monetary compensatory amounts created in this way. This procedure will result in price-increases in national currencies in seven Member States: Italy, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, Greece and Denmark. In addition, decisions will need to be taken on winding up the negative monetary compensatory amounts which exist in Greece, France and Italy.

At the beginning of 1985 we shall proceed to the next stage, which will involve the winding up of 5-point monetary compensatory amounts for the Federal Republic of Germany, which will be followed up by a compensation to the German farmers. At the same time, there will be a smaller reduction in the monetary compensatory amounts in the Netherlands, which will — if necessary — be followed by a compensation to the Dutch farmers also. Partial Community financing is planned to a certain degree. Finally, the remaining monetary compensatory amounts for Germany and the Netherlands will be wound up at the beginning of the 1987-88 marketing year. The Council has in this way worked out guidelines for the final winding up of the positive monetary compensatory amounts in these two countries. It is not possible for the United Kingdom, where the currency is not stabilized within the EMS system, to set up a corresponding programme.

I should like now to say something on future monetary compensatory amounts created in conjunction with changes in the rates of exchange. The Council proposes to solve this problem by calculating the monetary compensatory amounts in future on the basis of the strongest currency, which will only involve negative monetary compensatory amounts. These negative monetary compensatory amounts will be wound up on a proposal from the Commission in the light of the economic and monetary situation and trends in farm incomes. This new system will be applied over a period of 3 years, within which the Commission will present a report, i.e., before the end of 1986.

I now come to milk, which, as you know, is the difficult problem we are now working on. It is absolutely essential that we secure better control of the development of milk production. This is the reason why the Commission in June last year proposed a quota system. The overwhelming majority in Parliament, as far as I am aware, considers that this is the only practical solution, and the Council has now also realized that it is the right one.

The basis on which an agreement in the Council seems possible can be summed up in the following 10

points. To begin with, a quota system will be established covering a period of 5 years. The Commission will present a report on this system after 3 years.

Second, the total amount for the Community will be set at 97.2 million tonnes. As you know, Mr President, these are the figures which the Commission has proposed. The amount will be distributed among the Member States on the basis of the 1981 deliveries plus 1%, as proposed by the Commission. But we know, and I think that Parliament recognizes this, that it will be necessary to set up a reserve in order to allow for special conditions. This is the reason why there is a supplement on the 97.2 million tonnes, a Community reserve of 0.6 million tonnes.

Third, a further problem which we must recognize exists, a political and social problem of the greatest importance, is the transition from the present system to the new one. In consequence of this, the Council has debated whether to set an additional amount of 1 million tonnes for the 1984-85 marketing year.

Fourth, there must be maximum flexibility in the application of the quota system, taking account of the structure of milk production. This is a point to which Parliament's Committee on Agriculture attaches the utmost importance, and there will therefore be a choice for Member States between either distributing the quotas among the individual farms or allocating them to dairies. In the first instance, there will be an extra levy of 75% on the quantities exceeding the quotas; in the second, a 100% levy.

Fifth, in order to avoid distortions, there will also be a system of control covering direct sales not passing through a dairy.

Sixth, for the so-called difficult cases — this applies, for example, to farms with development plans or farms which have had disease in their stocks during the reference period — this problem will be solved by setting the reserve within the quantity allotted to the individual Member States. This is another point which your rapporteur has covered in his report. He has stressed the very important relation between structural development and the distribution of the quotas.

Seventh, there is another main problem concerning the small farmers, and here the Council's deliberations tend in the direction of extending the existing Community support by 120 million ECU over a period of 2 years.

Eighth, an effective quota system will make it possible to give support to the restructuring of milk production as an element in the structure directives and under the control of the quota system we have set up.

Ninth, it will not be possible within the framework of an effective quota system to apply a levy to intensive milk production. It has not been possible to obtain a consensus in the Council on this.

Dalsager

Tenth and last : I would point out that, taking into account the reduction in the price of butter, it will be possible to cut the consumer subsidy by 75% without affecting consumer prices.

Mr President, I have now given a brief survey of the work on the milk package in the Council. I think it is a good package which will secure our future milk policy. It coincides closely with the Commission's proposals. Even if it departs slightly in some instances from the proposals, it includes some self-financing in the form of a 1% increase in the co-responsibility levy for the coming dairy year.

I have tried as briefly as possible to give you an account of the progress made in the Council. In the course of the debate which will take place today and tomorrow, I am of course ready to supply further information.

I should like to end with three remarks. First, as the Commission President has explained to you, certain elements in the package being developed in the Council, including in particular the resolution of the MCA question, will entail additional expenditure on agriculture in 1984. In any case, the present economic trends will mean additional expenditure this year. These financial aspect will necessarily also form part of a comprehensive agreement in the Council.

Secondly, I would point out once more that I have presented a report on progress in the Council and on the basis on which a comprehensive agreement may be possible. The Commission has contributed to this progress, but we have not formally altered our proposals.

Thirdly, I would point out that the progress which has been made follows the guidelines which we put in our document COM(83)500 and which Parliament itself recommended in its resolution of 18 November 1983. In that resolution, you said that the monetary compensatory amounts should be phased out within three years without a reduction in farm incomes and, in regard to the milk sector, you stressed the principle that the quota system should be limited in time and should carry maximum flexibility. The Council is now ready to follow you and us in a commendable effort to improve the common agricultural policy.

(Applause)

President. — Now that we have heard Mr Dalsager's statement, I will give the floor to one speaker for and one against Mr Barbi's proposal to suspend the proceedings.

Mr de la Malène (DEP). — *(FR)* Mr President, I should very naturally like to support the proposal made by Mr Barbi. We are about to embark upon a debate in a somewhat unrealistic situation. We have prepared for one day's debate on structures and another on prices. The Commission has just told us

that it would perhaps be changing its proposals, but that it was not as yet submitting any formally new proposals, whereas the Council has reached an agreement, as all the newspapers are telling us.

Are we then going to have an unrealistic debate on proposals that we now know will not be the Commission's last word, given the agreement reached by the Council of Ministers? I can only say that this makes the work of the House extremely difficult. I therefore agree with Mr Barbi that we should suspend the sitting and that the Committee on Agriculture should bring forward proposals without delay, perhaps at the end of the afternoon if possible. I see no other way. We are not going to debate a hundred or so amendments to texts which we know have been overtaken by events. That would be thoroughly detrimental to the authority of our Parliament.

The Commission was not expecting or has been unable at this stage to present new proposals which it will be modifying tomorrow. We know this, it has told us as much. But today, we are told, it cannot modify its proposals. Where does this leave us? On what basis is our Committee on Agriculture supposed to work? On the text of the Council of Ministers, with which we are now familiar, since Mr Dalsager has just given details? But that is not the correct procedure, since we should be working on the basis of texts presented by a committee, but the Commission tells us that it is not changing its original text now although it will be doing so tomorrow!

(Applause)

What is the House to make of this situation? The only solution is to support Mr Barbi's proposal that the sitting be suspended so that the Committee on Agriculture can try to work out the least unsatisfactory arrangement for the House.

President. — Does Mr Maher wish to speak against the proposal?

Mr Maher (L). — Mr President, I think it is important that we get the opportunity of asking the Commission questions, so that we can be more clear about the situation in the Committee on Agriculture, I think that is a reasonable proposal. We should try and get the maximum amount of information from the Commission while we are here. If you allow that, I would like to ask the Commission: What is the position, for instance, about individual countries? I have heard it said that some decisions are being left over to the Summit, for instance, the problem of Irish milk production. Now is that true or false, because I think it is important for us to know if we are considering the question?

President. — At the moment we are merely discussing the question whether we should suspend the proceedings for an hour or carry on.

Mr von der Vring (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, regarding the suggestion of a one-hour interruption with a view to enabling the political groups and the Committee on Agriculture to meet, my interpretation was not that Mr Barbi had requested a suspension of one hour. On the contrary, the intention was that of revising today's entire agenda, and we must now deal with this request. You cannot simply convoke a one-hour meeting of the political groups and the Committee on Agriculture. I would urge you, Mr President, not to deal with this critical question on a 'one speaker in favour and one speaker against' basis, but rather to call all the political group chairmen with a view to facilitating the ultimate emergence of a practical solution.

Mr Curry (ED), chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — Mr President, the rôle of this Parliament is to pronounce on Commission proposals in order that our advice may then be considered by the Council when it takes a final decision. This presupposes, that our advice is available to the Council before it reaches the final stage of its decision-taking. Quite clearly this circumstance will not be fulfilled. Therefore, if we are practical, we must recognize that there is an element of Council agreement.

Mr Dalsager and President Thorn have both endorsed to all intents and purposes the agreement in the Council. They have said that they may change their proposals, but they need to hear from Parliament first. Now quite clearly we are not going to give them advice as to whether they should change their proposals unless we, in our turn, look both at their proposals and at the emerging Council proposals. There are significant changes. I accept that they follow the line of the Commission proposal and in many ways the line of the reports before this House. However, there are significant differences from them.

What I would like to do, Mr President, is to see whether there is a means by which the Committee on Agriculture could recommend to this House the withdrawal of a large number of the amendments now tabled and the substitution of a much smaller number of agreed amendments. For that purpose I would prefer to have a small meeting with the coordinators, the rapporteurs of the reports before the House and the vice-chairmen of the Committee on Agriculture before the full committee meets. If we put a completely new situation to a full committee without a structure, this will prolong rather than shorten the debate. I would therefore like to call together that smaller group immediately. The full committee and, I hope, the Commission — I extend the invitation to President Thorn as well as to the Commissioner responsible — could then join us at, say, 11 o'clock to meet for an hour, so that we can repair to the group meetings when the committee has been able to take a

decision. If I call a full meeting now and we try to produce a solution in an hour, I suspect we shall be further apart and not closer together at the end of it.

If it meets with the approval of this House, I would suggest that as the most effective formula, Mr President.

(Parliament adopted Mr Barbi's proposal)

President. — The sitting is suspended.

(The sitting was suspended at 9.50 a.m. and resumed at 11.35 a.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MR DANKERT

President

President. — The deliberations have, I believe, resulted in a number of conclusions. I first give the floor to Mr Curry, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, to tell us what proposals have been adopted.

Mr Curry (ED), chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — Mr President, the committee met and it decided on a number of things. It decided, first of all, that the Goerens report on oils and fats, the Vitale report and the Stella report were not affected at all by recent events and they could be taken as tabled.

We then considered what we should do with three major reports — Mr Woltjer's report on prices, Mr Woltjer's report on milk and Mr Marck's report on monetary compensatory amounts. We were very anxious to be able to fulfil our constitutional function and we recognize that we must deliver our opinion on the basis of Commission proposals. In the absence of any new proposals, our rôle is to deliver opinions on the existing proposals. Therefore, when this Parliament votes on the regulations it will be delivering its opinion on the existing proposals.

We also wished to take into account in our vote the situation which has arisen because of the Council proposals which will be forwarded as a package to the Summit. It was agreed by the committee that we should ask Mr Woltjer and Mr Marck to produce compromise amendments which would replace the existing resolution texts. It was emphasized that this would not prevent other Members who wished themselves to place compromise texts before this Parliament from so doing, and I understand from you that these should be tabled by 3 p.m. to enable the normal work of translation to take place.

It must be emphasized that Mr Woltjer and Mr Marck are producing their texts as a sort of collective private enterprise to give the House an opportunity to take into account the situation which has changed, as we have explained this morning.

Curry

If those are rejected, of course, we shall proceed to vote on the amendments as they stand. The committee thinks that by giving the House an opportunity to adopt a short, much-abbreviated text which takes into account what has happened in the Council, we have the chance both to fulfil our constitutional function and to try and make our debate more relevant to the changed situation. But this would take place without compromising the rights of anybody in this House either to make their speeches and declare their points of view or to table amendments. That was carried by a large majority in what you will understand was a fairly difficult and hasty committee meeting. I hope that the House will approve that solution.

President. — Thank you very much, Mr Curry, for the clear proposals you have made.

I repeat that the procedure you envisage affects Mr Woltjer's report on prices and his report on milk and Mr Marck's report on monetary compensatory amounts. For the other reports, the procedure will be as usual.

Mr Barbi (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, I should like to preface the discussion of the reports relating to agriculture with a consideration of a general political nature.

I and my colleagues will be strongly tempted to mark our protest against this new manifestation of indifference on the part of the Council, which not only has taken no account — as so many times before — of this Parliament's opinion, but has not even waited for it. This is just one more proof of the urgent and indispensable need for a reform of the relationship between our two Institutions and of the rightness of our proposal for a new Treaty.

We do not wish to dwell on this institutional aspect, because we have always regarded it as a means — a most important, determining, means, but only a means nevertheless — of ensuring the efficient functioning of the Community's life.

As President Thorn has rightly pointed out this morning, after repeatedly finding the Council incapable of arriving at a decision, we see that this time, yes, the Council is at last coming to a decision.

We shall therefore go straight to the point and say that we are happy that on the agricultural question the Council has been able to come to an initial understanding, thus removing one obstacle — though not the only one, alas — to our Community's more speedy advance.

We have always shared and supported the view that the Common Agricultural Policy must be corrected and improved, that there must be a review of the auto-

matic nature of agricultural expenditure, that the total amount of that expenditure must be contained.

To those who cry that the Common Agricultural Policy is costing too much, we have always replied with force and conviction that the cost of 're-nationalizing' agriculture would be much higher. This is a calculation that should, above all, be made by our countries' ministers of finance when they bridle at the need to increase the Community's own resources, a need to which Parliament drew attention as far back as two years ago and which the Commission has finally defined!

We are satisfied that the agricultural ministers have helped to remove the obstacle of the CAP and of the agricultural prices, because we want the other ministers and the European Council to get down at last to the new policies, the need for which is pressing and which alone can start the economic recovery necessary to cut down unemployment.

We should also like to draw attention to another positive sign to which President Thorn also referred this morning. This is the adoption of the ESPRIT project. We are now asking the Council to make sure that we do not have to wait again for years for further initiatives, not only in the field of research and innovation, but also in the energy and transport sectors, where the need is great.

And to do this, Mr President, we are prepared to clear the decks quickly as far as the debate on agricultural problems is concerned.

President. — A moment ago, I committed a small error because I was not properly informed. I said that there were three reports affected by the new procedure: in fact, there are only two — the report on milk and the report on monetary compensatory amounts. We shall carry on debating the report on prices, but this is not a problem for today at all events, and we shall see by tomorrow what procedure will be the best to adopt on it.

Mr de la Malène (DEP). — *(FR)* Mr President, I shall confine myself to procedure, without discussing the substantive issue, on which I would of course have plenty to say.

I took part in the meeting of the Committee on Agriculture on which its excellent chairman, my friend Mr Curry, has just reported.

I have to say that I and my group cannot subscribe to the procedure followed.

Mr President, you are responsible for ensuring that our Parliament conducts its business correctly and discharges its responsibilities, and I draw your attention to this point.

de la Malène

Under the Treaties, it falls to us, before the Council, to deliver an opinion on proposals from the Commission. The Commission, in the person of Mr Thorn, its President, has told us this morning that it does not intend, for the time being, to change its proposals, whether on related measures in the milk sector or on prices. It has intimated that it will perhaps do so tomorrow, but that does not concern us. Theoretically, under the Treaties, we should pronounce on the Commission's texts.

The Committee on Agriculture, aware that we have been put in an unrealistic situation, is proposing that Mr Woltjer's first report on related measures concerning milk, and Mr Marck's report on monetary compensatory amounts be replaced by two very brief texts, to be called compromise amendments, and that this should be done under the appropriate rule in the Rules of Procedure. What this means, Mr President, is that the House will not be pronouncing on the Commission's proposals, which it will have no opportunity to do, but will be pronouncing on the Council's agreement. That is the purpose of these two compromise amendments. We are changing the substantive text, discarding the Commission's text and switching the focus to the Council's text, on which we no longer have the right to propose amendments. I earnestly draw your attention to the responsibility that we would be taking upon ourselves by depriving even a minority of defenders of agriculture of their right of amendment in this matter. We have been seized of the Commission's text, not of a Council agreement. Moreover, if we changed the substantive text, we should have no right of amendment. Mr President, I earnestly draw your attention to this point.

President. — Mr de la Malène, I think there is a misunderstanding.

First of all, Parliament has to pronounce on the text of the regulations proposed by the Commission. There is no intention of not voting on these regulations, and so we are following the procedure laid down by the Treaties.

Then there are the motions for resolutions. If I am not mistaken, the compromise texts concern the motions contained in the Marck report and the Woltjer report on milk, not on prices.

There is a tradition in this Parliament that motions for resolutions may be accompanied by amendments which replace the original motion. When we speak here of a compromise amendment, that is the procedure we mean, and once the time-limit for tabling amendments has expired all that is required for fixing a new time-limit is that a majority of the House should agree to this procedure. That is all I have to propose with regard to these two reports, and I think that this procedure is in complete conformity with the Rules.

Mr de la Malène (DEP). — *(FR)* Mr President of course nothing is changed with regard to our right to amend regulations. That is a first point which has not been acknowledged, and I think it worth stressing.

On the second point, the motion for a resolution, you are allowing a compromise amendment to change the text on which the motion for a resolution was based. We must be clear about this: the motion for a resolution was based on the Commission's text; the compromise amendment is based on the Council's text, and on this text from the Council the House will have no right of amendment through the medium of the motion for a resolution. Mr President, I draw your attention to this irregularity.

President. — Mr de la Malène there are no restrictions on the content of amendments concerning a motion for a resolution: in a manner of speaking, one can put whatever one likes into a resolution. Constitutionally, however, we are solely concerned with the regulations, and these have to be put to the vote as planned, with due respect to the time-limit for tabling amendments, which has expired. What is now at issue is the matter of fixing a new time-limit for tabling amendments to the resolutions contained in these two reports.

Mr de la Malène (DEP). — *(FR)* Mr President, I am sorry to labour the point, which is not my usual way of doing things, but this is a fundamental matter.

We are aware that the farming world is asking itself questions. I am deliberately using moderate language. And yet here we have a situation in which a narrow but neither intellectual nor logical interpretation of our Rules of Procedure is going to be allowed to stifle — I am weighing my words — the debate that we could have on what is going to be decided for the farmers of Europe!

Even if the application of the Rules of Procedure that you have proposed, as you have just said, is corrected, I want to say that this will do nothing for the standing of this Parliament in the eyes of Europe's farmers. At all events, I have my doubts about this interpretation, I have been at pains to state this clearly, in a completely dispassionate way.

President. — Mr de la Malène, I repeat that the proposal I have made, which I took over from the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, in no way prejudices the rights of this Parliament.

The fixing of a new time-limit for the tabling of amendments, the proposal for which must first be agreed to by a majority of the House, simply means that Parliament is entitled to table new amendments to the motions for resolutions. I am not in a position to say anything about these amendments, since I have not seen them; all I propose is that a new time-limit for tabling amendments be fixed for 3 p.m.

Mr Prout (ED). — Mr President, last month this House voted on the Spinelli report. We asked for more powers, but do we really deserve them if we are not prepared to exercise the powers we already have? Parliament has the right to be consulted on these Commission proposals. According to the Court of Justice, if the Commission or the Council make changes of substance in those proposals after Parliament has delivered its opinion, then Parliament has the right, if it chooses to exercise it, to be reconsulted. The procedure recommended by the Committee on Agriculture throws that right away. We know the Council intends to make changes of substance to the regulations under Article 149 of the Treaty. We know we have the right to be reconsulted on these changes. Yet we refuse to exercise it. We simply intend to alter the motion for a resolution to the proposals on MCAs and milk to take account of a political statement made by Mr Dalsager which has absolutely no constitutional validity. We must make a political statement, of course. But let it be contained in a motion for a resolution to wind up a debate on the current state of reported negotiations in the Council, it must not be an expression of opinion on the regulations themselves. Let us also ask the Council if they do indeed intend to reconsult us.

President. — Mr Prout, on the point you are making, I would say that as far as I know, according to the normal procedure, there are before Parliament a number of proposed regulations. We must pronounce on those regulations, and that is what we are going to do. Whether these formal realities and the political realities coincide is another matter; I can only try to solve the formal problems.

Mr Prout (ED). — Mr President, this is not a political problem. It is a constitutional problem. It is a question of our rights as an institution. We may not choose to exercise them, but it is important that this house know that we have them.

Mr Pranchère (COM). — *(FR)* Mr President, I consider that this discussion goes to the heart of the matter, since the Council of Ministers has taken decisions without the Parliament even being given the opportunity to state its opinion which I find thoroughly regrettable. If we choose today to follow the procedure, the rule according to which Parliament has to be consulted on whether or not it approves compromise amendments then — and you have acknowledged this — we shall be exercising a right of Parliament. This is the point that I should like to stress, since it is clear that the motion for a resolution adopted by a majority vote as a replacement for the one stemming from the Woltjer report on milk is a motion which is not only based on an agreement by the Council but actually goes further than that, since an agreement which is subordinate to an agreement

by the Foreign Ministers — as you are aware, so that there is no need for me to elaborate — is not really an agreement at all, but a declaration. The motion for a resolution is now going to focus the debate on this text, and this, in my view, is very serious, since it uses the decision on milk quotas virtually as the basis for seeking to secure the reform of the CAP. It appears to me that we are taking a heavy political responsibility upon ourselves, and Parliament cannot go back on its decision: it should debate the substance of the Commission's proposals. This is, of course, a political viewpoint, but I stand by it.

President. — I propose to the House that the time-limit for tabling compromise amendments to the Woltjer motion for a resolution on milk and the Marck motion for a resolution on monetary compensatory amounts be set at 3 a.m.

(Parliament adopted the President's proposal)

Mr Vitale (COM). — *(IT)* Mr President, you interrupt the debate when you see fit. After a long dialogue with Mr de la Malène, you do not give the floor to others. I must say this procedure is beyond me.

I have asked to speak, as have other Members, and you just cut the debate. I don't understand.

President. — You have the floor, Mr Vitale.

Mr Vitale (COM). — *(IT)* President, we accept the Curry proposal, because this is the only thing we can do at this moment. But there is a problem which is not simply a procedural, but a political one: the dates for Parliament's part-sessions have been published for many months, but the Commission and the Council have not taken the slightest notice. They have not taken the trouble to schedule work so that this debate could be held at an appropriate time. I formally propose that our acceptance of this emergency procedure, which raises both political and institutional problems, should be accompanied by an official letter of protest from Parliament to the Council to make it recognize in this incident a further proof of the need for ordering institutional relations which we voted at the last part-session. This is the additional proposal I wanted to make.

Mr Gautier (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, just a clarification with regard to the organization of the work within the political groups. May we assume that voting on these reports will not now take place today but rather that the debate, even though the President-in-office of the Council is unlikely to be taking the floor, will stretch beyond 5 p.m.? Or do we take it that voting will take place at 5 p.m. today?

President. — Theoretically we shall be voting at 5 p.m., but I can offer no absolute guarantee, since we have to finish the debate. We shall, however, do our best to keep to this arrangement.

Mr Eyraud (S). — (FR) Mr President, another problem arises. The groups must be given the opportunity to state their positions on the amendments.

President. — We shall now begin the joint debate which is on the agenda.

Mr Marck (PPE), rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the debate on MCAs has entered a new phase. But we feel that we can begin this debate in the proper manner because the basic data are known and also because the various propositions have already been discussed and considered in the Committee on Agriculture.

What are the points on which we are agreed? Firstly, the MCA system must be a temporary one. When the first MCAs were introduced in 1969 after the devaluation of the French Franc and the revaluation of the German Mark, the idea was to protect the system of common farm prices against the immediate consequences for a very short period. We all agree, I believe, that the MCA system must be temporary and that MCAs must be dismantled at the time of the first review, the first price review. It was a good system as regards both its purpose and the procedure adopted and should therefore have been a temporary measure. However, this intention was frustrated by a series of unexpected currency fluctuations that always followed the same upward and downward course.

The second point on which we are agreed is that a procedure must be developed for dismantling the MCAs as quickly as possible. An *ad hoc* arrangement must be found for the present MCAs, and for future MCAs there must be an automatic device that is triggered off as soon as new ones are created. This argument is based on the realistic expectation that stability in the currency markets is still along way off. In any case, the farmers in the countries concerned must not become the victims of monetary fluctuations, and provision must therefore be made for compensation.

The third element on which we agree is that the MCA system is no more than a stop-gap arrangement while the economic and monetary policies remain unharmonized. The further expansion of the European Monetary System, through the participation of all the Member States, for example, and the achievement of a genuine economic and monetary union consequently have top priority.

On these three points we all agree in the Committee on Agriculture and, I believe, very largely outside this committee.

On the other hand, there are a number of points on which a very large number of the members of the Committee on Agriculture have been unable to agree. The first concerns the implications of the MCA system for trade among the Member States. The Commission's statistics show that countries with posi-

tive MCAs find it easier to export to countries with negative MCAs because they are automatically at a major advantage. Negotiating margins of 6 to 10% are a substantial argument in markets where the haggling and competition pivot on a few percentage points. Where such advantages have been held on to for ten years, they have a lasting effect and cause lasting distortions of the market which are difficult to eliminate. I should also like to point out that the Court of Auditors has referred in various reports to the numerous cases of fraud due to the existence of MCAs.

A second point on which we are not wholly agreed, but which had the support of a large majority, concerns the method that has been chosen for dismantling the MCAs. This brings us to the decisions the Council has just taken. There are two conflicting sets of proposals: on the one hand, the Commission's proposals, on the other, the proposals put forward by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, which have been largely accepted by the Council of Ministers.

A large majority of the Committee on Agriculture approved the Commission's proposals and opposed the conversion of positive MCAs into negative MCAs, as the Council of Ministers is now proposing. I should just like to summarize the reasons for this, because they will continue to apply and will also play a part in the position we must adopt on the compromise amendment.

Firstly, the effect of inflation is not a convincing argument for either set of proposals.

Secondly, the rôle of the ECU would be very seriously impaired by the Council's system, or German system, as it is known. The rôle of the ECU would be played by the strongest currency, the DM. I believe this to be one of the major objections to the system proposed by the Council.

Thirdly, the Commission's proposal would result in a better spread of the administrative difficulties, whereas the other proposal would place all the burdens, including that of pre-financing, on the shoulders of countries with negative MCAs.

And fourthly, the cost to the budget would be far higher: a one-point reduction in the positive German MCAs would reduce annual expenditure by 34.5m ECU, whereas a one-point reduction in the negative French MCAs would increase expenditure by 79m ECU. In other words, for each point the two systems differ by 113.5m ECU. That is something we must bear in mind, and it is the second and, in my opinion, most serious objection to the proposal which has been put forward to the Council.

The Council's present proposal would lead to the dismantling of MCAs in a relatively short period, and this is undoubtedly an advantage over a possible conti-

Marck

nued accumulation of MCAs, with all the disruptions to trade and cases of fraud it might entail. And as there is no prospect of MCAs being dismantled through a change in prices, this proposal is perhaps the only way in which they can be dismantled. But the disadvantages remain, and they must be considered. Besides the serious disadvantage this proposal would have for the rôle played by the ECU, the financial costs would be particularly high. It must be realized that these financial costs cannot be passed on to agriculture yet again. They are the consequence of an imperfect monetary policy. Those responsible for the absence of economic and monetary union must search their consciences and take the financial consequences.

Madam President, to take account of the change in the political situation, I shall table a compromise amendment which broadly retains the decisions and objectives of the Committee on Agriculture but adapts them to the changed situation. I hope Parliament will approve this proposal. For my own part I would certainly say that I am glad a solution has been found to this difficult matter of the MCAs, because, here again, a less than perfect solution is still better than no solution at all.

IN THE CHAIR : MRS CASSANMAGNAGO
CERRETTI

Vice-President

Mr Goerens (L), rapporteur. — (FR) Madam President, the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a regulation introducing a tax on certain oils and fats is part of a general scheme for reform of the common agricultural policy.

This was already made clear in document COM (83) 500 (final), in the following terms: if the Community strengthens its action by introducing a supplementary levy in the milk sector, thereby making provision for internal control of butter production, it should complete its action aimed at restoring balance on the market in oils and fats by applying a non-discriminatory internal tax to consumption of oils and fats other than butter, of whatever origin. Such a tax is in conformity with the Community's international commitments. While subscribing to the objective enunciated in the proposal for a regulation discussed in this report the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture wishes to make the following comments.

The first point that the Committee on Agriculture would like to stress is that the proposal to tax certain oils and fats is not an isolated measure, but reflects the wish of the Commission to distribute fairly the sacrifices necessarily entailed in any reform of the common agricultural policy. Secondly, I would point out that this proposal conforms fully with the GATT rules. The tax envisaged is a non-discriminatory tax to

be applied to all oils and fats of Community origin. It is to be charged at 7.5 ECU per 100 kilos of products to which it is applicable, oils and fats of vegetable or animal origin, whether produced in the Community or imported. It is expected to yield an annual revenue of 600 million ECU. However, in drawing up this report, the Committee on Agriculture has been at pains to emphasize that it is not in favour of taking the easy way out by introducing a new tax instead of tackling the problems of the imbalance prevailing on the market in other oils and fats.

By calling upon the Commission, in paragraph 12 of the motion for a resolution, to report to the European Parliament in a year's time on the progress achieved in negotiations with the leading supplier countries, the Committee on Agriculture has sought to ensure that the taxation of oils and fats does not become permanent. It is of the opinion that the tax of 7.5 ECU per 100 kilos is not likely to produce a substantial and lasting improvement in the price ratio between butter and other oils and fats. The committee believes that negotiations with the United States and other supplier countries on restricting the volume of oilseeds, oils and fats imported are more likely to achieve the aim of a better price ratio between butter and other oils and fats and to strengthen Community preference.

With your permission, Madam President, I should like to quote paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution, which states that the Parliament

believes, therefore, that at the present time the introduction of a tax on oils and fats is acceptable as a provisional measure, provided that at the same time negotiations offering prospects of success within the foreseeable future are conducted on restricting the volume of imports.

The introduction of a new tax is bound to attract criticism. In this case, however, what we have is a temporary instrument which, if adopted by the Parliament and the Council, is likely to put the Commission in a substantially stronger position in its negotiations with the main supplier countries.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that this report should provide a basis for finding a more appropriate solution to the problems currently affecting operation of the common agricultural policy. The principle of Community preference is under serious threat. The motion for a resolution endeavours to establish a lasting solution, one which is fully in conformity with the Community's commitments in regard to trade relations with our main supplier countries.

I therefore invite the House to support this report that I have presented at its behest, which looks to achieve a solution through dialogue. I stress this point and I also stress that, in the eyes of the Committee on Agriculture, this tax is to be seen as a temporary measure.

Mr Woltjer (S), *rapporteur*. — (NL) As rapporteur I am, of course, in a rather embarrassing position because, although I am still in the process of defending, or have the duty to defend, my own report as it was approved in the Committee on Agriculture, I have meanwhile been instructed by the committee to draw up a compromise text that deals with the agreement reached in the Council of Ministers in rather more detail. But I should like to raise a few points at this stage and also to discuss the agreement that has been reached.

Madam President, firstly, I think we can be pleased that a decision has at last emerged from the Council, that we have at last reached the stage where the Council is again offering farmers some certainty about the course the policy will follow, because the major problem to which the farming community has always referred in recent years has in fact been uncertainty about the future of the common agricultural policy. And when the Commission says, as Mr Dalsager recently did on its behalf, that it has done its best, I feel I must point out that, if we look back at the past, it becomes clear that the Commission's policy has been far from consistent. At one time it tried to overcome the problem with prices, on another occasion with quotas, then it raised prices further than was acceptable in view of the market situation, and all this resulted in tremendous uncertainty.

Now a solution has been proposed, and I believe it agrees with what Parliament has already said in the Curry report. In this report, which we adopted last December, we strongly advocated a quota system. We also said that the system should be applied flexibly in the case of small farms and farms in mountain areas. These points were explicitly made in the Curry report.

The Commission then put forward its detailed proposals for regulations, and as rapporteur for the Committee on Agriculture I drew up a report in which I referred to a number of aspects of the Commission's proposals which I felt were in need of improvement.

One of these points was that, in our opinion, if a quota system was introduced, the basic year should be 1983 and that we should then work back to the level we want to achieve. From what has happened in the Council it is clear that this issue has been evaded. The problem has not been solved, and I think it is still a major problem in the present proposals, because one of the points is that all farms which managed to develop after 1981 and did so under the policy then in force were not, of course, acting illegally. It must be accepted that this development has taken place, and it must also form the basis.

A second point we explicitly made about the proposal was that we felt the quotas should be fixed for each producer. I see that the Commission, or in fact the Council, agrees with us to some extent. The Member

States can now opt for quotas per producer or per dairy. That is a step towards what we were advocating, and in this respect I can say that we are quite pleased with the outcome.

A third point I consider very important is the level of production. In the Committee on Agriculture we have not yet in fact discussed this at any great length. What we have done is to say that a number of smaller farms must certainly be given greater latitude. The Commission, and now the Council, has made 600 000 tonnes available for this purpose, and it might be said that they have complied with our proposals in this respect. In my original proposal, I also referred to the problem that might arise if the quotas were fixed at the 1981 production level plus 1 in one fell swoop, because there would then be a danger of a considerable amount of meat coming on to the market, resulting in disruptions in other sectors as well. We now see that the Council has recognized this problem and so intends to reach the production level of 97.8 m tonnes in two years.

We of the Committee on Agriculture — and I again wish to make this very clear — have said, however, that we do not consider the combination of co-responsibility levy and superlevy acceptable. We now see that the Council has chosen a different course. It has clearly opted for reducing production to the 1981 level + 1 in two stages, but has decided to make this financially possible in 1984 by increasing the co-responsibility levy by an additional 1%.

What we are also pleased to see, and this again is something that agrees with what the Committee on Agriculture says in its report, is the realization that, if such steps are taken, some scope must be created for the smaller farmers by giving them support. In this respect, I can say that the allocation of the 120 m ECU again clearly included in the decision is also a step in the direction of the proposals that have been approved by the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr President, I do not want to go into too much detail, but I do want to make one point clear. I began advocating the introduction of a quota system in 1980. I know that many people had their doubts about this. These doubts were partly due to the lack of conviction at the time that changes to the agricultural policy were really necessary. Others felt that a quota system had so many disadvantages that we should put it out of our minds entirely. They believed, for example, that a quota system might very well consolidate the structure of agriculture. It was at that time that I began to look very closely at a combination of a structural policy and a quota policy. And I now see that this has borne fruit inasmuch as the Council too has now realized that you cannot simply introduce quotas and leave it at that, but that you must also ensure with some kind of quota allocation that the smaller farms have an opportunity of improving their structures under the existing quota policy.

Woltjer

The Council is now well behind schedule, but I am not inclined to be bitter about this. As I have said before, I am very glad that a decision has at least been taken on this aspect in the Council. I should not like to defend the decision in every respect: I have already said which aspects I would certainly not defend. But taking the decision as a whole, I must say that farmers will at least have some kind of certainty about the course policy will follow. Many problems have yet to be solved. In my compromise text I have explicitly called on the Commission to submit a report to Parliament in the near future, indicating clearly how it intends to use these quotas. There is a great deal of uncertainty about implementation and such like, and I therefore feel we of the Parliament must keep our finger on the pulse and demand that the Commission keep us informed on the implementation of its proposals, so that we may jointly keep a close watch on these matters and so prevent all kinds of problems which need not in fact have arisen if action had been taken in good time.

Mr President, 1984 will certainly not be an easy year for the dairy farmer. We all know that. But if no decision had been taken, I am afraid it would have been even worse. What has now happened and what has yet to be confirmed by the Heads of Government, but what the farmers are certainly going to have to face, is that 1984 will be a difficult year for them, but that there are again fresh prospects. I think that is the major advantage underlying this decision. It will need a great deal of improvement in the future. That is why I also say that we must ask the Commission to keep Parliament posted on these matters so that the improvements can eventually be made.

Mr Vitale (COM), rapporteur. — (IT) Madam President, the subject of this report from the Committee on Agriculture is the question of strengthening controls over aids for olive oil. We have had two proposals from the Commission on this: one on producers' associations, their duties and responsibilities, and another which calls for the setting up of an *ad hoc* agency financed by the Community and operating outside the normal administrative structures of the States concerned so that in practical terms it would be directly answerable to the Commission.

The problem of controls is undoubtedly serious: in the last ten years, 1 340 cases of infringement have been notified in every sector, ranging from sheepmeat to butter, from olive oil to milk powder. They have occurred in all the Community countries. Stricter checks will therefore be welcomed, and indeed Parliament has called for them many times.

In the particular case of olive oil, however, some further clarification is needed, not least because there has been a press campaign which raised a lot of dust but which was neither well-informed nor, I believe, entirely disinterested, in which the scale of the

problem of fraud has been exaggerated. Thus, there was talk of inflated output figures, this being deduced from the difference between requests for production subsidies and those for consumer aids. Since, for several years, the difference between them amounted to some 300 000 tonnes, it was argued that this amount was the subject of fraudulent claims. But such calculations can only be made by people who do not understand the nature of the market for olive oil. The fact is that only a part of the olive oil produced is marketed. A large proportion is consumed by the producers themselves; another important amount is sold directly by the producers to consumers, without passing through middlemen; finally, some olive oil is bought directly by the processing industry. All this accounts for the gap between the output and the amount put on the market, hence for the difference between applications for production aids and those for consumer aids.

All this is not to say that fraudulent practices do not exist. They do without a doubt; put the data published in the press are certainly exaggerated, as in fact Mr Battersby states in his report. The figures must therefore be scaled down, and we shall then see that such fraud as exists in this sector is not very different from what happens in other sectors, especially if we bear in mind that — and I refer here again to Mr Battersby — checks in this sector are much harder to effect. In Italy alone there are 1 200 000 producers, over 10 000 pressing mills, some 160 000 000 olive trees with crops that vary, according to the years and the areas, by anything between 50 and 60 %. Hence the special difficulties of controls.

Let me say again that this is not to deny the reality of fraud, but we should like to scale down the problem to its real dimensions, without in any way questioning the need to strengthen controls.

With this in mind, the Committee on Agriculture has examined the Commission's proposals and has proposed amendments. According to the Commission, the first control measure should be to penalize the producers' associations for untruthful declarations by their members. But what has been happening in recent years? The producers' associations have in fact had delegated to them the primary duties and responsibilities which should in reality lie with the Member State. They have been making up for the shortcomings, the low efficiency of the State administration. The Committee on Agriculture felt that this *de facto* delegation of duties and responsibilities, this substitution of the producers' associations for the function of the State is not conducive to clarity in the use of the aids. The associations can, of course, receive the applications and the relevant certificates, but they cannot, in virtue of this fact, be made responsible for the veracity of the declarations by individual producers, because in doing so they would be abrogating to themselves a task that falls of necessity to the State.

Vitale

In this conviction, the Committee on Agriculture has approved the rapporteur's proposal that penalties on individual producers guilty of fraud should be increased, but it has pronounced against laying the responsibility on the producers' associations, whose tasks do not include taking the place of the State as guarantor of honest dealing.

Second point. On this principle — and here we diverge from the conclusions reached by Mr Battersby — the Committee on Agriculture has rejected the proposal for an *ad hoc* agency operating outside the administrative structure of the Member States — a kind of international super-police — that would be directly responsible to the Community. It would represent a costly and cumbersome exceptional measure that would take away responsibility from the Member State, without really affecting the practical situation. We can just imagine Dutch and Danish inspectors doing their rounds in Calabria and Sicily! What would they be able to check? I know the people down there! It would only open new possibilities for fraud, instead of checking it, not to mention the fact that this would set up a rather risky precedent totally out of keeping with the Community's institutional structure. Let me add at once that it would be acceptable, indeed desirable, for the Community to be able to effect direct checks in all the sectors in which the Community provides subsidies. What is not acceptable is that a special rule should be made for one particular sector, without considering the generalized nature of fraud, so that in effect the nature and function of these controls is restricted.

This was one consideration which motivated the Committee on Agriculture in taking up the rapporteur's suggestions and proposing an alternative way namely, strengthening the administrative structures of the Member States, which should equip themselves with more suitable and more efficient instruments for the purposes of effecting controls. It is the States' primary responsibility that should be strengthened, perhaps by means of an appropriate temporary contribution, as happens, for instance, in the fisheries sector, rather than investing the Community's money in a structure alien to the administrative set-up of the Member States, which would thus be not very effective.

The Committee on Agriculture has also stressed two other points. The first is that the completion of the olive-grove register should be speeded up as much as possible and that the register should start being used, from now on, if possible. It represents a fundamental means of control, allowing the computerization of the data and hence an objective, scientific, assessment of the yields and of oil output.

The other point concerns simplifying the check by eliminating aid for the first 100 kg of oil produced, this representing the part of output consumed by the producers and so removing the need for control

proceedings in respect of at least 20 % of the output and at least 35 % of the producers. The checking procedure could thus be speeded up and it would concentrate on that part of the output that does appear on the market.

These are questions on which the Committee on Agriculture has offered its views, amending the Commission's proposals along the lines of tightening up real checks and at the same time putting the problem in proper perspective and rejecting the idea that responsibility should be delegated either to the producers' associations or to these agencies which would be costly but rather ineffectual. What we must ensure is that the responsibility for seeing that Community money really is used for the purposes for which it is intended rests squarely on the Member States.

Mr Battersby (ED), rapporteur. — Madam President, the two olive-oil reports before us today were prepared independently on different bases, and the important point to recognize is the many points of agreement between these two reports. Mr Vitale and I agree on the social importance of the olive-oil sector. We agree that the olive-oil sector is susceptible to fraud and irregularity. We agree that the press reports of the volume of fraud are very probably grossly exaggerated. We agree on the need, nevertheless, to reduce the level of fraud. We differ basically only on the method of control.

The Committee on Budgetary Control believes that we should have much tighter control with a small multinational Community inspectorate such as we have created for fisheries. The Committee on Agriculture believes that we should create a special national service within the existing intervention agencies. Mr Vitale considers that the autonomous agencies proposed by the Commission would not enhance efficiency, and I believe that the autonomous agencies are essential if we are to protect taxpayers' money.

We are faced with three alternatives. We can either dilute the Commission's proposals and retain the present weak control system, we can accept the Commission's proposals and tighten up the system or we can accept and improve on the Commission's proposals. I believe that the least we can do is to accept the Commission's proposals and that if we are to act responsibly as watchdogs over the taxpayers' money, we should establish — as I must emphasize we have established successfully for fisheries — a Community multinational control inspectorate. We are dealing with 750 million ECU in aid per annum to the sector, and against this the cost of a 5 or 10-man inspectorate would be infinitesimal and much less than 1 %.

The report which I wish to present is interim in nature. It is an interim report because Parliament is awaiting a special report which the Court of Auditors is in the process of preparing and which should be ready in June. It is also an interim report because the Committee on Budgetary Control awaits some further

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data from the Greek authorities on various aspects of olive oil, such as production, storage, consumption, export, etc., although we have received some very important and relevant data over the past week — which, unfortunately, came in too late for incorporation.

At this point I must emphasize that we are receiving the fullest cooperation from the Italian and Greek authorities and from the producer organizations in our work on this report.

Over the years newspapers and journals have contained articles alleging weaknesses in control and scope for fraud in the entire payment system for olive oil. It has been admitted by the Commission that, owing to the large number of producers in the Community — 1.4 million producers and tens of thousands of presses — the control system relating to olive oil is, of course, slacker than the control systems applying to payments for other agricultural products. Therefore, it behoves us to do something about the situation and to ensure that the taxpayers' funds devoted to schemes intended to aid olive-oil producers actually find their way to these producers.

There is a further consideration, and it relates to the potential enlargement of the Community to embrace the Iberian peninsula. A year ago the Commission indicated in a special information memorandum that if nothing is done, the enlarged Community of Twelve would have a permanent surplus of around 230 000 tonnes of olive oil every year. In paragraph 4 of my explanatory statement I quote the Commission's comments in regard to this aspect.

Perhaps it would be better if I were to go through my motion for a resolution now and explain the various considerations put forward by the Committee on Budgetary Control. Informed observers estimate that the attempted — and I must emphasize this word — the attempted misuse of European Community funds in the olive-oil sector is as high as 10% to 15% of the total amounts involved. This may be rather inaccurate and exaggerated, of course, but I believe there is an obligation on us to see to it that public unease is put at rest and that the sensationalist press is not given more fuel for damaging rumours. Because of the weaknesses in the control system, producers at present receive Community aid years after initial entitlement arises. Quite often, these producers are in a very small way of business indeed and live in underdeveloped areas. Their cash-flow is constantly distorted by late payments of aid, they have to go into serious debt to pay for pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and so forth. If we can ensure that controls improved, it would be possible for the authorities at the Community and national levels to ensure that the budgetary aids flow more speedily to the producers.

Another aspect which I highlight in paragraph 1 of my motion for a resolution is the upward trend in the figures shown in budgetary estimates. Historically,

olive-oil production is cyclic in nature. One year is a good year, then the next year is bad; yet the amounts shown in the Community budget for 1982, 1983 and 1984 show a steep, sustained rise. One can understand that increases in aid levels will cause an increase in allocation, but not to the extent shown by the constant growth curve of Community estimates and allocations.

Paragraphs 2 and 3 in the motion for a resolution are self-explanatory. If we are to safeguard these payments, we must ensure that the system of aids to the olive-oil sector is defensible.

The point made in paragraph 4 springs from the fact that in the agricultural statistics for 1983 published by the Community Statistics Office there was a major error in the line opposite the heading for olive oil. This slipshod — and that is the only word I can use for it — error gave rise to very harmful speculation in the press. It is the sort of error which should never occur, and the major errors in this publication differed in almost every language edition of the report. It should not happen again.

Paragraphs 5 and 9 give some specific suggestions in relation to the control of production aid. The role of effective data-processing is central to this issue, and the need for improvement is obvious.

As regards the olive-grove register, I believe that this should be used as soon as possible and it should not be necessary for the authorities to await the preparation of the entire register before making use of the information already gathered. I believe that the olive-grove register should be used immediately in those areas where it can be introduced immediately.

As regards producers' associations, I believe that these have a special rôle to play in the control process. The criteria laid down should make it possible to ensure that these organizations have a broad spectrum of membership. Registration of these bodies should imply an obligation to provide valid information and statistics so that the control of applications should be facilitated. At present, I believe that the minimum terms for recognition of producer organizations in Italy are too extensive. They should be reduced from 25 000 producers to 10 000 producers and from 13 000 tonnes per year to 5 000 tonnes per year. And so as to discourage fraud, there should be a uniform system of penalties. There should also be an independent Community control agency charged with the responsibility of carrying out checks in the olive-oil sector. The results of such an independent control agency would be guaranteed if its international character were ensured. Because of the amount of Community funds in the olive-oil sector, which is approximately 750 million ECU, it is important that the Parliament be seen to do all that is possible to ensure that the best possible system operates. In this way we are safeguarding the best interests of the olive-oil producers themselves.

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Because of the considerations which I have just outlined, I found it necessary to put down some amendments to Mr Vitale's extremely valuable report. Amendment No 11 is self-evident in view of the explanations I have furnished already. It is obvious that an independent, multinational inspectorate would be more independent and more *communautaire* than national services ever would be. Amendments Nos 12 and 13 are necessary if the character of the multinational inspectorate is to be preserved. Amendment No 14 calls on the Commission to put into effect those parts of the olive-grove register already in existence and asks that there be an accelerated completion of the olive-grove register as a whole. Amendment No 15 is necessary because paragraph 9 of Mr Vitale's report suggests complacency and we cannot afford to give any impression of complacency in this sector.

All Members of Parliament are entitled to put down amendments to any resolution. I have therefore used this possibility to amend my own resolution as adopted by the Committee on Budgetary Control.

My amendment adding a new paragraph 11A stems from my conviction that the present system of consumption aid may not be the most effective means of increasing consumption.

My amendment adding a new paragraph 11B is prompted by the desire to have more detailed information on the way in which consumption aid benefits consumption.

My amendment seeking a new paragraph 11C demands of the Commission a justification for its policy of concentrating more on consumption aid than on production aid. I believe that as much as possible should be done to assist the producers, who are quite often in a very poor economic condition.

My final amendment, paragraph 11D, is easily understood, and I would recommend to the House that my report, together with the amendments I am proposing to it and to Mr Vitale's report, be approved.

Mr Stella (PPE), rapporteur. — (IT) On behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, I am reporting on three proposals from the Commission for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2601/69, laying down special measures to encourage the processing of certain varieties of oranges; a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1035/72, on the common organization of the market in fruit and vegetables; and a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 516/77, on the common organization of the market in products processed from fruit and vegetables.

These are sectoral proposals, which in fact have already been stated in Document COM(83) 500, on the reform of the CAP, in which the Commission, starting from the premiss that anomalies have appeared in the implementation of certain measures, argues the need to modify the existing system of aids and premiums. An associated aim is to effect savings

in the administration of the EAGGF (Guarantee Section).

In justification of its proposals, the Commission adduces the fact that the existing system has gradually resulted in unjustified benefits to the processing industry. It is incumbent on the European Parliament, for its part, to express lively concern in respect of these proposals which question the organization and the activities of an industrial sector, with the negative economic and social consequences that this implies.

We should remind ourselves that the proposals regard a rather wide range of products grown in a variety of geographical areas and in farming units which are, compared with other producers, usually rather small, but nevertheless important for the maintenance of farming activity and of the processing industry in a number of the Community's regions.

While we agree with the need to rationalize the mechanisms of the common market organization, we cannot agree that Community aids to the processing industry, which is the driving force of the entire sector, should be put in question. Such aids should not encourage production that is not related to demand in the market; if budget savings are to be made, these should be directed at eliminating those aids which are not justified in economic and market terms. We are in favour of a policy of selective aids which will avoid distortion of output and of competition among finished products and among processed products originating from the same raw materials.

Any adjustment of the systems of aids and premiums should not jeopardize the basic principles of the existing rules in the sector of processed fruit and vegetables, given that at this time no difficulties are experienced in finding outlets for products which benefit from Community aids. If the existing system of aids is penalized, the result will be a weakening of the competitiveness of Community processed fruit and vegetables and the consequent entry into Community markets of similar products from third countries.

We are therefore in favour of the Commission's proposal to modify the calculation of the financial compensation granted to industries processing certain varieties of oranges, which would result in larger deliveries of better-quality products for processing. We also support the Commission's proposal to stop aids to industries which process fruit and vegetables withdrawn from the market and intended for free distribution, because we believe that the increase in Community expenditure is accompanied by artificial inflation of the quantities earmarked for this purpose, by distortions in the normal merchandising channels and other abuses.

We are, on the other hand, opposed to the proposal to abolish completely the aids for cherries in syrup. Any such measure would open the dangerous road to the indiscriminate abolition of aids for processing, whereas it would be desirable to find more rational and selective forms of aids, either according to the

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variety to be processed or on the basis of other criteria which would have to be worked out, but without going so far as to abolish them altogether.

Mr Louwes (L), draftsman of the opinion of the Committee on Budgets. — (NL) Madam President, on behalf of the Committee on Budgets I should like to comment briefly on the reductions or, in fact, the administrative measures.

I would remind Parliament that last November, when we were debating the Curry report, the Committee on Budgets welcomed these restructuring measures. I need hardly repeat this. Everyone now knows, and it is emphasized here time and again, that agriculture will soon reach its financial limits. I shall therefore confine myself to stressing three aspects.

Firstly, a few basic budgetary principles. Three of the regulations we are discussing would again result in 'negative expenditure', which, moreover, is earmarked for specific purposes. It is difficult to imagine what negative expenditure is: that is one of our objections. But in fact, by creating negative expenditure, we are evading the provisions of the Treaty, and earmarking expenditure for specific purposes from the outset undermines Parliament's budgetary powers. Hence our objections to the role allotted to the management committees in a number of these regulations. The Committee on Budgets will not cease to object to these three points, and we hope that, when the Financial Regulation is revised, they can be eliminated.

My second point concerns the tax on oils and fats. All our basic objections, which I have just mentioned, apply here. Another objection is that it will not solve the problem of surplus production in the dairy sector and thus the butter problem in particular. It will not, after all, reduce expenditure or result in better management. A third objection my committee has is that there is a link here with the renegotiations under the import and export policies in GATT. We should have preferred to see these problems discussed at that level rather than a unilateral measure being taken at this time. The Committee on Budgets therefore recommends Parliament to reject this levy on oils and fats. We have tabled amendments on this, and I recommend the House to adopt them.

A third point to which I would just like to revert, Madam President, is that in November we were already expressing considerable scepticism about the control of agricultural expenditure in the longer term. We explained this in the report which bears my name, and expressed our serious doubts about whether the proposals as they were then and are now presented to us would be sufficient to ensure control of expenditure in time.

What the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, said this morning about the budget being exceeded indicates that the doubts, the fears we expressed at that time were justified. We also said in November,

and I should just like to repeat this, that the whole gamut of measures now before us is no more than a first step towards achieving real control over the pattern of expenditure.

To conclude, two other comments. We were pleased to hear from Mr Thorn that the money in excess of the 16 500m available for financing the agricultural policy this year will not come out of funds intended for other policies. We fully agree with this, of course.

Secondly, I am nevertheless curious to know — and perhaps Mr Thorn or Mr Dalsager can take this up in his answer — where this 2 000m may have to found.

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Madam President, fellow Members, on behalf of the Socialist Group I should like to comment on a number of points but, to begin, I must express our satisfaction at the Council's unprecedented apparent rediscovery of its decision-making capacity. This is a positive factor which must be borne in mind, even if the Council decisions are not always to one's liking. That having been said I should now like to turn to some matters connected with both the Council decisions and the Commission proposals.

To begin with, the monetary compensatory amounts: when one examines the origins of the monetary compensatory amounts, one is forced to conclude that the role ascribed to agricultural prices within the European Community is exclusively one of income determination. This means that every parity realignment, calculated in national currencies, leads to price increases or decreases. In an effort to preclude these it was decided to introduce the absurdity of 'green currencies' and the related monetary compensatory amounts.

The idea is that of keeping farm prices constant while taking no action whatever on agricultural input costs, which become more expensive for farmers in Member States which have devalued and cheaper for those in Member States which have revalued.

My group cannot in principle accept such a system, and we are in favour of a dismantling of the monetary compensatory amounts, along the lines contained in the Marck report. We see the necessity for degressive national state aids possibly with Community backing — but as a complementary measure in order to ensure that farmers do not have to bear the entire brunt of such parity realignments.

But what has the Council just done? One really has to enjoy this melting on one's tongue: the Council has decided to transform a 3% positive compensation into a negative one and to proceed without further ado to dismantle the negative compensatory amounts. That is tantamount to duplicity with regard to the electorate, for the Council's version may be summarized as follows: The Council gave its blessing to a 3% price increase, which it proceeded to take away under the positive monetary compensatory amounts. A more

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honest approach, however, would be to declare at the outset that a price increase had been agreed upon, the financial incidence of which must be estimated somewhere in the region of several hundred million ECU, rather than giving the misleading impression of a financially neutral operation, and one which is, to boot, so complex as to be unintelligible to the average citizen. We are in favour of a more honest approach and opposed to such a manoeuvre.

What has the Council done with regard to the creation of new monetary compensatory amounts? It has, to all intents and purposes, abandoned the ECU in favour of the introduction of a green German mark. Here, too, we have to reject it in principle. We are in favour of an expanded role for the ECU, in agriculture too, and condemn those — including some in the Federal Republic — who reproach the French, or whoever it may be, with having an unacceptably high rate of inflation and at the same time take advantage of this new system to stoke that inflation even further. We further believe, for the most diverse psychological reasons, that it is bad to elect a specific currency to play a pivotal role. For this reason we are opposed to this new system even if accompanied by revised methods for calculating the monetary compensatory amounts.

The second issue I wish to take up is that of the taxation of oils and fats: the Socialist Group rejects the taxation of oils and fats.

(Applause)

We are fundamentally opposed to the introduction of indirect taxes which, once introduced, will in all probability, and depending on the financial needs of the ministers of agriculture, tend to be increased annually. The brunt of such indirect taxation is borne by the less well-off who are already suffering enough as it is, under the economic policies which are currently being pursued in most of the Member States. We reject attempts to finance unwelcome developments in the butter sector by taxing a section of society which has absolutely nothing to do with it, for they in fact eat margarine.

You might just as well say that Coca-Cola should be taxed in order to promote sales of fresh milk. That is just as absurd as taxing margarine to promote sales of butter. We therefore have doubts about the legal basis of such measures. In an effort to finance surplus agricultural production, both the Council and the Commission want the Community's citizens to fork out, and so base their action on Article 43 of the EEC Treaty. That requires, however, approval by the individual Member State parliaments.

There are, furthermore, international ramifications. After reading the report of proceedings of the last meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, I can only echo the sentiments of

the minister from the Philippines who asked what connection there was between coconut oil and butter given that their respective applications were totally different. In the international arena, the European Community is behaving like a bull in a china shop. Considerations of international policy therefore provide a further incentive to oppose a tax of this nature.

I am at a loss to understand why our friends who represent Mediterranean Member States regularly call for a tax on oil and fats. I have the impression that they never read statistics. Thus the annual per capita consumption of vegetable oils is some 28 kilos in Greece but only 20 kilos in the Federal Republic of Germany. Who, therefore, will have to stump up in the event of a tax on oils and fats? Essentially the consumers in the Mediterranean Member States, since they consume far more vegetable fats than their counterparts in the more northerly Member States.

I can only urge my colleagues from the Mediterranean Member States to pore over the statistics and to ask themselves whether their action is totally rational. For our part, we are utterly opposed.

For my third issue I should like to turn to my group's decision, by a large majority, to approve in principle the quantity ceilings. In this respect we shall vote in favour of the Woltjer report or, alternatively, the compromise amendment. We are in principle in favour of the transitional measure envisaged, which would establish quantity ceilings over the next five years, in the form of quotas, provided they are flexible enough to make exceptions for specific small undertakings and furthermore to make provision, in the framework of Community agricultural structure policy, for a spreading of the quotas according to structural necessities.

I now turn to various budgetary aspects. Although we today must give due acknowledgement to what the Council has so far decided, I get the feeling that we have never yet had a reform quite so expensive as this one which is being sought by the Council. Commission President Thorn informed the House this morning that this reform, as it is called, will cost some 1500 to 2000 million ECU more than the budgetary appropriations so far. Heretofore we have always proceeded on the basis that such reform must take account both of agricultural policy dictates, on the one hand, and of financial policy dictates, on the other, and furthermore that it cuts costs.

Now, however, it is to be feared that the Council wishes to increase expenditure, and my group is at a loss to see where the Council intends to raise the cash. We, at any rate, refuse to go along with any transfers of funds from one budget title to another. Do not look to the ranks of the Socialist Group for approval of any scheme to finance butter mountains at the expense of the Social Fund! We take it as settled that

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the existing budget, with its appropriations to the tune of 16 500 million ECU for the agricultural sector must not be exceeded, since the Community has no alternative source of income.

We therefore urge the Council to let us know, if they would be so kind, in the course of their future deliberations just how it intends to finance the various measures it envisages. We hold to the belief that no additional cash can be made available from the Community budget for the 1984 financial year and that no financial tricks can be tolerated. We can now witness, all too well, the consequences of such financial manoeuvres last year, when budgetary commitments were carried forward from 1983 to 1984, resulting in additional commitments to the tune of 600 million ECU.

To summarize: no budgetary manoeuvres, for we adhere to the motto 'budgetary transparency and budgetary integrity', and such a motto should also govern decisions adopted under the CAP!

(Applause)

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

IN THE CHAIR: MR JAQUET

Vice-President

3. Topical and urgent debate: Objections

President. — Pursuant to Rule 48 (2), second subparagraph, I have received the following objections, tabled and justified in writing, to the list of subjects for the topical and urgent debate on Friday morning.

(The President read out the list of objections) ¹

I remind the House that the vote on these objections will be taken without debate.

Lord O'Hagan (ED). — Mr President, I wonder if you could make it clear whether the Presidency has decided to ensure in future that meetings of the coordinators on the Political Affairs Committee will take place before the meetings of the chairmen of groups and whether that procedure was observed in this instance when the list of resolutions was originally drawn up. Could that ruling be made quite plain before we proceed to vote on the individual objections to the original list?

President. — I have taken note of your statement and will refer it to the President and the Bureau.

Lord O'Hagan (ED). — I will raise the question again tomorrow if I do not receive an answer by then, Mr President.

¹ See the Minutes.

Mr Spencer (ED). — Mr President, you have a long list of urgent resolutions, and I would like to try and help you by offering to withdraw my objection. Incidentally, the resolution I have submitted is on the appointment of the President of the Commission, not on his emoluments, as was translated in the English text — a rather different matter.

When the coordinators met, they unanimously recommended that this resolution be included in the second March part-session and be used to wind up the debate on the European Council in Brussels. I am happy to withdraw and to save the House time now if you can give me confirmation that that will be possible under our Rules.

Mr von der Vring (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, if this motion is withdrawn, there are still two others with a request that they be taken in fourth place. Can you tell us, before we vote, what order they will be taken in if both are accepted?

President. — The first motion, if it is accepted, will come fourth and, the other one having been withdrawn, Sir Peter Vanneck's motion would be fifth.

Mr Spencer (ED). — I am sorry, Mr President, what I said — and it clearly was not translated properly — was that I would withdraw it if you could confirm that it would be possible to include it with the Brussels Council debate next week. If you can confirm that, I will withdraw it. That was the recommendation of the coordinators. If not, I will leave it in.

President. — Good. Then Mrs Krouwel-Vlam's motion would come fourth and Mr Spencer's fifth.²

After the vote on Mr Haagerup's objection

Mr Haagerup (L). — *(DA)* On a point of order, Mr President, I just want to say that I asked for these three humanitarian questions to be put on the agenda in the hope that they could be adopted without debate. This is just for Parliament's information.

President. — That is not possible: motions for urgent debate cannot be adopted without debate.

Mr Alavanos (COM). — *(GR)* Mr President, I would like to say a word about the matter already referred to by Mr Haagerup. We are about to vote on the objection raised by my colleague Mr Ephremidis and others to ensure the inclusion, as a matter of topical and urgent debate, of Mr Piquet's resolution concerning political prisoners in Turkey. To avoid complicating the procedure, we too have asked that this resolution be put to the vote without prior debate. It is a humanitarian matter and I think all our colleagues will show understanding.

² For the vote on the objections, see the Minutes.

President. — I shall now put to the vote this request for urgent debate, but I repeat, since it is a request for urgent debate, the motion cannot be voted on without debate.

Mr Gerokostopoulos (PPE). — (*GR*) Mr President, before the debate commences, would you inform us, if you can, whether the information that the staff will be on strike tomorrow is in fact correct, and whether this strike is likely to affect the business of this House?

President. — At the moment, all I can tell you by way of reply is that the Bureau is meeting to discuss the matter and that I therefore cannot offer you any information at this juncture. Perhaps we shall have some news later on.

4. *Agricultural regulations* (continuation)

Mr Clinton (PPE). — Mr President, my responsibility here today is to speak mainly on the Commission's proposals in the milk sector. These proposals are being changed somewhat, but I will add immediately that any changes being made are being paid for by the producers themselves.

Before starting to talk about milk, may I make a brief general comment? In my view, the affairs of the European Community have been run appallingly badly during the past five years, and the brunt of the blame for this must be borne by the two institutions that have both the power and the responsibility of initiation and decision-making. The fact is that the Community has been stumbling from one crisis into the next. There has been endless talk and no effectual action where action and foresight were so badly needed. I am fully aware that there were exceptional problems during this period, but the Japanese and the Americans had the same, or similar, problems, and they have succeeded where we have badly failed.

The greatest failure of all has been the setting up of the European Council, where the Heads of State have been known to spend considerable time arguing about things like the price of milk when they would have been better occupied at home trying to run their own countries. This Parliament should be saying quite bluntly that this Community cannot be run as a sideline by people who have more than enough already to think about. Is it any wonder that we now find ourselves in a crisis arising from the failure to provide, in a timely way, for the ordinary ongoing needs of the Community? We are now faced with a long list of panic measures that one would think were specifically designed to undermine the strongest pillar of the Community and the only successful and properly developed policy that we have — namely, the CAP.

European farmers cannot be treated in a fashion where they do not know where they stand from one year to the next and with measures and changes being

suddenly introduced that may well have devastating effects on their incomes. President Thorn this morning spoke about the objective method, and all of us know, only too well, that this method had long since been thrown out of the window without any explanations whatsoever. I was surprised that Commissioner Dalsager made no mention at all of the completely unacceptable situation that would be created for Ireland by the Commission's milk proposals — not only milk, but the beef sector would be badly affected as well. These two sectors together account for 70% of the total agricultural output in Ireland. I hope this Parliament will recognize our exceptional problem and express the hope that a satisfactory solution will be found this weekend.

Just to put things in proportion: in the Community as a whole, dairy production accounts for about 20% of total agricultural production; in the country I represent, Ireland, it accounts for more than 33%; two countries, France and Germany, produce half the total. Milk therefore is not only a very significant product in the Community but it also employs a very large number of people both inside and outside the farm gate in production, in processing into a large variety of products and in the distribution and marketing of these products. There is now a sizeable problem of surpluses of butter and milk powder arising, in my view, from the failure of both the Commission and the Council to anticipate developments and take the necessary and appropriate steps to prevent the present situation from arising.

Some of us have for years been critical of the escalation in imports of cereal substitutes, which increased from 6 million tonnes to 17 million tonnes in the space of about six years. Even now, when serious damage has been done, all that the Commission is proposing is to look for stabilization at present levels. We have now approximately 800 000 tonnes of butter in store, and we are still importing 110 000 tonnes of butter from third countries at the same time as we are failing to respect the principle of Community preference and the Treaty of Rome itself. In this way, we have drained the Community budget unnecessarily. The Commission is, and has been, closing its eyes to the fact that large sums of money are being provided from an over-taxed budget to pay for abuses of the Community regulations. Because of all this, a long list of panic measures is thrown on the table and we are expected to adopt it calmly regardless of its consequences for many people throughout the Community. The performance, in my view, is just not good enough.

I will have to conclude, although I do not think I have taken my full time, Mr President.

Mr Provan (ED). — Mr President, we meet to discuss this problem today when we are really in the eye of the storm. Everything in the Community is now open

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for discussion, because we are all aware that unless certain decisions are taken, the Community may face dire consequences. We, in my group, had no wish whatsoever to be obstructive to the correct decisions being taken in another place. It is essential for Parliament at this time to show responsibility and yet flexibility, so that decisions can be taken in the face of what might well be imminent bankruptcy. Decisions in other places, i.e., in the Council of Ministers, have to be taken, as we all know. As President Thorn said this morning, the impasse must be broken. I am encouraged by some of the sounds that we hear coming from Brussels on matters that the Council of Ministers for Agriculture have already deliberated upon. I believe that there is a basis for further discussions so that the matters can be resolved. I am worried, on the other hand, that we have various aspects, especially in the milk sector, that do appear to discriminate unduly against some Member States. But more of that anon.

Let me first turn to the compromise amendments that will be coming forward in the name of the rapporteurs, Mr Marck and Mr Woltjer. I believe the two of them have adapted themselves extremely well and extremely rapidly and should have the grateful thanks of this House for the way they have conducted themselves in allowing us to come to conclusions that will make decisions possible.

Mr Marck, in his compromise amendment, quite rightly points out that the decisions that are likely to be taken by the Council will substantially increase the budgetary costs. There is no way that we can tie ourselves to the most highly valued currency in the Community and expect it not to have extreme inflationary costs on some of the other currencies and therefore on the farm price proposals. We therefore have difficulty, Mr President, in accepting the decisions that appear to be coming on monetary compensatory amounts.

However, if that is one of the prices that have to be paid by the agricultural sector to bring stability and a long-lasting solution to some of the problems that are having to be seriously faced at the present time, then something has to be conceded. I believe that all member countries of the Community will have to be conceding something if satisfactory arrangements are to be achieved, because there is no doubt that the agricultural industry at the present time has severe financial problems in many places. However, do not let anybody consider that the agricultural industry is so rigid that it will not be able to adapt itself to changing circumstances. It has done so before, and I am absolutely convinced that it will be able to do so again. Once the circumstances are changing, the industry will change. If we cannot allow an industry to adapt itself to changing circumstances, then we are building up problems for ourselves that would have really serious consequences. We cannot, therefore, find the MCA problems easy to accept, but provided that the

overall pattern of free trade in the Community is allowed to continue, I believe we shall have made some progress.

Regarding the Goerens report on oils and fats, my group has completely rejected the Commission proposals and also Mr Goerens' report. It is difficult and costly to operate and will also invoke retaliatory action from third countries, thus harming our own exports. It would not achieve any significant increase in butter consumption, for which it was designed, and would make food dearer for some of the consumers who are least able to pay. In addition, it would put up the price of olive oil at the same time, and we have difficulty enough in that sector as well.

So what about the milk sector, where the real problem of the Community is at the present time? The financial cost to the Community will break the Community unless this is solved. I believe that the Council of Ministers deserves a certain amount of recognition and congratulation for at last actually achieving something. It has taken them years to do it. It is a great shame that they have driven the Community into such a state that one commodity could actually cause so much of a problem for the whole future of the unification of Europe. However, the Ministers have faced up to it. We do not like the base year that they have selected, i.e., 1981. We feel that it is unjustified and will have a distorting effect on competition in the dairy industry within the Community. A 7% cut for the UK as against an increase in one Member State and a 2.3% cut in another one does, in fact, allow certain producers an unfair advantage as they will be able to continue or even increase production whilst others will face the penalty.

Mr President, we live today in an exciting time for the Community. Let us all accept the changes that have to be taken. Let us live with them and go out to the people and explain why they are necessary!

(Applause)

Mr Maffre-Baugé (COM). — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, five years of action and experience on the subject of Mediterranean products in the European Assembly cannot be covered adequately in a few minutes' speaking time, which is incidentally doled out with the utmost parsimony. Europe is ungenerous with time, with ideas and with money.

I shall therefore concentrate on a few essential points. In 1979, Mediterranean products were the pariahs of the Community. Enlargement was the spectre. It was at that time that I entered European politics, taking my place as an ally in the Communist and Allies Group, with the intention of helping Mediterranean producers to gain recognition for their rights and opposing the economic suicide of enlargement. The record is not wholly unsatisfactory. Progress has been made in a number of areas. Unfortunately, though, the

Maffre-Baugé

problems remain and the struggle continues in a Europe which has been weakened by its contradictions, is labouring under enormous pressures, and has lost credibility as a result of its successive defaults. Nevertheless, we have managed on this difficult, sandy terrain with its many pitfalls to make some progress in a number of areas: adjustment of the balance in agricultural spending in favour of Mediterranean products, a new and more favourable price hierarchy, revision of Community regulations. We have sent the ball quite high and quite far; it remains to be seen whether or not the Commission and the Council really want to catch it.

In the wine-growing sector, the new regulation adopted in 1982 falls short of what was required and is not being applied properly in the Community. Granted, it holds out prospects, but is too timorous in the intervention levels that it fixes. It needs to be reviewed, amended. Currently, the market in wine is thoroughly depressed, imports are tending to rise above the ceiling of tolerability, the social climate is becoming harsher and anger is unfortunately rising to the surface. And yet a few simple measures would breathe new life into the market: exceptional distillation in vulnerable districts; an effective guarantee of a minimum price (Article 3 bis — previously, northern production enjoyed a better designed system, relatively speaking, but what we are hearing from Brussels sounds like the death knell of many of our farms; Mediterranean production, for its part, has no real price guarantee in the Community); the fixing of sufficiently attractive intervention prices for distillation to deter dealers from speculative manoeuvres and encourage them to buy. Instead of these measures, which are compatible with the rules, the Commission is freezing prices for the coming season and shabbily trimming and, to use a slightly colloquial expression, cheese-paring on short-term storage contracts, even to the extent of undermining efficiency on the pretext of fabricated budgetary problems.

In fruit and vegetables, the Council has approved a new regulation which is partially based on the report adopted at the part session of June 1982, which I presented on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture. It was supposed to come into force as soon as the official declaration on enlargement was made; it has yet to be applied. All these promises which have been made but not kept are poisoning the atmosphere and steadily undermining the Parliament's reputation. We have been reasonable in what we have asked for, and our reasonable demands have been granted in theory but not, Mr President, delivered in practice. The renewed intensity of the negotiations on enlargement does not imply the automatic accession of the applicant countries, as some would have us believe. We must close the ranks of our pawns on the chessboard. The outcome of the game in progress is not a foregone conclusion. We managed to put it off from 1984. There is nothing predestined about 1986. The

problems involved are extremely complex, and a conclusion is some considerable way off yet. The applicant states are asking themselves questions and public opinion there, not to mention in France, is worried about the major economic difficulties that this enlargement will create. More than ever, we need to show fight, not defeatism or resignation.

In saying no to those who want to enlarge on all sides, to enlarge the Community and destroy it, I am holding fast to the commitments of my calling and to the extension of them in my political commitment within the Community institutions. We have better things to propose than this sort of adventure: dynamic sectoral cooperation in tackling problems on the basis of thorough prior examination conducted jointly with the applicant states with the aim of securing mutual advantages seems to us a much more judicious approach than indiscriminate enlargement which, with all the difficulties and confrontations, would lead ultimately to the disintegration of the Community.

I have reached my conclusion, Mr President. We support a realistic approach, both for Europe and for Spain and Portugal. Together with these countries, we can prepare the ground for a soundly based future, whereas the fanatical supporters of this enlargement are taking us along the road of irresponsible adventurism.

Mr De Gucht (L). — *(NL)* Ladies and gentlemen, the decision taken by the Council of Ministers in no way means that a debate on monetary compensatory amounts is superfluous. But it is a pity the Council has taken decisions without awaiting Parliament's opinion. My group approves the compromise resolution tabled by Mr Marck where the crux of the matter is concerned.

The problem of the MCAs remains one of the stumbling-blocks in European integration. MCAs were originally introduced as a temporary palliative, to give protection against fluctuations in exchange rates, under the common organization of the agricultural markets. The continued existence of this system is an indication of the continued absence of economic and monetary union — MCAs were intended to be strictly temporary from the outset, pending the establishment of economic and monetary union — but we find that no progress has been made towards this economic and monetary union in recent years. In the meantime, the continued existence of these monetary compensatory amounts has had an adverse effect on intra-Community trade and on competition, which they have distorted. Thus not only do the MCAs conflict with the spirit of the Treaty; they are no longer justifiable because of the harmful side-effects they have.

I therefore welcome the Council's decision gradually to abolish MCAs. The figures prove that the Commission was right in its proposals. After all, if the MCA

De Gucht

system had been retained, it would have cost the budget no less than 367m ECU in 1984. The implementation of the measures proposed by the Commission would result in a saving of 169m ECU in 1984. But it remains to be seen, we feel, what savings will in fact follow the Council's decision.

As I said at the beginning, I find it very regrettable that we still have no real economic and monetary union. And yet we adopted the right course in 1979 by establishing the European Monetary System, a course which has not only led to the relative stability of the national currencies participating — and this in a period characterized by major economic and monetary fluctuations — but one which must also open the door to increasingly close cooperation in the future.

All these considerations lead me to conclude that the gradual abolition of the MCAs is a first and important step towards a real economic and monetary union.

Mr Davern (DEP). — Mr President, I rise to speak with some sense of despondency about the European Community. For one thing this Parliament, the only directly elected representatives of the European Community, and consequently the only ones who will bear the brunt of the annoyance of public opinion in the Community, now finds itself in quite a ridiculous situation. The advice they are about to give in one form or another will be totally irrelevant to what the Council decided yesterday.

However, to some extent, this situation may serve to highlight the need for reform on our part which would enable us to respond more rapidly to events in the Council. These events have come about, I believe, by the machinations of individuals in the Commission who have led the Council of Ministers into this situation and who have deliberately misled Parliament as to the financial position of the Community. I believe that this has been done deliberately for reasons of political expediency. It is an action which will not promote the concept of a united Europe or advance European integration.

The decision of the Council of Ministers yesterday does not contain one iota of Community preference. It contains nothing whatsoever that would benefit Community producers, the people who are asked to pay the price: no tax incentives, no tax on imports and indeed no tax on cereal imports into the Community. If we returned to ordinary grassland production we would not have the surpluses we have.

But before I move on to that I would like to say that the Commission has totally failed to present an aggressive marketing policy outside of this Community to enable us to compete with the rest of the world and to show them that we are as good as they are and we can produce as well as the best. In particular, we have no need to be subservient to the Americans who are a most aggressive force in this market.

The Commission is proposing savings, but I could show them how savings could be made through Community preference! The cost of exporting 15 million tonnes of cereals to offset imports of cereal substitutes into the Community is 1 140 million ECU. Levies on imported cereal substitutes would produce 708 million ECU. The lack of levies on goods other than cereal substitutes, oils and fats imported under preferential trade agreements costs us 1 112 million ECU. On the other hand, the estimated savings under the Commission proposals are a mere 2 500 million for 1984-85, 2 900 million for 1985-86 and 3 200 million for 1986-87.

The cost of exporting 20 million tonnes of milk as butter and skimmed-milk powder is 1 080 million ECU for butter and 680 million ECU for other milk products. The cost of exporting butter replaced by New Zealand butter imports is 105 million ECU. Where is the political reality in importing something we have in surplus, importing cereal substitutes when we have our own cereals to produce? How do we explain this to the ordinary citizen — people whom we are now asking to fund the Community, people we are asking to give more money and more of their support in spite of Community failures? I come from a small milk-producing country which produces only 4.5 % of the total milk produced in the Community, yet we depend on that for 46 % of our total agricultural revenue. How do I now defend the actions of the European Community to those people who voted 4 to 1 to join the European Community?

Mr Taylor, who is very vocal here, will be one of the people running from Northern Ireland to seek the benefit of the derogation that, we hope, the South may achieve, because we know that the mainland government annexing his country is totally against giving any derogations. I should also say that our people are losing faith in the Community. Indeed, I am greatly saddened because it is the family farms that are going to lose. To me it is Mansholt back again. The Mansholt Plan is here. It is being brought in by people like Mr Dalsager and others in the Commission. They are destroying family farms but allowing the factory farms to continue. Farming without soil or sun. So whatever status the family farm has in the Community, whatever hope we had is now gone.

If there are no derogations, particularly for the smaller producers and the smaller economies that so depend on family farms, then I do not believe there is a future for those countries or indeed a future for the European Community. It will become a community of six rich nations, the rest can go to hell! In that situation, I do not believe the foundation on which Europe was built will continue to exist. I do not believe the morality on which Europe was founded will continue to exist. Should that happen, it is the Commission that will be directly responsible — not the Members of the European Parliament, who have striven to help

Davern

the smaller nations concerned and not have them dismissed by sleight of pen. Are we to become a Community of big business, of the vested interests of multinationals such as Unilever, so often ably defended in this House even by some Socialist Members? Or are we to become a Community concerned with people and about people, that does not limit itself to an exercise in financial rectitude which destroys the lives of ordinary rural people?

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Mr President, might I address myself directly, at the outset at any rate, to the situation as far as my own country is concerned? We are all here as European Members. At the same time, I have been rather disappointed over the last four and a half years to find that the nationalistic approach has been and is, in big and small countries alike, just as evident today as when I arrived. Therefore I make no apologies when I ask Members — all of whom are elected Members whom we can take as reasonable people in their approach to any matter of a general nature — whether they are aware that in my own country agriculture is the predominant, the absolutely predominant industry.

Agricultural exports from my country account for approximately 40 % of our total exports. Are you aware in this Parliament, you fair-minded Members, that cattle, beef and dairy products account for 80 % of those agricultural exports? Are you aware also that agriculture, whether directly or indirectly, provides one out of three of the rather scarce jobs that we now have in my country? Can you conceive that 85 % of our milk-herd-owners have under 30 cows each, the average yield of which is less than 700 gallons per cow per year? Compare this with the average of over 1 300 gallons in some of the more highly developed dairy countries here on the continent! Are we mad in the head, and I think we must be, to import, as has been said by the previous speaker, surpluses into the Community, such as cereals? To import butter where already we have a butter mountain? To export the artificially created surpluses at great cost to the budget and then cry about trying to balance the budget and bumping off the ceiling? No wonder we are bumping off it with the madness that seems to have gripped the Member States of this Community, the Council of Ministers, even the Commission itself! What has become of the savings that would have arisen had the oils and fats tax, as proposed by the Commission, gone through? We are now told it has been abandoned by the Council. What has happened to the obviously sane, sensible proposal that there should be a special tax on intensive farm production, particularly the milk factory farms that have grown up around the major ports of Europe and are using the 25 million tonnes of imported cereals and cereal substitutes which have grown amazingly over the last six years and are producing up to 10 million tonnes of our dairy problems? Can we have a look at the suggested MCAs, of which I welcome the proposal as made by

the Commission and even as watered down by the Council? But what is to become of the budget if, in fact, in this rather bankrupt situation, the strong-currency countries, whose farmers may lose as a result of the MCAs being abolished or phased out, are offered compensation, as the proposal now seems to be? This, again, seems to be crazy in view of the impact of what we are led to believe is a very serious financial situation for the Community.

How come that suggestions are now emerging from the Council's deliberations that agricultural produce in deficit within the Community is in certain instances to be subjected to price-cuts for the coming year? Surely this again is the height of insanity: there is no explanation for it other than that our people in the Council are just gone a little dotty, or, perhaps, are overpressurized by the multinationals, who seem to call the tune at all levels and bring down upon us Article 28 of GATT as a justification for all these mad escapades that we seem to have embarked upon and which have brought us into the plight we are now in. I ask them, and I ask you, the Members of this Parliament, my colleagues: should we not be much more concerned as a priority with Article 39 of the Treaty of Rome, which is why we come to be here at all in this institution? Why is it not given at least equal reverence with Article 28 of that sacred cow that is now the plaything and, indeed the most profitable thing there is for the multinational industrialists, who gain by free entry into Third World markets and the North American market, in return for which we allow in up to 25 million tonnes of cereals and cereal substitutes? This I think, is where we have really gone wrong, and that is why I feel it is not just a matter of madness, it is a matter of big business, big pressure from the multinational industrial giants that are calling the tune within our Council of Ministers. We should not go for it, whatever may be the strains put on that same Council.

I would say to the Members of this House that if we are to continue as a Community — and I sincerely hope we shall — we must have regard to Community preference, we must have regard to the concept on which this whole Community was established and hopes to grow in size and importance in the future, that grand concept of closing the gap between the less well-off and the better-off within the Community. That is the concept on which we can stand together, on which we can succeed in the future. Abandon that concept and we shall destroy that which has taken so many long years of hard work on the part of many great people in the past to build up, in order to leave us with this institution and the other institutions that go with it.

Mr Eisma (NI). — (NL) I am very pleased to see, Mr President, that the French Minister of Agriculture is entering the Chamber and will hear the opinion of D'66.

Eisma

So at last, Mr President, we have reached the stage where this Parliament is discussing the introduction of a system of quotas in the dairy sector. Better late than never. We are in favour of the introduction of a superlevy. We believe this is the only instrument that can really restrict production.

I might remind you at this stage that D'66 was calling for production quotas as long ago as 1979. If this measure had been accepted at that time, the Community and its farmers would now have fewer problems to contend with. Effective measures will always take their toll, Mr Tolman, and putting the Community's agricultural sector on a sound footing again will be a long and difficult task.

What are needed in the present situation are both a superlevy and a conservative price policy. This is in fact duplication, but that, unfortunately, cannot be avoided. But if an effective system of quotas is used, a more generous price policy will be possible. Quotas must therefore result in something like balance between supply and demand in the Community.

Like the rapporteur, we are opposed to quotas per dairy, particularly as they would result in the payment of mixed prices to producers. The motion for a resolution rightly says that the quotas must be fixed per producer. Again like the rapporteur, we reject the proposed levy on intensive production.

We shall wholeheartedly support Mr Woltjer's report with the exception of paragraph 15. This anomaly in the motion for a resolution says precisely the opposite of the rest of the resolution and report. But we must forgive the Committee on Agriculture for this.

We also appreciate Mr Marck's report and the Commission's proposals for the gradual dismantling of monetary compensatory amounts. D'66 is in principle in favour of the rapid dismantling of MCAs. But this must not be allowed to have an adverse effect on countries with positive MCAs. Of the various ways in which this can be prevented, we join with the Commission and the rapporteur in favouring national income-support measures on the conditions laid down by the Commission. We consider the method chosen by the Council, dismantling over five years, too slow and too expensive. For that reason we shall also support Mr Marck's motion for a resolution.

The same does not go for the Goerens motion for a resolution and the Commission's proposals for a tax on oils and fats. Although this tax on oils and fats is presented as a market-regulating measure, it is merely intended as a means of collecting more money at the expense of third parties. D'66 is opposed to this.

President. — I am happy to welcome to this House the President-in-Office of the Council, and on behalf of the Parliament I bid him heartily welcome.

(Applause)

Mr Rocard, President-in-Office of the Council. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Members of

the European Parliamentary Assembly, it is perhaps a tradition but for me it is also an honour to be welcomed today by your Assembly.

There is no need for me to tell you what a happy coincidence there has been in the timing of the preparation of formal decisions to be taken by the Council of Ministers of the Community on one side or another in response to the lead given by the European Council, which, despite having no legal existence under our Treaties, is the guarantor of the fundamental objectives on the Community plane and of the Member States' agreement to pursue them; no need for me to draw your attention to the happy coincidence in time of your own deliberations leading to the delivery of your opinion to those bodies and the as yet conditional exploration by the Council of Ministers for Agriculture of various possible decisions submitted to the same bodies.

What has just occurred in Brussels, after many months of waiting and with the rapid approach of a decisive date, is indeed important, even though it is conditional. It gives me great satisfaction, as President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers for Agriculture, to have the opportunity of giving the Parliamentary Assembly a rapid outline of these developments.

(Applause)

Here we have evidence, in my view, that our institutional system is operating well, and I hope that this will always be the case.

The democratic dialogue between Parliament and Council is especially necessary in that the subject is complex and often apparently obscure, and moreover, like all negotiations, these negotiations must, of the nature of things, go through a confidential phase; the Parliament's contribution is to bring clarity, explanations and transparency to this debate, and that is important.

A significant step has been taken towards a solution to the crisis which has been looming over Europe since Stuttgart, since Athens. I believe this to be so. To be perfectly frank, before this meeting of the Ministers for Agriculture, I was pessimistic; I am a little less so now. Ratification of the outline agreements that we have sketched out together is subject to the fulfilment of difficult conditions, as everyone knows.

But should this come to nothing after all, what would the disappearance of this hope signify? On a general level, we all know that each passing year confirms that in the days of our children and grandchildren the world will belong to the continent-States. Already the United States and the Soviet Union, with between 250 and 300 million inhabitants each, dominate the planet. Whose voice will be heard in future? China's, with a billion inhabitants? India's, with 700 million?

Rocard

Japan's, with 120 million? Brazil's, with rather more? Where shall we rank, each of us individually, if we do not manage to join forces?

The challenge of new technology is within our grasp if we do manage to join forces. Here again, there has been good news for European life in recent weeks, news about the Esprit programme, the technical and commercial success of Ariane, a European although not a Community venture, and the Airbus programme, which is again a venture mounted by Europe if not by the Community. Nevertheless, all these developments point in the same direction.

If we fail to meet this challenge, will Europe be condemning itself to having its future determined elsewhere, between the two shores of the Pacific? I do not want to believe so.

In the shorter economic run, as we all know, there exists a European multiplier effect. This was very well brought out in the Albert—Ball report, commissioned by you, the European Parliament. Let us therefore give rein to this European multiplier effect.

What is really in the balance is the influence in the world exerted by the set of values for which our Community stands: freedom, democracy, pluralism, tolerance, and also a concern, in the management of public affairs, to combat inequality and continue the process of promoting greater social justice. This, I believe, is the set of values for which Europe stands and which it will be able to promote even more influentially and convincingly than at present if it can bring itself to believe in its destiny.

The points just made are familiar to all, and are not controversial. In the present state of development of the Community, agriculture has a pivotal role. It has been the only fully operational common policy. It is the real cement of our Community, rightly or wrongly, like it or not. It is the fundamental factor in the crisis. It absorbs two-thirds of the European budget. After twenty years of progress — during which the Community has developed from being dependent on agri-foodstuffs imports to become self-sufficient in the main temperate products, and now a very considerable exporter, although altogether we are in deficit, since we have very little production of proteins, even less of vegetable oils and fats, not to mention citrus fruits — we still have a net deficit. But we have become a force to be reckoned with as an exporter of the products of our region.

I wish to affirm my view in this Chamber that, whatever the present situation of the common agricultural policy, its history and the results that it has achieved represent the greatest success of the European Economic Community.

(Applause)

Let us consider for a minute — or perhaps even less — what its disappearance would mean. We hear it said here and there that, when all is said and done, the

common agricultural policy creates more constraints, limitations and obstacles than advantages. We hear it said that it would be better to abandon it. Well and good. But few are mindful of the enormous benefit to each Member State of being able to sell its agricultural produce on the markets of the other nine, at prices above the so-called world prices, which have never been other than knock-down prices for disposing of surpluses.

At all events, disintegration of the common agricultural policy would mean a catastrophic collapse of farming in all our countries, even those which imagine themselves to be losers on the CAP, including my own country, which imagines nothing of the sort, although the temptation to do so is occasionally hinted at. The fact is that such a prospect is anathema to the vast majority of the farming community, who fear the renationalization of the common agricultural policy more than anything else.

What then, ladies and gentlemen, are the real difficulties in the agricultural sector, what is their true nature? I for my part shall never tire of reiterating my view that there is very much less a crisis of agricultural surpluses in the European Economic Community than a worldwide economic and financial crisis as a result of which virtually all the countries whose agricultural structures are currently unable to feed their peoples are insolvent. It is the collapse of financial resources which would allow the total quantity of food produced in the world to be distributed more or less according to real needs that is causing a localized crisis in Europe, almost as a consequence of the contrast.

There is a second factor contributing to our difficulties in the agricultural sector, one which should be ever present in our minds: this is the diffidence displayed by agricultural Europe *vis-à-vis* the rest of the world when it should be asserting a clear identity. As I understand it, we have become net exporters of most major products, and this is a structural and definitive situation, but — and I apologize to the Commissioners for saying this, but since they know it is true, I hope they appreciate that I am supporting them rather than criticizing the Commission — the Community does not really have any external commercial policy.

(Applause)

We have been pusillanimous about establishing Community preference in the face of massive imports, particularly of cereal substitutes, which are accentuating the imbalance on our dairy and cereal markets.

If I may digress on an anecdotal note, I can report that I have concluded a sort of ironic pact on a friendly basis with Mr John Bloch under which we have agreed that, before declaring any trade war, we would at least try to understand each other's point of view.

Rocard

I think we can take it from the outset that there is something rather unintelligent about this American pressure on us to export less and at the same time to absorb more and more substitute products, which are forcing us to seek export outlets for our cereals.

But if we can reach agreement, on the intellectual plane at least, about the nature and scale of the problem, the necessary negotiations will perhaps be able to start on a better basis. The present situation ultimately reflects a lack of resolution on the part of our Community *vis-à-vis* North American agriculture. This stems from our rather special circumstances. Offence has been taken to the word 'model', so I shall avoid using it. It is nevertheless true that European agriculture, taken in the round, is set apart by distinctive characteristics. Our agriculture is based on free enterprise: we do not have a system of the Soviet type, which holds no attractions for us, as is well known. Our agriculture is highly developed, modern, often in the forefront of development: we are not in the Third World, we are not of the South, we are of the North.

At the same time, however, our countries have a high ratio of population to farming acreage, and this is a third distinctive characteristic. With our high population densities and the relatively limited amounts of land available in our countries, our agriculture has to be intensive. It is only here that this applies, not in any of the other leading producer countries in temperate regions, whether North America, Argentina, Australia or New Zealand.

There you have the reasons — and they are enough in themselves, there is no need to look for any other causes — explaining why our European markets have been organized in the way that they have, and you have the various factors which explain why it is that our agricultural support systems differ from those in the United States (while the cost as a percentage of local agricultural production is very similar in the Community to that in the United States, namely, 9% of the agricultural value added, and the cost per head of the farming population in the Community is only between two-thirds and half of what it is in the United States), factors which simply oblige us to make adjustments at the frontiers, at the level of external trade, so as to relate our system with theirs. All this calls not only for good faith, recognition of the problems and an intelligent approach, but also firmness and a modicum of cohesion.

There is a third general contributory factor in our agricultural difficulties, in addition to the financial crisis in the countries which have food shortages and Europe's hesitancy over asserting its identity abroad, and that is to be found in the problems experienced by the farming world in adapting itself to market trends.

Today, every young farmer setting up in business and every farmer considering investment options must

understand that he will be working for export markets. This simple statement gives the measure of the tremendous change that is taking place.

We are therefore faced with the need to switch gradually to the types of product that are most needed in the world, and in doing so we must keep our costs down to levels that enable us to sell to our prospective customers abroad at prices they can afford.

By waiting until our resources were running out before moving to adjust this policy and correct the imbalances arising out of the very success of the CAP, we have been collectively guilty, ladies and gentlemen, of irresponsible conduct inasmuch as the pressures of the financial crisis might cause us to take hasty decisions failing to achieve compatibility between budgetary imperatives and an intelligent economic approach to the longer term — but happily we have you, and the Council of Ministers for Agriculture to prevent that. Agriculture is a living thing, a living organism, even though it has to work within budgetary constraints, for self-evident reasons.

I should like to say a few words about procedure before going on to take stock of the negotiations, the conditional outline agreements currently on the table, although I understand that President Thorn and my old friend Commissioner Dalsager reviewed the situation this morning. It is not insignificant that the Commission's proposals for reform of the common agricultural policy have been before the Council of Ministers for Agriculture for only a little over two months, since they were not on its agenda during the second half of 1983. I make this point in order to stress the significance of what was achieved on Monday and Tuesday.

As you are well aware, the issues involved are of a highly technical nature: over the past twenty years and more, there have been 918 meetings of the Council of Ministers for Agriculture, accumulating decisions on an ever-widening range of products and an ever-increasing number of techniques and rules governing the markets in each of these products.

Now I count myself among those who believe that although it serves no purpose to manage affairs efficiently unless one takes intelligent steps to explain what one is doing and unless, of course, the policies pursued are the right ones, there can be no good policy without good machinery for implementing it.

The Ministers for Agriculture have demonstrated over the past two days that they are capable of reaching agreements, if only conditionally, since they do not have entire responsibility. It is as well that they have done so, given the state of anguish — and I do not exaggerate — in which we were all contemplating the approach and outcome of the meeting next Monday and Tuesday of our Heads of State or Government.

I must therefore give some clarification of the nature of these conditional agreements.

Rocard

To begin with monetary compensatory amounts. I should point out that the Council has thus far dealt exclusively with the dismantling of monetary compensatory amounts, to the exclusion of the other problems, notably the basis on which they are calculated, which we have not yet begun to discuss. There are plenty of problems in store for us!

These matters are on the table for further meetings. No reference was made to them.

Just with the question of dismantling alone, we are confronted with a twofold problem. There are disparities in prices, with resultant disparities in profitability, and — a point too often forgotten — monetary compensatory amounts, by becoming permanent, have been the source of an enormous fundamental economic distortion in the functioning of the Community. The problem of correcting these disparities at the frontiers, which is the most widely known aspect of what is often perceived as a vexatious matter, is only the second problem. The essential one is the economic distortion, whatever form it may take.

We had two proposals for tackling this problem, one of which was put forward by the Federal Republic of Germany during a meeting of the Council on general affairs and examined in greater detail during bilateral discussions. I always have misgivings, when there are bilateral discussions, that the others resent being excluded. The only justification in this instance is that the situations of our two countries, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, represent the two extremes as far as monetary compensatory amounts are concerned. However, the fact that we have been obliged for technical reasons to hold a few bilateral talks should not cause anyone to fear that the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers for Agriculture would countenance any unequal treatment to the detriment of any partner. I shall be coming to the subject of Ireland shortly.

At the meeting of the Agricultural Council, this German proposal was confirmed orally. On Sunday afternoon, we discussed a similar proposal presented in writing by the Netherlands. As a result, we were able to go some way towards formalizing a 'conditional agreement', the content of which, including the three phases it calls for, are known to you. I do not think it necessary for me to go into details, since I am told that you have been given a thorough explanation.

The first phase, with 3 points being transferred from positive to negative, will see the simultaneous dismantling of negative amounts with effect from the start of the marketing year for each product, according to the normal calendar. This phase involves the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. This is one of the points agreed at the Agricultural Council, subject always to fundamental approval, the decision on which is outside our remit and has to be taken, once again, in the light of the opinion that you are in course of considering and formulating.

In the second phase, on 1 January 1985, the Federal Republic of Germany will unilaterally dismantle 5 points of its positive MCAs. This is to be accompanied by a slight reduction — by 0.8% on average — in the remaining Dutch positive MCAs, to bring them into line with the German level. Assuming ratification of this general agreement, the Community will authorize the Federal Republic of Germany to compensate its farmers for this loss of income. Partial compensation from the Community budget to the Federal Republic of Germany has also been envisaged, but this too is subject to ratification. Consideration still has to be given to the possibility of an overall phased reduction, but that is a matter for our foreign affairs colleagues and the summit.

The third phase will complete the process, at the beginning of the 1987-88 marketing year. This means, ladies and gentlemen, that 80% of the existing positive compensatory amounts will disappear in less than 10 months. Arrangements for dismantling the existing negative MCAs are to be made in the course of the price negotiations which are about to open. The remaining 3% of negative MCAs will be dismantled immediately, by virtue of the method adopted for dismantling.

Credit must be given for the efforts that have made this possible. The Federal Republic of Germany has made an enormous effort, and this should be acknowledged. Credit is equally due to the Netherlands for its spontaneous association with this idea, and to the United Kingdom for agreeing conditionally, but nevertheless agreeing to take part in this exercise if general agreement is reached. We are therefore pleased that this proposal is being put to the European Council.

The fact remains, however, that this solution would cost more than the Commission's proposals — about 400 million ECU more in 1984 and somewhat more than that in 1985 — and it is subject to agreement on how this additional cost is to be financed. If agreement is not reached — and this does not depend on the Agriculture Council — we will try again, but in that event I should be less than optimistic about the very survival of the common agricultural policy.

As for any future monetary compensatory amounts in the event of an exchange-rate adjustment, the agri-monetary disparity would take the form of negative monetary compensatory amounts only, whatever the nature or scale of the adjustment, to the exclusion of positive MCAs, and this would apply throughout the period leading up to the complete dismantling of the existing MCAs. At the end of this period, it will be necessary to discuss and set up a new system, about which we have merely expressed the wish that the guarantees should not be less than under the present system. Once that has been attended to, it will remain

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for us to review the technical aspects of monetary compensatory amounts, particularly in regard to the problem of pigmeat.

While on this subject I should like to ask the House whether it finds it legitimate to have monetary compensatory amounts on products for which there is no intervention machinery. With all products which are traded in freely on the open market — and, heaven knows, free trade is the fountainhead of European prosperity — negotiation between customers and suppliers, the free play of market forces and freedom of contract provide the machinery for absorbing the effects of monetary fluctuations and sharing them between contracting parties. When there is intervention on a given product in the agricultural sector, it is readily understandable that it is impossible to proceed on that basis. An abrupt fluctuation in exchange rates would trigger movements of millions of tonnes of cereals and hundreds of thousands of tonnes of beef and veal from country to country. That would be unacceptable in the case of products for which there are intervention arrangements. We are still at a loss to understand why monetary compensatory amounts were extended to other products.

We on the Agriculture Council are accustomed to behaving like horse traders. We haggle over big deals and know the price of things, but principles are not exactly our line, or let us say that we do not consider ourselves to be the body best qualified to view our work with the noblest, most abstract philosophical gaze. And if Parliament could enlighten us with an opinion on this matter, on the purpose served by monetary compensatory amounts, well, ladies and gentlemen, it would be most interesting and useful.

(Applause from the Left)

A few words now, with your leave, on the agreement concerning milk. We are all aware of the imbalance on the milk market, both within the Community and beyond. Apart from the lack of finance, which is the general problem affecting all our sales, all our exports, with milk there is a specific problem: physical capacity for absorbing milk products is limited, in the present state of our production methods at least. We know that milk, in the forms in which we are able to offer it, is not a foodstuff readily used by people in countries where there is a general lack of milk, which is not part of their diet. No technical solution has yet been found to this problem. It is being worked on, and there may be a successful outcome, but as yet milk is a product consumed only in developed, temperate countries. This, of course, does not help matters. It is the reason why we have these surpluses, which are a very heavy financial burden, costing about 5 billion ECU.

This aspect of the problem — a cost of 5 billion ECU to finance surpluses for which buyers cannot be

found, 1 million tonnes of dried milk in our warehouses, 900 000 tonnes of butter in cold storage, and no demand for these products — must not blind us to the other aspect: 1 700 000 producers of milk in the Community, modest levels of income from dairying in several countries — two-thirds of the Member States at all events — and the fact that this sector is crucial to some of our national economies — Ireland is an obvious case in point, but it is not alone, since in Luxembourg milk accounts for 39 % or 40% of final agricultural production. None of these things can be overlooked. We nevertheless considered it obvious that a reduction in output was unavoidable. The goal is to limit Community production, by 1985-86, to the guaranteed quantity of 97 800 000 tonnes, comprising 97 200 000 tonnes as the sum of the national quotas and a reserve of 600 000 tonnes in the hands of the Commission to deal with the most serious or most difficult cases.

The Agriculture Council agreed on the idea — which will undoubtedly be discussed again by the Council on general affairs and the European Council — of proposing a transitional year, since we were convinced that it would be physically impossible in this sector, where livestock are involved, to cut production from 103 000 000 tonnes or so to 97 000 000 tonnes in a single year. Stopping milk production is not the same as stopping a production line in a car factory. All the cows which will be producing milk in 1984 are already in full production, and all those that are to be stopped producing will have to be slaughtered. However, beef and veal are also products which receive support from the Community, and to the best of my knowledge, Commissioners, the Community budget for 1984 makes no provision for a collapse in beef and veal prices in the event of our taking ill-considered action in the dairy sector. I would remind any of you who are sceptical about this budgetary problem that beef and veal are covered by Community commitments and that if you want to impose budgetary restrictions on milk, and find that a million cows are slaughtered as a result, you will have this additional problem on your hands. I do not address these remarks exclusively to the British contingent, I am not that selective, but I do wish that people would just think things through and remember what agriculture is when dealing with it. What happens to one type of product affects all the others. If we produce less milk, the land will still be there and it will perhaps be turned over to the production of cereals or meat. This, too, should be borne in mind.

The national quotas of total Community production will be based on deliveries in 1981. That was one of the most difficult decisions to take. It means that the sacrifices to be made in terms of volume, the reductions in national production, vary from country to country. It is true, we have not gone for cuts across the board. The main reason for this is that 1981, which becomes our base year, was the year when the guarantee thresholds were established. How is it that

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the guarantee threshold was not seen not only as a mechanism which would push prices down if volumes increased excessively but also as a warning, a signal to the Member States to address themselves to the fact that they faced the prospect of milk surpluses? It would have been impossible to get those countries whose milk production has increased since 1981 at a much slower rate than the Community average to accept that they were going to pay as much as the others for the surpluses. That would have been enough to bring about the collapse of the Community. The growth-rates between 1981 and 1983 range from 4% to 14%. No one could have persuaded the countries with the slowest growth-rates that they should share the cost of the surpluses equally with the others. It is also painful, I know, for the countries with the fastest growth-rates. However, in my opinion, we could not have reached an agreement without their acceptance.

Now to the method. We have opted for regions rather than countries, since the concept that we are proposing to the supreme European authority — and your opinion on this point will be invaluable — is the 'region'. It is evolving somewhat in its definition according to the types of problem and product concerned — the regions are not always the same — but at least it is recognized and has been used for various other components of Community policy. The main thing is that the definition and the criteria should be *communautaires*. Everyone was agreed on that.

I would add, in passing, that every single member of the Council of Ministers for Agriculture rejected the possibility of running the slightest risk of 'renationalization' of the common agricultural policy, if only in the milk sector. We have sought to eliminate this risk, and our reason for proposing this diversified system — for which we hope to receive support in your opinion in the approach to next week's final decision — is that we considered it physically impossible to do otherwise.

Hence the idea of having either a system of individual quotas or a system of quotas per dairy, depending on the adjustments needed in the various regions. Since it is of course likely that the system of quotas per dairy will be a little less efficient, with surplus production and decreases cancelling each other out, we considered it logical to propose at the same time that the super-levy should be higher for dairies. We are therefore proposing 100%, whereas in the case of individuals it is 75%, thus partly counterbalancing the advantage of flexibility.

The Community rules on administration of quota transfers have yet to be defined, but we are all conscious on the one hand that too much latitude cannot be allowed and on the other hand that quotas must be transferable under conditions defined by the Community, so as to avoid total ossification of our productive apparatus.

I should like, if I may, to add a philosophical observation on this subject. The few delegations, including that from my country, which argued against individual quotas and for quotas at a slightly higher level were motivated by extreme fear of excessive administration of the system. And if you will allow me to make a comment which will perhaps be found ungracious, prejudiced and provocative — at all events, it is now as a free citizen that I express my feelings, rather than as President of the Agriculture Council, in which capacity I have no authority to do so — I would add that, when confronted with a serious situation, one needs the extreme ingenuousness of a diehard to have a sudden access of confidence in State administration and believe that one can administer the right of 1 700 000 dairy farmers to produce milk. My socialist convictions have made me ponder much more deeply on the relationship between the State and the economy, which is not, in my view, automatically reprehensible simply because I am a socialist. The limitation is that, although the State may know how to administer, which is its role, it does not know how to produce, and never has. This has been demonstrated, and we no longer expect it. The role of the State is to regulate flows, and that is a considerable task in itself. Unlike the diehards, I have no complexes about this. Having given a good deal of thought to all the experiments in this field, my attitude to excessive administration and bureaucracy is one of calculated distrust based on experience and firmly established in my thinking, particularly since I expect more and better things from a more interventionist State.

That is how I am able, on the basis of the thinking behind my convictions, to explain to those of you who are fundamentally committed to the very legitimate convictions that go to make up conservatism that if you were true to them, even in the administration of the dairy sector, you would take fewer risks.

One should be consistent in one's thinking.

I am sorry if this parenthesis has been rather provocative, but I consider it important not only to exercise pragmatism in seeking solutions to our urgent problems but also to consider one's actions in the light of one's philosophical and social perception of things. That is the approach that I have adopted as a militant and as a minister in my country. As President-in-Office, I have listened, weighed things up, proposed and been gratified to find that my overall proposals have been accepted. Probably because, pragmatically, they corresponded to what we were capable of doing, irrespective of all philosophical frames of reference.

In addition to making a choice of method, we of course also have to envisage the need for supporting measures.

Rocard

One cannot impose such a drastic change on European milk production without giving some help for adjustment, to cover the transitional phase. We have accordingly proposed — and here again, these are only proposals — that the aid to small producers should be continued for two years and, most important, that the Community socio-structural directives that we are reviewing should continue to allow the possibility of granting finance for modernization of holdings, including dairy farms. The fact that we are limiting the volume of production does not eliminate the need for modern, efficient holdings, albeit subject to production ceilings; on the contrary, I would say that it increases the need. Improved productivity is crucial to incomes. It must therefore be achievable and provision must be made for financing it. These are the main transitional measures.

In our analysis of these problems, and in this outline agreement, we deliberately decided to exclude two problems in which we considered that the strictly technical aspects were far outweighed by the political implications. The Agriculture Council accordingly decided to transfer one of these — the particular case of Ireland — direct to the European Council. The other is the tax on oils and fats, and we shall be reverting to it when we have completed our product-by-product deliberations.

Before I come to the subject of Ireland, I should like to say a few words about the tax on oils and fats. To my amazement, we have entered upon a holy war here. As a more or less cheerful agnostic, I am at a loss to understand. I can only say that we are open to all suggestions for an alternative scheme of raising 600 million ECU to tide us over the bleak transitional period until ratification by the national Parliaments of our 10 States restores order by matching Europe's resources to its needs.

We have no intention of committing an assault on anyone. In my view, a tax charged equally on Community products and imports, in other words a tax on consumption, is fairly neutral from an economic viewpoint. At the rate envisaged, as everyone knows, it will have little economic effect; it cannot be made out to be an assault on anyone, and I have even tried to explain this to various American friends, who acknowledge that, assuming no increase in the 6% rate, this is no drastic measure.

Consequently, if the European Parliament could help us to dispel the holy war atmosphere, we could perhaps bring a calmer approach to the problem.

Now a few words about the very serious Irish situation. Ireland is one of the countries where milk production rose substantially between 1981 and 1983, so that its interests are not at all suited by the choice of 1981 as the base year. This is extremely saddening. It is the outcome of the calculated risk taken by Ireland in choosing to accede to the European Economic Community. Ireland does not have a very

strong industrial base and I am sure that the national leaders must have been aware of the risks that they were taking in joining a Community where there was free trade in industrial goods. The effect of competition has been devastating and Ireland has lost a quarter of its industrial capacity, more or less as a direct result of competition from within the Community.

The compensation for this was the opportunity given to Ireland, through the rules of our common agricultural policy, of making the best and, if possible, unlimited use of its most abundant resource, which is grass. And now that is to end. The scale of the effect of this on Ireland's strongest production activity, the main component of its gross national product, is such that many of the European ministers recognize that we should consider the political and qualitative implications (quantification would be impossible), taking a view not confined to the purely budgetary and accounting aspects.

Ladies and gentlemen, there you have the essentials of what has been outlined. Your time is precious and, while I shall be at your disposal for other occasions, I do not propose now to discuss the prospects for the future that we could open up not only for the common agricultural policy and European farming in general but indeed for milk in particular. Consider what we could do if our production and especially our processing techniques could be adjusted quickly enough to shift the emphasis from dried milk and butter to cheese, fresh products, yoghurt, and the various other forms in which fresh or new milk products are consumed, for which there is much more scope on the market.

It is not an agreement among losers facing a wholly and exclusively sombre outlook that we have concluded and submitted to the higher Community authorities; it is an outline agreement on ways and means of getting through what is only a bad phase. But if the world returns to better financial health and if our dairy farmers and processing industries manage to make the best of this bad phase by adapting speedily and redoubling their commercial dynamism, with support from a Commission itself displaying a more dynamic approach to export markets, I would say that we are not going to see the story of the steel industry all over again and that even dairy farming still has a big future. That is my opinion.

Ladies and gentlemen, I consider these two conditional agreements to be very important, perhaps not so much for their actual content as for the fact that they have cleared the ground for the European Council. Be that as it may, they do not exhaust the subject. We have all the other products to review, and we shall be meeting again on Friday and Saturday. Stakhanov is dead, I know, but, on the Agriculture Council, the influence of the work-rates he imposed lives on.

Rocard

The price negotiations cannot be completed until a later stage, since we must first deal with the dossiers on inter-product price balancing in ECU, validation by Community decisions at the Summit and balancing with national prices, in the light of the dismantling of negative monetary compensatory amounts and the various national governments' analyses of the results following the European decisions and the proposals that they submit to the Commission. All proposals really come from the Commission, but it listens to national suggestions and, as I am able to testify, even takes account of some of them.

At all events, these two agreements mark the beginning of the end of a period of uncertainty for farmers. Admittedly, they do not all have cause to rejoice, but at least there is a balance in these agreements and the dismantling of the monetary compensatory amounts puts an end to market distortions. We are heading for a stricter and more reliable management of markets.

I conclude by affirming my belief that these agreements remove the spectre of renationalization of agricultural policies, since they restore market unity and provide a *communautaire* solution to correct the imbalance on the market in milk — including arrangements under which the Commission can deal with the most serious cases, using the reserve allocated for this purpose.

The prospects for general agreement at the Brussels Summit have improved a little. There remain other very onerous problems, not least the budgetary problems. You have the opportunity to formulate a synoptic opinion, covering all the problems. The Ministers for Agriculture have no such opportunity and, as far as the other matters are concerned, all they can do is either hope or pray, depending on their personal convictions. At all events, without these preparatory agreements, I am not sure that it would have been possible to reach agreement at the Summit, and that represents the full extent of our pride in our work.

(Loud and prolonged applause)

President. — Mr President-in-Office of the Council, I thank you for your statement, for the information you have conveyed and for the ideas you have imparted to us.

Mr Vernimmen (S). — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should just like to take this opportunity of thanking the President of the Council for the great deal of information he has given us, but in fact — and this is, of course, a pity — his statement has not increased the credibility of the debate that we are now having to hold on, for example, what I consider to be an excellent report, Mr Marck's report.

The Commission has been calling for the dismantling of the MCA system for years. For some years now, Parliament, too, has felt that there is an urgent need for something to be done about this system. In the Council of Ministers and even at summit conferences, lip service has been paid to the principle of dismantling since 1978, but when it comes to the point, when agreement actually has to be reached, the countries with strong currencies, principally the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands, shrink back — although this does not seem to be the case now, and we are pleased about that — before the very serious implications this move will have, especially because of the shift in the pattern of trade it will bring.

Let me give you some examples of the changes. In 1968, Italy imported almost twice as much milk and cream from France as from the Federal Republic. In 1982, it imported almost five times as much from Western Germany as from France. The change began as early as 1970, only one year or even only a few months after the introduction of MCAs. Since 1970, West Germany's share of the sugar market has quadrupled, from 5% to about 21%, while France's share has fallen from 71% to 42%. The greatest upheaval has been in the pigmeat sector, which undoubtedly explains some of the widespread dissatisfaction among French producers. Italy's imports of pigmeat from the Netherlands rose substantially, primarily at the expense of France, Ireland and, to a lesser extent, Denmark. Furthermore, we know that the MCAs have frequently — I repeat, frequently — given rise to serious fraudulent practices.

Mr Marck's report, which I repeat is a good one, makes this sufficiently clear, in my opinion, and I shall certainly have no difficulty in approving the amended report, the compromise proposal. I am very pleased, Mr President, with what you have said here, although I would refer in passing to the very serious financial implications which our budgetary specialists will be facing.

The second problem I want to discuss concerns Mr Goerens's report. We have been aware of this problem for years, the problem of introducing a tax on oils and fats. I personally have serious doubts about the effect of the proposed measure. In a free-market economy, taxes imposed solely on consumption — because it is the consumer who pays the tax — seem almost medieval to me.

As I see it, the idea is at all costs to make farmers believe that this arrangement will lead to an increase in butter consumption and that this will to some extent alleviate the major problem of surplus production. If Mr Goerens said that the sole aim was to raise more money, I might well agree; but I have grave doubts about the contention that the proposed measure will stimulate butter consumption. Butter

Vernimmen

consumption or margarine consumption is no longer, as it used to be, a question of social status but, in my view, one of environment and habits.

Would it not therefore be better to give serious thought to the tens and hundreds of millions the large multinationals spend advertising margarine, and should we not ask the scientists to prove for once their constant claim that margarine is so good and butter so bad for the consumer's health? I believe that this is very important and that we cannot fail to have doubts about the way in which Mr Goerens deals with this problem.

If we want to stimulate the consumption of butter, it would be better to reduce its price slightly. If we increase the price of margarine today, there will still be a difference. I have my doubts about this measure being appropriate on social grounds.

Mr Früh (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, to begin with I should like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the President-in-Office of the Council. One thing is, I feel, undeniable: Rarely has this House witnessed such a fundamental analysis of the Community's agricultural policy as that which has just been delivered in these 40 minutes. The President-in-Office of the Council has clearly shown that the Community only came about through the agricultural policy and that the Community's position in the world between the two superpowers has its origins in this policy.

I am indebted to him for such an analysis. He has, one hopes, been able to arouse an awareness among many Members of the great importance of the agricultural policy debate, in conjunction, of course, with the budget difficulties. A continuation of the agricultural policy, Community enlargement, new policies to complement existing ones with the object of reinforcing the Community's collective evolution and enhancing its position — none of these things is possible within the current financial framework, and this has to be acknowledged. I hope we shall find a way out of this difficult situation, which has, as a result of the Stuttgart and Athens Summits been amply demonstrated to all and sundry. Hence I feel I can express the gratitude of all members of the House to the Council for the latter's success in at least indicating a way forward. There have been no Council decisions, but we are, after all, well aware that such was utterly impossible and that the Community institutions would not have been empowered to take decisions of this nature. The Council has thus demonstrated, by dint of considerable effort and in a multitude of sittings, how one can break the deadlock.

I would like to comment briefly on the monetary compensatory amounts. Just how important they have become over the years may be gauged from the fact that the initial remarks of the President-in-Office of

the Council were devoted to this issue, concerning which he demonstrated the tremendous efforts required of the two countries primarily concerned — France and the Federal Republic — in order to reach an agreement.

The much-reviled system of monetary compensatory amounts has in fact achieved a very positive result, for it should be borne in mind that we have, over the past few years, tried to attain the unattainable. We have adopted common agricultural prices — and this in a Community with diverse economic policies and their resultant differences in inflation rates. In the absence of this system, which has required tremendous efforts both from the Commission and from all other Community institutions, the CAP and the common price policy would have collapsed long ago. That much should be stated clearly at the outset.

The system functions on the basis of the most disparate statistics. They demonstrate one thing and oppose it with another, in which it is by no means certain that they all add up. I have heard, Mr Dalsager, that a Commission paper on this matter exists, albeit in only one language version — it has, regrettably, been neither translated nor published — which shows, fairly reliably, that all the numerous distortions attributed to the monetary compensatory amounts are a myth. I would respectfully inquire as to whether such a paper in fact exists. Perhaps we could have a look at it sometime.

(Applause)

Furthermore — I may be allowed to add this comment, for it merely echoes the sentiments already conveyed to us by the rapporteur — we welcome this agreement on the monetary compensatory amounts, however difficult it promises to be, for we have simply had enough of this constant barrage of mutual recriminations, we have to live together, and we naturally are opposed to all forms of distortion. As a result of this structuring of the monetary compensatory amounts, on the one hand, and the reduced rates of inflation which have, thank God, come about in the interval, we are on the way towards a monetary union. This will have the effect of bringing us quite a step forward. It would probably be a help to us if the United Kingdom were to adhere to the monetary union and so contribute the strength of its currency to help achieve a uniform solution.

(Applause)

My final comments have to do with a theme which the President-in-Office of the Council depicted as a well-nigh religious conflict, that is to say, the fats tax. I am quite aware that it will not be an easy task — even within the ranks of my own group — but the comments that have been made in the House ...

(Interjection by Mr Blumenfeld)

Früh

The adoption of a fats tax to stimulate butter consumption and make butter a more viable product in competition with other fat products is based on totally erroneous premises.

This is the issue: the Commission is struggling to make good a financial shortfall ...

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

Mr President, before I began, Mr Colleselli informed me that he would not be speaking and would cede his speaking-time to me.

Anyone who believes that a tax can be levied on fat with the object of bestowing a more competitive edge on butter is deluding himself. I, too, know that the problem cannot be resolved in this way. Our concern is to help the Commission cover its financial shortfall, especially as it assures us — and there are sufficient legal experts in the Commission — that the steps it has proposed are in conformity with GATT regulations. I shall refrain from any further elaboration on this point.

Secondly — and I now come to the religious war — we are dealing with the following. If we, having a common agricultural policy, are incapable of working out a common negotiating position *vis-à-vis* third countries who have already stated their attitude in no uncertain terms, I am convinced that we shall fail to resolve the issue. Just as the monetary compensatory amounts are designed to cleanse and improve the Community and the CAP from within, so a tax on fats must help us as a negotiating position *vis-a-vis* third countries.

(Applause)

That is the function of the fats tax. I do not wish to implement such a policy. I merely want to show the Community's capacity to adopt a common position! Those who constantly talk of family farms, of land-related production, really ought to eschew such entreaties if they cannot see their way to adopting this policy and instead grumble about a trade war. No one wants a trade war, least of all we, but we must have an equitable position before we can negotiate with each other. The United States here, the European Community there: then we shall find a suitable solution both for agriculture and for the Community.

(Applause)

Mr Simmonds (ED). — Mr President, in view of the approaching hour I hope you will defend my speaking time as rigorously as you have done that of the previous speakers!

May I begin by welcoming the breadth and the depth of Mr Rocard's speech and the vision he showed today. It is extremely refreshing to hear a President-in-Office of Council speaking with such vision ...

Mr President, it is my duty today to speak on behalf of my group on the milk sector. It is no secret that my

group would have preferred to contain the expansion of milk production by a system of pricing. It is only very reluctantly that we accept the bureaucracy of a quota system. I have to say also that we have very grave reservations ...

(The President called for silence in the Chamber)

... I do hope that Mr Früh will listen to me as carefully as I listened to him!

May I say that we, the European Democratic Group, do not like having the year 1981 set as the base year for quotas. Apart from that, I wish to address some very particular questions to the Commissioner on the quota system. I will put them very slowly.

Firstly, when and how quickly does he believe that a system of quotas can be brought in? I believe that there is a very considerable bureaucratic exercise to be indulged in before the quota system can be started in any country, and I do not believe that it would be appropriate to start a quota system in any individual country before it can be applied universally throughout the Community. That would be unfair.

Secondly, what steps do you propose to police the imposition of quotas? Every Member State fears that other will cheat on the rules whilst at the same time looking for every opportunity to do so themselves. I do ask you to pay particular attention to this. In the interim period what price, Mr Commissioner, will be paid for milk before quotas are brought in? Is there enough money in the 1984 budget to cover our responsibilities in this field in that interim period until quotas have actually started to bring down milk production? I do hope that in your summing up, Mr Commissioner, you will be able to answer those questions.

There are two further points on which I would very briefly like to comment. Firstly, I was very glad to hear from the Commission this morning that there will be no transfer from other budgetary headings to pay for agricultural support in the 1984 budget.

Finally, may I add my voice to those today who have opposed the idea of an oils-and-fats tax. In my country, we cannot understand the farcical economics of the proposal to increase the cost of margarine, for instance, solely to try and stimulate the consumption of expensive butter. I look forward to the answers to my questions from the Commissioner in his summing up.

Mr Adamou (COM). — *(GR)* Mr President, from among the matters on our agenda I shall speak mainly about olive-oil production, because the cultivation of olives is very important for Greece in that it occupies some 200 000 families. Indeed, if we bear in mind that harvesting the olives and exporting the oil constitute a productive cycle that covers over half the year, it is apparent that there are possibilities for the seasonal employment of thousands of workers in addi-

Adamou

tion to the olive-growers themselves, a fact of especial importance at a time when unemployment in our country has topped the level of 300 000.

Moreover, the olive grows in infertile regions not suited to other forms of cultivation. Despite all this, olive-growing is passing through a crisis. The incomes of growers are falling year by year, because EEC prices, which are determined not on the basis of production costs, the level of inflation and the cost of living, but on the basis of the price of seed oils, have resulted in the abandonment of thousands of olive-groves. In parallel, there is increasing competition against olive oil from seed oils that are imported to the tune of tens of thousands of tonnes, and which, because of their lower price and the propaganda issued by their importers, are attracting the consumer. Whereas Greece produces 200 000-300 000 tonnes of olives per year, a quantity sufficient for the needs of the Greek market, there is consumption amounting to a further 150 000 to 200 000 tonnes of seed oils imported by Unilever *via* its subsidiary known as Elais, so that olive oil is in surplus.

All these facts make it necessary to support and develop olive production, all the more so since olive oil, particularly Greek oil, is one of the healthiest foods and is an antidote for the avoidance of cardiovascular disorders.

For all these reasons, Mr President, we maintain that the following measures must be put into effect :

First, the price of olive oil should be improved on the basis of the cost of production, and its beneficial properties should be widely publicized so as to increase consumption.

Secondly, imported fats and oils should be taxed.

Thirdly, imports of oil-yielding seeds to Greece and their support in Northern Europe should be restricted.

Fourthly, the cultivation of olives should be supported and extended.

Fifthly, support on behalf of olive oil should be granted to the cooperatives, which can monitor both the quality and the quantity of oil produced, and not to the packaging processors, who can perpetrate frauds, as was the case in Italy.

With this opportunity, I should like to point out to Mr Battersby that the principle of collective responsibility is undemocratic. Just because a few frauds have been uncovered, this does not mean that olive-growers in general are to be regarded as suspect. That would be like saying that because Lord Elgin stole the marbles from the Acropolis in Athens, all lords are thieves.

The Vitale report has many positive features and we shall vote in favour of it, whereas we disagree with the report by Mr Stella. Here, I want to draw attention to a Community practice that is unacceptable. Last year in Greece, 50 000 tonnes of apricots were buried and the

EEC paid compensation of 17 drachmas per kilo. The producers had asked for 22 drachmas, while processors were offering 12 drachmas, to produce juices and preserves. We proposed that instead of paying burial compensation of 17 drachmas, the EEC should pay a subsidy of 10 drachmas to the processors. The producers would then get their 22 drachmas, while the EEC would have saved some 700 million drachmas. However, the EEC rejected this and, worse still, at the very time when the Greek producers in Corinth were burying their apricots, other apricots were being imported into Greece from Morocco, Tunisia and elsewhere. That is why Greek farmers say with bitter sarcasm, and quite rightly too, 'See'! The EEC of the monopolies!

IN THE CHAIR : MR ESTGEN

Vice-president

President. — Since voting-time has now arrived, the debate is adjourned and will be resumed after the voting.

5. Votes ¹**IN THE CHAIR : MR DANKERT**

President

Luster report (Doc. 1-1456/83 : Freedom of education in the European Community)

Section I, paragraph 1 : Amendments Nos 9 and 10

Mrs Viehoff (S). — (NL) Mr President, I have been informed that my Amendment No 9 has not been properly translated into German. A new translation was to be distributed, and I do not know whether this has already taken place. I would therefore point out to our German-speaking colleagues that the translation is not in order.

6. Agricultural regulations (contd)

Mr Nielsen (L). — (DA) Mr President, it is my task to present the views of the Liberal Group on the current questions surrounding the Community's agricultural policy, first and foremost the milk policy, which, on the one hand, has been the subject of long debate and, on the other hand, has acquired a very topical character following the most recent work of the Council of Ministers. We discussed these matters in the Liberal Group last week. We spent a long time working on it, and we have a number of views which we are pleased to see to a reasonable extent reflected in the decisions the Council of Ministers has provisionally taken. Our group voices a certain optimism

¹ See Annex.

Nielsen

on the grounds that the ministers of agriculture have succeeded in reaching the first stage in an outline agreement on how to tackle the problems which have arisen. When I put it in this way, Mr President, I do not say too much, since it remains for the agriculture ministers to debate matters on Friday and Saturday and finally for the European Council to take them up before we can say that any actual solution has been achieved.

I should like to say on behalf of the Liberal Group that we are proud of the fact that the Liberals have made many a contribution to this effort to resolve one of the gravest crises the Community has ever faced. Indeed, in most of the governments of the individual countries, there is a prominent liberal representation, and I would point out that, among the preparations to what has now occurred, there was a special contribution from the European Liberal Association on the occasion of the Epiphany meeting in Stuttgart this year. A large number of European Liberal ministers in office were present at this gathering, and they had a discussion of the kind which can take place among party colleagues in which a basis was found for preventing the crisis in the Community, despite the many differences, from leading to a weakening of the Community. We Liberals thus have grounds for being relatively optimistic, and, as I have said, we find what we agreed on at a group meeting in Paris last week to a certain extent reflected in the provisional agreement now reached.

We agreed that it is necessary in the present circumstances to introduce a quantity system, if I may call it that — i.e., that the price guarantee would be tied to a certain quantity of milk. But there is to be sure a major flaw in the provisional agreement reached by the ministers, something we on the Liberal side would have preferred to see put differently: for we think it can only be right and proper policy, when a quota is imposed, that the producers should be paid a reasonable price for it. Let them have a price increase such that the development of their incomes keeps pace with that of other groups and can remain in step with the costs incurred by producers in the milk sector. There must be the logical connection that, when the quantities for which prices are guaranteed are limited, the guaranteed price must also be realistic and must cover costs and afford the producers a reasonable income. This demand, to which we Liberals attach great importance, has not been fulfilled by the ministers to date.

In the purely technical sense, we ourselves proposed the same as is now being proposed namely, that 1981 plus 1% should be taken as the starting-point for the allocation of quotas to the Member States. We are thus in agreement on this point. We are also greatly satisfied that the monetary compensatory amounts are to be brought under control. My party colleague, Karel

De Gucht, has already dealt with this, and the regularization which is to be undertaken here coincides closely with what we have been urging.

The group has also given its support to the report presented by our group member, Mr Goerens. It is also our wish that a longer-term solution to the problems be sought through an increase in the Community's resources.

I would add that we should also note with satisfaction some things which have not been adopted, but I can only mention two of them. One is that, while matters are to be regulated, reasonably simple lines will be adhered to. The ministers have not favoured a host of exemptions on all kinds of grounds. That is only right and proper. We must avoid these exemptions if the arrangements are to function. We must also note that the social elements in the milk policy, which are not the concern of the agricultural policy, are not to be extended but remain unchanged for two years. That is as far as we have got provisionally.

Mr President, I would like to voice the hope of the Liberal Group that the Council will succeed in reaching agreement during the next few meetings on a final result which will point to the future, both for the Community and for the Community's farmers.

IN THE CHAIR : MR ESTGEN*Vice President*

Mr Aigner, Chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control. — (DE) I should like to comment very briefly on the Battersby report. A total of 26 amendments to this report have now been tabled and so we have achieved our object of demonstrating, in the form of an interim report, the difficulties with which the control function is confronted, even for those who are directly concerned. We have been successful in demonstrating this and we intend to deliberate these amendments painstakingly in committee. I may, therefore, by agreement with the rapporteur, urge that the report be sent back to committee.

In dealing with this report we were confronted with two major difficulties of an opposing nature. Proponents of one viewpoint held that our efforts represented a too ambitious, too intensive control with almost discriminatory overtones, while proponents of the opposite viewpoint held that our control fell short of their ideal and that too much money was being allocated to non-viable schemes. I should like to extend our heartfelt thanks, first to our rapporteur, but also to the Italian authorities whose task it is to oversee the allocation of this money. Heaven knows they have developed tremendous intuitive powers, and I can only say that we must continue to lend our support to such endeavours. What is really needed is a truly

Aigner

comprehensive control so that those who use this money correctly are not put to a disadvantage *vis-à-vis* those elements who attempt to obtain money through fraudulent means and falsification.

I repeat therefore, that in agreement with the rapporteur I request that this report be sent back to committee, where all the amendments will be painstakingly examined with all concerned so that, as soon as the Court of Auditors has completed its investigations, we can, we hope, present our definitive report to the House in plenary sitting.

President. — We have taken note of your statement.

Mr Kaspereit (DEP). — (FR) Mr President, since this morning we have listened to a great many speeches. From the Commission we had a speech of a technical nature, but that is only natural. However, I was expecting something different from the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers. He is an able man, an excellent speaker. Well, he certainly had a great deal to say, but to tell the truth I was little the wiser when he had finished. And certainly no more so than when he appeared before the Committee on Agriculture last week.

I do not propose to dwell on the problem of monetary compensatory amounts, which were the subject of Mr Marck's report. My group has no observations to make. Certainly, the problem needed to be resolved, but I cannot say if this is the best solution. It is at least a solution of sorts.

Nevertheless, after what Mr Dalsager had to say this morning, I do wish to sound a warning note about what might happen if other currencies were to be devalued. We must avoid a situation where, by creating only negative MCAs and by basing everything on the strongest currency, we would in effect be setting up a Mark Area within the Community. By doing this we would be creating a further problem which we should not be in a position to cope with.

As regards milk, we remain opposed to all the proposals that are being put forward. For what is it that is involved here? The Commission is proposing measures of biblical simplicity and in my view too elementary by half. There is too much milk, too much is being produced; the answer is perfectly simple: cut production, freeze prices, increase the co-responsibility levy, and hey presto! the problem is solved. At least, they say it is solved. But when the President-in-Office of the Council says, somewhat smugly, that the time of uncertainty for the farmers is over, he is telling no lies: sure enough, the uncertainty is over, but what the farmers are certain of now is their misfortune, the misfortune that is facing them as from today and from which they are unlikely to find any relief.

The fact is that no attempt has yet been made to come to grips with the fundamental problem. We

resort to stop-gap measures, to freezing prices — as I was saying just a moment ago — we strive to keep within a budget drawn up we all know how and about which we had some words to say in the last part-session, but no one will say what they are going to do next. What policy has been worked out for the future? We are waiting for the answers.

Our position is therefore quite clear, but we shall go on repeating the same thing as long as is necessary in the hope that eventually we shall be heard. It is necessary, first of all, to observe a few rules and to grapple with the problem of dairy surpluses — why we have them. When I say observe the rules, I mean look into the problem first and then take whatever measures are necessary to prevent unfair competition to animal fats from vegetable and marine fats. It is imperative that these products, which at present are not subject to any tax, are at last taxed in order to restore an element of fair competition.

It is wrong that we should continue to import on preferential terms into the United Kingdom dairy products from New Zealand. The quantities being imported are enormous and doing away with them would go a long way towards reducing the burden of dairy surpluses in the Community.

It is wrong that we do not have a proper policy on exports and food aid in the dairy sector. Let no one try to tell me that we cannot export: it was a colleague of mine who used to sit in this House that said once, that we seem to have no trouble in persuading the blacks in Africa to drink Coca-Cola; so why could we not persuade them to drink milk and thus increase the consumption of our European milk? But it is too easy to say that they do not want to.

Also we must urgently put our minds to the question of substitute cereal products. This seems to be a forbidden topic and the Commission is maintaining almost total silence on it — at any rate the Council is. The Commission has nevertheless recently come to understand the need to enter into discussions with the United States within the framework of GATT, in compliance with Article 28, in order to seek at least a partial solution to this problem. And what do we find out now? That the Council has refused to enter into any such discussions. So I ask myself: what is going on? Are they trying to hoodwink us, are they trying to make fools of some people? What I do know, and I can see it for myself, is that, rather than looking after the interests of the millions of farmers involved in dairy production in the Community, bearing in mind the difficulties we are facing at the moment, time and effort is being wasted on drawing up technocratic measures that concern themselves more with products than with people.

And so, Mr President, our position will, as I say, be quite straightforward — and I will close on this

Kaspereit

point: we shall not be voting for the proposals on milk contained in the Woltjer report; we reject the technocratic quotas policy being forced on us; we are calling for a humanitarian policy and for the proper implementation of the Treaty of Rome in regard to agriculture. This is the only way in which we can get out of our present difficulties and steer the Community away from the dangerous course along which it is presently heading.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) The Honourable Member who has just spoken should realize that there are large population groups in this world who cannot take milk and who would quite simply die if we fed them excessive quantities of milk. So it is not as easy as that. I just wanted to point that out.

Mr Gendebien (CDI). — (FR) Mr President, if the provisional agreements reached last Tuesday can be called historic, it is certainly not on account of their content. Their timing may indeed be a matter of some historical significance in that they raise the hope of seeing the Community come out of the decline it has been in for some time.

Having said that, it would be unacceptable if the Community were to be salvaged at the expense of the farmers. Why? Because, Commissioner, the farmers have already paid, and paid in two ways.

In the first place, farmers with small and medium-sized family holdings have not had a proper rise in income for several years.

Secondly, the farming community has lost 60 % of its jobs in the past twenty years, in other words one farm-worker for every minute. This is one of the results of the common agricultural policy, and in all this time who has benefited from this policy? Not the small and medium-sized farmers, but the agrifood sector, the large farms and the dairy factories.

Therefore, Mr President, Commissioner, our position is as follows: first, those concerned should maintain a humanitarian and socially-responsible attitude to farmers, particularly the small dairy producers, such as we have in Wallonia and in other regions of the Community.

Secondly, we should like to see the needs of particular regions being reflected in the decisions taken, and we believe in the need for direct or indirect income subsidies in regions with weaker structures.

In other words, we are saying no to the proposals for a virtual freeze on prices. These would inevitably mean ruin for further tens of thousands of farms throughout the Community. As for the specific problem of milk quotas I do not have the time to expound my views to you, save to say that I am totally against them on principle. However, if this system is adopted in the end, it is vital for it to be implemented selectively, taking into account three priorities: firstly, priority for

regions oriented towards and naturally specializing in dairy production; secondly, priority for land-based production and, thirdly, priority of the human aspects of the work unit. These are the only conditions on which the farming community will accept the quotas as a lesser evil.

Miss Quin (S). — Mr President, these are important reports that we have in front of us and, although they have been in part superseded by the events of this week, I for one am glad to be in a position to comment on these matters.

First of all, I would like to refer to the area of major concern, which is that of the milk sector and the decision that has been taken on quotas. I obviously welcome the fact that a step has been taken to stop the open-ended guarantee to buy in milk and thus create surpluses which, I believe quite rightly, have made the EEC so unpopular among our populations. However, British Labour Members in this Assembly do not like the idea of quotas as any kind of long-term solution. We believe that they can fossilize the situation and prevent necessary and desirable change; they can be difficult to administer; they can encourage inefficiency, which we are continually being told is a bad thing, and they do not have very good effects for consumers. Therefore, we believe that a long-term reform of the agricultural policy still is very necessary.

Irish Members of this House have pointed very eloquently to the difficulties that the quotas create for them. I do believe that the only way that their problem can really be tackled is by a long-term reform of the agricultural policy which does aim aid at those who actually need it rather than those who do not. However, it should be aid of a direct kind and it should also be accompanied by action on reducing prices over a reasonable period of time.

Mr Dalsager's statement this morning answered some questions but raised others. Certainly, I feel that I need more details about how the quotas are going to work and in particular how the reserve quota to deal with special difficulties is going to be implemented. Also, perhaps more details could be given to us about how exactly the aid envisaged for small farmers is going to operate.

On monetary compensatory amounts, I must say that I welcome the fact that these are to be abolished. I certainly do not like the way that they have been used in my own country to provide an unnecessary and completely unjustified tax on food.

On the question of oils and fats, there seems to be some uncertainty as to whether a tax is actually going to be introduced or not. I would like to reiterate that Labour Members are very much against such a tax. They are against it both as far as the principle is concerned and because we fear that once such a tax is

Quin

introduced, even at a low level, then there is a very dangerous precedent by which it may very well be increased in the future. Certainly, groups such as the European Community Consumers' Association have said that any effect — even a minor effect — on the consumption of margarine will adversely affect poor families and, in particular, the elderly. They conclude: 'an oils and fats tax would therefore be particularly regressive.'

I will conclude by referring again to the major decisions of this week. While tackling surpluses is a very important first step, I believe that it is just a first step and that the CAP remains a profoundly unattractive policy, which is unpopular among the poorer sections of our own populations and is also thoroughly disliked by our trading partners in both the developed and developing world. We need a new policy therefore which will help smaller farmers and farm workers, which will help poorer agricultural regions and which, finally, will help those less well-off sectors of our population who simply have to buy and eat food rather than produce it.

Mr Dalsass (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, in today's debate it is extremely difficult to give a precise opinion for the entire agricultural policy is in a state of flux, even taking account of the Commission's statement today, to the effect that it intends to maintain its original proposals and, for the moment at least, not to modify them. The situation, nevertheless, calls for a realistic appraisal and a recognition that something new has intervened. We are faced with what might be described as a preliminary decision in the Council of Agriculture Ministers on several important aspects of agricultural policy of which the milk sector and monetary compensatory amounts are but two. This testifies to the importance attributed to today's meeting of our Committee on Agriculture, in an effort to ponder the situation once more, and it is no less justified if we deliver no more than a very brief political commentary on both of these issues.

It is commendable to note that some progress is discernible on the issue of agricultural policy adaptation. For quite some time now we have been calling for a reform of the agricultural policy. This House voted last November on a motion for a resolution which demonstrated, in broad outlines, the manner in which the agricultural policy ought to be reformed. A quota system was to be adopted for the milk sector. However it also contained recommendations for dealing with specific situations. I would like to underline that here.

I must say that the news of a tentative agreement in the agricultural sector was greeted with a sigh of relief on my part. It seemed that matters were beginning to move at last and recognition of the need for a reform of the agricultural policy was finally gaining ground.

Tangible action can also contribute to the elimination of the preconceived ideas that the CAP squanders too many financial resources or that it merely gives rise to surpluses. A reform would free considerable sums, as we have just heard from the Commission, for use in other spheres. But another reason for my heaving a sigh of relief must be attributed to my anxiety. I remain anxious although we have embarked upon the right course.

We are aware of the different parameters applicable in each Member State. The Community spans Member States not self-sufficient in foodstuffs, on the one hand, and those producing large quantities destined for export, on the other. I am not advocating a discriminatory treatment of Member States. It goes without saying that a Community solution must be applicable to all.

Nevertheless any reform must, I feel, take account of the inherent inequalities within Member States. There will always be areas and regions within a country which are inherently arable and fertile and others in which agricultural activity can only be pursued in the face of considerable difficulty. The latter are the so-called 'mountainous and less-favoured areas'. Such areas are not in a position to make sacrifices of any consequence. Hence the need for farmers, precisely in such less-favoured areas, to remain and to continue to pursue their agricultural activities on environmental protection and ecological grounds. The prevention of even greater damage to the agricultural environment as a whole provides a further reason for their continued presence in such regions.

The ball would now appear to be in the Council's court. The task of taking greater account of the inherently weaker agricultural activity is now incumbent on Member State governments. We have seen that there is some small room for manoeuvre here. Let us hope that the opportunity can be seized. I would reiterate that a reform can only be considered equitable if it is aimed at stemming the surplus production emanating from the better-off regions enjoying both prolific and low-cost production and which are, therefore, in a position to make some sacrifices. For the moment I confess to being at a loss to gauge the ultimate effect of these reform proposals, for I have not got all of the relevant details.

I would, however, like to highlight the considerable significance of this tentative agreement within the Council of Ministers of Agriculture, for it has the merit, on the one hand, of removing a degree of uncertainty within farming circles whilst outlining in a somewhat more realistic framework, the degree of support which will be available henceforth. In such a context I welcome this reform and I would hope that it could soon be emulated by agreement in other spheres.

(Applause)

Mr Hord (ED). — Mr President, I rise to speak on behalf of my group on the subject of the oils and fats tax, and in particular the Goerens report. Earlier we heard Mr Rocard, who in his long speech was inclined to suggest that the oils and fats tax, so far as the Council debate was concerned, had turned into a holy war. I thought that he let the cat out of the bag by suggesting that the real issue was for the Community to find an extra 600 million ECU in order to assist the solvency of the agricultural policy. So it is in recognition of Mr Rocard's earlier comments and the overwhelming case against an oils and fats tax that we will hear no more of this absurd initiative.

But I think that what we have increasingly realized is that the proposal for an oils and fats tax is really an admission of failure on the part of the Commission to control agricultural expenditure. It is almost as if the Commission were intent on pulling a successful vegetable oils sector down into the mire with the common agricultural policy and other formal régimes covered by the CAP. Also, as Mr Rocard indicated earlier, the tax is clearly a measure to raise revenue to finance the high and excessive cost of the dairy sector.

One thing I think that we should get across as often as we can is that olive oil cannot be a substitute for vegetable oils. I think that this point should be well taken, particularly by the olive-oil lobby, because olive oil, apart from being a very expensive oil, has a specific flavour which would make it very expensive to utilize in the wide-ranging and important food-manufacturing sector.

I believe that an oils and fats tax can be described as irresponsible, discriminatory, damaging, inflationary, unfair and totally unacceptable. I submit that it is irresponsible because, firstly, it is a tax on the consumer only because the butter and butteroil sector is uncompetitive. Secondly, it is irresponsible because, amongst other oils, it taxes rape seed, which depends also on taxpayers' financial support. How absurd to place a tax on a product which relies for its existence and promotion on subsidies paid by the same people, namely the European taxpayers. Thirdly, it is irresponsible because olive oil — this delicate and expensive child of Mediterranean origin, which, although nurtured by some 700 million ECU of taxpayers' money every year, does not sell because of its high retail price — is itself also to be hit by the proposed oils and fats tax.

It is discriminatory because, firstly, it taxes margarine — which is the principal alternative to butter, which is expensive and uncompetitive with margarine — while butter is not to be taxed. Secondly, it is discriminatory because there is a substantial differential between the target price of rape seed and sunflower. It could, I suppose, be argued that this discriminates between the north and the south, the north producing the rape seed and the south producing sunflowers.

It is damaging, firstly, because it undermines very important food processing industries. The oilseed crushing industry is a very large and important industry. Unfortunately, that same industry lives in an extremely uncertain world. It does not know from one year to the next whether it is going to be crushing rape seed or anything else. If the Commission deems that there will be a substantial reduction in the subsidies to rape seed, no rape seed is available for processing, the seed-crushing industries are very severely hit and they stand to lose a lot of redundant equipment used for the processing of rape seed. Secondly it is damaging because it would cause the food manufacturers, particularly the manufacturers of cakes, biscuits, crisps and snacks, ice cream and many other foods, to put up their prices, with a consequent reduction in consumption and the prospect of more unemployment.

It is inflationary because it is a tax on the consumer and it is not capable of being absorbed. All Europe should be waging a war on inflation, and this 600 million ECU tax is an inflation-maker and must as such be condemned.

It is unfair because the oil-seed processing industry and associated manufacturers have put their production onto a highly efficient basis and cost increases of finished products have been markedly lower than butter and butter oil. So this is a tax, amongst other things, on efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

It is totally unacceptable because I believe that the people of Europe are not prepared to tolerate an unrealistic and abominable tax proposal such as the oils and fats tax. If the Community really does wish to start earning some respect in Europe, it should abandon the oils and fats tax proposals totally, utterly and immediately!

Mr Vitale (COM). — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, speaking at the last meeting of the Committee on Agriculture, the French Minister, Mr Rocard, whom we heard a short while ago, said that we were paying today for the errors of the past.

Because we have known this for many years, what we expected from the Council was — certainly — a reduction of the milk surpluses, but a reduction within a general framework of reform of the agricultural policy which would not only free the budget from the burden of the surpluses but would start us on the way to correcting past errors. In other words, the answer we were looking to was to the question: How can we reduce the surpluses and at the same time correct the imbalances and distortions we have inherited from the past, starting with the producers and consumers, who are the innocent victims of this past and should not be made to pay the price of our change of course? In our view, the Council's proposals do not furnish an answer to this question.

Vitale

Already the Commission's preceding proposals, laying down quotas for milk output, had the effect of perpetuating the existing imbalance, a situation in which no distinction was made between milk which could be sold in the market and that which went for intervention buying, i.e., between production which corresponded to demand and production which could only be maintained because it was financed by the Community.

The present proposals, in which the 'ceiling' for milk production is raised, do not resolve the nub of the problem, which lies in equal treatment being accorded in totally disparate situations. That is the crux! It is true that for 1984 there is a reserve which can be shared out to meet these various exigencies, but that is only postponing the solution, because when later the 'ceiling' is again put at a little over 97 000 000 quintals, these reserve margins will shrink and the present imbalances will reappear in all their magnitude.

Add to this that the whole operation will be paid for by all the producers in the Community, with the co-responsibility rate raised to 3%, and by all the consumers, with a levy on vegetable fats. Enough to show that the compromise quotas are in no relation to the promised reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, that these decisions do not untangle, but simply cut — at the expense of the workers in the countryside and the towns, and particularly in the economically weakest areas — the 'knot' which, as Mr Rocard said, we have inherited from the past.

We remain of the opinion that, while a genuine reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is needed to reduce the surpluses, the main thing to do is to strike at milk — not because it is produced or where it is produced, but at the point where it is presented for intervention, i.e., at the point when it becomes a burden on the Community budget. It should have been penalized at this stage by reducing the price paid at intervention.

These considerations were not accepted by the Council, which chose instead to opt for quotas. But even if the quotas are reached, and it seems that they have already been reached, we still have to find other means, well beyond the temporary and skinking reserve of 600 000 tonnes, to deal with anomalous situations, which we all know about and which have been discussed here, in Greece, Italy and, in a different way, in Ireland.

Even on the compensatory amounts, the Commission's proposals, although they meet the justified calls for reducing positive compensatory amounts (a rather ingenious proposal has been made by the German Federal Republic), have aspects which may prove troublesome. Admittedly, they allow greater flexibility in prices expressed in national currencies, but what inflationary effects are likely to arise? What contribution to strengthening the ECU does this represent, when in fact we are merely returning to the old monetary

'snake' and cutting of agriculture from any possible process of convergence of monetary policies, which we need so much? Above all, what will be the cost to the Community's coffers of the compensation to German farmers from 1985 on? We are told that the Federal Republic will pay part of it. But which part? This is a parliament and we need clear statements. We need to have all the facts to be able to make a judgment.

These, Mr President, are the points we wish to raise and the reservations we have. Our agreement to Mr Woltjer and Mr Marck working out a compromise amendment does not by any means signify our acceptance of the Council's position, but merely takes cognizance of a factual situation which shows up not only — were this all! — the limited margin of manoeuvre in agricultural policy, but also the limitations of the existing institutional set-up in which a row between the governments — such as we have seen — takes precedence over this Parliament, which in certain situations is forced into a corner. It is also to highlight this aspect that we oppose the 'Brussels compromise' as a manifestation of the old political and institutional outlook which we must leave behind.

Mrs S. Martin (L). — (FR) I am bound to say, Mr President, that for a moment I wondered if I should speak in this debate at all, seeing how apparently seldom the President-in-Office of the Council pays heed to our opinions.

But, after listening to him yesterday during his televised interview following a meeting of the Council, I knew what I had to do. I had known all along that class struggle was central to French Socialist dogma. But, no doubt naively, it never occurred to me that the President-in-Office of the Council would go as far as extending it to the Community as a whole, as he has done, by setting city-dweller against agricultural worker.

How can one say that farmers must understand that city-dwellers will never agree to pay for agricultural workers? To me, what matters most is the future of the Community, and that includes farming, and so we have to find solutions that will be acceptable to all the citizens of the Community, whether they live in the cities or in the country.

We are aware, of course, that certain changes have to be made and that something will need to be done to control milk production. We are equally aware that this will not be an easy task, for the future of thousands of families — 400 000 in France alone — hangs in the balance. But what I say quite clearly we cannot agree to is seeing them die a slow death, without telling them, without tackling the root causes of this overproduction — which is something we have condemned repeatedly in this House, and which a recent report by the Court of Auditors also condemns —, without taking measures to aid conversion. Anyway, I have never believed production quotas to

Martin

be the proper solution. If we have to freeze production to some extent, let us freeze it, but let us do it through voluntary partial or total abandonment of milk production, which could be paid for from the savings in refunds.

In fact, what we are asking of agriculture today is that it undergo a genuine restructuring. In other sectors of the economy, whether it be the motor industry, iron and steel, coal mining or textiles, any restructuring is always accompanied by conversion measures. Why should agriculture be any different? Why has the Council turned down the milk IVD? And I note that while the dairy sector is being plunged deeper and deeper into the doldrums — which in effect means cuts in prices, a rise in the linear co-responsibility levy, falling volume — a question mark still hangs over the tax on imported oils and fats; intensive farming — a source of surpluses if ever there was one — still goes unpenalized; and on top of that we are being asked to rejoice, to believe that all this is going to help the Community get out of its present jam.

How does Mr Rocard imagine he is going to persuade farmworkers, especially the younger ones, to believe that? Of course I am not saying that one should take from other policies in order to give to agriculture, but neither should anyone go away with the idea that one can make the Community into something better by destroying the agricultural policy.

We are conscious of the fact that we shall never get anywhere unless we all agree to pull together and unless we are prepared to accept compromises. But the President of the Council must realize for his part that the proposals must constitute an indivisible whole and that farmworkers are not prepared to be led like lambs to the slaughter.

Mr Vgenopoulos (S). — (GR) Mr President, I shall not spend time on the Woltjer report, on the dairy sector, or the Marck report, on monetary compensatory amounts, since latest developments at the Council of Ministers of Agriculture have almost presented us with *faits accomplis*, as indeed we were told by the representative of that body. I shall concern myself with the Goerens report, which relates to the tax on fats and oils, upon which I should like to make a number of comments.

In all our debates in the European Parliament in recent years, the demand for a tax to be imposed on fats and oils has aimed to improve the price ratio between olive oil and seed oils. Now, however, it is apparent from the Commission's proposal, and indeed from the rapporteur's presentation, that the imposition of this tax is justified in terms of a different line of thought. The comparison is no longer between olive oil and seed oils, but between butter on the one hand, and other fats and oils on the other hand, including olive oil.

Besides, the forthcoming accession of Spain and Portugal to the Community will exacerbate the

problems and imbalances existing in the olive-oil sector. For this reason I think that the tax in question will have to be formulated to take account of future enlargement. We shall therefore vote in favour of the Goerens report, since by doing so we shall be opposing abundant imports of seed oils into the Community, a thing that I in any case proposed last year in my own report on olive oil, which was unanimously approved. However, we should like this tax to contribute to an increased consumption of olive oil within the Community, a thing that would be achieved by improving the price ratio between olive oil and seed oils. With this in mind, I have submitted a few amendments.

I now come to Mr Battersby's report. The allegations by various colleagues that frauds are being perpetrated to the cost of the Community's budget in the olive-oil sector compelled the Committee on Budgetary Control to request that the debate on the Battersby report should coincide with the debate on the adaptations required in the CAP.

I was curious to see what new features would emerge from Mr Battersby's report. Unfortunately, and with surprise, I realized that the entire report is based on rumour and on newspaper reports. Where are the facts and figures to show that there have indeed been significantly large contraventions in the olive-oil sector, figures that justify a report? Does the Commission agree with Mr Battersby's views, and if so, on the basis of what facts? Why has olive oil been made a scapegoat for the hundreds of contraventions that take place in every agricultural sector each year? Already, as you know, a resolution has been submitted under Rule 48 by Mr de la Malène and others on the theme: Irregularities in the administration of expenditure by the Agricultural Fund on the dairy sector in the United Kingdom. The document in question is No 1-1579/83. There should therefore be another report on auditing in the dairy sector, and so on, and so forth.

Mr President, this is not a sensible way to proceed. If we want checks, let us have them, but then for all products. I believe that all of us here are particularly sensitive in all that concerns the correct use of common resources, and nobody will cover up contraventions if they are detected and proved.

We should therefore like to see controls established for all agricultural products, especially olive oil, and we agree with the proposals in the Vitale report for the stricter auditing of support on behalf of production. We disagree with the rapporteur only on one point concerning producers, who are to receive a flat-rate payment below a certain limit of production. On this point we agree with the Commission's proposal, that the limit be set at 100 kilos of olive oil and not at 200, as the rapporteur proposes.

In brief, then, we oppose the Battersby report in its present form and our vote will depend on the fate of

Vgenopoulos

the amendments put forward by myself and other colleagues. We agree with the Vitale report and shall vote in favour of it.

As for the Stella report, on processed fruit and vegetable products, we cannot agree with the proposals for cuts in this sector, because one-third of the savings resulting from the measures proposed will come from Greek production. Thus, while in general the resulting savings, amounting to about 84 million ECU, will be very small compared with the total credits granted by the EAGGF (Guarantee Section), savings of 29 million ECU will be very difficult for Greece to bear. I must remind you that in Greece the fruit-and-vegetable sector represents 27% of total agricultural production, and therefore is as important to Greece as milk is to the Netherlands, Germany, France and so forth. If we examine the substance of the Commission's proposals, it will be seen that the result will be to increase the quantities of products that have to be disposed of, whereas their burial creates very bad social impressions and has a negative impact on public opinion concerning the correct functioning of the CAP. Indeed, if we consider that the quantities to be buried have hitherto been donated as free aid to schools and for humanitarian purposes, to prisons, hospitals, institutions and the like, the reaction that the new measures will provoke becomes clear. We shall not, therefore, support the Stella report.

Mr d'Ormesson (PPE). — (FR) Mr President, may I say that if the common agricultural policy is in a state of crisis, this is principally because inflation and the recession are not the ideal conditions in which to develop trade with other countries and because the future financing of the Community is itself under review. As soon as control of dairy surpluses becomes, unfortunately, a necessity, it also becomes a matter of adapting to the logic of a given situation. But if producers with an annual production of over 60 000 litres are going to find themselves being heavily penalized, then what is needed above all is a tax on imports of oils and fats of vegetable and animal origin intended for animal feed. And here I congratulate Mr Charles Goerens on his excellent report. He sets out, and supports with irrefutable examples, the reasons for introducing these taxes and commends the Commission's proposal to fix this at 7.5 ECU per 100 kilos of oils and fats, and recommends that the proceeds be used to cover costs in this sector.

I am delighted, moreover, with the Commission's proposals for the dismantlement of monetary compensatory amounts to lay down new bases for them, abolishing the almost insuperable barriers of positive compensatory amounts. But there are three major problems that dominate our future. The review of the United Kingdom's contribution is tied to the problem of the future financing of the Community. This should be resolved as a matter of priority at the next summit, but resolved once and for all. This question is

all the more important coming as it does at a time when Spain's possible accession to the Treaty of Rome is under discussion. Unless a new and permanent basis for the Member States' contributions to the Community is drawn up, Spain's entry is liable to bring about the breakup of the Community, for in the present situation there is nothing to say that Spain would sever its trade connections with South America in favour of Community preference. Such an observation highlights the fact that the Community cannot survive and grow unless these fundamental principles are observed, but also that it cannot hold on to its achievements unless it alters its articles of association and in particular links them with the obligation to join the European Monetary System.

Assuming for a moment that some positive decisions will come out of the forthcoming summit, I should like to make the point that the search for new product lines to replace those that are currently being overproduced calls for a major programme of research, and exactly the same kind of programme is needed to generate a greater true demand in the countries linked to the Community through the Lomé conventions, particularly the 43 African countries which are for the most part suffering from malnutrition and underproduction and whose population is expected to double by the end of the century. All of this serves to reinforce my belief that we cannot hope to preserve and develop the Community unless we adhere to the fundamental principles of the common agricultural policy. But just where do agricultural surpluses stand in relation to the needs of the economic environment of the Community? Nevertheless, to sustain it a market needs to have true demand at both ends. One cannot have subsidies unless there are market profits to pay for them. Mr Rocard would do well to bear that in mind. There is nothing more important than re-establishing the expectation of profits, the will to invest and an interest in trade between the peoples of Europe and Africa. To achieve that we must stop confusing the idea of raising the standard of living with Socialism.

(Applause from the centre)

Sir Fred Warner (ED). — Mr President, I only want to speak about one thing this evening, and that is the co-responsibility levies for milk. Please let no one think that this is a minor technical matter, because our original co-responsibility levy is probably the most unpopular tax that has ever been seen in Europe — useless to the consumer and burdensome to the farmer. It has raised many political issues and many emotional issues. Its total unfairness has stiffened British opposition to many proposed measures of reform of the CAP, and its inability to curb production in the main producing countries has led to the greatest outburst of xenophobia and *anti-communautarisme* by some of our friends who normally sit on my right when they are in this House. So I think we should pay full attention to this.

Warner

In this debate today we are faced with a new levy — the new major levy arising from the quota system. We all know what this will mean to farmers. In my country, they are going to lose 4 % of their income or so on the MCAs, about 10% or more of their production will no longer bring them any return at all or at best 25% when they have paid a 75% levy at the farm gate. Then, on top of that they have a rise in the linear co-responsibility levy to 3%. So they are going to be about 20% worse off in their income next year. They know it and we know it.

This packet of very harsh measures is going to be accepted. I feel sure, by this Parliament, and it is going to be accepted by Europe because it is essential to a general settlement of our problems in the CAP. We will accept it as part of that settlement and as part of a settlement which should and must include the budget, Britain's contribution, the increased resources for Europe and all the other items which have plagued us for years. But, if we are to accept something which is going to penalize the whole agricultural industry in Europe, for goodness' sake, why do we have to preserve on top of that a linear co-responsibility tax which is no longer needed? It is now completely superfluous. It was justified to us this morning by Mr Dalsager, and has been justified by others in this debate, on the grounds that the extra 1 % is required to finance the 1 million tonnes of milk which is the special allowance for the change-over period as the farming community adapts itself to the new levies and quotas. That is understandable, and for 1984-85 it is clear that the farming community will have to accept a continuation of the linear co-responsibility levy at 3%. But after it has performed the task which we were told was now its sole purpose, I very much hope that it will disappear, and I would like to have from the Commissioner at the end of this debate a clear assurance that after 1984/85 the linear co-responsibility tax will vanish.

I ask one more question. What has happened to all these monies arising from the linear co-responsibility levy? Where are they? What are they being spent on? I have seen no proposal and no accounting from the Commission on this subject, and the farming community who have paid them are entitled to know what is happening to them, because they paid them for a special purpose. They were assured that the money from this levy originally would go to promoting sales of milk, and I should be astonished to find that it had, in fact, gone to that purpose. Has it not perhaps been spent to plug other gaps in our rather leaky financial hull, and ought we not now clearly to specify what has happened to this money in the past and what is happening today?

I do not think that the Commission has spent very much time on this question of promoting the market for milk. I have seen very few new ideas come

forward. We have seen ideas from national farming unions, from COPA, from the Milk Marketing Board in Britain, but we have not seen much from Europe as a whole. What proposals are there? We have one in this Parliament. There is a document before this House which was tabled by me and other Members proposing that there should be a scheme for old-age pensioners comparable to the scheme for schoolchildren. You may say that that would be very expensive and that it is unreasonable. But I doubt it. I believe that it is less expensive to give a small aid to pensioners to consume milk than to put the milk into intervention, with all the cost of manufacturing storage and disposal. Could we not look at this, please? I and my colleagues will certainly raise this question again before this Parliament finishes its time in July.

Mr Alavanos (COM). — (GR) Mr President, a little while ago Mr Rocard divided peoples into two categories — without any racist intention, we believe. There are those who like drinking milk, such as the peoples of the EEC, and those who do not like milk, such as the peoples of underdeveloped countries. I think there is a third category of peoples, such as the Greek people, who like fresh milk, indeed very much so, but who are obliged to drink powdered milk at high prices and in restricted quantities. This is due to the following reasons:

First, our accession to the EEC prevents us from developing our own milk production.

Secondly, the EEC's compensatory payments in effect prohibit the importation of fresh milk from neighbouring socialist countries.

Thirdly, the Greek economy has been condemned to play the part of an importer of powdered milk produced by Nestlé and other multinational companies in the EEC.

The national agricultural policy rejected by Mr Rocard is the only solution for Greece's agricultural economy not in the sense of isolationism but of a rational development of international cooperation. Mr Rocard called for the survival of the CAP; we call for the survival of the Greek farmers that the CAP itself is undermining. A characteristic example of this undermining is the compromise reached by the Council of Ministers concerning dairy products. All the countries in the EEC, both those with gigantic rates of milk production and export such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, but equally so Greece, whose production is smaller than that of several individual dairy enterprises within the EEC, are obliged to limit their production to the levels of 1981 plus 1%. As Mr Rocard philosophized, so we, too, must philosophize and say that this compromise of the large partners over milk imposes a strategic choice upon Greece: to give up the development of the dairy industry, to give up the development of cattle-breeding and to accept

Alavanos

the present situation of a relatively retarded agricultural economy. We cannot understand how and why the government agreed at the Council of Ministers with this strategic choice imposed upon us by the major partners in the EEC. We, at any rate, along with the Greek farmers, do not agree. That is why we are fighting alongside them for our country's right to develop its own cattle-breeding, and an essential precondition for this is withdrawal from the EEC.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr Delatte (L). — *(FR)* Mr President, Mr Woltjer's report has been effectively superseded by the negotiations and by the proposals made by the Council of Ministers.

The President-in-Office was careful to stress earlier that these were in the nature of preliminary soundings, but why these agreements before there has been any debate in the European Parliament? Quite simply, because our backs are to the wall! The procrastination over the review of the common agricultural policy places us now in the position of having to make urgent decisions, and some exceedingly harsh measures are being proposed.

I agree with the President of the Commission when he says that these decisions constitute a whole, and I would add that none of these decisions would make any sense on its own. Milk quotas on their own will have no lasting effect unless imports of products that create dairy surpluses are restricted and unless imports of competitive products are reduced. Let us not forget the negative effect of quotas. They tend to preserve the *status quo*. They stifle enterprise in agriculture. They are a disincentive to producers. And it is a high price to pay for the delay in deciding to look for remedies to our difficulties.

Before we can apply the right remedies we must first identify the true causes. And the causes are, first and foremost, the lack of a determined will to export. Another is the importing of competitive products, New Zealand butter for example, and oils and fats which come into the Community — duty-free I might add — as well as excessive imports of substitute products although Europe already has enough, virtually, to feed its animals.

Let us be realistic. We cannot be strict with those inside the Community and lenient with those outside it.

I should like to pay tribute to Mr Goerens for his report on the taxation of oils and fats. It was a difficult report, I am sure, but crucial for the future of Europe's farming economy. As the Commission points out, the co-responsibility levy on dairy products, paid by the producers, places them at a disadvantage in relation to imports of competitive products since everyone knows that these products come in untaxed.

Such being the case, it would seem that taking vegetable oils and fats that compete with oils and fats of

animal origin is quite in conformity with GATT rules. And may I say that we are not talking here of an exceptional tax. To be more precise, it is the abolition of an exemption introduced at a time when we were broadly in a deficit situation. The rapporteur's proposal that negotiations should be entered into with suppliers, and with the United States in particular, with a view to restricting the volume of imports of oil seeds, oils and fats, is a vital and fundamental aspect of this whole package of measures.

For my part, I believe it is absurd for us to continue to buy in products in quantities that far exceed our needs.

Those are the reasons, Mr President, why I endorse and shall be voting in favour of the Georens report.

(Applause from the Centre and from the Right)

Mr Kellett-Bowman (ED). — Mr President, I apologize for the frailty of my voice, which in no way represents my strength of feeling on this particular subject, which is olive oil. I think the Commission is getting into a great muddle on this subject, and this is bringing the Community into disrepute. I am in favour of the general principle that the poorer people in the poorer regions should be aided. This is all about economic convergence, something with which I do not think anyone in this House could disagree. But it is the way in which the Commission implements this policy that is at fault.

To start with, the Court of Auditors drew the attention of the Committee on Budgetary Control to the fact that there were some irregularities. This caused the Committee on Budgetary Control to look into the matter, and unfortunately we now have not got the Battersby report from budgetary control going in parallel before the House with the Vitale report, since there were too many amendments to the Battersby report.

The Commission were themselves, to be fair, not happy with the reports coming from the olive-oil regions. So what did this brilliant Commission do? They instituted a six-year programme of photographing, from the air, olive-trees. The difference in production of an olive-tree can vary between 16 kg and 160 kg, depending upon the amount of water available and irrigation. So what is the point of counting trees from the air? At the end of the programme they would need to start again because, obviously, new trees would have been planted. They do seem to me to be absurd. So I put down an amendment which says, 'Refuses budgetary cover for the Commission's inept six-year programme for counting olive-trees from the air'.

Then, in order to promote consumption, we have consumption aids. The Commission has been concentrating its consumption aids in the olive-growing area

Kellett-Bowman

itself, where consumption must have already reached saturation point, in the area where most people will buy olive oil loose in their own containers. So, what on earth is the point of promoting packaged olive oil there? If they wish to increase the Community consumption of olive oil, surely the consumption aid should be spread across the Community. And so, we have put in an amendment to add a paragraph after paragraph 9 which reads, 'Proposes that consumption aid included in the budget be used to stimulate demand throughout the Community'.

Now we do have problems, we understand, in that the distribution of this aid is through producers' organizations. I cannot accept that public money should be distributed through organizations with direct political links. In one country there are four major distributors' organizations, each one directly linked to a political party. I do not think that this helps the money get to the place where it is needed, and neither do I think it looks correct and proper to the outside world. We have accordingly put down an amendment which reads 'Stipulates that production aid must be distributed by organizations other than those connected with political parties'.

My own view, Mr President, is that we should involve the inland revenue system in Italy so that producers of olive oil should apply for a different income return form and therewith declare their production. It would be interesting because I think that the fact that they would be taxed on over-claims would militate against over-claims themselves.

The rapporteur is in some difficulty here because it is an interim report and he wishes to work with the authorities in the three Member States concerned. That places him in some difficulty about being critical in an interim report, and so I have put down these amendments. I have got my group's support, and I ask for support from the House.

Mr Pasmazoglou (NI). — *(GR)* Mr President, I would like to stress that the decisions proposed by the Council of Ministers are along the right lines. I also believe that the analysis presented this afternoon by the French Minister for Agriculture is well founded. Particularly in the matter of milk production and its support by the Agricultural Fund, and also the gradual elimination of positive monetary compensatory amounts, these are developments that we should welcome. But that, in itself, is not enough. The Community is facing a collective problem that must be considered at the Summit Conference on Monday and Tuesday — and I stress this, as many of our colleagues have done. This problem includes the Community's general financial problem, the increase in its own resources, coping with the accession of Spain and Portugal, and the Mediterranean programmes, which are very important.

But even within the framework of the CAP, the proposals by the Council of Ministers are inadequate,

because there is no provision for Mediterranean products. Reorganization of the CAP is both necessary and urgent, and will have to be combined with reinforcement of the principle of Community protection and with necessary provisions for Mediterranean products such as oil, wine, dried grapes, tobacco, cotton and, of course, fruit and vegetables. I therefore want to stress that unless there is an adequate and strong Mediterranean policy, it will be impossible to deal with the Community's structural problems as a whole.

Mr President, I also want to refer to the Goerens report. The report is correct, as indeed is the Commission's proposal, and as some of our colleagues have observed, the objections raised do not hold water. I would like to make two comments about the report.

My first comment is that this proposal does not conflict either with the GATT or with previous resolutions of our Parliament, as has been maintained.

My second comment is that the olive-oil surplus is likely to be of about 200 000 tonnes, as Mr Battersby said this morning, and this corresponds to less than 5 % of the total consumption of vegetable fats and oils. This problem must be dealt with, because oil, like wine, is a traditional Mediterranean product. Failure to deal with the problem will have severe economic and social consequences for all the Mediterranean peoples.

Mrs Le Roux (COM). — *(FR)* Mr President, livestock farming in France is in a poor way. In 1983, dairy farmers, cattle and pig breeders saw their incomes fall, their living and working conditions deteriorate, they can see no prospect at the moment of any improvement in their situation.

Several months ago a campaign was orchestrated in Brussels to make scapegoats of the stock-farmers and force them into accepting sacrifices. Regrettably this campaign has spread to certain capitals and even to this Parliament.

We are told that the Community is being crippled by its surpluses. But the truth of the matter is that these mountains of butter, powdered milk and beef are being used simply as a screen to cover up the holes in the Community sieve through which vast quantities of vegetable fats and substitute products are pouring into the Community. Let me quote you a few figures to illustrate once again the absurdity of the system.

The European Community imports vegetable fats to the tune of six times the volume of its butter stocks, 45% of these imports being from the United States: 90 000 tonnes of butter are imported from New Zealand exclusively into the United Kingdom, where butter consumption is steadily declining. This is utter madness. That is where things need putting right, and we insist that it is put right before doing anything else.

Le Roux

The dairy problem, which lies currently at the heart of all our debates, epitomizes the contradictions that exist within the CAP. Since 1977 milk producers have been paying the co-responsibility levy, but this has done nothing to stop stocks continuing to grow. Why? Because Community mechanisms discouraged milk production based on the farm's own raw fodder resources and promoted the growth of the kind of intensive dairy farms that are now seen in northern Europe. There is in fact a direct link between rising production and the use of feeds imported in derogation from Community preference.

It is now estimated that these imported feeds account for 15% of milk production in the Community. The Netherlands, which accounted for 46% of the Community's imports of substitute products in 1983 and 1984, have experienced one of the largest increases in output, with the result that a Dutch producer receives five times as much from the EAGGF as a French producer. Far from providing a solution to such problems, the Council's compromise proposal would simply exacerbate the situation by penalizing the producers who are in no way responsible.

The Council has not gone all out in its efforts to restrict milk production by introducing quotas, freezing prices and raising the co-responsibility levy from 2 to 3%. If these measures were implemented, the effect on French producers would be to cut their incomes and at the same time to reduce their production by at least 2%. Farm workers are not such fools as to agree to carry the can while the intensive dairy farms, imports of American fats and of New Zealand butter get off scot-free again.

There are here some who want to use quotas and co-responsibility levies as the basis for a new common agricultural policy. This would be tantamount to abandoning the principles enshrined in the Treaty. The same goes for cattle farming. Livestock farmers are being blamed for all the problems, whereas stocks exactly equal the volume of imports, 70% of which take place in derogation from Community preference.

We do not support the idea of restricted growth in agricultural expenditure. We do want to see a rationalization of support mechanisms but in a way that takes better account of the budgetary liability of the various types of farms; we want to tax the intensive dairy farms by coming down on abuses of Community preference, abolish the system of monetary compensatory amounts, tax imported fats and introduce a genuine exports policy. That is what our amendment to the Woltjer report seeks to do. We have in effect pulled the communication cord; let us hope that we shall at last be heard.

The Council's compromise proposal constitutes a grave threat to French agricultural workers, but more than that it threatens the entire rural way of life which

is directly dependent on farming. This proposal is not yet a reality and its future depends on decisions which we shall be making here, but above all on the impact the opinions of producers will have, and I take this opportunity, on behalf of my Group, of sounding a warning to them and assuring them of our determined support.

Mr Di Bartolomei (L). — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the partial agreements reached on the organization of the market in milk and on the modification of the system of monetary amounts are in our eyes proof of the Community's recovery.

I will not speak of the details of these decisions which have been so well discussed by other Members, including those from my own group; but I will note that questions of substance which remain unresolved or have been resolved badly, and fundamentally important problems of method which have been ignored, make us fear that this promising start may find no continuation in the next few days in further practical steps towards agreement and that at next week's Brussels Summit the reform of the CAP and the re-launching of the Community may suffer new shocks and further dangerous delays. We wait and tremble and hope. There remains the obligation to ensure fair incomes for farmers, especially those whose incomes are lowest, while at the same time we must have more control over expenditure, which could lead to considerable savings. The demands reaching us from across the Channel do not leave us indifferent: we are aware of the need for austerity in expenditure, and this policy cannot be left in the hands of Mrs Thatcher alone.

Do the solutions worked out yesterday by the Ministers of Agriculture go along this line? On the whole, yes. They have brought in some air into an area which appeared hermetically closed. Mr Woltjer said rightly this morning that 1984 would not be an easy year for farmers, but in the absence of a decision it would certainly have been much harder. Some decision appears to be on its way, and I feel that we should accept it with the reservations which Mr Woltjer and Mr Marck have expressed and which we shall vote, I hope, in the form of amendments they have tabled.

Next week in Brussels the whole issue will be put on the table again: not only measures for reducing surpluses, for rationalizing and — to call a spade a spade — morally rehabilitating agricultural expenditure, but also the introduction of new policies, with the consequent increase in the Community's own resources. Agricultural expenditure must certainly be reduced, but there is no way we can put a trench round it, and the proposed changes will require accompanying measures which, at least for the immediate future, will not mean smaller appropriations for agriculture. The British Government — but to judge by

Di Bartolomei

Mr Thorn's review of the budget position, it will not be the British Government alone — will then have to yield to the logic of special contributions and of increasing the Community's own resources to enable policies for industry, for research and technology to be launched. These are of vital importance for Europe, and they are beyond the capabilities of the individual States.

We shall have to leave behind us the doubts and pusillanimous policies towards the outside world which the French Minister, Mr Rocard, and later Mr Delatte have condemned. Which brings us to the crux of the problem: we need the will to be united and to act in unison. Neither here, nor out there, in the national Parliaments, do we have first- and second-class Europeans; at most, we have differences of interest and outlook. Perhaps we have been pursuing mistaken policies, which must be corrected, but what is stronger is the common ideals and interests: peace and welfare, human rights and youth employment. We are now one great country. To talk, as Mr Chirac was doing only yesterday, of a two-speed Europe is a political and historical absurdity. Europe will be one, or there will be no Europe.

Mr Maher (L). — Mr President, we have to consider the long-term prospects in agriculture, because many people seem to believe that by imposing quotas or reducing farm incomes somehow we shall make the problem go away. But we shall not. The farmers are going to be there and the land is going to be there, so what do we do? This is where, I feel, the Commission, and indeed the Council — because I do not think the Commission should bear all the blame — have not been measuring up to their responsibilities in providing alternative uses for the land that will be freed as a result of a reduction in production.

That question must be examined more deeply. We are only 50% self-sufficient in protein, for instance. We could be producing a lot of that protein ourselves, yet there is no programme for that. There is no long-term programme for the regionalization of agricultural production. This we are going to have to face, because it is logical to think that those regions of the Community that are most suitable for milk and cattle production are the regions with a high rainfall, with a suitable soil type and with climatic conditions that are conducive to that kind of production. You cannot turn small farmers into cereal farmers. You cannot make them depend on that kind of production. They have to stay in milk whether they like it or not. There is no alternative for them unless you put them on the dole or put them out of production, and that cost has to be counted. So we have to move towards the regionalization of production, and that, in my view, is something that has to be faced sooner rather than later.

I would like to ask the Commission how this quota system that is now being talked about is to be policed.

How is it to be effected, and what is the cost going to be? Perhaps in countries with only a cooperative structure it might be easy enough, but what about countries where there are a lot of private purchasers as well as cooperatives? There are already indications that private individuals are approaching cooperative suppliers and asking them to supply them; they will get rid of the smaller producer and use the bigger ones. You will almost have to have a policeman in every village in order to make it work effectively. I do not know if you have thought about that, but I think it is something that needs to be examined more deeply and the cost has got to be counted.

It is unacceptable in my view that the farmers of the Community should have to accept all of the burden arising from these changes. I think it is totally reasonable that those farmers from the countries that are supplying us with butter, which is already in surplus here, whether it is from New Zealand or elsewhere, the farmers producing the crops that are adding to surpluses inside the Community, should bear some of the burden. It is quite reasonable that we should ask for a tax on oils and fats in order to help us to resolve our problems and I reject the view that we cannot look at this question of oils and fats.

The Court of Auditors recently issued a report which said that the increase per annum in the cost of the CAP was 2.9%. That is a very small increase indeed. You would think, from listening to some of the people in this Parliament, that the cost of the CAP was so high that we cannot bear it any more, but in fact it is very cheap. And even if it was renationalized it would still be quite expensive, perhaps more expensive for individual member countries. The cost of food in the European Community has risen much more slowly than in the OECD countries.

So I would argue very strongly that we are paying a very small price for having adequate food supplies, for safeguarding an agricultural population and an agricultural industry which is giving employment to perhaps 30 million people in the Community.

Could I make this point to the British, since they complain so much about the cost of the CAP? The increase in the cost of their Trident programme — investment in massive weapons of destruction — has increased by 500 million pounds as a direct result of the increase in the exchange rate between the dollar and the pound, and there is not a single complaint about it. Yet they complain about a relatively small contribution to the support of the European Community and particularly to the cost of the agricultural policy.

Mr Spencer (ED). — Mr President, I did not come here to make a speech on Trident or on defence costs, but I do feel I ought to make some kind of response to the previous speaker, if only to say that that was the

Spencer

most inspired introduction of an irrelevancy into a major debate in this Parliament that I have heard for a long time.

I reject both his arithmetic and the logic of his defence, which presumably is that we should sit here and throw the butter mountain at the Russians. I actually wanted to talk about both butter and Russians, but in rather a minor key.

A lot of historic speeches have been made today, and it is an important day both for farmers and for consumers in the Community. I wanted to echo the call of Sir Fred Warner when he said that he was not sure we were doing enough to find uses for our surplus milk products and for our butter. I also want to draw the Commissioner's attention to one of the regulations that would permit an increase in the use of butter: this is Regulation No 1723/81, which would allow the Commission to authorize the use of surplus butter in foodstuffs other than pastry products and icecream.

We are talking, Mr Commissioner, about toffees. I am not quite sure whether toffees are a great European institution, but in my own country and in my own constituency, toffees — often made with butter — are a great speciality. They used to use something like 5 000 tonnes of butter in 1976, but with time the butter became more expensive and they began to switch to inferior substitutes like butter essences, so that now the use of butter in the UK industry as a whole is down to 1 000 tonnes.

The price problem in conjunction with the suspension of another arcane regulation — in this case, Regulation No 1932/81 — has meant that this form of consumption may decline and vanish altogether. I hope the Commissioner will find time, amongst his other great responsibilities, to push through the extension of the regulation that would allow confectioners to buy butter instead of sending it to the Russians. He might reflect that while we still have a butter mountain perhaps we could let the benefit go to some of the sweet-eaters of Europe and that the better place to put the butter is in toffees and not in Russians. As a token of that, as a very small sweetener — if I may use that phrase, as we always seem to be talking about sweeteners — and as a small recognition of the fact that he has sat through this debate until this late hour at night, perhaps I could present the Commissioner with a box of butter toffees made in my constituency, with the compliments of Thornton & Co.

(Mr Spencer handed the box of toffees to Mr Dalsager.)

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, the European Community is more than just the CAP. Such is the consolation, the hope, that we can, indeed must, hold out to the Community's citizens when we attempt to encourage them to keep up their belief in

this Community and to lend it their support. It has long since been clear to all Community citizens who do not emanate from farming circles that 10 times an erroneous policy does not result in even one correct whole. Today we are debating yet another proposal which purports to put an end to the continuous Community misery, or such is what we are given to understand. Our experience heretofore, however, will be sufficient to temper any euphoria on the part of the Community consumer. Considerable scepticism remains the order of the day. Anything which aims to unravel the muddled situation prevailing today, entailing both tremendous cost to the consumer and harm to the small farmer, is to be welcomed. Nevertheless all of the groping attempts by the Commission and the Council which have been described today cannot obscure an attempt to tinker with the symptoms without getting to grips with the causes. The result is, as such, predictable. The emphasis will be shifted, but a real end to the ludicrous surplus Community production is not in sight.

Parliament is faced with a dilemma. It has no alternative, within the context of the proposed package, but to approve a quota policy, knowing full well that it is no more than an emergency solution, and a dangerous one at that. Were it to become the custom — and the list of erroneous policies which have followed this course is endless — it would lead directly to the adoption, as the norm, of the *status quo*, the perversity of which can hardly be denounced in harsh enough terms. However one tries to twist and turn the proposals they cannot obscure the existence of a milk surplus of some 20% to 25%, for the figures laid before us, which purport to reduce the surplus from 23% to 15% contain a small, but subtle, flaw. They fail to take account of the fact that part of the existing milk disposal was only achieved through the allocation of subsidies. The real level of demand, that it to say without the annual subsidy of some 8 to 10 thousand million ECU, which has been provided in recent years, would be considerably lower.

Who are the true beneficiaries of such subsidies? I shall provide a brief example of what a system of quotas and its related subsidies can give rise to. The sugar surplus for 1979, as reflected in figures which had not yet been concealed behind a price cartel, reveals the following: there were some 366 000 sugar beet producers in the Community, of which some 157 000 farms, or 43%, occupied a sugar beet surface area of 2 hectares or less. The income transfer associated with such production represented some 100 Deutschmarks per month. Set against this the 8 000 undertakings farming surface areas in excess of 30 and 50 hectares respectively which received monthly subsidies to the tune of 4 500 to 9 000 Deutschmarks; all of this from the pockets of the Community consumer and taxpayer who, in addition to bearing the brunt of the 'A' quota was now being called upon to help make good the losses in the 'B' and 'C' quotas. Such might not appear unduly flagrant in the milk

Seibel-Emmerling

sector; it must be borne in mind, however, that, here too, some 12% of the undertakings account for fully half of such controversial production.

This calls for more than healthy mistrust. Now we are faced with a tax on vegetable fats. At some 670 million ECU it appears, at first sight, to be quite modest and cute. But let us, if you will, ponder for a while. Such an imposition would occasion no more than a relatively modest increase in the price of margarine and fats which would in no way alter the purchasing habits of the consumer but would, rather, merely represent an additional burden on the lower-income groups. That can in no way be the intention. We should have succeeded in creating a measure which, free from parliamentary control and capable of ever severer application, would only justify its existence when the degree of this severity had been multiplied; moreover, it would be a measure which ran diametrically counter to the obligations as enshrined in the Treaty of Rome.

Both Community consumer organizations and the Socialist group have tirelessly pointed out that nothing less than the removal of sales and price guarantees and an orientation towards real structural policy can get the muddled vehicle back on the right track again. This has been successfully blocked heretofore by the efforts of an overwhelmingly powerful and influential lobby representing the mammoth agricultural concerns — and such will, I fear, continue to be the case. In this scheme of things who can possibly survive? We are all victims. We are paying with our health for prolific, rather than qualitative, production, damaging the soil and poisoning our drinking water in the process. Now our health is to be gambled with frivolously through the scheme to increase the fat content of milk. Millions of ECU will thus be misdirected, resources which the Community sorely needs for employment — creation in environment — friendly new technologies. Our money is being used to finance a surplus which we do not need and which is placing the Third World in ever-more dire straits.

I would like to have data at my disposal which would indicate, for every surplus tonne of milk, the energy thereby expended, the damage to our soil through over-fertilization, the quantity of chemicals employed and the extent to which we overburden our waterways. Is this the state of affairs we wish to bequeath to future generations, to demonstrate the use we made of the resources, the workers' hard-earned money, and our environment? If we wish to survive then the decision which would appear to be taking shape can be considered as no more than a transitional one. Let us come to grips, once and for all, with our fundamental problems!

(Applause from the Left)

Mr van Aerssen (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to comment briefly on

the institutional aspects of the manner in which the procedure adopted by the Commission has unfolded. I must object in the strongest and most serious terms against this procedure, for a decision has, in the final analysis, been foisted upon the European Council although it has no real competence in the matter, even though it may very well like or indeed ought to take it. Strictly speaking, the Commission has acted correctly but in so doing it has pulled the political rug, as provided by the Treaty of Rome, from under its own feet and, in so doing, has left its partner — the European Parliament, without a leg to stand on, given that such a procedure makes no provision for control by the directly-elected Parliament.

To those Members who promote the advancement of the Community and the implementation by our Parliament of its control and own-initiative function I would point out that such will be foiled as a result of the procedure adopted in this instance, which was amply demonstrated by the President-in-Office of the Council this afternoon. The Community cannot progress in this manner — and certainly not in the eyes of the directly-elected European Parliament.

I am speaking now as vice-chairman of the Committee on External Economic Relations which has been entrusted with the task of justifying the amendments, tabled in my name on behalf of our committee, to the Goerens report on vegetable fats tax. The Committee on External Economic Relations rejected, by an overwhelming majority, the imposition of a fats tax. The arguments advanced in favour of such a tax are, we feel, insufficiently convincing. Our amendments are designed, not to provoke a trade conflict, even less a religious one — to use the President-in-Office of the Council's term of this afternoon — but, rather, we favour resolving the issue with the relevant partner States within the GATT framework, that is to say, where it belongs. It is no secret that this constitutes a problem. We also know that the instrument conjured up by the Community constitutes neither an ideological nor a convincing solution.

The fats tax represents — as several members have already indicated — the imposition of a new consumer tax in the Community. Anyone, to speak in an economics context, in possession of all his marbles — and I need only refer you to any aspiring economist in the third semester — knows that it is a consumer tax, one which will have to be met by all of us, but predominantly by citizens in the Member States along the Mediterranean basin. Economically speaking, there is no way around this fact!

This tax — and this is a fundamental issue — can only be justified if the Member States take action to remove the burden from the consumer, as the other side of the coin. It is one of the cardinal tenets of European policy that the Community edifice, as desired by all of us, should not result in increased costs to the consumer. Any measure by which the

van Aerssen

Community asks its citizens to stump up extra cash must have its corollary in tax relief provided through the individual Member State budgets and/or tax laws.

Such a compensatory measure is, however, singularly lacking here.

The consumer tax is also endowed with a 'Janus' face, something which renders it truly original. It creates enemies for us! In this respect the United States has been cited by the President-in-Office of the Council as an example. We shall give him the answer to his question. He has urged Parliament to take a stand on the issue. I am now doing just that, on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations: Such a tax is creating enemies for us. To the example of the United States I would add that of the developing countries, which has not yet been expanded on to any great extent.

I shall confine my remarks to one example. The adoption by the Community of such a vegetable fats tax would have the effect of taxing Peruvian fish oil. This tax violates all of the cardinal principles which we inserted in the Lomé I and Lomé II conventions, and this with a view to assisting our partners in the Third World. To those who would dismiss the vegetable oils tax as a measure to make good a financial shortfall I would merely say: financial shortfalls must, of course, be made good, but not by employing the wrong means! One has only to call to mind — and this has already been mentioned by several speakers — the manner in which, in an attempt to prop up the CAP, certain surplus-related problems are resolved at present. This is no way to tackle the problem! This resolves absolutely nothing but, rather, only gives heart, in the final analysis, to those who, justifiably or otherwise, either had to, or wanted to trigger off such surplus production.

A fats tax presupposes market uniformity. The presentation of this issue proceeds along similar lines. But this cannot be so. This has been indicated both by Mr Spencer and our lady colleague from the Socialist group. Although we have almost attained self-sufficiency in olive oil by now, for soya and soya oil the Community only produces some 25 to 27% of its needs respectively. Conclusion: one cannot mix together butter, apples and pears nor, for that matter, butter and margarine. We are dealing with divisible markets and, as such, one must have recourse to variable parameters and variable policies, avoiding global policies such as this fats tax which merely creates havoc while representing no economic solution. This problem must be resolved within the GATT framework, where it belongs, but not in isolation.

Switzerland is an example of a country which introduced such a fats tax. It began with a rate of 2.5% or 3%. Today it stands at 240%. Once introduced, a tax feeds upon itself like a cancerous ulcer. I would call to mind the champagne tax introduced by the Kaiser Wilhelm during the first World War to help finance the German navy. These ships are today, as you know,

all in dry dock — but the champagne tax lingers on. The imposition of a vegetable fats consumption tax would follow exactly the same course.

The problem we are discussing belongs within the GATT; such is the tenure of the amendments tabled by the Committee on External Economic Relations.

Mr Keating (S). — Mr President, it is important that we should have this debate — even if events have overtaken us — because the farmers of Europe are listening at this moment for us to say practical and reasonable things here. We should be failing in our duty as a Parliament were we not to draw some wider conclusions. The situation which changed a decade ago with the first oil shock brought to an end a phase in the common agricultural policy. However, it has taken us a decade until now to realize it, and I think that realization is beginning to come through in some of the decisions which are now half-taken and which may be taken in the very near future.

Up to the first oil shock, the policy which said: 'We will displace lots of people from the countryside, we will rationalize agriculture through the original CAP and the displaced people will find jobs in industry' was a fine policy as long as industry was booming and drawing in workers from as far away as Turkey and North Africa. Within the last decade that policy has become obsolete. It seems to me not to be too useful to discuss whether the CAP is a success or a failure, because I think the answer is that it is both. It has done remarkable and admirable things for European agriculture, but it has also now produced surpluses which threaten to destroy the very fabric of the CAP itself and also threaten the whole structure of the Community's budget.

The crisis is, therefore, a real crisis, and I want to turn aside for a moment to make an observation on the imports both of butter and of grain or near-grain which are exacerbating that crisis. I have the most enormous difficulty in making a special case for the New Zealanders. They are already rich, already extraordinarily favoured in the land that they farm and already living close to South-East Asia, economically the most dynamic place in the world, where they have alternative markets. If you wanted to make a case for really disadvantaged people in the Third World, we should have to agree. But why do so for New Zealanders? It seems to me preposterous, for the sake of 3 million very well-to-do people, to put at risk a much larger number of European small farmers. Indeed, why do so for the Americans, who have extraordinary economic power, who behave with extraordinary irresponsibility in their general economic policy and who are engaged in military ventures all the way from Vietnam to Lebanon and Central America? Of all the peoples on the earth, why should we be nice, not to those who deserve it in terms of Community imports but to the two groups in the world who least deserve it? It seems preposterous.

Keating

However, that is essentially an aside. That is not the core of the problem. We have a crisis in the CAP, and we have not an infinity of ways to solve it. If we solve it by the market, what we do now in recession is to put out of business people who will go into town, who will swell the ranks of the unemployed and whose children will form an alienated time-bomb at the heart of our Community. We cannot go a market road alone, by means of a drastic reduction in prices.

There are not many alternatives. Quotas, however unwelcome, are in fact an alternative. They are a realistic and practical alternative, but on conditions. It seems to me that we have to recognize that if we have quotas — and we have in reality had a reduction or a standstill in prices — those processes bear enormously unequally on different places. The question of enlargement of the Community is going to make that problem even sharper, because the social history of various rural areas throughout the Community and their economic history are not the same. We vary, of course, country by country, but we vary in a much more important way. We vary between the developed and the rich on the one hand and the undeveloped and poor on the other hand.

Many countries have witnessed a bitter struggle in the countryside between the rich and the poor. In the fortunate countries, that is over. It is over in Britain, it is over in Denmark, it is over in Holland. But in my country, with a troubled history, it is not over. In the case of the Greeks, and perhaps of the Spaniards and the Portuguese who are soon to join, there is a history of fascism in their countryside and their rural evolution is not over either.

Therefore we have a major crisis in the CAP, which will be sharpened by enlargement. We pay lip-service, as we did in the Treaty of Rome and as we did at the time of the Community's first enlargement, to the idea of convergence, while we pursue policies which produce divergence. Those actions are born of humbug and hypocrisy and do not really solve the problems. I hope we get solutions. I hope — there are no decisions yet — that the Irish do not have to push it to a crisis. I hope we get derogations that we can live with. But Irish farmers will have to be defended, and no Irish Prime Minister can go home with the present sort of arrangements accepted.

We do not want to wreck the CAP and we do want Community solutions. What we want, then, is a fundamental reform of the CAP which will transform it from a blunt instrument into a delicate instrument and which recognizes that, precisely because Europe is so diverse, a real unity of price and of market can only come into existence when those diversities have been overcome in the course of decades with a much more nuanced, a much more delicate and a much more targeted policy than currently exists. If we botch up some solutions this week, they will only give us a breathing-space to reform the CAP in a more fundamental way.

Mr Abens (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the price proposals for the farm year 1984/85 constitute a real challenge for farmers, taxpayers, policy-makers within the Community institutions, and the members of the European Parliament. Exactly what is involved? For the first time, since the inception of the CAP, price proposals are being discussed against a backdrop of a lack of funds. This price round is not confined exclusively to agricultural policy: At stake is nothing less than the very survival of our Community. The news that the Council of Ministers of Agriculture had reached a tentative agreement on two critical issues in Brussel last Tuesday was welcomed: that of checking the milk surplus, on the one hand, and the removal of MCAs on the other. This has enabled us to look towards next Monday's European Council with somewhat more optimism than had hitherto been the case. Parliament now has the opportunity to make a contribution in the form of a resolution on the Commission's price proposals, with a view to ultimately extricating the Community from the present crisis.

I am indebted to our rapporteur, and member of my group, Eisso Woltjer, for his first-rate report. It goes without saying that my task is not one of focusing attention on the technicalities of this issue; this House has, in any event, sufficient experienced and alert experts. I should, nevertheless, like to highlight a few political guidelines which are of particular significance to me.

Every discerning individual is acutely aware of the inherent complexity and difficulty of the agriculture issue. The farming community is likewise aware of the need for policy measures. The milk surplus, in particular, through its extent, its durability, its budgetary, but also its social policy ramifications constitutes an inordinately difficult problem. The Community intervention stocks of butter have never previously attained the 900 000 ton plus mark.

The farming community is not, however, the sole culprit for the current deplorable state of affairs. They merely, and understandably, attuned their behaviour to the CAP market dictates. It would, therefore, be utterly wrong, unreasonable and unfair to saddle the eight million Community farmers with the full burden. I am shocked to read in the Woltjer report that real farm incomes have decreased by some 30 % since 1974, and that for the year 1983 alone a drop of 13 % was recorded. Frankly I wonder if such a trend can continue for much longer.

We need solutions, but they must be balanced ones. Two days ago, on Monday 12 March, agreement was reached in Brussels on the introduction of quotas in the milk sector but a decision on the introduction of a vegetable oils and fats tax was left to the European Council meeting next Monday and Tuesday.

Abens

I consider it a principle of political equity that internal market measures should be accompanied by measures in the field of external trade. A great deal of our problems of market disequilibrium is, after all, attributable to imbalance in our external tariffs.

The Community agricultural landscape is typified by flagrant regional and structural discrepancies. There exist areas in which milk production is the only viable activity. There are numerous small or medium-sized family undertakings whose only alternative to milk production is that of swelling the ranks of the Community's 12 million unemployed. The measures envisaged will have to take account of such inherent differences. That applies to quotas and levies but also to the application of income-effective compensation payments and the time may even have come for examining the merits of a system of direct aids to income for the poorest farmers. This, in my view, would provide the extra means required, which could be justified from the point of view of social policy.

Mr Helms (PPE). — (*DE*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we are discussing today, against a backdrop of very specific parameters and conditions, the adjustment of the CAP on the basis of the Commission's proposals and the data supplied by Commissioner Dalsager, Commission President Thorn, and, just this afternoon, by the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Rocard. That is a special situation, and one which has been subject to much criticism. I find it extraordinary that, given the crisis prevailing in the CAP and other areas, we can afford the luxury of being able to choose our forum at all.

All of the Community institutions have their backs to the wall and I am grateful that these discussions have been afforded such an opportunity. Our contributions to the debates will, of necessity, be circumscribed, but I should like to make one thing emphatically clear at the outset: the constant sniping at one or other formal incongruity within the global concept is, I believe, misplaced at this juncture. This is a time for concentrating on the essentials.

The miracle would appear to have come about that the Council of Ministers of Agriculture, meeting in Brussels, has managed to reach a compromise after consulting with Councils responsible for other areas. This, I believe, augurs well for the chances of substantive agreement at the forthcoming European Council. This is to be welcomed, for the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Rocard, left no one in any doubt about the critical nature of the deliberations, and the necessity and urgency of thrashing out a compromise. This aspect should also be sufficiently underlined here. I am especially grateful to the President-in-Office of the Council, Mr Rocard, for taking the trouble to identify in addition to the need for compromise, the issues of monetary compensatory amounts and milk policy as the most critical.

I am at a loss to appreciate the numerous members of the House who have launched polemical and irrele-

vant broadsides, demonstrating, in the process, a noticeable lack of familiarity with the workings of the CAP. In this respect I would cite the example of Mrs Seibel-Emmerling. I fully agree with her that the European Community cannot be considered as, in essence, no more than the CAP. But at the same time it is intolerable that the entire CAP should be called into question and criticism levelled in all directions. I have witnessed with surprise and disappointment the manner in which, for example, the spokesman on behalf of the Socialist Group, Mr Gautier, has focused on individual points and depicted them as deception. He ought to have a few words with his party colleague, and current President-in-Office of the Council, and French Minister for Agriculture, Mr Rocard, with a view to recognizing the care and effort being devoted by all sides towards the achievement of a reasonable solution.

Both the compromise solution as pruned by the Council and, of course, the Commission proposals have, understandably, been subjected to criticism in the House. To be frank, I am happy that the Commission proposals have been removed, Commissioner Dalsager. We find many of the points contained therein unacceptable, for example, those dealing with monetary compensatory amounts, or the restrictive price course. A system comprising guaranteed quantities coupled with quotas ought to be sufficient to restore a judicious price policy — something you, Commissioner Dalsager, questioned in this House back in January. I should like to take this opportunity of emphasizing this principle. I have read in the press, with some satisfaction that the Council intends, as indicated by Mr Rocard, to meet this coming Friday with the object of reaching agreement in principle on the broad spectrum of surplus production.

I would, therefore, recommend the critics, in particular those on the Left — or at least Mr Gautier and Mrs Seibel-Emmerling — to confer with their party colleague, Minister Rocard, and to take coaching lessons in agricultural policy so that they could familiarize themselves with the parameters and complexity of the CAP and its significance for the Community.

Whilst not partaking of the view expressed by Mr van Aerssen with respect to the vegetable oils and fats policy, I would like to state on behalf of my group, that we continue to consider the CAP as one of the keystones of Community policy. Speaking on behalf of the Council, Mr Rocard echoed these sentiments, and we are grateful to him for this. We realize that such is, on the whole, the view taken by the Council, something which all Members of the House would do well to bear in mind.

*(The sitting was suspended at 8 p.m. and resumed at 9.15 p.m.)*¹

¹ For the item concerning written declarations under Rule 49, see the Minutes.

IN THE CHAIR : LADY ELLES

Vice-President

Mr Barbagli (PPE). — *(IT)* Mr President, many among us have always maintained that structural agricultural surpluses must be abolished, especially in the dairy sector. We should therefore welcome the decision, or perhaps the 'pre-decision' adopted by the Council of Ministers.

The Chairman of my Group has explained today why we are in favour of a solution that will help to find a way out of the dead end in which the Community has found itself. May I say, however, that the solution which has been adopted is wrong and in itself is not a Community solution. Mr Dalsass was saying this afternoon that some countries produce surpluses, while others produce too little. I would add that there are enterprises which produce little and others which produce too much. The quantities which the quotas guarantee leave this situation unchanged and will, for instance, prevent the development of dairy production in areas where, frequently, no other productive possibilities exist, as for example in mountain and hill areas; they will also prevent a contribution being made by those farms which depend on agricultural acreage, to the development of those areas. It is particularly serious that, in order to find the resources for the 1984/85 marketing years for the guaranteed quantities which are much higher than in other years, the compensatory payment has been raised by one point, and raised, what is more, linearly, so that it affects in the same way all types of enterprise, dairy factories and farms which depend on acreage without distinction. Yet the land-dependent farms make a real contribution to employment and development in their areas.

Mr President, I think it is also very worrying that nothing has been said of integrated projects for the Mediterranean and apparently nothing will be said at the Summit. It seems that the money that will be saved on agriculture — and the savings are badly conceived, as I have said — will not be channelled to other policies but will merely serve to satisfy demands that have nothing to do with the interests and the great objectives of the Community.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think these are very grave matters, even though we all understand at this moment that the first priority is to overcome the impasse so that the Community can move forward again. But what Community will it be? Will it be a Europe of solidarity, a Europe of development, hence a Europe of employment? A Europe in which investments are once again made, in which geographical and sectoral imbalances are being corrected? I say, Mr President, that we must have answers to these questions.

Mr Bournias (PPE). — *(GR)* Madam President, the subject has almost been exhausted and my contribu-

tion will therefore be limited to just one topic: to Regulations No 2601, 1035 and 516. Firstly, however, I must express my satisfaction, as a Member of Parliament, concerning the statement made today by the French Chairman of the Council of Ministers for Agriculture, and for his assurance that the demise of the CAP has not merely been postponed, but definitively averted.

As for the two Regulations No 2601 and 1035, I believe that the change in the method of support will reduce aid to the processors, will have adverse consequences for orange growers whose products will be converted into juices, and will be to the disfavour of those employed in the processing sector. Madam President, I think it useful to stress that a change in the present method of support for ordinary oranges, which are used exclusively for manufacturing juices, will create long-term procedural problems and problems during implementation. For these reasons, and to avoid controls and delays, I oppose the new Regulations. However, in the case of Regulation No. 516 that concerns cherries I agree with the Committee on Agriculture's report, namely that support for the processing of cherries in Mediterranean countries should not be abolished.

I should like to use this opportunity to ask the Committee whether, apart from cherries, there will be any subsidies from the special fund of the EEC for other fruits such as sour cherries, bitter oranges, figs and fruit in syrup.

The industries engaged in such processing on the frontier Greek island of Chios have already asked to be included in the programme of aid, and should be supported since they do indeed supply the consumer with fruit preserved in syrup. I fear that the Commissioner may consider me biased, but I do ask him to believe that the subsidy of such fruit will increase agricultural incomes and productivity, and provide work for many unemployed islanders who, because of the continuing shipping crisis, cannot turn to the merchant navy for the support of their families. It is a fair request, Mr Commissioner, and the competent authorities in both the EEC and my own country should comply with it, to avoid adverse social consequences.

Mr Eyraud (S). — *(FR)* Madam President, I too am of the opinion that an agreement on the review of the common agricultural policy is vital for the survival of the Community. One cannot but admire the willing, resolute and effective way in which the French Presidency has pursued such an agreement. It is a great pity, however, that a reform that has been on the agenda of the Community bodies for so many years should be so long in coming. It has been discussed often enough — when fixing prices, in relation to a mandate, at Summits — but never has it been possible to reach a general agreement. Like an old inner tube, it has been patched many times over the years but now it is

Eyraud

starting to leak, the time has come to change it. Forced into immediate action by budget constraints, the Community is at last trying to tackle the problem of the CAP as a whole, from scratch. Inevitably it is running into all sorts of terrible difficulties, for there is now nothing left — or almost nothing — of those great principles which were its guiding light at the time when the CAP was first being drawn up. Community preference, the free movement of goods, a single market and financial solidarity were compatible only in the context of a uniform economic environment. The gradual decay of the CAP has taken place in three stages, all of which have had the effect of accentuating disparities, because at no time have the differences in agriculture within the Community been truly taken into account.

The first stage of this decay resulted from the fixing of a single price for all. Evolved as it was in the context of stable exchange rates, such a system proved totally unsuitable in the context of fluctuating currencies. The currency upheavals and the differences in the rate of inflation between Member States which resulted from them led ultimately to the introduction of MCAs in 1969. It will have taken fifteen years for any serious attempt to be made to dismantle them. Which is fortunate in a sense, because during these fifteen years they have had the opposite effect to that which was intended. They effectively reintroduced customs duties — totally contrary though they are to the principles of the common market — by acting as export taxes and import subsidies in the case of countries with weak currencies, and vice versa in countries with strong currencies. For the latter, the continuing existence of MCAs was a veritable boon in that it allowed agricultural production to expand artificially; this marked the beginning of the surpluses.

Farmers in countries with weak currencies, on the other hand, found themselves doubly penalized. Not only were they not able to benefit from the positive effects of the devaluation of their currency, but in addition they had two other difficulties to cope with: firstly, the increase in their production costs in line with their national level of inflation and with the rise in the cost of imported supplies due to slippage in relation to the dollar and to the uncontrollable rises in the green currency; secondly, they have to contend with what in this context amounts to unfair competition from the products of Member States with strong currencies whose production costs are much lower.

We welcome the important step forward resulting from the agreement, even if it is only conditional, which was reached at the Council of Agriculture Ministers and in accordance with which 80 % of positive MCAs are to be dismantled over the coming ten months. We are thus seeing enacted a demand expressed on many occasions by the European Parliament, which must now pass opinion on the legitimacy of MCAs applied to products not subject to intervention.

The second stage of the decay of the CAP coincides with the progressive abandonment of the concept of Community preference.

After a few years of working almost normally, Community preference was largely knocked on the head, as the President-in-Office of the Council of Agriculture Ministers indicated this afternoon, by the Community's reluctance to positively affirm its identity vis-à-vis the rest of the world. The Commission, thus logically reflecting the economic liberalism that had become excessively widespread in the Community, never showed any willingness to promote an effective commercial policy. This led to disastrous agreements in the context of GATT, which have resulted in massive imports, at reduced levels of duty or altogether duty-free, of products intended for animal feed: soya, maize gluten, cassava and other substitute products, replacing Community cereals. The effect of this has been to destabilize the market and necessitate more refunds in order to export our surpluses. It may interest you to know that the derogations from Community preference in respect of cereal substitutes alone cost the Community budget 650 million ECU in the financial year 1981, in other words as much as we would hope to raise with the tax on fats and oils that we are proposing. We hope that all Member States will come round to our way of thinking at the next Council.

The third stage in the decay of the CAP is now in progress. If, to use a rugby metaphor, which should please our British colleagues — although I do not see many of them here — (actually I am rather fond of rugby myself) if the try by the Council of Agriculture Ministers is not converted by the Council of Ministers into an agreement by the end of the month, the CAP and the Community will collapse. I chose the image of a try because in rugby there are classic tries, beautifully put together, and then there are other tries, the ones one has to be content with, scored in the midst of confusion. I fear lest this should be the case with the agreement that is now taking shape. The compromise on milk does embody a number of positive proposals: spreading the cut-back in production over a period of one year and putting 600 000 tonnes into stock, the choice of the quota system being left up to the individual Member States. This is vital, in my view, if we are to establish a system that is suited to each country. Moreover, we could in this way see how each system works and then keep the one that works best: introduce subsidies to help farms fitting certain criteria to modernize. On the other hand, I regard as negative the one point linear increase in the co-responsibility levy and the abandonment of any idea of a tax on intensive farms producing over 15 000 kilos of milk per hectare. Without a doubt this will be seen by small producers as a denial of justice. And apropos of this I am sorry to note that an earlier proposal by Parliament to exempt the first 60 000 kilos produced has not been taken up in this draft agreement. Without such an exemption the 120 million

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ECU set aside for small farmers seems like a pittance. In France, threequarters of milk producers deliver less than 60 000 litres a year. Altogether in the Community there are over a million producers like this, which means that each one will receive less than 120 ECU by way of compensation for lost income. One should not forget, either, that most of the small dairy farms are situated in mountain areas. Perhaps it might be possible to increase the special allowance payable to farmers in such areas. It is a suggestion that I should like to see taken up by the Commission and by the Council.

I would like to say in conclusion, Madam President, that the CAP has, in the space of twenty years, brought the number of farmworkers in the Community down from 20 million to 8 million. Of the 12 million unemployed in the Community, how many, I wonder, are farmworkers who left for the towns to seek work back in the sixties? Are we prepared now to allow the number of farmworkers to fall from 8 million to 3 million, thus creating a further 5 million potential jobless? I leave these figures with you to think about.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like on behalf of the Commission to comment on the reports which have been presented here by Mr Marck on the monetary compensatory amounts, by Mr Goerens on the proposal for a tax on certain oils and fats, by Mr Woltjer on the common market system for milk and dairy products, by Mr Vitale on the control of payments to the olive oil producers, by Mr Battersby on control problems in the olive oil sector and by Mr Stella on the proposals in the fruit and vegetables sector.

Listening to the debate today I have formed the impression that a number of Honourable Members believe that final agreements have been reached in the Council on some elements forming part of the Commission's proposals. I should like to point out straight away, once again, that no agreement has yet been reached in the Council. I am sorry Mr Rocard is no longer present. He would have been able to confirm what I am saying here.

Before I go on to discuss the amended reports, I should like to thank all the rapporteurs for their excellent work. I think that the rapporteurs were able in addition to amend their statements at very short notice, and I greatly value that.

With regard to Mr Goerens' report on the proposal for a Council regulation introducing a tax on certain oils and fats, I would say that the Commission has put forward this proposal with a view to achieving a better balance on the Community market for animal and vegetable fats. I am happy that it has been possible to a large extent for you to go along with the Commission's proposals.

In point 6 of the report the Committee on Agriculture also proposes that negotiations be held concurrently with the introduction of the tax with a view to determining quantitative restrictions for certain raw materials from third countries.

I must say that I do not quite understand this part of the report. I do not think that the members of the Committee have quite realized what it will mean, and the same goes for other speakers who have covered this point today. If our Community wants to continue exporting to countries outside the Community — and we surely all want that — we must inevitably also accept imports into the Community. In general terms I would say that, for those products which are consolidated in GATT, we may of course seek to achieve deconsolidation. Such deconsolidation will mean that concessions must be granted in other areas, i.e. that in real terms the increased protection in these areas must be paid for. I would ask you whether you think that our Community can afford that.

Point 11 of the report also calls for the expediting of negotiations with those third countries which are suppliers, notably the United States, for the conclusion of agreements on voluntary restraint in exports. Unfortunately I have to say that this is very unrealistic. Do you really think that any third countries will be disposed to limit their exports to the Community voluntarily when they have rights to them embodied in treaties? Do you really think that the European Community will at any time be prepared to grant a similar concession? I would point out that the Commission must at the present time stand by its proposal for the tax on fats.

With regard to Mr Vitale's report I would inform you that the Commission is well aware of the economic and social importance olive oil has for certain areas of the Community. We know that there are around 1.5 million producers, and it is precisely the large number which has given rise to problems of control. I would point out here that the Commission does not share the opinions expressed in the more popular sections of the daily press concerning fraud in this sector but, as I have said, the Commission realizes that there is a problem of control which needs to be solved; it is with this in mind that the Commission presented its proposal. Of course in this sector it is not possible — as in others — to apply systematic inspections of accounts. It is impossible because of the prevalence of large numbers of very small holdings in this sector.

I note with satisfaction that the rapporteur and the Committee on Agriculture in principle favour the setting up of a control body. Changes have however been proposed which, in my opinion, would involve a weakening of the control capacity, in particular abolition of the principle of autonomy and limitation of the Commission's right to inspect the activity of the

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control body. I must therefore stand by the Commission's proposal and I hope that Parliament will accept the principles embodied in the resolution of the Committee on Agriculture and will at the same time reject the proposed amendments concerning the control body.

I should also like to say a few words on Mr Battersby's interim report, which has been drafted in conjunction with the Vitale report. The report of the Committee on Budgetary Control indeed calls for the setting up of an independent EEC control body and I greatly welcome this proposal.

With regard to Mr Stella's report on processed fruit and vegetables, I note that the Committee on Agriculture has approved the two proposals for a Council regulation presented by the Commission in this sector. The first proposal is to alter the method by which the support for oranges is calculated, while the other is concerned with abolishing the support for the processing of fruit and vegetables withdrawn from the market. I hope that Parliament will be able to go along with the Committee on Agriculture in its conclusions.

In contrast to this I very much regret that the report rejects the Commission's proposal to abolish the support for cherry production. The clear aim of this proposal is to find savings in the agricultural policy which create the smallest number of problems in the sector concerned. The Commission found it expedient to abolish the support for cherries in syrup, because imports are very limited. The duty in question is reasonable; no trade agreement has been entered into with any major supplier country and, as it is not a specifically Mediterranean product, the Commission will stand by its proposal.

With regard to Mr Woltjer's report I would say that I informed Parliament this morning on the latest developments in the Council, and you have also had the opportunity of hearing the President-in-Office of the Council here this afternoon. I should like in the first instance to say a few things about Mr Woltjer's original report, if I might put it that way, and his contribution to the debate today.

I am happy to note that on a number of points there is agreement between the conclusions of this report and the Commission's proposals. I have noticed that there is a certain convergence of views on the introduction of a levy on the quantities of milk supplied over and above the guarantee threshold, secondly on the question of consideration for the situation of those producers who have undertaken investments in connection with structural improvements, and the possibility of leaving a certain room for manoeuvre to the Member States in the assessment of this situation, thirdly on flexibility with regard to the transfer of quotas on the takeover of a holding, together with the

possibility open to Member States of using financial support in order to encourage the giving up of certain quotas which can then be allocated to holdings whose structures are to be improved, and finally on the supplementary disposal arrangements for butteroil and the gradual abolition of Community support for the direct consumption of butter.

On the other hand, I cannot share the views regarding the phasing out of the co-responsibility levy. In view of the very considerable stocks of butter and skimmed powder and the high cost of the sale arrangements, I think we should maintain this levy. As I have said, it may even be necessary to increase the levy temporarily in order to finance a slightly higher level of quotas than that proposed by the Commission.

Also I cannot accept the proposed exemptions for certain holdings in hill-farming areas and disadvantaged areas. While I do not in any way wish to underestimate difficulties facing the milk producers in these regions, I think that the situation within the milk sector is so serious that it is necessary for the supplementary levy to be imposed on all milk producers without exception. We can however consider easing the situation for smaller milk producers by extending the special support of 120 million ECU, the intention of which is to assist the smaller milk producers. These comments are in no way intended to detract from my positive impression of Mr Woltjer's important report.

Finally I come to the compromise resolution Mr Woltjer has presented today, and I must express my admiration for the speed with which he has reacted to the new situation. The Commission is favourably disposed to this new text. I only disagree on one point, and it is rather a question of timing than of principles. We agree to the preparation of a full report on the application of the quota system, but we cannot reasonably do it before the end of 1984, i.e. at a time when we do not yet have a full year's experience to build upon. We will therefore present a report to Parliament in 1986, but in the meantime I can reassure Mr Woltjer that I myself and my staff will keep Parliament's Committee on Agriculture fully informed of developments with regard to the quota system.

Also, in answer to Mr Simmonds' question, I can assure you that both the Commission and the Member States will take measures for the effective control of the quotas and that the quotas will be introduced as rapidly as possible, so that they can be applied with effect from the 1984-85 production year, which already starts on 1 April.

With regard to Mr Marck's report, I should like in the first instance to put forward a few general comments on his original report. You know that the Commission has always been at pains to limit the effects of the monetary compensatory amounts. We have two possibilities here.

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To begin with it is possible to undertake an adjustment to the green exchange rates, so as to bring them into line with economic reality. As one of the main elements in the proposal, the Commission has proposed an automatic arrangement for both present and future monetary compensatory amounts. It has been found that it is much more difficult to wind up the positive monetary compensatory amounts than the negative ones for reasons which everybody is aware of, since the abolition of the positive monetary compensatory amounts involves a drop in prices in national currencies. The Commission has not overlooked this difficulty by any means. One of the intentions of the proposal is therefore that there should be compensation for the losses in income caused by such falls in prices with the aid of gradually reducing support which will be limited in time. These elements, as has been pointed out, form part of the provisional price package worked out by the Council.

The second possibility is to limit the monetary compensatory amounts by making a change in the increasingly complicated calculation rules on the basis of experience up to now. The proposal provides for a number of such changes, but these changes cannot bring about the lasting effects made possible by the first method. As the monetary compensatory amounts are in conflict with the principle of a single market and can introduce distortions, these limitations are a step in the right direction.

Finally I come to the compromise resolution which Mr Marck has put forward today. I should like to express my gratitude for the speed at which he has reacted to the new situation which has arisen as a result of the progress made in the Council. On the whole I can accept this motion for a resolution. I will say however that it is going a little too far to say that a vigorous attack is being made on the role of the ECU. This is not the Commission's view.

One of the last comments I heard in this debate was Mr Eyraud's attack on the Commission for not having pursued an active trading policy. I am very sorry that the remarks of the President-in-Office of the Council on the same subject this afternoon caused Mr Eyraud to attack the Commission, since of course, along with all other Members of Parliament, he knows that the Commission has had proposals on the table at the Council on the matter for 3-4 years, but the Council has not been able to take a decision. Mr Eyraud also knows that a proposal for a mandate on the import of certain raw materials from the United States is at the Council awaiting a decision. It would have been nicer of him, at least as far as the Commission is concerned, to have raised this matter with the President-in-Office of the Council rather than with the Commission's representative at this sitting. But I will present Mr Eyraud's compliments to the President-in-Office of the Council and tell him that the question has been raised again.

Mr Eyraud (S). — (*FR*) I should like to point out to the Commissioner that I asked a double question on this subject, to the Commission and to the Council, and I hope to receive an answer from each of them in the very near future.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

Agricultural prices

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1508/83) by Mr Woltjer, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1350/83 — COM(84) 20 final) for regulations concerning the fixing of prices for agricultural products and related measures (1984/85).

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (*NL*) After nearly twenty-five years what some people, including myself, have been predicting for years has now come about. The agricultural policy has got out of hand and is threatening to plunge the whole of the European Community into a serious crisis to which there is no simple answer. The agricultural policy has got out of hand because, despite the Commission's and Council's fine intentions, both the surpluses in some sectors and the expenditure inevitably associated with them have risen at record speed. It is inconceivable that the debate on the reform of the agricultural policy should have continued throughout the life of this directly elected Parliament without a single practical step having so far been taken. But there is a fundamental difference between 1979 and now. The Community is in very deep water, by which I mean that it cannot even honour the commitments it has entered into unless suitable measures are taken.

Mr President, in 1980 the Commission drew up its now famous proposals for a mandate. Adopting the phrase 'It is now five to twelve' as its slogan, the Commission then put forward a package of proposals for reforms, which showed courage and a sense of reality. Less than a year later, however, these proposals had been shelved. The Council was not sufficiently prepared to do anything practical about the surpluses and the burden the common agricultural policy imposes on the budget. In 1981 the world market recovered slightly, which prompted the Commission, the Council and a majority in Parliament to forget all the good proposals for reforms and to approve an unprecedented price increase of over 10%, for which the farmers are still having to pay. The troublesome British were outvoted in the Council, because the Commission was prepared to amend its price proposals that year. I repeat, Mr President, it was the Commission that withdrew its own proposals at that

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time and replaced them with new ones. All the warnings about the structural nature of overproduction were quickly forgotten that year and fell on deaf ears.

Mr President, the policy thus drifted between proposals for reform and irresponsible increases in prices for several years. The result of all this is that farmers in the Community still do not know where they stand and that increasing production is the only thing they can have any confidence in. This had led to a race without a finish, which is still going on. This inconsistent policy, which I repeat was the Commission's policy, should not in fact be called a policy. The impression the citizens of Europe had during this period was that Europe was no more than a farm lobby and that there was no money to be had in Europe for anything other than the agricultural policy. The farmers, for whom all this was designed, ultimately suffered as much as anyone, because they too now have absolutely no reason to feel satisfied. On the contrary: they are now in danger of having to foot the whole bill, and that is not really right.

Mr President, that is how things stand in 1984, even if there is now a ray of hope. It is at last being realized that, unless far-reaching measures are taken, the bankruptcy of the common agricultural policy and the collapse of the Community as a whole cannot be avoided. My report discusses the Commission's proposals for restricting the growth of production with quotas. The Commissioner has just discussed this point, and I must say that we agree on quite a number of points. Unfortunately, there is little or no scope in 1984 for compensating farmers for reductions in what they produce. They can look forward to a substantial drop in their incomes. The introduction of quotas does, however, comply with the principle — and this is the course we must adopt — that the two objectives of keeping a balance in the markets and maintaining incomes at a reasonable level can only be achieved with two different instruments.

Mr President, I believe the statements that were made on agricultural expenditure during the budget debate must be respected even now. This means — and this was the premise I adopted when drawing up my report — that the 16 500m ECU included in the budget must certainly not be exceeded. I realize that, if this premise is respected, it will be impossible to increase prices by more than has now been proposed by the Commission, even if there are enough arguments for a greater increase. I also realize that this amount falls well short of what is needed to eliminate the surpluses, which have reached a very high level — not only in the dairy sector but also in the meat sector — with the aid of subsidies and that we simply do not have this amount available. At least 5 000m ECU would be needed if the surpluses were to be reduced to anything like an acceptable level. It is almost painful, Mr President, to hear it being said in Germany at this very moment that stocks of old butter must be destroyed because there is no more room in

the warehouses. I realize that this report, at least as far as I have been able to discover, may not be based on a clear and specific plan of the Commission's, but it is nonetheless causing an enormous political stir, which may well result in the public increasingly losing faith in the Community.

Mr President, our belief that we must not exceed this 16500m ECU does not mean that the Committee on Agriculture has not considered the problem of incomes very carefully. We stress in our report that the Commission's proposals do not take sufficient account of the development of incomes that will again be necessary in 1984. On the one hand, I can appreciate that the Commission believes a realistic approach must be adopted to the present financial situation. On the other, we must also consider what can be done within these limits to support incomes as far as possible.

And although we realize that farm incomes must be kept in check in the coming years because of the shortage of financial resources, we must try wherever possible to take action to alleviate the situation. The surpluses, which are a millstone around the farmer's neck and have caused farm incomes to lag behind, must be reduced even further in the coming years if there is again to be the real financial scope needed to support farm incomes after all this time. That is also the goal explicitly stated in Article 39 of the Treaty, and many of my colleagues have said as much in their statements and in amendments they have tabled.

Mr President, I now come to the specific details of the price proposals and what they entail and the views of the Committee on Agriculture. I will be brief because we know that there is little point in going into too much detail now that a substantial compromise on the prices seems imminent.

I have already said that the implementation of all the price proposals and of the proposals contained in Commission Document 500 will cause a serious incomes problem. Various figures have been mentioned, but they are undoubtedly so high as to be unacceptable. I have also indicated that most of the measures — and in this I therefore agree with the Commission — are needed to prevent the bankruptcy of the common agricultural policy. And yet we felt that we must table various amendments to the Commission's proposals. We have made it clear that, at a time when money must be used as efficiently as possible, global measures cannot be used. In these circumstances more direct measures must be taken, measures like the 120m ECU for small cattle farms. I must also point out to the Commissioner that this complies in every way with my proposal for the gradual abolition of the co-responsibility levy, because he well knows how this figure of 120m ECU came about. It was simply based on a 1% reduction in the co-responsibility levy for the first 60 000 litres of milk produced per farm, and the 120m ECU was set aside for this purpose.

Woltjer

Mr President, we have also called for direct aid to a number of countries where inflation is high. Again we realize that a very large increase in prices specifically to counteract these rates of inflation is not possible. But we have nevertheless called for 1½ % more on the understanding that direct measures and various structural measures will also be needed.

If you look at the report, you will appreciate that we have tried to find ways of making as efficient use of resources as possible and that we have said that in some respects the Member States can also be expected to play their part, particularly where the dismantling of the MCA's is concerned. If we compare this with the proposals that have now been put forward as a compromise — I will not say that they are in danger of being accepted by the Council, but they are at least on the point of being accepted — the conclusion to be drawn is that there are not really any major differences but in fact many areas of agreement. But there is one major difference, and that is over the dismantling of the MCAs. I cannot understand why the Commission should want to accept the Council's proposal when so much money is involved. In the present situation this is almost an impossibility. The Council wants to exceed the Commission's budgetary proposals by 1500m ECU. I find this really staggering. I can therefore hardly imagine that the Commission is able to accept this 1500 m ECU for its own account.

Some years ago I was called a Don Quixote who tried to climb butter mountains. At that time it was being said that it would be impossible to introduce a quota system in Europe. I am pleased to see that realism at last prevails in Europe and that we are now adopting the course of which I was so strong an advocate at the time — often acting on my own.

Europe now appears to be making a genuine breakthrough in the application of the common agricultural policy. In itself this is a good thing. In itself it shows the farmers that we know how to run a common agricultural policy and that that is just as much to their advantage. But we have not yet reached that stage. The goal has not yet been reached. There are still enormous stocks depressing world market prices and in fact still threatening the agricultural policy, because things will certainly not be easy in 1985. I would go so far as to say that, even if all the Council's proposals are accepted, there will still be a time-bomb under this agricultural policy in 1985, because the financial implications of these proposals will continue to cause serious difficulties in 1985 — especially as the Community is unlikely to have its VAT ceiling raised.

I can also tell you — and this is one of the premises I adopted in my report — that it is politically unacceptable to Parliament — and this is a sentiment you will also find expressed in the amendments tabled by the Committee on Budgets — for cuts to be made in the regional policy, the social policy, the development

policy and so on. We — or at least we Socialists — have fought hard for these policies in the last five years. As rapporteur I have also tried to persuade a majority of this Parliament to ensure that we at last make this breakthrough. We have taken steps forward, but I hope the Commission realizes that a solution has yet to be found for 1984 and that a great deal more has yet to be done before the goal is reached.

(Applause)

Mr Newton Dunn (ED), draftsman of the opinion of the Committee on Budgets. — Madam President, the Committee on Budgets restricts its comments to the financial and budgetary considerations and does not actually consider the agricultural point of view at all.

The committee's discussion demonstrated a lot of doubts about the Commission's proposals. There were doubts as to whether the proposal to eliminate monetary compensation amounts was not too drastic, and it was pointed out by one of our colleagues from the Federal Republic that it would result in a massive drop in incomes for German farmers, which might well produce very dramatic consequences in its immediate wake. There were doubts as to whether the proposals were too severe on Mediterranean farmers, because the Commission's proposals did not take into account differences in inflation rates in the Community countries, so that one of our Greek members pointed out that, with an inflation rate of 20 % in Greece, the proposals were exceedingly unfair to Greek farmers. There were very considerable doubts over the fact that sacrifices — because sacrifices were being called for — were being asked for equally from farmers in all countries. There were doubts whether the proposals we were discussing were indeed the proposals that we should finally be voting on, and these, of course, have been borne out by very recent developments.

It was pointed out by one of our colleagues that the whole balance of spending was wrong and that more money was spent by the EEC on feeding surpluses to calves than on the fight against unemployment among young people.

There were doubts the resources were adequate to fund the Commission's proposals: that has been borne out by President Thorn's comments this morning, which demonstrated that there has been a large carry-over in commitments from 1983.

The committee's conclusions were, however, that we must be extremely realistic in our present great financial difficulties, and although we had considerable doubts about the consequences, we have to face the proposals because there is just no more money available. Though unsatisfactory and painful, we have to face them, because not only the Committee on Budgets but, we hope, the Parliament will be very responsible indeed this year.

Newton Dunn

The committee came to four conclusions which I was instructed to lay before our colleagues. First of all, the Committee on Budgets reiterates its opinion against an oils-and-fats tax. On this it is very firm. It has also asked me to table, which I have done, three amendments to the Woltjer resolution stressing, in particular, the committee's opinion.

First of all, Amendment No 166 points out that whatever decision is adopted by the Council must be governed by the fact that the appropriations available for agriculture were fixed in the budget we adopted in December. The Commission has followed the Parliament's budget — the agreed budget — and we very much hope that the Council will respect those same budgetary limits.

Secondly, the committee stresses that appropriations used to finance whatever settlement is made for agricultural prices must on no account touch non-agricultural allocations, and we were extremely pleased to hear President Thorn in his statement this morning stress that the Commission did not intend touching non-agricultural money. The Committee on Budgets would be very firm on that point, and we have put down an amendment to that effect in the hope that the Parliament will follow us. That is Amendment No 167.

Finally, Amendment No 168, which is intended to stress how tight the ship is and that there is no more money, points out that there is no more money, not only because we have reached the 1 % ceiling and have reached the limit of the Community's own resources but because it would surely take a considerable time before any increase in these resources could be ratified by 10 separate national parliaments. We do not believe that any such increase can be ratified before December of this year — only nine months away — when the 1985 budget will, of course, have to be approved.

That, Madam President, is the opinion of the Committee on Budgets.

Mr Cohen (S), *draftsman of an opinion of the Committee on Development and Cooperation.* — (NL) Madam President, it is always with some diffidence that we of the Committee on Development and Cooperation speak in this debate on farm prices. This debate primarily concerns farmers' incomes, surpluses, what the Community is able to achieve with its budget, and then, all of a sudden, we see in some far corner a speaker with an interest in development and cooperation trying to introduce the interests of the developing countries into this debate. This is rather difficult. It may even be a line of approach that not everyone appreciates. It is therefore with some diffidence but also determination that I take the floor.

I speak with determination because we are convinced that the interests of the developing countries must not be overlooked in any aspect of this agricultural policy or of the industrial policy or of any other of the

Community's policies. The Community — and others as well, who happen to be better off than most of the developing countries — have a duty to take account of the interests of these countries. For this and other reasons we of the Committee on Development and Cooperation are really quite pleased with the proposals the Commission has put forward this year.

The Commission's proposals aim at restricting production in the Community. Proposals to this end were made by my colleague and Parliament's spokesman on prices this year, Mr Woltjer, years ago, and we have always supported them. Necessity has taught us that limiting production is the only way out of the problems raised by surplus production, the budgetary problems and the problems which the economy as a whole is causing agricultural and other sectors. We therefore believe that the course the Commission has adopted, a course which Mr Woltjer has been advocating for years, is the course we should follow, because it is also in the interests the developing countries.

It is in the interests of the developing countries that they should be encouraged to produce food themselves. It is in the interests of the developing countries that the Community's food aid should comply with food strategies for these developing countries. It is in the interests of developing countries that they should have an opportunity of exporting agricultural products to the Community, not because these exports are in themselves so important, but because they are a token of the developing countries' ability to make revenue of their own, so that they are no longer dependent on financial aid from the Community, because in relations with developing countries there are only two alternatives: either we grant aid or go ahead with financial transactions, or we make it possible for these countries to make revenue for themselves, and that means we must also enable them to export to our market. We therefore fully approve limits on production.

We also believe, and we have said as much in our opinion, that the Community should accede, as we have been saying for years, to the International Sugar Agreement. We are not saying that the negotiating position the Community is adopting at the moment, which is chiefly aimed at controlling stocks rather than limiting exports by the producing countries, is a bad choice. We quite accept that, with overproduction at its present level in the world and in view of the isoglucose problem that we shall also be facing, the control of stocks and the financing of stockpiles at world level are necessary.

We also believe that at a time when so many developing countries import sugar, an increase in prices is not the first priority. But we do believe that the Community must show that it is willing to accede to the International Sugar Agreement, even though its negotiating position conflicts with that of other major

Cohen

producing countries. We feel it must continue to demonstrate this willingness because without the Community's cooperation an agreement of this kind simply cannot be reached. We accept the Community's initial position, but we should like to see greater emphasis placed on its willingness actually to enter into international commitments.

It goes without saying, of course, Madam President, that we do not have a good word to say about the Commission's proposal for a levy on oils and fats. It can only reduce the developing countries' export opportunities, and I have just said that there are only two courses open to us: either to grant more aid to developing countries or to ensure that their purchasing power is stimulated by enabling when to make revenue of their own, and that means more export opportunities not fewer. That is why we continue to advocate that a levy of this kind should not be imposed on oils and fats.

These two elements, Madam President, are the *leit-motif* of our statement. Our premise is that the developing countries must have an opportunity to export to our market and also that food production in these countries to our market and also that food production in these countries must be increased. That may sound paradoxical, but it is not. Different categories of products are involved: food produced in the developing countries is for domestic markets, the products exported are also grown here. In our own interests and in the interests of the developing countries we must ensure that these countries continue to have the opportunity of exporting.

Mr Alber (PPE), Draftsman of the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. — (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, in the usual scheme of things the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection invariably takes issue with the agricultural price proposals. This year, however, the average price increase works out at less than 1 % and when one takes into account such factors as the exchange rate into national Member State currencies, the reduction of monetary compensatory amounts and the relevant inflation rates, it transpires that most farmers will have experienced very considerable losses. The price proposals will not, therefore, lead to any increase in consumer prices. It goes without saying, therefore, that consumers have no objection to the measures. I have just stated, however, that such price proposals will result in a loss of income for the farmer without, for all that, helping to resolve the structural problems in the agricultural sector, for they are not the appropriate tools — at least not in isolation — to check surplus agricultural production. The interests of the Community consumer are not confined to modest price levels. An efficient agricultural sector and stable markets are every bit as important for him. Not

without reason does Article 39 of the EEC Treaty couple these two objectives. Notwithstanding price adjustments and quota regulations the elimination of surplus production will require other measures. The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection believes that this could be, at least in part, attained by altering cultivation methods by an increased reliance on the planting of specific products in which the Community is not self-sufficient, for example soya, or through the cultivation of specific plants, which provide special alcohols for energy and fuel extraction.

The same applies to the production of other raw materials, for example fibre plants could be employed as a substitute for asbestos. Plant-protective agents can themselves be produced from plants. Experts have calculated that a change in cultivation methods along these lines could remove as much as one quarter of the total agricultural surface area currently employed for food- and feedstuff production. A changeover from the fertilizers and pesticides currently employed, accompanied by a reduction in chemical feedstuffs, could likewise contribute both to a quantity control system and, simultaneously, to a noticeable improvement in the environment.

Wildlife conservation and ecological balance would ideally require the removal of specific farmland from production. In this way one could declare more surface area as havens for animal and plant conservation. Both the agriculture and wildlife conservation roles undertaken by Community farmers must naturally be accorded far more importance in the form of appropriate compensatory allocations. An extension in processing activities would also render saleable hitherto unmarketable products. For example historical and climatic shortcomings have deprived us of sales outlets for milk products in the Third World, although famine often reigns in these very areas. To this must be added a high lactose-allergy level, that is to say, an inherent milk rejection among the peoples of the developing countries. Whereas less than 10% of Europeans suffer from this phenomenon, the comparable figure for the Third World is in excess of 50%. Methods have, however, been developed of late, for example skimmed-milk proteins can be refined through the milk product in such a way as to eliminate any possible milk rejection. One cannot escape the conclusion that both the responsible officials in the Community and commercial organizations have done precious little for quite some time now to bring about a dynamic marketing and sales approach.

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection reiterates the demand it has repeatedly made for a reduction of surplus production. It believes that its renewed recommendations could help not only to resolve this problem but could at the same time constitute a substantial contribution towards a positive environmental arrangement.

IN THE CHAIR : MR LALOR

Vice-President

Mr Wettig (S). — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in this year's agricultural debate Parliament's position is somewhat precarious for, on the basis of information emanating from Council meetings over the past few days there would seem to be some uncertainty concerning many of the items we are debating. No doubt a good deal of the Commission's proposals have now been overtaken as a result of Council's deliberations.

This year's discussion of the agricultural prices for the farm year 1984/85 merely serves to bring into sharper focus a constitutional problem which had already begun to manifest itself in recent years for at that time too, in particular during the discussion of the agricultural price proposals, it became apparent that the Council of Ministers of Agriculture had already reached substantive agreement amongst themselves, and this during Parliament's hearings and on matters concerning which the latter had not been informed. By the time Parliament's decision had emerged the Council had invariably taken care of the essentials. This year the problem has merely been accentuated. The President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of Agriculture found an elegant formula by describing it this afternoon as nothing more than a temporary aberration. I deduce from his comments that the significance of the problem is at least not lost on him. I interpret his favourable disposition towards Parliament — to the effect that the Council of Ministers still sought Parliament's counsel with a view to resolving specific problems — as no more than a in order to take the heat out of this issue. I believe it will indeed be necessary to maintain a vigilant watch on cooperation between Community institutions, Commission and Council, for example, with a view to ensuring that Parliament's constitutional role — which is, in any event, a relatively weak one, in the context of hearings — is not weakened. Were the scenario to which we have been party in a particular sense this year to be further emulated it would result in an erosion of Parliament's hearing rights, leaving, ultimately, nothing but an empty shell, for the negotiations between the Commission and the Council of Ministers would have invariably, to all intents and purposes, culminated in agreement on the very matters which Parliament had been debating.

I shall now turn to the proposals and the report presented by the rapporteur of the Committee on Agriculture. The Socialist Group welcomes the report's clear commitment to a reduction in agricultural price guarantees and its refusal to make do with such a hoary principle but, rather, to follow it up with very tangible and viable recommendations, capable of practical implementation in the political field. We further welcome the report's support, in principle, of the

Commission's price proposals, albeit with reservations, occasioned particularly by regional policy considerations, which understandably occupy a very special position within the Committee on Agriculture. Matters in this area cannot be examined without at least some reference to the past whether it be in relation to the Commission's role and its resoluteness in the farm price negotiations, a similar inquiry into Council's role with a view to gauging the effectiveness of its efforts to resolve the emerging problems in this sector over the past five years and also, with regard to Parliament's role, the degree to which it elaborated clear decisions for dealing with developments in the agricultural sector. Parliament, in particular, cannot shirk its responsibility for having contributed in the past to clearly excessive farm price proposals, thereby providing utterly erroneous signals to the farming community. This applies, in particular, to the position adopted by Parliament during the years 1981/82 and 1982/83 which — especially as regards the public perception of Parliament's decision — was a major factor in contributing to our reputation for profligacy in the agricultural sector.

The false signals I referred to have provoked the current policy, which is nothing less than an emergency brake which will result in substantial loss of income in the agricultural sector, threatening farmers in certain areas with ruin. No one who has helped bring about such a state of affairs through their votes in this House can now disclaim responsibility. Those in the Commission and Council who have hitherto prevented a readjustment of the CAP are just as much to blame. The report condemns the exclusively budgetary character of the agricultural price decisions. I cannot go along with this criticism, for I believe it resides in a miscalculation. By having such considerable recourse to the public budget as a means of subsidising agricultural incomes, it goes without saying that financial deficits in the public budget must also have an effect on the financing of agricultural incomes. The solvency of the public budget is also a parameter against which agricultural price increases are gauged. If, for example, the consumption of every other kilo of butter in the Community can only be assured through the allocation of subsidies then it is obvious that, in times of budget shortfalls, such subsidies must be curtailed.

I should like to highlight one issue, to which the rapporteur has already referred, and to which my group attaches particular importance. The budgetary framework dictated for the 1984 financial year must not be altered as a result of these agricultural price decisions. We shall not lend our approval to any policy aimed at financing agricultural expenditure through reductions in other chapters of the Community budget. This applies in particular — and I would emphasize the point — to any reductions in the Social Fund, Regional Fund or research expenditure, of whatever nature, which the Community might undertake. My Group will not approve of any such measures.

Wettig

I should like to make a final comment on the decisions we have to take tomorrow and whose effect will be felt for some time. We feel that the criticism and the warnings we have been voicing since 1979 have now been fully vindicated and we regret that the measures we laid before the House over the past few years — especially in the course of the agricultural price debates — failed to obtain majority support, and that there was invariably a narrow majority for an alternative policy. On the basis of the measures discussed and the tentative agreement reached in the course of the past few days by the Council of Ministers and what may arise during the coming week, the reform of the CAP is by no means assured. Anyone who is familiar with this field knows all too well that it will be a long haul to restore order where disorder had long reigned. We hope that a sensible attitude, along the lines advocated by my group since 1979 will obtain majority support in the House.

Mr Tolman (PPE). — *(NL)* I should like to begin, Mr President, by thanking the rapporteur, Mr Woltjer, for the considerable effort he has put into this report. He must most surely be thanked for that. But when Mr Woltjer avails himself of the opportunity in his presentation — which he has very right to do — to issue another warning regarding the agricultural policy as he would have liked to see it in the last five years, then I cannot agree with him. While Mr Woltjer cannot completely conceal his disappointment over last year's price increases, I must say that I have different political views. Last year's price adjustment was not an irresponsible act but very much needed, and when we remember that farmers' incomes are still well below those of the other sections of the population, it was completely justified.

The Christian-Democratic Group is pleased with the provisional agreements that have been reached on the agricultural problems. We can therefore take it that the agricultural problems will not result in stalemate at the forthcoming summit conference as they have done in the past. We think that is very important. But that is all we are happy about. The debate we are having on prices is not a debate without constraints. Parliament has its back to the wall, we are close to the financial ceiling, and Europe and the agricultural policy are ruled by the book-keepers, the budgetary people. It should be made quite clear that the Committee on Agriculture believes the budgetary nature of the price proposals has unacceptable implications. This is stated very clearly in paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution contained in the report of the Committee on Agriculture. The committee also feels that any changes in prices which are essential to mitigate adverse effects on incomes must be accompanied by an increase in the Community's resources, as it says in paragraph 7.

The President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of Agriculture, Mr Rocard, anticipating an increase in the

VAT ceiling, has himself referred to an advance to cover agricultural expenditure. The inflexible position adopted by some Member States to force changes before resources are increased is short-sighted, and I also consider it politically wrong.

What do the price proposals in fact mean? This is an important question. The average price increase of 0.8%, which is what the Commission is proposing, might create the impression that incomes will remain as they are. Nothing could be further from the truth: costs are continuing to rise. According to objective calculations, prices should rise by an average of 3.9%. What was particularly striking about the two statements made by Commissioner Dalsager and Minister Rocard was that no reference was made to the development of incomes, or rather their decline. A remarkable oversight or a deliberate omission? I will not comment on that. But on behalf of my group I will consider the matter. We accept that policy changes and production quotas are necessary. In principle, we accept a price freeze from sheer necessity. After an average 13% fall in incomes last year, this means a further decline by 10 to 20%. We accept a great deal, but not everything.

I must therefore ask the Commissioner a direct question. Can we assume that, if production quotas and a freeze on prices are accepted, there will be no further changes to the intervention system, such as its suspension for a few months where cereals and milk powder are concerned or an increase in intervention stocks? We would like a straight answer to this, because we reject a package of measures which entail further reductions in incomes. We do not want this limit to be exceeded.

To the farmers of Europe my group says: the period of unlimited production with associated guarantees is over. That is a tough but honest message. To the Commission and Council we say: the farmers have never been asked to make so great a sacrifice where their incomes are concerned. We want surpluses prevented by suitable means, but we do not want to undermine the intervention policy, as you must appreciate, Mr Commissioner. We see the incomes problem as the central issue, and we do not want it said that a hardworking commissioner like Mr Dalsager is digging the graves of Europe's farmers. In the country I come from, the Netherlands, there have been many demonstrations under the slogan: 'Cuts yes, bankruptcy no'. Let us take that to heart.

To conclude, I should like to comment on various other points. I do not want simply to consider what agriculture in Europe must do, but also to ask the Commission what it intends to do. Does the Commission really want to pursue a strong marketing policy? What action is the Commission taking to ensure the early disposal of the vast stocks in cold store, which will cost enormous amounts of money if they remain

Tolman

there? What does the Commission intend to do about butter imports from New Zealand? Tough penalties for European producers and privileges for New Zealanders, that is a situation that is no longer understood, and I no longer consider it politically acceptable here in the European Community.

Mr President, as we approach the point in 1984 where we agree to fundamental changes to the agricultural policy, we should like answers to these questions. My group will listen very carefully to the Commission's answers and, if the Commission and Council do not do their duty, we shall not fail to take the necessary initiatives ourselves.

Mr Provan (ED). — Mr President, this has been a long day and we have had a great deal of discussion on agriculture. I would like first of all to congratulate the rapporteur, Mr Woltjer, for all the work that he has done, not only on this report on farm prices, but also the one on milk quotas. He has really had the main responsibility of all the Members in this Parliament for the major decisions that we are having to take this week and I think he deserves our warm thanks, quite honestly, for the bold and courageous way in which he has faced up to the problem. He has been exceptionally good and we congratulate him warmly.

I would also like to thank the Commissioner for being here with us tonight! It is often enough that Commissioners take a hell of a lot of stick for not being here or not paying attention. He has been with us all day, and it is very nice to see you, Commissioner, paying attention and looking straight at me in the eyes at the moment!

Unfortunately, the report that we are going to discuss is really out of date because of decisions that have been taken elsewhere, but it is necessary that these decisions are taken and I hope that the rapporteur will be able to come forward with a few short, concise paragraphs that we will be able to accept tomorrow, to remove the decisions that have already been taken elsewhere and thereby make this report meaningful again. I understand that he will, and I hope that we will be able to support him. He has tried hard, ladies and gentlemen, and he has made a good job of it and we have basically been able to fall in with what he has had to say so far.

Unfortunately, there are those in this House who believe in protectionism and are actually attempting to further aggravate the problems we now face. That is not the way to give the agricultural community the stability and understanding they so desperately need for the future. We have got to take difficult decisions. The farming industry, I believe, is ready to face the situation, provided they are given the proper direction in which to go. That is our job, that is our responsibility, and we must do that.

Having said that, it is up to each and every producer in the Community to face those decisions. There must be absolutely no discrimination one against the other. There is no place for special pleadings from any one part of the Community. It is very, very difficult for anybody to say 'we should have something different because we are a special case'.

I must turn to my main responsibility tonight which is to describe the situation that we face in the United Kingdom. We believe that the proposals that have already come from the Council of Ministers on the monetary compensatory allowances could be highly inflationary in the future. I would like the Commissioner, if he possibly can, to give us some indication as to what the cost will be of the reform of the MCA system in the 1984 budget. I would like him to be able to give us the cost for the 1985 budget as well. We must realize that these figures could cost a great deal of money. I would like to know where we are going to get that money from. I would also like to know exactly what he intends to do if there is a revaluation of the German mark. It would have an immediate inflationary effect right throughout agriculture, right throughout the Community. What is the answer to that, Commissioner? Surely what we should be trying for now is to control agricultural expenditure and control agricultural prices so that the industry as a whole can actually live within strict financial guidelines: otherwise we shall not really achieve what we think we are going to achieve.

Every realignment of currency within the Community, in the EMS and outside the EMS, will have an appreciable effect on farm prices if the proposals that are coming forward from the Council at the present time are put into effect. What would happen if, all of a sudden, the German mark were to go up by 5%, 6%, 7%? That would mean an immediate increase in European farm prices of the same percentage. What would happen at the same time if the American dollar were to come down by 5%, 6% or 7%? We could not afford it, Mr Commissioner, I hope you will address yourself to that point when you give the response to this debate tonight.

The other problem that we face in the United Kingdom is the variable beef premium scheme that we have been operating highly successfully for the last year or two. It means that the consumer gets an advantage of the lower beef prices when production makes that possible. I believe, quite sincerely, and I hope the Commissioner will endorse it, that the way we operate that scheme in the United Kingdom is cheaper to the European budget than if we were to operate a full-scale intervention scheme. The UK Government is contributing approximately 50% of the cost of that beef variable premium scheme, and that means a net saving to the European budget. If we want to operate that type of scheme, we should be allowed to continue to do so because of the advantages it gives to our consumers and also to the European budget.

Provan

Exactly the same can be said regarding the sheepmeat regime. That has been beneficial to our hills and uplands, and any tinkering with the mechanisms which would allow any form of discrimination so that the UK producers were not to get the overall European price should be strongly resisted. I hope that the Commissioner, as a good European, which I know him to be, will uphold what the British sheep producer believes in at the present time.

With regard to milk quotas, we have a problem as well, because we believe that the way these are being operated from 1981 as the base year will allow distortions in future production. I know it is difficult and I know that the Council has taken decisions. My group, on the other hand, is at present reluctant to interfere too much to prevent the proper decisions that have to be taken from being taken in the long-term interests of the Community, and whilst it is difficult for us to accept, we realize that there are many aspects of the package that is coming forward that will, in fact, be difficult for many other people within the Community to accept.

With regard to financial guidelines, the threshold mechanism is a very serious way of ensuring that we get financial guidelines under the financial restrictions we are at present experiencing.

The hill-land compensatory allowances are extremely important to the less-favoured areas, and I realize that we must get a 'beefing-up', if I might use that expression, of those structural measures in the future as we restrict expenditure elsewhere.

There are many other problems that one could talk about for a great deal of time — inflation, the lack of convergence of the European economies, the cereal price and the livestock problems — but I hope there will be other members of my group to contribute to the debate so that we do not enter a situation that could have a devastating effect on the long-term interests of European farmers and European agriculture as an industry. It is an industry, and one we must look after and make sure that it thrives in the future.

Mrs Barbarella (COM). — (IT) Mr President, may I first make two observations of a general nature.

First, at the formal level, this is the nth time that the Council of Ministers has arrived at a quasi-agreement, if I may use such an expression, without taking the least account of the only democratically elected institution, our Parliament. Today, this afternoon, in this Chamber, the President-in-Office of the Council had the temerity — I use the word advisedly, because this is how I feel about it — the temerity to say that the institutional interplay is functioning well. This to me is virtually to mock Parliament. On this I will say no more. But it was a failure in courtesy which Parliament should strongly condemn.

As to the content. Judging at least by the information we were given this afternoon — information which is

very incomplete — I think we should be very worried about the kind of compromise that is being worked out in the Council. We have the distinct impression that, once again, for the nth time, *ad hoc* solutions are being chosen to stop up the major outflows: generalized stringencies, indiscriminate cuts which, however, and let me stress this, do not achieve even that reduction of agricultural expenditure which was the point of departure both for the Commission and for some of the Member States.

Of course, we can be glad that any kind of agreement is beginning to loom on the horizon after many years of no decisions at all, but I do not think we can be very happy about the content of the agreement, at least as we know it so far. I do not see any indications that we are on the way to a genuine and permanent solution of the fundamental problems of European agriculture.

So much, Mr President, by way of generalities. But I should like to say something of the particular subject of this debate, the proposal on agricultural prices and I should like to remind you of the unchanging attitude of the Italian Communists which we have expressed in this House.

We have always held that the fixing of agricultural prices is only one of the instruments of the overall implementation of agricultural policy. In other words, we believe that price levels do not alone guarantee income levels for producers or, more generally, guarantee the prospects of agriculture's development. We believe that the agro-money component, the provisions for mopping up surpluses and any structural intervention measures together constitute a complex of measures, *all* of which are the expression of a policy of real support for the producers and of real support for the agricultural sector.

This year, I think, Parliament is in no position to assess these prices because it has been presented with bits and pieces of an agreement which individually correspond to the points which it has raised but which do not make up a general picture against which Parliament could appreciate the meaning, the implications and the justification for the price increases.

I would further add that we have long believed that we must pursue a strict policy of price support in agriculture. Because we have always been convinced that the profitability of farming should arise from the general improvement of farming conditions. This year, what is more, stringency is dictated by the financial situation from which no way out can be seen for the immediate present. But how are we to judge this stringency? More exactly, how are we to judge Commissioner Dalsager's proposal for a 0.8% increase, or the —1% from the President-in-Office of the Council, when we have no general framework for the measures that are being taken!

Barbarella

We have been told only today of the existence of a preliminary agreement for the dairy sector which implies, Mr President, widespread stringencies and will thus have a very real impact on the prices guaranteed to producers; we have also been told of an agreement on monetary compensatory amounts which, again, will have an impact on these prices.

Well, let me say this. We think that the proposals on compensatory amounts look very disturbing and we wish to express the strongest reservations about this intention of hooking up the green currencies to the Deutschmark, because this will represent a serious blow to the European Monetary System whose fifth anniversary fell a few days ago. If we undermine the European Monetary System we are also undermining the hopes for the evolution of that system into the Community's real financial integration.

Let me now turn to the other points of the agreement I mentioned before. We have learnt today from the President of the Council that other matters, which concern in particular agricultural prices, but also the question of the EEC's commercial policy and, more specifically, questions relating to the importation of cereal substitutes, will not be tackled before Friday. But all this also will affect directly the fixing of agricultural prices, not to mention the question of disposal of products originating in the EEC.

In these circumstances we do not see how a serious assessment can be made of what the desirable level of prices should be, and I think we can only say once again what, in our view, should be the criteria by which the agreement in this particular area should be guided.

We believe, first of all, that the diversity of production conditions existing today in the Community requires new flexibility in the implementation of Community measures, hence in the calculation of the prices and also, and above all, in the stringency measures which also contribute to price determination.

A second criterion is austerity which we admit is necessary, but the cost of which should not be borne by everybody in the same degree. There are products which are produced in surplus, there are others which are not. Commissioner Dalsager himself has reminded us of the position with regard to citrus fruit: the output is shrinking. Well, we believe that in sectors such as this penalizing stringency measures should not be imposed.

We also believe — this is the third criterion — that real account should be taken of the different rates of inflation in different parts of the Community.

In conclusion, Mr President, we feel that if the compromise solutions which have been achieved are so incomplete, it is because in past years the will has been lacking to tackle in good time the key problems of European agriculture and above all the one we regard as crucial: the question of the unlimited

production support which in effect has supported production rather than producers. This is the essential point which has not been faced. We felt it to be our duty to make the Community's farmers aware of the political and managerial inadequacy which has characterized the policies of European governments in recent years.

Mr Brøndlund Nielsen (L). — (DA) Mr President, I had an opportunity earlier today to explain in detail the position of the Liberal Group on the present price question, and I shall of course not go through it all again but just mention the main principles.

We agree that there is a need for a certain quota limitation, but we think that it should be linked to a price which affords the producers a reasonable return and which covers the trend in costs. I already said as much earlier today, but I would point out that it is the view of the Liberal Group. We also welcome, as I have said, the result which has been achieved on monetary compensation.

As I have already dealt with these matters, I permit myself to take up one or two other subjects. I should like to say a few words to Mr Wettig, who thought that Parliament has in the past taken some rather irresponsible decisions on the agricultural policy and that these have contributed to the difficulties we are now facing. The problem to my way of thinking is that the resolutions adopted by Parliament have not been followed up. I am thinking here of a number of guidelines put forward by Parliament which would have altered things in such a way that more emphasis is placed on getting the national support arrangements phased out or harmonized and on a distinction with regard to quality criteria.

Finally Parliament some considerable time ago stated its views on the main question we are now dealing with. We have also stated our view on a quota system. It is some time, for example, since we adopted the Plumb report and the Curry report. It is as though everything is new, but in reality we are dealing with things which date some way back into the past. And may I say half seriously and half in jest that I am sure that both the Council of Ministers and the Commission have kept in view the sensible and ordered proposals which Parliament put forward in very timely fashion.

But there may also be other things which there is good reason to look at. Perhaps the time has come to begin considering some of the guidelines which need to be followed in the longer term, i.e. when we emerge from the situation we are in at present. Here is one of the things which we should take up, something that Mr Alber spoke about as rapporteur for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, namely the possibility of taking up entirely different productions. I think that is something we should think seriously about, and Mr Alber set out a long list of items.

Brøndlund Nielsen

One of the more relevant things was not included — as far as I could hear — namely that we should be able to implement the forestry policy, about which so much has been said in the Community. It is not of course something which can solve the income problems of agricultural producers in the short term; we can be quite certain about that. But it was perhaps something we should have taken up, and the same applies generally to many of the ideas which Mr Alber mentioned and which were aimed at more economic and environmentally compatible production in various respects — things which, like the forestry policy, should be prepared and drawn up in very good time and for the very long term. But now that we have achieved such a high degree of self-sufficiency and security of supply, it is something which we should be able to find the means to take up in the Community, and I urge that it be done.

There are other matters which need to be considered at the same time. We must, for example, consider how to ensure that the Community can in the longer term continue to maintain a strong presence on international markets, so that we can sell those goods which we can produce efficiently. I should like here to express my belief that the Commission even so thinks it better to sell more on third country markets than to sell to intervention stores. That is also one of the things we must do more work on. We must also stick to our objectives with regard to quality premiums and the development of the quality of the products we have, also in the consumers' interests. We should also think of their future in the Community, and one of the aspects of the Woltjer report I have some misgivings about is the large number of exemptions of what I would call a social nature which Mr Woltjer advocates. The interests of the consumers will only be served by the pursuit of an agricultural policy which, in spite of everything, supports rational and sensible farming. I am happy that the President-in-Office of the Council in his speech today stressed that there continue to be structural support for the development of rational, modern dairy enterprises and milk-producing farms.

Time does not allow me to go into any more detail, but I suggest that we think a little beyond the very urgent day-to-day problems which are on the agenda of the moment.

Mr Kaspereit (DEP). — (FR) Mr President, one might well wonder just what the Commission is playing at. We spent all those years painstakingly but efficiently building the Community, one of whose pillars was the common agricultural policy. And now all of a sudden the Commission is abandoning the eight million agricultural workers in our Community, for that is effectively what is happening. To seek at once to freeze prices and cut production is quite simply an affront to nature and an affront to the people who work with it.

Allow me to remind you of something the President-in-Office of the Council said in a recent speech: 'Agriculture today is the victim of budgetary terrorism in economic irresponsibility'.

I suppose you could say that my Group was guilty of budgetary terrorism in forcing a debate in this House last month. But the duty of the budget authority is precisely to provide a sufficient volume of appropriations to finance its common policies, not least the CAP. Some people here seem to forget that the budget has to be tailored to the policy and not the policy to the budget. It is for this reason that we have condemned the Commission's present policy proposals, which are dictated solely by the constraints of the moment. We have, moreover, persuaded the Committee on Agriculture unanimously to adopt an amendment which draws attention to the exclusively budgetary nature of the proposals on prices which, if they were to be adopted, would have unacceptable consequences for the incomes of agricultural workers.

In acting as it did, the Commission was taking an enormous risk: it totally ignored the effect of market trends. In its draft supplementary budget, adopted in July 1983, it wrote: 'If, in 1983, it is found that the appropriations actually needed exceed the appropriations initially allocated, this is essentially attributable to the highly unpredictable nature of expenditure on agriculture; it is this unpredictability that is responsible for the large sums in appropriations originally entered in 1981 and 1982 remaining unutilized by the EAGGF Guarantee Section.'

It was then that the Commission misled the budget authority in underestimating the needs of the markets. It would be interesting for us today to hear the Commission's explanation of its attitude at that point.

And so here we are with the Commission announcing a virtual freeze on farm prices. Strictly speaking it is actually a cut in prices, since a whole series of related measures have to be taken into consideration, such as the suspension of intervention in relation to certain products, changes in the intervention system for beef and veal, new proposals concerning the ratio of fat content to proteins in milk, and so on and so forth.

This cut, on which it would be interesting to try to place a figure, comes on top of the reduction in farm incomes during 1983. It goes without saying that we find these proposals unacceptable, and this for three very precise reasons. In the first place, they deny the possibility of guiding production and of restoring a balance in the agricultural markets by providing incentives to producers to abandon product lines that are in surplus in favour of those which the Community is short of. Secondly, they run the risk of accelerating the departure from the land of large numbers of small producers to swell the ranks of the Community's 12

Kaspereit

million unemployed, either because they are no longer able to meet their bills or, quite simply, because farming no longer guarantees them a decent income. Finally, they introduce an element of uncertainty as regards production, as farmers are no longer able, since a few months ago, to programme what investments they might make.

This year especially, when economic difficulties are piling on top of each other, when farmers are finding themselves having to face the prospect of a serious decline in their incomes due to inflation and high interest rates, and when their whole future is in question owing to the threat that hangs over the common agricultural policy, it is inconceivable that they should not get their just price increases.

Those are the reasons, Mr President, why the Group of European Progressive Democrats are demanding, on the basis of the results of the objective method, that the Council agree to a 3.9% increase in average prices for the forthcoming year.

Our Group will not compromise on this figure, which is a realistic one. Should the final version of the Woltjer report not include this essential point, we would then be obliged to vote against the final resolution, as we have already done in the Committee on Agriculture.

The truth of the matter is that the Commission — this is perfectly obvious to us and today's proceedings have borne this out — want, through its price policy, to influence structures. This could well be the product of purely technocratic reasoning, but it is economic heresy.

Price policy does have some effects on the way the markets operate. It does have short-term effects but it has no immediate impact on agricultural structures, apart of course from destroying a whole sector of European economic activity.

It was through the agricultural structures policy and through the Guidance Section of the EAGGF that the Community authorities were proposing to tackle the problem of surpluses. Well, Mr President, it seems that quite the reverse has happened.

From 1981 to 1983 the Community was financing development plans for young people in the dairy sector. The result, in the Netherlands for example — your country, Mr Woltjer — was a rise in the number of cows per shed from 35 to over 100, with a doubling of their yield. Doing away with these modern cowsheds would mean despair for many young people who have committed themselves to this venture. That is why we cannot agree to the sudden change of course in the common agricultural policy that is being proposed to us under the cloak of farm prices.

Do they really know which way they are heading in proposing the system of quotas, or is it simply, as the President-in-Office of the Council was suggesting, an

example of economic irresponsibility? Nobody has really looked into the system, how effective it is, the problems of implementing it and its consequences compared to other available options.

Just how true this is shows in the way the Committee on Agriculture has itself been changing its mind from one week to the next; a fortnight ago it accepted the quota system in a specific report on milk, and then a week later it refused to discuss milk quotas in the report on farm prices.

This very same report now contains one of our fundamental recitals: 'For the sake of the continuity and credibility of the common agricultural policy it is imperative to resolve the problem of surplus production taking into account the social importance of the production in question, the problems of small agricultural holdings, the preservation of the balance of the rural environment and actual responsibility for the creation of surpluses.'

That, Mr President, is precisely where the shoe pinches. The Community hectare feeds twice as many people as the American hectare. But this productivity is based on the import of substitute products and vegetable fats which come into the European Economic Community in vast quantities and without any duty, and it is these imports which are contributing to the artificial growth of our dairy surpluses.

For a long time we have been calling for a proper global policy on oils and fats. We would have preferred to see a higher level of tax; we are told that the producers are seemingly prepared to accept that.

If such is the case, well, I suppose it is all that matters.

But there is a reticence in this area, essentially on the part of certain Member States who — it has to be said — are afraid of going against American interests.

We are seeing the same attitude from the Commission, which is proposing to negotiate a limit on imports of substitute products, such as cassava and maize gluten, but only within the restrictive framework of Article 28 of GATT, that is to say with the Americans being granted compensation. As for the Foreign Affairs Minister, despite what the President of the Council was able to tell us today and the quite unwarranted satisfaction he manifested, he was even more diffident than the Commission. He chose to ignore this small opening, refusing to allow the Commission to negotiate within the framework of GATT.

Under these circumstances, how can one show any optimism about the Community's future, what with a Council that refuses to accept its political responsibilities, while one of the members of this Council is constantly derogating from the principles of the common agricultural policy and from Community preference in particular, and what with a Commission, finally, that is becoming increasingly technocratic, as

Kaspereit

can be seen, if by nothing else, by the fact that it is proposing to introduce quotas for productions that are in deficit, such as durum wheat and sunflower seeds.

And yet the events of the past 10 years have shown that there are two economic forces in the world: food and energy.

The Community is very much in a deficit situation where energy is concerned, but its potential in farming and food production is enormous.

So I would say to you, gentlemen of the Commission, gentlemen of the Council: remember what I have just said, for there you will find the solution to the problems which you appear to be so anxious to resolve today.

Mr Bonde (CDI). — *(DA)* Mr President, I address myself to those colleagues who continue to present Danish farmers as the big milking machine plugged into the Community's depleted coffers. Come to Denmark and visit our farmers out in the country. Look through their books, study the statistics, do your homework, get to the truth today instead of continuing to present the myths of the past.

It is true that Danish agriculture had two good years after we joined the Community. Things went tolerably well until 1979, but ever since then Danish agriculture has been in a deep crisis. In 1983 — new figures show this — Danish farmers earned only 43 kroner for every 100 kroner they earned in 1972. The average farmer in 1983 earned 47 200 kroner, abare 8 000 ECU, from agriculture before tax. It is considerably less than the monthly salary of the Commissioner for agriculture. The low level of income is not only attributable to our high level of interest rates. While the value of production has risen by 9% at constant prices, expenditure for raw materials and auxiliary materials rose by 32%. For each time we produced to a value of DKR 100 in 1972, we now get DKR 109; but to earn the extra DKR 9, we have to pay DKR 16 more in expenses. The end result is DKR 7 less. Over the past three years 4 025 Danish farmers — 4 025 Danish families — have gone out of business. A further 30 000 are on the verge of bankruptcy. The new farm price package will push thousands of our most efficient farmers over the edge into bankruptcy. In the coming year every tenth Danish cow will be slaughtered prematurely. Over 100 000 cows will be killed off. Denmark's 33 000 milk producers will, according to the farming organizations, lose an average of DKR 40 000-50 000 per year in income. What is utterly absurd is that it is not the poorest cows, but above-average cows, which will be slaughtered, i.e. the poorest cows of the most efficient farmers. We are now punishing those who have followed official advice to invest in cowshed installa-

tions and modern equipment. There is no proposal for natural wastage among older farmers. It is the well-trained young farmers, particularly in Jutland, who will be hardest hit by the farm price package. Danish agriculture is today in a dramatic situation of choice. If we accept the price package unchanged, 1984 will be the worst year to date for farmers' incomes; it is to be expected that the majority of the farmers will have directly negative incomes. We cannot accept this when the prospects for 1985 and subsequent years are even gloomier for the Community.

Whether we are for or against the EEC, there are only two alternatives: either our Prime Minister goes to the summit meeting on Monday and enters a polite but firm veto, — and not even that will help — or our farmers get together with the politicians and launch an independent agricultural policy, which can change the effects of the Community farm price package. The situation is now so serious that there is no point in discussing whether the supporters or opponents were right in their assessments of the Community agricultural policy for, whether we stay in the EEC or leave, there is a need for an independent Danish agricultural policy. We must get out of the price trap between constantly rising prices and price packages which do not cover costs. We must evidently switch production to products for which there are bigger differences between revenue and costs and, above all, abandon the belief that the problems of agriculture can be solved in Brussels. From now on in the Community every year to come will be worse than the year that has passed.

We cannot offer that prospect to young Danish farmers. The farm price package will not even stop the budget being exceeded. Surpluses will not be smaller but bigger. According to the latest stockpile inventories, the butter could stretch 7.7 times round the earth. If we emptied the stores of grain, beef and skimmed milk powder, there would be a king-size steak, 76 bread rolls and 5.6 litres of skimmed milk for every single Dane every day of the year. It is immoral to destroy food in a world in which 40 000 people die of hunger every day. How can any Dane have confidence in an organization which destroys people's food?

Mr Eisma (NI). — *(NL)* Mr President, we appreciate Commissioner Dalsager's stamina. He has been sitting here for hours, and he is prepared to go on sitting here for hours to listen to us. We can reassure him by saying that we largely agree with the Commission's proposals. But the problems are so serious this year that painful measures will simply have to be taken. We are therefore happy with the agreement that has been reached by the Council on a number of aspects, as we heard this morning.

Eisma

For the further development of the Community, for new policies and for the accession of Spain and Portugal an increase in the Community's own resources is essential. But an increase is possible only if there is a guarantee that the additional resources are not swallowed up by the common agricultural policy. Agricultural expenditure must be stabilized. This means that the agricultural policy must be revised. This morning we discussed the super-levy in the dairy sector. We are in favour of this, but although the dairy sector is particularly important, this will not solve the whole problem. There are surpluses of all products that are protected in the Community. We must not therefore concentrate solely on northern products but tackle southern products too.

But these various problems cannot all be solved with one system. The instruments must be used flexibly. Quotas are possible in the case of dairy products and sugar. For olive oil we think there should be a charge per sector or tree rather than the present intervention system.

Mr President, present overproduction no longer allows a broadly based price policy to be pursued. We are therefore in favour of the super-levy. In the present circumstances we also agree to a conservative intervention policy. But in structural terms this is, of course, taking action after the horse has bolted. What would be far more preferable is a preventive system that limits production so that this structural intervention is no longer needed. The intervention policy must again become the cyclical instrument it was intended to be. What has been lacking in recent years is a clear and coherent view of the agricultural policy in the Community. The agricultural proposals and the positions adopted by the governments of the Member States too often take the form of a defensive reaction or acceptance of a *de facto* situation. To conclude, I would say that a continuation of *ad hoc* reactions will have a disastrous effect on the confidence of the citizens of Europe and of farmers in particular.

Mrs Calliope Nikolaou (S). — (GR) Mr President, for years on end the Socialist Group has continually been pointing out the need to review the CAP, and has emphasized the dangers created by the accumulation of structural surpluses. Moreover, it has repeatedly called for decisions to be taken about the critical matter of increasing own resources. It is our dilatoriness in taking such decisions that has led to today's financial impasse.

By adopting the 1984 budget we created a financial framework adapted to the restrictions imposed by the Community's available revenues. This financial framework provides 16.5 million ECU for the CAP and 8 billion ECU for all the other policies together, thereby exhausting the ceiling of 1% of the VAT.

From as early as December 1983 the Socialist Group has pointed out that the sums available would not

suffice to cover the needs of the CAP, and that major overspending would occur with mathematical certainty. From what we have heard from Mr Thorn and Mr Dalsager, it is clear that these fears were justified. Mr Thorn has told us that there is likely to be overspending on unforeseen items to the tune of 1.5 to 2 billion ECU, to which will have to be added any expenditures decided upon at next week's Summit Conference.

However, all this should have been foreseen when the draft budget for 1984 was being drawn up, so that Parliament could reach its decisions under conditions of financial clarity. Right now, of course, the question arises of how we are to finance this overspending on the CAP.

The Socialist Group cannot under any circumstances accept that this overspending should be financed at the cost of amounts agreed in the 1984 budget for the financing of other policies, and in this connection we note with satisfaction Mr Thorn's assurance. Council will have to take note that political compromises must not take place at the cost of the priorities laid down by the European Parliament, and relating mainly to social and regional policies and aid to the Third World. Council must find other ways of financing the additional agricultural expenditures entailed by its decisions. However, we have heard nothing about this critical matter from the Commission. An expression of good intentions will not suffice.

Turning, now, to the measures about to be decided upon by Council concerning agricultural products, let me make a few personal comments with particular reference to the peripheral countries.

First, in the milk sector I think that there should be special treatment for Ireland, granted that milk plays an all-important part in Ireland's agricultural production as a whole — amounting to 32% — and besides, alternative solutions for reorganization are extremely limited.

Secondly, since there is a danger that Council's compromise will be restricted to milk and to the monetary compensatory amounts, it is essential to stress the need to take decisions concerning other products as well, and particularly Mediterranean products and ones from countries with high inflation rates. This will both enable a global evaluation of the financial overspending entailed by the implementation of the CAP within the framework of the 1984 budget, and allow it to be dealt with in a uniform way.

Finally, as the Woltjer report also proposes, adequate measures should be undertaken to secure the incomes of small producers within the Community.

Mr Kaloyannis (PPE). — (GR) Mr President, the CAP is not monolithic, it can be modified, but it must never abandon its basic principles, which are: the unity of the market, Community preference, and economic cooperation.

Kaloyannis

Judging from this general standpoint the Commission's proposals for agricultural prices in 1984/85, the associated report by Mr Woltjer, and what we have been told concerning Council's position, I am led to make the following comments and remarks.

The Commission's proposals are inspired by a cold, book-keeping attitude. The Commission wants to reduce Common budgetary expenditure at any cost. The producers' incomes, the state of the market, the fate of agriculture within the Community, very scant account is taken of all these in the prices of all the agricultural products. The proposed average increase of 0.8% in the price of agricultural products is unacceptable.

The Woltjer report is not easily refuted, and it must be recognized despite existing reservations, that the rapporteur is inspired by views founded on the basic principles of the CAP. The reservations arise because it is apparent that the rapporteur, throughout his work, was operating under the pressure of the realities of the common budget and the anticipated inflexible positions of Council. I would say the positive features of the report are as follows: The proposal to adopt an objective method in determining prices, on whose basis the increase should be in the region of 3.09%. The proposal to institute special measures for countries with high inflation. The institution of measures for strict application of the principle of Community preference, and for improvement of the mechanisms affording protection, in particular to Mediterranean products. The better treatment of Community products not in surplus. The proposal to increase the Community's own resources, which apart from anything else, is a prerequisite for the implementation of the integrated Mediterranean programmes.

Given all the above, and in the hope that certain amendments designed to improve the Woltjer report will be adopted, I pledge my support for the report.

As regards the positions adopted by the Council of Ministers, I would like to make the following comments:

The new provisions concerning the MCA's are indeed positive, a matter that is of relatively little interest to my country. Also positive are the provisions relating to milk, such as the reduction in production, the common reserves, the aid for small producers, the maintenance of structural directives and the flexible administration of the market. The only thing is that additional expenditure for these provisions must not be derived at the cost of other products, especially Mediterranean ones. I consider any form of coresponsibility for Mediterranean products, such as production targets or thresholds, and reduction in the level of intervention, to be unacceptable.

It is also necessary at all costs to frustrate any attempt to impose unfavourable provisions on dried grapes,

which ideally exemplify a Greek product not in surplus. I pledge my unreserved support for the imposition of a tax on fats and oils, always providing that some part of the revenue derived from it will be used to support the price of olive oil.

More generally, the prices should be determined as early as possible after 1 April 1984, because if July comes without the prices having been fixed, there will be a risk that no appropriations will be forthcoming from the budget with the result that the Commission will not take measures which lie within its competence, namely rebates on exports, intervention payments, etc.

Miss Brookes (ED). — Mr President, as the Member of Parliament for North Wales, which is one of the largest of the Community's sheep-breeding regions I should like to emphasize the positive effect which the sheepmeat regime has had on the standard of living of the sheep producers who have benefited from its introduction in 1980. The sheepmeat regime has been of particular value due to the type of land given over to sheep farming. These areas tend to be the less-favoured areas and the hill areas of farmland where alternative agricultural production is impossible. The sheepmeat regime therefore has served a dual purpose. Not only has it been a form of market organization, but it has also provided vital support for the economies of these less-favoured agricultural areas. It is extremely important that this regime should be allowed to continue to contribute to the development of these areas.

While accepting therefore, that a reduction has to be made in agricultural spending, I would like to emphasize the necessity for these cuts to be made with due consideration to the agricultural community and with the least possible hardship to those members of the agricultural community least able to bear the burden of the cuts. Any decision to reduce agricultural spending should be made not in an arbitrary or discriminatory manner but with specific aims and goals in mind. The Commission's recent proposals for the reform of the sheepmeat regime would result in sacrifices being made by farmers in some of the poorest agricultural regions of the Community and run contrary to the efforts made by the Community to integrate these less-favoured areas.

Neither can it be said that the aim of the cuts in this sector is to reduce a surplus as the Community has a very low level of self-sufficiency in sheepmeat. This can be seen from the fact that the Community has been obliged to import large quantities of sheepmeat from third countries. Instead of making sweeping cuts, which will undermine much work which the Community has undertaken in the past in the agricultural sector, may I ask the Commission to aim to solve

Brookes

some of the fundamental problems affecting the agricultural sector — primarily that of agricultural surpluses which are becoming an increasing embarrassment to the Community.

Mr Pranchère (COM). — (*FR*) Mr President, even though forced to concede the fall in agricultural incomes in 1983, the Commission has refused to take this into account and, in an act of cynicism, it has opened the way to a deliberate aggravation of the situation of small family holdings. Its increase of 0.8% will be welcomed by no more than 0.8% of farmers. With its proposals it is deliberately flouting Article 39 of the Treaty, which seeks to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community. If the majority in this Parliament truly had the interests of farm-workers at heart it would pass a vote of censure on the Commission, which has failed in its task by not observing the terms of the Treaty. Unfortunately, however, there is a sufficient number of its stooges in this Parliament who must have been delighted with the way the Commission acted. There is no shortage of examples of what I mean: the election manifesto of the Liberal Group, which calls for a cautious policy on prices and the introduction of guarantee thresholds, and the Scrivener operation to freeze EAGGF appropriations have played right into the hands of the Commission, which has laid into agricultural spending with an axe while simultaneously orchestrating a campaign of deception even to the point of blackmail based on totally spurious budgetary pretexts, the sole aim of all this being to make scapegoats of the farmers and impose sacrifices on them by holding them as hostages to a purely hypothetical industrial common market. It has unfortunately found a sympathetic ear within the Council of Agriculture Ministers. Its compromise proposal is in our view totally unacceptable. It is particularly unfair to the small and medium-sized farmers since it makes them bear the brunt of all the sacrifices, while sparing the intensive dairy farms and leaving the frontiers wide open to imports of oils and fats, substitute products and New Zealand butter. One law for the rich and another for the poor. The family farmers will be getting it in the neck while the United States will be raising their glasses to Europe and its growing free-trade spirit. The way it has been formulated, the quota system together with its assortment of co-responsibility measures is nothing less than an abandonment of the fundamental principles of the Treaty. Already there are those who would wish to extend it to cover other productions, to use it as a basis for the reform of the CAP. This would be intolerable.

In other words, it is not just the dairy sector but all producers who are under threat, and already there are proposals being put forward to scale down intervention in other sectors such as beef and veal, oleaginous products, wine and fruit and vegetables. It is a long

time now since the French members of the Communist and Allies Group pulled the communication cord, but they were not paid enough attention.

We are today paying for the retreats and surrenders of the past. The French Right bear a large share of the responsibility for this, a fact which their present contortions could never make us forget. Let us take, in chronological order, the recent statements by Mr Chirac regarding the expulsion of the United Kingdom. They could never make us forget that he approved and supported its entry into the Community, with its retinue of derogations from Community principles. Mr Chirac and Mr Bernard Pons were, respectively, Secretary of State for Finance and for Agriculture when in 1969 France called for the creation of MCAs, which did so much harm to French agriculture, and in 1980 Mr Giscard d'Estaing gave in to the British demands which continue to poison the Community atmosphere.

These are the same people who in 1977 agreed to the co-responsibility levy on milk, which opened the way to all the co-responsibility systems. To pursue the same course without correcting these mistakes is to lead the Community to its destruction and our agriculture to ruin. Let us say it quite emphatically: we do not have our backs to the wall and we do have the option of taking actions which do not impose further sacrifices on small and medium-sized farmers. For example, what is there in these budgetary excuses behind which the Council and the Commission are hiding in imposing the price cuts and the quotas? The report by the Court of Auditors shows clearly that there are appropriations available in a number of sectors. Why not make emergency use of them this year to finance farm prices? Has not the time come to stop cutting the United Kingdom's contribution? Parliament took a first step by blocking the appropriations in the 1984 budget, but it has just reversed its decision in adopting the Scrivener report. Would not the best response to Britain's blackmail be to use this money to finance farm prices, which could then be put up by at least 7%?

But that is not all. Hundreds of millions of ECUs could be saved from this year on by closer adherence to the principle of Community preference. So, as you can see, we have more than enough to cover the 550 million ECU which would be needed in 1984 to finance a rise in Community prices of 6%, which is the figure we are proposing in order to take into account both the objective method and the decline in incomes in 1983. What is stopping us from pursuing such a course?

It is because he rejected the idea of taking such a step and because he did not come down in favour of an effective increase in farm prices that we voted against the Woltjer report in committee, while recognizing its positive features following the adoption of certain of our amendments, among others. We are not isolating

Pranchère

the debate on farm prices from the other aspects of the CAP. Whilst we vigorously oppose any attacks on the farmers, that does not mean at all that we accept the CAP in its present form. If for no other reason than that it has penalized and mutilated French agriculture. And French farmers are certainly aware of this since, according to a recent survey, 59% of them consider they have suffered from the common market and only 38% feel that they are better off.

Just recently they expressed their discontent by holding a demonstration during the Council meeting in Brussels last Monday. Their indignation is quite justified and indeed we share it. With them, we reject the freezing of prices and the arbitrary production restrictions which would inevitably result in the ruin and gradual disappearance of large numbers of livestock farmers. Quotas have a sinister reputation in our country; they conjure up the image of plant closures and redundancies in the iron and steel and coal-mining industries. It is an unacceptable course in agriculture, when so many needs remain to be satisfied in the Community and in the world at large.

We shall only agree to discuss production targets after first correcting all the anomalies in the Community mechanisms which are directly responsible for the present situation. Before introducing discipline within the Community let us first impose discipline with regard to those outside the Community. Let us not put the cart before the horse. Before talking about quotas or co-responsibility, we need to tax imports of vegetable oils and fats and substitute products and restrict imports of New Zealand butter; we have to abolish the system of MCAs and have done with the free hand-outs to the United Kingdom. These are a *sine qua non* which require the affirmation of a clear political will to resist all pressure from the multinational corporations and from the United States, with whom we have an agricultural deficit of 7 000 million dollars.

The reform of the CAP is long overdue, but it must be carried out sensibly. It is in fact quite ludicrous that countries which show the least regard for Community principles should benefit most from the EAGGF. The CAP must be made to be more fair by going back to Community principles and endowing it with a renewed vigour in order that it can help to guarantee family farmers a proper income and ensure the further expansion of our agriculture by cashing in on all its trump cards.

The CAP must be made to benefit the agricultural workers and not the agriculture-based industrials or the agri-food firms. We must rid the CAP of all the bad old bureaucratic grease which tends to build up and stifle the initiative of farmers and of entire regions. We have to move away from the quota system which tends to encourage this kind of trend and take the road towards greater decentralization and a better adaptation of Community mechanisms to local realities.

It is certain that our proposals for improvements, which could be implemented immediately, would be rendered null and void with any enlargement of the Community, whose consequences would be as serious for the applicant countries as for many regions in the Community. Here again, we believe that nothing is yet finally settled. We have already succeeded in preventing enlargement from taking effect as expected on 1 January 1984; we can turn this result into a permanent state of affairs and transform the integration of the applicant countries in the EEC into a mutually profitable cooperation.

President. — This debate is suspended and will be resumed tomorrow morning.

*(The sitting was closed at 12 p.m.)*¹

¹ Agenda for next sitting: See Minutes.

ANNEX*Votes*

This Annex indicates rapporteurs' opinions on amendments and reproduces the texts of explanations of vote. For further details of the voting the reader is referred to the Minutes.

SCHWENCKE REPORT (Doc. 1-1354/83 : ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF DIPLOMAS) : ADOPTED

The rapporteur was

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 1 to 5 (1st sentence), 6, 8 and 9 ;
- AGAINST Amendment No 5 (2nd sentence).

Explanation of vote

Mr Alavanos (COM). — *(GR)* We recognize that the rapporteur's intention is to solve a whole range of problems. However, so far as my own country is concerned, and bearing in mind the enormous unemployment and problems faced by doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc., we think it likely that fresh problems will arise, and I refer in particular to point 2, which stresses the mobility of qualified personnel. Furthermore, we hold the view that such problems should be solved within the scope of international organizations such as Unesco. Finally, in common with other colleagues I should like to stress the need for the Belgian Government to deal with the matter of high registration fees for Greek and other foreign students.

For this reason, we Members of the Greek Communist Party will abstain from voting.

* * *

LUSTER REPORT (Doc. 1-1456/83 : FREEDOM OF EDUCATION IN THE EC) : ADOPTED

The rapporteur was

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 1 to 4, 6 to 8, 10, 13 and 14 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 5, 9, 11, 15 and 16.

Explanations of vote

Mr Megahy (S). — I shall vote against this motion for a resolution on several grounds. First of all, it seeks to intrude the EEC into a matter which does not directly concern it, namely, education. While some of the objectionable features have been removed by amendments carried, nevertheless, it seems to me that this is not a matter with which the EEC should in fact be concerned.

Secondly, I take very strong issue with the way in which this was put on the agenda at the last moment. One of the few times that I did not get here on Monday, I discovered that this had been put on the agenda. The only reason I can think for that being so is that it is intended to use it as a weapon in France during the election campaign. I think there are political motives behind the way this was included.

Megahy

Thirdly, I object to talk about control of the curriculum by the EEC. More than anything else, I reject completely this talk about financial help for English public schools. The English public schools have been mainly responsible for Britain's industrial demise. They have, in fact, done tremendous social harm, and to support a motion which seeks to give aid to Eton, Harrow, Winchester and all these archaic and dangerous institutions is something that I cannot stomach. I will certainly vote against it for that reason if for no other.

(Applause from the left)

Mrs Viehoff (S). — *(NL)* I shall vote against this report. I am a strong supporter of every kind of freedom provided that it does not restrict the freedom of others. Freedom of education comes under this heading, but the question of what is the best education for a child to enable him to develop into a critical and well-informed member of the society in which he must live must not be subordinated to the question of the freedom of education. The rejection of my amendment on this subject is one of the main reasons why I shall be voting against the report.

The second point that is causing me problems is the rejection of Mr Sieglerschmidt's amendment, which said that the admission of a child to a school receiving government funds should not depend on the parents' economic situation or on the child's social, racial or ethnic background but solely on the principle of equal opportunity.

The fact that these two amendments have not been incorporated into what is not a very successful resolution prompts me and, I believe, many other members of my group to vote against the report.

Mr Forth (ED). — I am disturbed that in this day and age we can actually produce a report which says — in paragraph 5 of the motion for a resolution — that 'the purpose of education and teaching shall be to enable the individual to develop fully and to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms'. One of the reasons why youngsters coming out of our schools today are almost unemployable is that many of them can hardly read or write and have not mastered the basic arts of numeracy and articulation. As such we are creating generations of young people who may be fully aware of human rights and fundamental freedoms but who will never get a job because they have nothing to offer the prospective employer. As long as institutions like this persist in the fantasy that we should develop these young people fully and give them some ideas about individual freedom and human rights but neglect to teach them the basics of modern life and give them skills which they can offer in the job market, then we should not wonder or be surprised when we have distressingly high unemployment rates amongst the young.

I hope that further thought will be given to this matter and that this institution will not put words like this so carelessly into its resolutions, thus potentially condemning many young people to a life of unemployment. For that reason, I am going to abstain in the vote on this report.

Mrs Boserup (COM). — *(DA)* I am pleasantly surprised by the fact that this House has joined together in altering, by means of a motion for an amendment, the mention of Article 235 of the Treaty of Rome as a basis for this measure. However this was restricted to removing the reference to Article 35 from the section on suitable resources. But there are no suitable resources which the Community can use to interfere in our education. I do not think that can be said often enough. Apart from that I must agree with my French colleague, Mr Chambeiron, who said that this is an odious attempt to meddle in a fairly serious political dispute in France, and I really do not think that we should use our time for that in this chamber. I am also pleased to have been able to agree with Commissioner Richard, who said that the Commission preferred to stay out of this. That is wise of the Commission, and it is wiser than the Commission is accustomed to being. I will vote against.

Mr Sieglerschmidt (S). — *(DE)* Despite some reservations, I had originally intended to vote in favour of this resolution. My reservations have to do with the timing of this resolution, that is, practically coinciding with the French legislative elections, albeit unintentionally. That is regrettable and a disservice to the subject matter of the resolution. Added to this was a polemical, electoral speech by Mr Galland, rendering it all the more difficult for me to vote in favour. Nevertheless, the fundamental importance of this matter would still have encouraged me to vote in favour. However, following the rejection of equality of opportunity, and of my colleague, Mrs Viehoff's motion, the intention of which was to make it clear that, although the parents' rights concerning the education of their children was one of the aspects involved, the overriding issue was that of the child's welfare, I cannot any longer lend my support to the resolution. However, because I believe that this report generally adheres to the fundamental principle 'as little State, as much freedom as possible' I shall refrain from voting against.

Mrs Tove Nielsen (L). — *(DA)* I come from a country which has rich traditions in the matter of freedom to set up private schools, whether on religious or political grounds, or for quite specific pedagogical reasons. I think that is something worth fighting for. I concede to my opponent in politics or opinion every right to send his or her children to whatever school he or she wishes, even if it is opposed to what I believe in. In a true and genuine democracy one should always give one's opponents the right to fight for their opinion, and I for my part will fight for what I think is reasonable and justified. It is therefore important that all the Member States get the same possibilities as Denmark to set up and operate schools on the basis of the principle that it is the parents' wishes which should be the deciding factor in what school their children should go to. We are dealing here with an important problem in human terms and in terms of beliefs, for the question is whether the State or the parents should take decisions regarding the child. As a true liberal, I must say that of course it should not be the State; of course it is the parents who have the right to decide how their children should be educated. This is also the belief of those who now feel threatened by the Socialist system in France.

Mr Sutra (S). — *(FR)* Would you please confirm for me, Mr President, that the translation was accurate when I understood the speaker to say that in Denmark they have schools with political leanings? Is that really what is being proposed in this report?

President. — Mr Sutra, I do not know enough Danish to be able to give you an answer. I shall therefore ask Mrs Nielsen to tell us what the situation is.

Mrs Tove Nielsen (L). — *(DA)* I can assure the Honourable Member, Mr Sutra, that there are schools in Denmark of a political tendency which I, as a liberal, am 100% against, but I recognize the right of my political opponents to fight for their beliefs and to set up whatever type of school the parents are willing to pay for. I do not wish to participate in supporting them, but others must have the right to do so. That is our attitude, as liberals.

(Applause)

Mr Van Miert (S). — *(NL)* I think it is rather a pity that this debate is taking place at a time when it might justifiably be assumed that it is prompted more by political manoeuvring than anything else. The subject is extremely important, and we should therefore be able to consider it without any undue haste. As you know, this is a matter which once caused considerable difficulty in my country. Fortunately, many years ago the various political movements came to an agreement which guarantees the free choice of schools and also equal opportunities for children.

I want to make it clear that we abided by this agreement in every way. This is also a question of balance between subsidized and official education. We would have voted for the motion if the majority had been wise enough to adopt the relevant amendments and other improvements that were called for, as Mr Sieglerschmidt and other Member have

Van Miert

already said. We are sorry that we cannot vote for it. We shall abstain for two reasons: firstly, because of the unwillingness to draw up a completely balanced report that takes account of the well-founded and basic anxieties that are also felt by others, and secondly, because it leaves too much room for political manoeuvring as it now stands. We shall therefore unfortunately have to abstain.

Mr Estgen (PPE), in writing. — (FR) It is not just with pleasure but with enthusiasm that I am going to vote in favour of the resolution on the freedom of education and teaching in the European Community.

I do so with all the more satisfaction and conviction for having fought for the rights of independent and private schools in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg which, despite bitter opposition and delaying tactics on the part of the Socialists and Communists in our country, finally acquired their legal status on 31 May 1982 with the passing of the law concerning the relations between the State and private post-primary education. Now there is just primary education to go.

For me the child's right to education and the right of parents to choose the type of education for their children according to their conscience and their philosophical and religious beliefs is fundamental and unalterable. For school is not only an instrument for communicating objective and scientific knowledge, impartial, but also a pedagogic forge, a place of education where choices between different values are made. It is not for nothing that in Luxembourg we have changed the name from the Ministry of Public Education to the Ministry of National Education. Freedom of thought, conscience and religious belief is the bedrock on which our entire civilization and democratic system of politics is built.

Frankly, I find it puzzling that my Socialist and Communist friends who in other spheres fight so passionately to eradicate all forms of discrimination — whether it be against homosexuals or any kind of minority or fringe groups — should refuse to eliminate discrimination in the exercise of some of the most fundamental rights in existence, namely the rights which guarantee a free future for our children, recognizing the principle of pluralism which forms the very basis of our society, and in a spirit of tolerance which should not be an empty word in our Community, which must daily earn and defend its position as an island of right and liberty in the sea of fascism and totalitarianism which surrounds us on every side.

But tolerance is often an empty word for those men and women who use it so frequently in their election manifestos and set speeches, when it comes to doing for the benefit of others that which one always expects for one's own.

As Mrs Simone Veil so aptly put it this afternoon: to those of the Left, and particularly those of the far Left, there are often two sorts of freedoms, those they can live with and those they cannot live with.

To safeguard our freedom and democracy we need as far as possible to limit and resist monopolies, including State monopolies, especially in education, and to fight the tendency of all powers to become totalitarian. 'Look out for the corners' is a good principle.

And so, since clearly everything starts with education, that is the area where we are need to be most vigilant, that is where we need to anchor the principle of our freedom. But respect for freedom of conscience and of education, enshrined as a right, even in a constitution, remains an empty word if the material conditions in which it can be exercised are not provided, are such that either private initiative is stifled by the greater resources of the State or else only rich parents can afford the luxury of sending their children to a private school, since the fees are so high.

Estgen

Accordingly, those private educational establishments which have something to offer to the public must be given public financial support, thus enabling all citizens to enjoy the genuine opportunities of the freedom of teaching.

* * *

EISMA REPORT (Doc. 1-1413/83 : DUMPING OF CHEMICAL AND RADIOACTIVE WASTE AT SEA) : ADOPTED

The rapporteur was

- IN FAVOUR of amendments Nos 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 3, 6, 7, 10 to 17.

Explanations of vote

Mr Beazley (ED). — What is noticeable about the statements of all but one or two Members of this House who have spoken in the Eisma debate or in that of last month on Mrs Walz's report, is that they are considering a practical problem in a totally negative way. Perhaps they do not in fact have to face the problem themselves at home. They, therefore, tell us all the places where not to dump radioactive waste but never where to dump it.

Radioactive waste is a fact of all our lives. Do not think that you can stop the production of nuclear waste by blocking waste disposal, because every one of you who is happy to have an X-ray for your teeth or your body is creating a great deal of very bulky low-level, or intermediate-level, radioactive waste. If you do not want it dumped in any of the safe places in the sea, you may find that you will have it dumped on your doorstep. If the waste is harmless it will cause no problem buried at sea. If there are any risks in low and intermediate waste, as my constituents believe, it would be better to put it into selected places in the sea where its radioactivity, if any, can be easily dispersed rather than alongside heavy concentrations of urban population, as is proposed for my constituency at Elstow in Bedfordshire. I ask you, do those who want X-rays care more for fish than for human beings? I will vote against the report.

Mrs Van Hemeldonck (S). — (NL) The Flemish Socialists fully endorse this resolution, partly because Mr Eisma's excellent report is an off-shoot of an initiative taken by us at European level after Socialist mayors had opposed the transport and dumping of nuclear waste and chemical waste from the ports of Zeebrugge and Antwerp respectively. We also support the motion because as Belgian subjects we are seeking Community protection against the Belgian Government, whose irresponsible policy is a threat to the health and safety of future generations. Despite condemnation by the Court of Justice of the European Community, demonstrations and actions by environmental groups and action by the mayors and citizens of the coastal and port area, nothing seems likely to persuade the Belgian Government to prohibit dumping at sea and to ratify the London Convention. We issue a strong appeal to the Commission to take the strongest possible action against national authorities who are failing to do their duty.

Mr Chambeiron (COM). — (FR) The practice of dumping chemical and radioactive waste at sea is one that the French members of the Communist and Allies Group, and my friend Sylvie Le Roux in particular, have already had occasion to condemn many times in the past in this very House. Where France is concerned, the considerable damage sustained by the coastline of Brittany and the Bay of Biscay, as well as the shores of the Mediterranean, is enough to demonstrate the urgency of putting a stop to this practice.

Everyone, I am sure, can remember the bodies of dead birds strewn along the Breton beaches as a result of discharges that have not always been accidental.

Chambeiron

But, quite apart from the ecological disaster, it is necessary to be aware of the evil consequences for the future of the living marine resources and for the economy of coastal regions. I am thinking in particular of the fishing industry.

I should also like to add that, in the longer term, it is not just the economic resources — the flora and fauna — but also human life that are at risk. For all these reasons we approve of the rapporteur's proposals, even if we might have preferred to see responsibilities more clearly defined and also some reference made to the problem of the use of flags of convenience.

Mr Johnson (ED). — I am not in favour of radioactive doorstep deliveries. I shall be voting for this report. I believe it is time we stopped treating the sea as a convenient dustbin. The English Channel is also La Manche and in the widest sense the sea belongs to the whole community of nations. Mr Eisma's report is a step in the right direction. I approve it.

(Applause)

Mr Seligman (ED). — Unlike Mr Johnson, I have got my feet on the ground. I intend to vote against the Eisma report because the Sherlock amendments have not been accepted and I hope our group will therefore also vote against it. What are we going to do with low-level nuclear waste if we do not put it in the sea, since no one wants it on the land? We heard a lot of scientific nonsense yesterday, Mr Eisma. You said that chlorine was going to go in the sea and poison the sea. I would point out that the sea has more chlorine in it already in the form of salt than any other ingredient, and the idea of poisoning the sea with chlorine is a lot of nonsense. I think this shows the low scientific level of this report which should be rejected because it does no credit to Parliament.

SITTING OF THURSDAY, 15 MARCH 1984

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IN THE CHAIR : MR LALOR

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 10.05 a.m.)¹

The sitting was suspended because of strike action by the staff of Parliament.

(The sitting was suspended at 10.10 a.m. and resumed at 3.15 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MR DANKERT

President

1. Agenda

President. — Before we start the voting which is on the agenda, I think it would be better if we fixed the

¹ Approval of Minutes : see Minutes.

timetable of our proceedings for the remainder of this part-session.

We shall now vote on the Price report (Doc. 1-1390/83) on the amendment of the Rules of Procedure, which has three amendments, and six reports on agricultural matters on which the debate is closed. We shall consider in order :

- Marck report (Doc. 1-1370/83);
- Goerens report (Doc. 1-1507/83);
- Woltjer report (Doc. 1-1470/83);
- Vitale report (Doc. 1514/83);
- Battersby interim report (Doc. 1-1537/83);
- Stella report (Doc. 1-1515/83).

The voting on these reports will involve 226 amendments. If one of the compromise amendments is adopted, the voting can be much shorter than expected. At any rate, we have to assume that the voting will last until about half past five.

President

Thereafter we shall resume the debate, which was opened yesterday, on the Woltjer report (Doc. 1-1508/83) on agricultural prices. The group spokesmen have spoken and pursuant to Rule 86 of the Rules of Procedure we could close the debate after hearing the Commission, represented in this instance by Mr Dalsager, and after deciding to vote without further discussion on the farm prices. This would be at about six o'clock. We could thus finish this evening, and there is another argument in favour of this. We have had a talk with Mr de la Malène and others on the sense of what we want to do. The Council of Ministers is meeting tomorrow and it would be better if we could give our opinion on the farm prices before this meeting, which means that we ought to vote today. That is why I am suggesting this compromise. Tomorrow's agenda could then go ahead as scheduled.

If the House does not wish to close the debate, it will go on this evening until all the speakers have been heard. We have two and a half hours left for the debate and in this case the vote on the farm prices would have to be taken tomorrow morning, but I do not think this is a very good idea in view of the meeting by the Council of Ministers. We have to decide to vote on the agricultural prices either late this afternoon, at about six o'clock, thus getting through the vote by eight, or tomorrow morning. I propose that we vote today so that our opinion can have some impact on the Council.

(Applause)

We must therefore decide to close the debate.

Sir Henry Plumb (ED). — Mr President, thank you for outlining the procedure for this afternoon's business. I accept that there is a long list of Members who wish to speak on agricultural prices, either on the Woltjer report or on the Marck report or on prices generally. However, might I suggest that we have had enough speeches during the course of the last few hours and that we cut the remaining speeches and get straight on to the voting. We could, perhaps, hear a summing-up report from the Commissioner before we go into the vote.

(Applause)

We had an excellent speech from Mr Rocard yesterday. We know exactly what the position is. Could we therefore move to the voting and stop any further debate on agricultural prices?

(Applause)

President. — Is there anyone against this proposal?

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Mr President, I am against this proposal. Anyone here last night would have seen the interest displayed in farm prices and the agricultural policy. At one stage there were as few as 15 Members present. Those of us who did want to contribute

further remained right through the night. I think therefore that it is wrong that an effort should be made at this stage to silence any further discussion. I think it is entirely wrong that the people who showed so little interest last night should — for whatever reason and despite our difficulties this morning — now be so voluble in demanding that the vote be taken quickly.

I do not think it should be allowed.

(Parliament agreed to close the debate)

Mr Pannella (CDI). — *(FR)* Mr President, would you be kind enough to indicate whether the events of this morning are likely to reoccur in the next few hours. We know nothing about the matter. If you ask me, a strike which prevents a parliament from working is quite exceptional. We have read the papers, of course, and we have also heard various rumours in the corridors, but we are not happy about things. Since it seems to me completely unlikely that it is a personal problem between you and the Staff Committee, could you at least tell us whether we are going to be able to continue without interruption until the end of the part-session?

President. — I am not happy about things either, Mr Pannella, since it is always very hard to make decisions. I shall not make any decision before the end of this part-session.

Mr Gerokostopoulos (PPE). — *(GR)* This morning the Vice-President in the Chair, Mr Lalor, approved yesterday's Minutes without the consent of the House, maintaining that they had already been distributed. I should like this mistake to be rectified if possible, since the Minutes were in fact only distributed this afternoon at 2.45. Otherwise it might lead to confusion.

President. — Mr Gerokostopoulos, I think the Irish and the Greeks have many things in common and that we should look at that problem tomorrow morning.

Mr Battersby (ED), rapporteur. — Mr President, in order to save time later on and having consulted the Chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control, Mr Aigner, and obtained his agreement, I would like to request that my interim report on olive oil control (Doc. 1-1537/83) be referred back to committee.

(Parliament approved the proposal to refer the Battersby report back to committee)

Mr Thareau (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, I quite agree with the decision that was adopted by a large majority a few minutes ago, so that we can get through the proceedings more quickly, but I should like an assurance that the speeches we were going to make can be submitted in writing. I really do urge this.

President. — I am in favour of what you have just said. If the time we have for voting obliges us to do so, I think a proposal should be made then. But at the same time we have to comply with the Rules of Procedure. I think it would be better to wait before taking a decision.

Mr Alavanos (COM). — (*GR*) Mr President, since a strike in the European Parliament is not a trifling matter, as one of our colleagues has already said, I should like to say that the Members should have been fully informed. Even if no mention is made of the strike, this does not mean that all the Members support the Presidency's position, which we believe to be genuinely harmful to the rights and interests of the workers.

President. — Mr Alavanos, I agree with you, but at the same time I have to say that as long as the Bureau can deal with its responsibilities, it should deal with them.

2. Votes¹

PRICE REPORT (DOC. 1-1390/83 'DISCHARGE FOR THE GENERAL BUDGET')

President. — A number of amendments — Nos 2, 3, 5 and 6 in fact — have been withdrawn. Any amendment to the Rules of Procedure must secure the votes of a majority of the Members. We must therefore have 218 Members present.

At the request of the chairman of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, we shall first of all vote on the annex concerning the discharge procedure.

Annex — Amendment No 4/rev.

Mr Price (ED), rapporteur. — Mr President, I should like to give an opinion on this amendment. May I also comment that looking round the Chamber I am rather anxious about the number of Members present. I wonder if it would be possible to ascertain, by asking everybody to press their buttons by way of a test, the number of people present.

President. — I am very sorry, Mr Price, but the Parliament is in normal session, Members are present, and we shall see from the result of the first vote whether there is the required number of Members present to vote for or against a given project.

Mr Price (ED), rapporteur. — On Amendment No 4/rev. under our existing Rules, Parliament has the power to refuse a discharge, it being understood that the normal effect would be the resignation of the

Commission. The proposal from the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions does not make any changes of substance but embodies the existing practices in clear rules. I am against Amendment No 4/rev. because it would impose an additional burden on Parliament: namely it raises explicitly the possibility of having to pass a censure motion in addition to refusing discharge. It would therefore weaken the existing state of Parliament's powers. The change proposed in this amendment was debated in the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions and rejected. The committee is therefore against this amendment.

After the vote on Amendment No 4/rev.

President. — So I now have to put to the vote the Annex, which also requires 218 votes. If you agree, I would propose to remit the vote on the Annex to a more suitable occasion.

(Parliament agreed to the proposal)

MARCK REPORT (DOC. 1-1370/83 'MONETARY COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS AND SLUICEGATE PRICES')

Proposal for a regulation I

Mr Marck (PPE), rapporteur. — (*NL*) Mr President, you will agree with me that the situation after the recent meeting of the Council is very different from when the Committee on Agriculture approved this report. I would just like to suggest that, in view of the compromise amendment to the motion the groups have agreed on, we reject the proposals in the regulation formally, to prevent any contradiction arising between the compromise amendment and the regulation.

President. — Mr Marck, if I understand rightly, the amendment refers to the motion. This does not relieve us of the obligation to vote on the amendment concerning the regulation, as is now planned. Our vote on the regulation is qualified by what we then decide with respect to the motion, but a vote must be taken on the amendments which have been submitted in respect of the regulation.

Mr Marck (PPE), rapporteur. — (*NL*) I then propose in the interest of consistency that the two amendments that I submitted myself be withdrawn and request the amendments from the Committee on Agriculture also be rejected.

Motion for a resolution

Mr Gautier (S). — (*DE*) Mr President, before you take the motion for a resolution, could you please explain how the relevant Rule of Procedure on compromise amendments is to be interpreted, since it also affects the Woltjer report on milk. As I under-

¹ See Annex.

Gautier

stand, an amendment of this kind must come from the rapporteur or from several groups. According to the Rules of Procedure several compromise amendments would not be valid.

President. — No, Mr Gautier, since everyone has his own version of a compromise. When a new deadline is set for tabling motions, everyone has the right to present a compromise amendment, which then has to be voted on. That would seem logical to me and it is what I should propose. This has been the procedure on several occasions.

GOERENS REPORT (DOC. 1-1507/83 'OILS AND FATS')

Motion for a resolution

Paragraph 4 — After the rejection of Amendment No 5

Mrs Tove Nielsen (L). — (DA) Mr President, I would point out that there is definitely something wrong with my machine. I wanted to vote against and did so — only to find that the lamp indicated that I was abstaining.

President. — Since you were not abstaining, we shall check on that.

Paragraph 6 — Amendments Nos 23, 44, 13 and 7 fell as the proposal for a regulation had been adopted

Mr von der Vring (S). — (DE) Mr President, this interpretation is debatable and dubious to say the least, since the resolution now contains additions to and comments on the regulation with the result that in the end one might wonder if in the circumstances we are still in favour of the regulation. This will become apparent with the final vote. I would ask you to put each of these amendments to the vote.

President. — I am sorry but we have voted on the regulation. Nothing can be changed in that respect. The question now is what consequences we can draw from the vote. I do not think that anyone will be able to dispute the fact that a number of amendments must now fall because they are related to the vote which we have just taken.

Sir Fred Catherwood (ED). — The Committee on External Economic Relations does not go against what is said by the Commission. It says that you have to have prior negotiations with supplier countries, which is not contrary to the regulation, so I do not see why we should not vote on it.

President. — If you think — and I trust your authority — that it is not contradictory to what we have voted, of course we can vote on it.

After the vote on Amendment No 7

Mr Poniatowski (L). — (FR) Mr President, my machine is not working and I voted against.

President. — It was not a roll-call vote, Mr Poniatowski. Your machine will be checked, but I am not going to change the vote.

Mr Galland (L). — (FR) How can you fail to change the vote if, after checking, you find out that Mr Poniatowski did not vote when he says he wanted to vote against? The amendment did not go through Mr President.

President. — Mr Galland, according to the Rules of Procedure, which I did not write, it says very clearly ...

Mr Poniatowski (L). — (FR) So it is a waste of time having a card!

President. — The Rules of Procedure clearly state that when there is a roll-call vote the result may be changed if a machine is not working. This cannot be done if there is no roll-call vote. This means that I cannot change this vote because a machine is not working. I am sorry.

Mr Galland (L). — (FR) It seems to me that the least you could do is to move Members whose voting machine is out of order to a seat where the machine is working. When there is only one vote in it, Mr Poniatowski will not then be wasting his time here.

Mr Poniatowski (L). — (FR) Mr President, can we have a rubbish bin for the useless cards?

(Laughter)

President. — I comply strictly with the Rules of Procedure.

Mrs Tove Nielsen (L). — (DA) Mr President, would you confirm what you said to me a few minutes ago. My lamp indicated that I was abstaining although I had in fact voted against. You then confirmed that it was of course possible to take account of the fact that I had voted against. How on earth is it not possible to do the same in this case?

President. — No Madam Nielsen, I said that in your case, as you said that you did not abstain, we would check what happened. Mr Poniatowski had a different problem, he could not vote, he said, and there I am in conflict with the Rules. You said that you did vote, but your vote against was interpreted as an abstention. There the machinery can be checked, because that should not happen, but if someone cannot register his vote, I have to apply the Rules, which say that only in cases of a roll-call vote can the result of the vote be corrected.

WOLTJER REPORT (DOC. 1-1470/83 'MILK PRODUCTS')

Motion for a resolution

President. — Nine compromise amendments have been tabled on the motion for a resolution. Amendment No 105, by Mr Clinton, is not admissible since it is not really a compromise amendment but a subsidiary amendment to Mr Woltjer's compromise amendment, No 97. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure I must obtain the agreement of the House before putting the compromise amendments to the vote.

Mr Clinton (PPE). — Mr President, yesterday when this compromise amendment was discussed in this House there was objection because it was felt that it was not possible to put in amendments. You gave an assurance from the Chair that all amendments by any Member would be accepted in the House. Now I put in an amendment which only amends the Woltjer compromise by asking that after paragraph 2 a subparagraph be added which says 'Recognizes that the only major obstacle to an overall agreement is the position in Ireland and calls for an urgent remedy to be found for the situation there'. Now, that only qualifies slightly the compromise amendment and now we are being told that that amendment is not in order. We were assured that no Member of Parliament yesterday, on account of these exceptional circumstances and on account of the urgency, would be denied the constitutional right to amend what was itself an amendment. I fail to understand now why my amendment is not felt to be admissible, and I would like further guidance from the Chair.

President. — Yes, Mr Clinton, I will try to give that guidance. I think it is rather simple. Compromise amendments refer to the existing or proposed text of the resolution. Your compromise amendment refers to the text of a compromise amendment and in that sense it is a sub-amendment to a compromise amendment. That is not possible. You should have drafted your amendment in relation to the existing text. You have amended a compromise amendment and that is not a valid procedure.

Mr Clinton (PPE). — Mr President, this was not explained yesterday and when the amendment was brought to the secretariat it was not explained that it could be done any other way. I think that this is hardly fair because we said it was an extraordinary situation in which we found ourselves and an immense amount of flexibility should be accorded on this particular occasion in that it *was* an important departure. In those circumstances I find it difficult to understand why an extra paragraph cannot be inserted.

President. — Mr Clinton, flexibility is possible if Mr Woltjer does not object because he is the rapporteur

for this report. But as far as the Chair is concerned, I would say that it was clearly indicated yesterday that amendments have to refer to the resolution proposed. This one does not and I think that is a fundamental element in my judgment.

Mr Curry (ED), Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — Mr President, Mr Clinton's amendment is not incompatible with any of the compromise texts. If Mr Woltjer would be willing to accept that as an addition to his, it is entirely compatible and it meets with the situation — it satisfies Mr Clinton and it satisfies everybody else. As chairman of the committee, I would be willing to recommend that.

President. — That is in fact what I suggested. I said that if Mr Woltjer accepts, then I have no problem, but under the Rules I have difficulties. Mr Woltjer has to decide this.

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (NL) I am not ready to accept it, Mr President, because in the compromise text which we tabled we have avoided all these points so as not to go into detail. Mr Clinton is also aware that his remark fits into the whole picture. I clearly agreed with everyone not to go into detail and I think that we must not do so now. The House can decide otherwise of course, but I cannot see it in my way now to go beyond the compromise.

President. — I would say that if the rapporteur does not see a way to integrate it, then, under the system we have to stick to my original decision that the amendment is inadmissible.

It does not make sense to discuss this, it is the task of the Chair to decide whether or not an amendment is admissible. In view of the established procedures, I would say this is a clear case. I have put it to the rapporteur that he may include it, he has declined to do so and therefore there is no need for a point of order.

Mr Ryan (PPE). — Mr President, we are dealing, as everybody in the House knows, with an extraordinary situation brought about by a conflict of events. I would say with respect that the decision in this matter should be left, not to the rapporteur, for whom I have great respect, but to the House as a whole. If the House wants to adopt this the amendment, then House should be sovereign, the House is supreme and the choice should lie with the House.

President. — No, Mr Ryan, that is not quite correct. I understand your position but I have to insist that yesterday I proposed to the House that it extend the deadline for tabling amendments in order to permit the possibility of compromise amendments: compromise amendments referring to the resolution as proposed. But here we have an amendment referring to a compromise amendment, which is outside

President

the scope of my ruling. In my generosity, I have asked the rapporteur to include in his consideration this sub-amendment. He refuses. I think that under the Rules I have to accept his verdict and I have to declare inadmissible the amendment concerned.

VITALE REPORT (DOC. 1-1514/83 'OLIVE OIL')

Mr Gautier (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, Parliament decided at the beginning of the week to debate the Vitale and Battersby reports together. If I understand things correctly, a joint debate makes sense only if there is also a joint vote, as was the case recently with the Hopper and Ligios reports. I really fail to understand why we should discuss the Battersby report jointly with the report by Mr Vitale, only to refer it back to committee now. Should the House not be consistent and vote on the two reports together?

President. — That is a request and must be voted on. One speaker for and one against.

Mr Franchère (COM). — *(FR)* Mr President, I think that the proposal that we have just heard does not reflect the real situation. I know there has been a debate on Greece together with the Battersby report, but the report which was submitted to the Committee on Agriculture by Mr Vitale was adopted by an overwhelming majority. It was ready and I cannot see for what reason — unless it is a reason one dare not admit — we could decide not to discuss the report. In my view the Assembly should complete what is now the work of the committees. In other words, we should do our job as best we can and settle the maximum number of problems.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr von der Vring (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, if you have looked at both reports you will see that the Battersby report deals with the problems in question in a much more detailed and precise manner. If we are now going to refer one report to committee because it is more detailed and vote on the other which glosses over things, then we shall be doing so because a different result is wanted. You should be prepared to vote for rejection, ladies and gentlemen. Sending the report back to committee is dodging the issue.

President. — I cannot read every report, Mr von der Vring, and I must leave this decision to the House. Mr Gautier has proposed that the report be referred to committee.

(Parliament rejected the proposal)

Motion for a resolution**Paragraph 5 — Amendments No 11 and 19**

Mr Vitale (COM), rapporteur. — *(IT)* Mr President, these two amendments support a proposal which we have rejected earlier.

President. — Yes, but at the same time it can be considered that Amendments Nos 11 and 19 do not contradict the proposal for a regulation. They express ideas which perhaps go beyond what is proposed. I think that these two amendments can therefore be voted on. It in no way affects our voting on the proposal for a regulation and does not contradict what we have just voted. They are therefore admissible.

Mr Vitale (COM), rapporteur. — *(IT)* I want to point out that when we approved the regulation we voted against some amendments which were identical to these.

President. — Mr Vitale, the President decides if an amendment is admissible. We are ready of course to hear your opinion and you are entitled to say yes or no to the amendment in the hope or the certainty that the House will listen to you. But from the point of view of admissibility, there is no problem here.

(The sitting was suspended at 5.05 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR : MR ESTGEN*Vice-President***3. Agricultural prices (continuation)**

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the Woltjer report (Doc. 1-1508/83).¹

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — *(DA)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it should not be necessary to give a lengthy account of the proposal on agricultural prices for the next production year. It has already been discussed in the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Development and Cooperation, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and of course in the Committee on Agriculture.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of Mr Woltjer's report. The motion on which Parliament will be voting is evidence of the hard work which is done in the various Community bodies. There are three reasons behind Parliament's and the Commission's wish that the Council take a decision as quickly as possible. Firstly, the production year begins on 1 April. It is absolutely essential that farmers be informed as early as possible of the various directives and restrictions which will apply for the

¹ See previous day's debates.

Dalsager

various products. Secondly, the conditions on the market are so complex that the Commission cannot guarantee that the common agricultural policy can be implemented within a reasonable budgetary framework if a decision on prices is not taken involving a reform in certain sectors. Thirdly, as you all know, the Heads of State or Government are meeting on 19 March, and they will of course be very interested in the progress made in the agricultural field within the Communities' various institutions. We are all aware that various provisions in the price package are difficult to accept against the background of developments in agricultural incomes. Nevertheless, it is thanks to the common agricultural policy that farmers have been successfully protected from the catastrophic effect of the worldwide economic crisis, which has hit both American, Canadian and other farmers very hard and has resulted in a decline in agricultural earnings in these countries of more than 30% in some cases.

It is necessary to face the truth and take account of developments in the most important agricultural markets. First and foremost, milk production has increased so much that supply far exceeds demand both in the Community and on the world market. This gives rise to exorbitantly high expenditure which is becoming more and more of an obstacle to the development and start-up of programmes in other sectors. The measures which have been implemented to date have not been sufficient to solve this problem, which is why we are now forced to look for other solutions.

At the meeting of Heads of State or Government the Commission put forward a series of interdependent measures, to be implemented in the course of the coming years. As early as five years ago the Commission proposed a freeze on common agricultural prices, and at that time we were not in the present situation. This year the Commission considers that such a solution would not be appropriate, but that price increases can be staggered, taking into account the market conditions for the various products. In this way it has been possible to deal more favourably with certain Mediterranean products.

Mr President, your Committee on Agriculture has acknowledged that in view of the market conditions the greatest care should be taken in fixing agricultural prices according to the objective method and we all know what the markets look like. Forced to take account of all these various elements together, we have put forward price proposals, which, globally, lie a fraction below 1%. As I explained earlier, the thinking in the Council is that these prices, expressed in ECU, should not be increased, but on the contrary should be reduced to a level below the Commission's proposals. Since September 1983 the Commission has submitted a large number of instruments to the

Council, on many of which Parliament has already expressed an opinion, and today you will express an opinion on our common price proposals.

What is the hurry, some people may ask? Simply because we have an obligation not only to finance the implementation of the measures taken in the course of the year, but also to uphold the principle laid down in Article 39 of the Treaty. The meeting of the Council of Agricultural Ministers this week provides reason to hope that a decision will soon be taken on the fixing of the common prices and related measures. Let me point out that up to now the Commission has not changed its proposals, despite the fact that the Council had not reached any decision.

The current debate concerns three points in particular, as I already had an opportunity to point out to the House yesterday. Firstly, the monetary compensatory amounts, where a solution to the problem of dismantling them is being sought along lines proposed by the German delegation. This solution involves converting some of the positive monetary compensatory amounts into negative ones, with the result that the prices in national currencies in countries with a weak currency will rise. Secondly, the system for the fixing of milk quotas, where it is hoped that the Member States can have the greatest possible freedom as regards administration, as long as the total quantities, which will be fixed at a realistic level, are respected. Thirdly, the question of what measures should be taken as regards the remaining products. In this respect I hope that the Council's attitude will largely coincide with the Commission's proposal.

In conclusion I can assure all Members that the Commission will examine all possibilities in order to find solutions which comply as far as is feasible with the lines adopted by Parliament.

Mr President, the reform of the agricultural policy, of which this price proposal is a part, is a long-term task, and I will not conceal the fact that the restrictive price policy must be continued for a long time yet. We are dealing with a sector which must increasingly be integrated into the general economy, not only in the Community, but in the world as a whole. This integration process is at times painful, but it is necessary to secure the future for the agricultural policy, which as was said earlier, is a cornerstone of the Community.

Let me put it this way: this week Parliament will be voting on one of the most important questions on which an opinion has to be expressed before the elections, namely agricultural prices. You have a chance to improve and strengthen the common agricultural policy so that the new Parliament, in which I hope to find most of you again, can take over a better and healthier agricultural policy than the one you took over from your predecessors.

President. — The debate is closed.

*Vote*¹

After the rejection of the Commission proposals

Mr Gautier (S). — I want to ask the Commission if it will withdraw its proposals after this vote by Parliament.

President. — Do you wish to reply, Mr Dalsager?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — No, Mr President, we will not do that.

President. — I should now like to know what the rapporteur, Mr Woltjer, thinks about the effect on the votes we are about to take, the amendments and so on.

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, I think we should carry on as planned with the vote on the resolution in which we can make clear our criticism of the Commission proposals. We cannot allow the matter to be referred back now, for the simple reason that Parliament has to be given an opinion by tomorrow, since that is when the Council is going to decide.

Mr Enright (S). — Mr President, could we ask the Commission if they will show the same determination over the Vredeling regulations?

Motion for a resolution — Recital L — Amendment No 28, by Mr Diana

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Is Mr Diana actually still a Member of the European Parliament?

(Laughter)

President. — Don't you know?

Paragraph 4 — after the vote on Amendments Nos 59, 37 and 207

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Mr President, in putting the amendments and requesting the rapporteur's opinion, you will have realized that it does seem to weigh heavily with the Members present whether the Committee on Agriculture decided for or against any particular viewpoint; yet the House has not been told that in fact the report as a whole only squeaked through by 16 votes to 15.

President. — I do not think you can interpret my impression of the rapporteur's opinions. I believe I interpret them correctly.

IN THE CHAIR: MR KLEPSCH

Vice-President

After paragraph 36 and after the vote on Amendment No 248

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Mr President, in accordance with the practice of the Bureau until now, I think

you should have said that Amendment No 248 would fall, because in paragraph 35 we voted for the exact opposite.

President. — Mr Gautier, I can only follow the suggestion of the rapporteur, and that I did.

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Mr President, your predecessor in the Chair, Mr Dankert, announced that all the other amendments had fallen when we had the vote on the tax on fats.

President. — In the example you refer to there was a difference between the texts of the regulation and the resolution, and we assumed that we could not of course correct the regulation in our resolution. In this instance we are dealing with the text of the resolution.

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) But, Mr President, in paragraph 35 we decided that we wanted to narrow the gap on cereals prices, and now in paragraph 36 we do not want to!

President. — I always follow the rapporteur's advice and must allow the House to decide as it wishes.

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (NL) I am sorry, Mr President, but I just want to say that I do not agree with Mr Gautier that the texts are contradictory. One advocates restriction and the other says how far we have to be restrictive.

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot allow the House to start a debate with the rapporteur over the meaning of the amendments, and I would ask you to accept this, Mr Gautier.

After paragraph 41 and after the vote on Amendment No 73

Mr von der Vring (S). — (DE) Mr President, I am not going to insist but I would ask you to accept what seems to be the case on such occasions and not to ask for a check if in your opinion a group has voted wrongly. If your whole group has not voted, it can mean that they have abstained or it can mean that they are asleep.

(Laughter)

President. — That is correct, Mr von der Vring. I shall comply with your request.

After paragraph 43 — Amendments No 25 and 49

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, we have just adopted the Marck report on MCAs. I propose that we end the argument over this report here by rejecting all the amendments on MCAs except one, Amendment No 200, where there is a specific reference to the other report. All the amendments on MCAs should be rejected except Amendment No 200. Do you agree?

¹ See Annex.

President. — I think I can go along with that, Mr Woltjer, and I hope that the House can as well. Could I just ask you which paragraphs are involved — all as far as paragraph 48? Is that correct? Up to and including paragraph 47? We shall therefore move on to paragraph 48.

Mr Bocklet (PPE). — (DE) Can we start with paragraph 47 *bis* since it refers to paragraph 48?

President. — Very well. Do you agree, Mr Woltjer?

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (DE) Yes.

President. — We shall begin at paragraph 47 *bis* after hearing Mr Blaney and Mr Gautier.

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Mr President, might I draw your attention to the fact that in this report which was passed by a very slim majority of the Committee on Agriculture there are references to milk quotas and super-levies. If we are to have that in this report, why can the same rule not be applied to the rapporteur as he would now wish it to apply to other Members of this House, that anything that is already dealt with by Mr Marck with regard to MCAs should be scrapped as far as any reference in this report is concerned. I am not advocating either course but I think there is total inconsistency here.

Mr Gautier (S). — (DE) Mr President, I think that Mr Bocklet's amendment needs a correction in the second line. Mr Bocklet will not object because it says here that some of the positive monetary compensatory amounts will be dismantled and that there will be a change from negative to positive MCAs. That is nonsense of course since logically it has to read that the positive MCAs will be turned into negative MCAs. It does not make sense otherwise.

Mr Bocklet (PPE). — (DE) An error crept in when it was being written.

President. — It will be corrected.

Mr Woltjer (S), rapporteur. — (NL) I suggested that the amendments by Mr Bocklet and Mr Maher not be put to the vote since I felt that the best course would be to adopt my own amendment, Amendment No 200, which in no way contradicts what we have already adopted.

President. — That is a difficult decision for me since I am no expert on farm matters.

After the adoption of the resolution

Mr Alavanos (COM). — (GR) Mr President, I should like to raise a minor point of order. In reply to a question by another Member Mr Dankert stated a short time ago that he would consider whether it would be possible to submit in writing those speeches on the

Woltjer report which could not be made because of lack of time resulting from the strike. Mr Dankert also said that the Bureau would consider the matter and take a decision. I should like to know whether there will be a statement on this matter.

4. Welcome

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, it now gives me great pleasure to extend a cordial welcome to the members of the European Affairs Committee of the *Bundestag* who have taken their seats in the official gallery.

(Applause)

The European Affairs Committee was set up with the agreement of all the parties in the *Bundestag* on 16 June 1983. It is unusual in that it brings together 11 members of a national parliament and the same number of MPs from the same country sitting in the European Parliament.

We are delighted to receive this first official visit and we hope that it will lead to closer relations between the German *Bundestag* and the European Parliament.

(Applause)

5. Waste

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1376/83), drawn up by Mrs Squarcialupi on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on waste.

Mrs Squarcialupi (COM), rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, it will take me only a few moments to present this own initiative report on a subject affecting the whole of Europe which was drawn up by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

We are aware of the reaction in Europe to the transport of dangerous waste and residues. We must find a solution to this problem, being especially careful to bear in mind that, by producing less waste, it is possible not only to maintain, but also to improve, standards of living and productivity, without squandering resources and without causing pollution. It is vital that a new way be found to deal with the problem, that less domestic, industrial and agricultural waste be produced and that the enormous amount of raw materials present in the waste, of which the Community produces 2 million tonnes, be recovered and recycled.

The basic aim must be to study and apply clean technologies. This is the message of the Third Environmental Action Programme but its sentiments are also shared by all the peoples of Europe, both producers and workers.

Squarcialupi

I shall briefly mention the amendments, which are all acceptable. The amendments tabled by the Committee on Transport cover topics already discussed by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection when dealing with the problem of the transfrontier transport of dangerous waste. Some were not discussed. I would, however, ask the Committee on Transport's rapporteur to insert her Committee's six amendments as separate subparagraphs to our Article 6, linked by the word 'in the meantime'. I will not go over all these points in detail since various understandings have already been reached privately.

I shall conclude, Mr President, by emphasizing the importance of this fresh approach to the environment and to economic development which will, most importantly of all, create a substantial number of jobs, as has been illustrated. I particularly want to draw attention to the fact that this problem affects the whole of Europe as regards information on waste production, registers of waste products, waste exchange agencies and the exchange of technologies and information which can help to improve production without causing pollution, with associated savings on cost, and which can help to create jobs.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission particularly welcomes this report and the motion for a resolution as a significant political initiative on the part of Parliament and thanks in particular the rapporteur as well as the co-rapporteur from the Committee on Transport.

With waste and the waste industry Parliament is raising a topic which in recent years and months has become an increasingly important part of a preventive environmental policy extending beyond the protection of the environment and the combating of nuisances and pollution. Wastes represent a special challenge to our highly industrialized society based on the division of labour, which, in order to protect our environment and the safety and health of the population, must find a way of disposing of the increasing quantities of waste and residues which are the unavoidable by-products of our industrial production process.

Between 2 000 and 2 500 million tonnes of waste accumulate annually in the Community. Independently of economic growth and sometimes even as a result of environmental measures, the waste avalanche is increasing annually by 5 to 8% and this figure represents a challenge. On the other hand, this waste, with the multitude of valuable substances it contains, represents a significant raw material reserve, both economically and strategically, for a Europe dependent on raw materials. In order to exploit the raw material by-products both technically and economically, a great deal of effort is still necessary, but feasible none the less.

Meanwhile, one fact is certain, and this constitutes the particular value of Mrs Squarcialupi's report: waste and the waste industry involved in recycling are of increasing economic, social and political significance in the Community.

The second fact is that the Commission is pleased to note that the European Parliament is not content merely to examine the difficult problems related to toxic wastes and the implementation of the basic guideline of 1978, for which Parliament has in any case set up its own committee of inquiry, but wishes in addition to give shape and direction to the Community's waste management policy. We can only support this. The Commission welcomes this constructive policy-making attitude on the part of the European Parliament in this very important field, particularly as it is itself at present working on a comprehensive memorandum on the Community's waste management policy. This memorandum will also contain a medium and long-term outline programme and will probably be forwarded to the Council of Ministers and Parliament before the end of this year.

For this reason Mrs Squarcialupi's report and the motion for a resolution are a great direct help to the Commission in drafting this memorandum. Here also we thank you for your cooperation. I believe that the details of the report and our opinion on them have already been discussed several times in committee, and since it is so late, I shall refrain from repeating them here. I should therefore like to bring the debate on this matter to an end by thanking you once again for your excellent cooperation.

Mrs Schleicher (PPE). — (DE) I am speaking on behalf of the European People's Party on Mrs Squarcialupi's report on waste. My group is extremely pleased that the whole question of waste is finally being dealt with in Parliament because we are convinced that to date neither the Council nor the Commission have paid sufficient attention to this topic. Indeed, we are of the opinion that the whole waste problem together with air and water pollution in the Community must be dealt with urgently. Firstly, it is an environmental problem of great significance, because timely measures, which are definitely not cheap, will avoid subsequent damage, which in any event is more expensive. The chemicals which we use everywhere have multiplied tremendously. Today there are about 60 000 chemicals which are used or processed in industry and agriculture and consequently appear increasingly as waste.

Secondly, far too little attention has been paid in the past to the economic value of waste and to waste utilization. It is certain that an appropriate waste industry will solve the problems in future very much quicker than would be possible by means of purely legal solutions, since 70 to 90% of the accumulated waste and residues could be used again in one form or another.

Schleicher

Today, alongside an enormous, but less dangerous, quantity of domestic waste, which must be dealt with mainly at regional level, we have the far more difficult problems with what is termed industrial waste. At present it is estimated that there is an annual production of approximately 950 million tonnes of waste in agriculture and approximately 160 million tonnes in industry. And in the case of the latter, it is chemicals, oil and radioactive waste which present special problems.

From an international angle the problem is the following: there are various countries which, while they produce waste, do not have or do not create the facilities for disposing of this waste themselves. For this reason they dispose of it in waters, mainly the sea, or find a way out via other countries, for example Eastern European countries. The latter, for their part, regard the acceptance of waste as a lucrative source of foreign currency, without feeling in any way bound to agreements and without seeing to it that this waste is safely stored.

The Socialist Group professes to be particularly committed here, at least in theory. In practice there is the flagrant example of Georgswerder near Hamburg, where ten years ago a committee of inquiry came to the conclusion that waste storage sites must be under continuous surveillance and control. To date nothing has been done about it, although your Socialist colleagues have had an uninterrupted term of office.

We support the conclusions in Mrs Squarcialupi's report. We find it contains important starting points:

disposal of waste as far as possible by recycling — in this context waste exchanges would certainly be a good start, because in this way valuable raw materials can be recovered; secondly, research on and development of technologies to dispose of dangerous waste; thirdly, the long-term introduction of technologies which generate as little waste as possible, so that such large quantities of waste will no longer be produced; fourthly, where this is not possible, the construction of an adequate number of supervised storage sites for dangerous waste.

In the past far too little imagination was devoted to creating incentives for a new waste management industry. For this reason we call on the Council to take the necessary steps and, in so doing, help solve Europe's problems.

President. — The debate is closed. The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

I owe Mr Alavanos and Mr Adamou an answer, which I should now like to give. The President has rules that in view of the difficult situation in the House each Member may submit a written explanation of vote which may if necessary exceed 200 words. We want to take a generous attitude, considering what happened today, and I trust that the Members will act accordingly.

*(The sitting was closed at 8 p.m.)*¹

¹ Agenda for next sitting: see Minutes.

*ANNEX**Votes*

The Annex to the Report of Proceedings contains the rapporteur's opinion on the various amendments and the explanations of vote. For a detailed account of the voting, see Minutes.

PRICE REPORT (DOC. 1-1390/83 'DISCHARGE FOR THE GENERAL BUDGET'): POSTPONED

* * *

MARCK REPORT (DOC. 1-1370/83 'MONETARY COMPENSATORY AMOUNTS AND SLUICEGATE PRICES'): ADOPTED

On the motion for a resolution the rapporteur was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendment No 23 ;
- AGAINST Amendment No 24.

Explanation of vote

Mr de Courcy Ling (ED), in writing. — This debate is taking place at the eleventh hour for the future of the European Community. I believe that we will after all survive and that the European Council meeting in Brussels on 19 and 20 March will produce satisfactory agreements on how to begin to solve the long-term problems of the Community. This new optimism which I dare to express would not have been possible had it not been for the dogged and courageous efforts of our Agriculture Ministers at their meeting on 12 and 13 March. Without their provisional agreement it would not be possible for the Heads of State or Government to proceed to further long-term agreements in Brussels. The Agriculture Ministers have been realistic and all our farmers will, I know, be prepared to accept some sacrifices in order to promote the long-term welfare and stability of the common agricultural policy. But the sacrifices must be equal as between Member States and I certainly refuse to accept that the British farmer should be worse off than his European counterparts.

In particular I deplore the suggestion by Mr Chirac, the President of the French Rassemblement pour la République on 6 March, that the United Kingdom should cease to participate in the common agricultural policy. Fortunately, the Ministers have decided otherwise but it is impertinent for Mr Chirac, who as French Minister of Agriculture, was above all responsible for an unsustainable rate of annual increases in European farm prices to suggest that Britain should be victimized as a result of the consequences of his own immoderate actions. It is not unknown for the rat to leave a sinking ship but it is disagreeable to be told that we, one of the most loyal members of the crew, should be thrown overboard in order that the rats may then continue a life of gluttony.

As a British Conservative Member I should like to be able to trust Mr Chirac.

* * *

GOERENS REPORT (DOC. 1-1507/83 'OILS AND FATS'): ADOPTED

The rapporteur was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 2 and 15 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 1, 3 to 12, 14, 17 to 22, 24 to 43 and 45 to 50.

Explanations of vote

Mr Gautier (S). — *(DE)* Mr Helmut Kohl, the Christian-Democratic Chancellor of Germany was in Washington last week and he told President Reagan that he would vote against this tax on fats in the European Community. Before telling Reagan, Mr Kohl would have been better advised to explain first of all things to his Christian-Democratic colleagues here in the European Parliament. We shall be voting against the motion for a resolution.

(Applause)

Mr Franchère (COM), in writing. — *(FR)* I wish to congratulate Mr Goerens on his thorough work. The rejection of the amendments to this report is a blow to the defenders of Unilever and American exporters of fats. We are sorry however that exemption for the developing countries was rejected. The Commission proposal to introduce a tax on oils and fats does not satisfy us entirely since it will affect without distinction imported and Community-produced vegetable oils and fats. But this is an interesting first step which the Council will have to consider, in the form of a tax on imports of oils and fats and concentrated foodstuffs, which represent 14.9 million tonnes of milk. This tax scheme is in line with Community preference and together with the tax on industrial dairies is an additional means — and the most certain — of coping with one of the aspects of the crisis in the common agricultural policy.

* * *

WOLTJER REPORT (DOC. 1-1470/83 'MILK PRODUCTS'): ADOPTED

The rapporteur was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendment No 97 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 98 to 102.

Explanations of vote

Mr Blaney (CDI). — I cannot but be against this report. I am against it because I feel it is totally and absolutely unfair in its entire content, in its objective as stated it is discriminatory, and in particular it works against the weaker members and the smaller dairy farmers of this Community. It works against the entire concept of the Community for there is now apparently no thought in the minds of the majority of this House to care for those who are weaker or less developed and who joined the Community with a view to making their contribution, in return for which they would be given some consideration — a consideration at least equal to that given to third countries, in so far as imports duty free are concerned. Community preference is being forgotten about, the small people will be brushed aside, wiped out and the bigger people and the bigger farmers will become bigger and consolidated. The weighed down taxpayer of this Community will then continue to pay to enrich still further the rich and to enrich still further the big farmers and to give the international cartels and the industrialists the freedom to go into the Third World in the name of humanity to sell their manufactures without duty in return for which small farming communities in parts of this EEC are being buried. I reject it totally and will vote against it in every possible way at any time and in any place.

Mrs Castle (S). — I abstained on the Woltjer compromise resolution because, although I know my colleague is anxious to get to the same end as I am, namely an end to the open-ended guarantees that we have at the present time, I disagree with him as to method.

Castle

Quotas are an alternative to tackling the root cause of the problem which we face, and that is the excessively high prices which have led to the surpluses, reduced demand and led to the budgetary crisis in which we now are. I might have considered tolerating quotas for a short time as part of a long-term development of a lower price policy, but not as a permanent alternative. It is quite clear from the deal which is now being cooked up by the Council that they are not moving forward in reducing prices. They are going back. The net result of the deal that is being done in the Council of Ministers is to push prices up throughout the Community by 3.5 % and this is being hidden by the fiddle that is being cooked up over the MCAs. The net result is that prices are going up, and I say, in that situation, your budgetary crisis will get worse. In that situation to vote for quotas is to vote for a sterilization of the crisis in which we find ourselves.

Mr Clinton (PPE). — I intended to submit a very short explanation of vote in writing, but I am impelled now to stand up and make it orally because of the lack of courtesy of the rapporteur who denied me that ordinary facility of simply repeating what was said by the President-in-Office of the Council of Agricultural Ministers, Mr Rocard, in this House yesterday. Mr Rocard fully recognized the unacceptableness of the situation for Ireland and stated that he believed that this has now been acknowledged and fully appreciated by the Council of Ministers generally and that the only way the matter could be settled was to refer it to the European Council.

That is what I wanted to say, but I was denied the opportunity of doing so. I very much regret that in these circumstances I am unable to vote for the package of proposals for the milk sector or indeed for the overall price proposals.

Mr Curry (ED), Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. — This is the first explanation of vote I have ever given in this Parliament. Almost everything is wrong with quotas from an economic point of view. They are likely to be fixed too high. Once you have got them you will not get rid of them. There is a danger of price indexation so that the actual quantity guaranteed moves away from consumption. They remove the incentives to become more efficient and to provide a product at a cheaper price. All that is true in a perfect situation.

The fact is that the situation is not perfect. This House has to take account of what the realities are. The realities are that either we get quotas or we get nothing. There is no other choice. As far as British producers are concerned, it is between quotas and a co-responsibility levy which we know is immensely unfair to our producers. Therefore, we are accepting reality. We have no option but to accept reality even in this House. But I do make a plea that there are conditions which have to be fulfilled. First of all, they must be strictly monitored. If we are to have quotas they must apply to everybody; they must apply with equal force to everybody, be enforced by everybody and, in so far as we are asking our farmers to accept pain and punishment, that must be accepted equally by all farmers. We will not forgive the Commission if they continue their lax attitude towards national aids, the absence of control. We wish to see a system which is fair and which is effective.

This is not the perfect system. There are many reasons against it but when you are faced with reality you have no option but to choose what is politically possible rather than what is necessary economically desirable. We must face the choice between what we would like and what we can obtain. This is what we can obtain, but I serve notice to the Commission that they had better make sure that they are enforced for all our producers in an equal manner, otherwise we will be after their blood.

Mr De Gucht (L), in writing. — (NL) I abstained from voting on the Woltjer and Marck reports, not on account of the contents of the report, but on procedural grounds.

In my modest opinion our resolutions have been superseded by the decision of the Council of Ministers on these two subjects.

De Gucht

It is true that, months ago, we asked the Council of Ministers to take a decision on the reform of the common agricultural policy. As a result of the Council's irresolution, the decision to reform now coincides with that on prices, and furthermore, Parliament has also produced new reports, the Marck and Woltjer reports, on the two bottlenecks in the reform process.

Although there can be no legal objection, the fact that the Council does not consider it necessary to delay its decision speaks of a fundamental want of respect for Parliament. This is proof of the Council's lack of concern for our opinion on these questions.

Perhaps we should also admit to having been at fault here too, as the attitude of this House with regard to agricultural questions has not been particularly consistent in the last four years, by which I mean the contradictions between the attitudes of Parliament in the budget and agricultural debates. At the same time this is ample proof that this Parliament is only influential as long as it is seen to be consistent.

Mr Keating (S), in writing. — Everyone pays lip service to the idea of convergence within the economy of the Community, but our actions produce divergence.

The basic thrust of this amendment is to give approval to a blunt instrument which will bear lightly on the rich farmers of Europe and substantially destroy large sections of smaller and poorer farmers. It increases the already divergent tendencies which can be seen within the countryside of the Community, and it runs counter to the intention and actuality of Community regional and social policy.

It confirms the growing belief of small farmers that the direction of Community policy, dominated as it is by liberal economic ideas, is making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The crisis, caused by increased production from those regions where farming is already well developed, and by imports, is being solved at the expense of those least able to pay.

Mr O'Donnell (PPE), in writing. — The package of proposals covering the milk sector and agricultural prices have frightening economic and social implications for my country — a small peripheral island more dependent on agriculture than any other region of the Community.

It is indefensible that the Commission has made proposals without taking into account the special situation of Ireland. We are continuously being presented with resolutions on the special problems of the UK and the Mediterranean countries, but the special case of Ireland has been ignored. The only real acknowledgement of the Irish situation was made yesterday by the President of the Council of Ministers. This represents at least a glimmer of hope for my country.

The proposals for the milk sector as well as the price proposals spell economic disaster for Ireland and more especially for Munster, where 70 % of the Irish milk is produced.

The people of my country who so enthusiastically voted to join the Community are now totally disillusioned that a Community based on a philosophy of fair play and equal opportunity for all could so blatantly disregard their legitimate claim for special treatment for a special problem.

If we continue in this way to ignore the special circumstances of the small and poor countries, then the Community will quickly lose all credibility.

The Community cannot progress or have any real meaning for the people who belong to it if we continue to permit a situation to continue where the rich become richer and the poor poorer.

Sir Fred Warner (ED), in writing. — I am voting for this resolution in spite of the fact that it could mean a serious reduction in the income of some dairy farmers. My reasons for doing so are the following.

Warner

First, I understand that the proposed measures are now the only remaining alternative to the breakdown of the common agricultural policy and the return of all farm support payments to national budgets. It forms part of a general approach to salvaging the CAP.

Second, it has been presented as part of an overall package which will include a final settlement of the problem of the British budget contribution and of the future methods of financing the Community.

On this understanding, I shall vote for the resolution. At the same time, I wish to say that there is no justification of any kind for continuing the linear co-responsibility levy after the end of this year, when it will have served its purpose of financing the one million extra tonnes of milk allowed during the transitional period. I note the implication in the statements made by the Council and Commission that it will disappear on 31 December.

* * *

VITALE REPORT (DOC. 1-1514/83 'OLIVE OIL'): ADOPTED

On the motion for a resolution the rapporteur was :

— AGAINST all the amendments.

Explanations of vote

Mr Antoniozzi (PPE), in writing. — (IT) My vote in favour of this report on olive oil stems from the need to support a vegetable oil which comes from the most socially deprived areas in the Community, particularly central and southern Italy and especially Calabria, Apulia and Sicily.

Protection for olive oil indicates an awareness of the needs of farming areas of particular interest and it also indicates action to promote a vegetable oil which is rich in organoleptic qualities of a special kind and which is very beneficial to health. Scientists have found that the incidence of heart attacks is lowest where olive oil is consumed.

In adopting this resolution the European Parliament will demonstrate its awareness of these problems and will give an example of Community solidarity which will be much appreciated by the people in southern Italy. My support for the resolution is an expression of the mandate I have been given by the citizens of the Mezzogiorno.

Mrs Fuillet (S), in writing. — (FR) No one, unless he delights in finding fault, is going to be happy with rules and regulations that allow irregularities. Every system has its loopholes, and fraud exists in other sectors apart from olive oil. The report by the Court of Auditors bears this out.

There is a need to improve the system of checking Community expenditure in this area. If the funds are allocated properly, it will be farmers and not the middlemen whose incomes improve. Every time there is a case of fraud, money disappears which should be going to the producers.

What I do not like is that every time there is talk of taxing vegetable oils and fats, especially imports, we always seem to find ourselves — and I was going to say, through no fault of ours — in the middle of a smear campaign against the olive oil sector. And a spin-off of the campaign is that the product itself is attacked. To avoid this, I should like the real reasons behind these constant attacks on certain products to be made clear once and for all.

Does the Commission believe that appointing a super-cop with a super-file is going to prevent fraud and improve checks? The Commission already has the legal means to improve verification procedures. The fact is that there are already checks carried out by Community inspectors as part of the clearance of EAGGF Guarantee accounts and there

Fuillet

are also the checks under Regulation No 729/70. The setting up of a national agency, however, can only do some good, although it cannot be hoped that fraud will be entirely eliminated. Does the Commission not think that the best solution would be to set up specific national agencies with responsibility for olive oil? We already have such bodies in France and they go by the name of *offices*.

Speaking as a French Socialist, I should like to point out that I am more than concerned by the creation of data-base files, especially at the supranational level where the use of such files for checking purposes would be acceptable only if there were an organization which could assure that there is no threat to individual liberties. This is not the case.

* * *

STELLA REPORT (DOC. 1-1515/83 'FRUIT AND VEGETABLES'): ADOPTED

* * *

WOLTJER REPORT (DOC. 1-1508/83 'AGRICULTURAL PRICES'): ADOPTED

The rapporteur was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 17, 18, 21, 23, 27 to 29, 55, 98, 111, 122, 145, 158, 168, 174, 186, 188, 190, 197, 199, 200, 215, 216, 234 and 247 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 1, 2, 4 to 6, 8 to 12, 16, 19, 22, 25, 30 to 45, 47 to 51, 53, 56, 57, 59 to 64, 66 to 73, 75 to 85, 87 to 91, 93 to 97, 99 to 105, 107 to 109, 112, 114 to 116, 118, 119, 123 to 144, 146 to 148, 150 to 157, 164 to 167, 169 to 173, 175 to 180, 182, 183, 185, 189, 198, 201 to 209, 212 to 214, 217 to 221, 223 to 229, 235 to 246, 248 to 258, 263, 267 and 269.

Explanations of vote

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Might I just say straight away that I disagree entirely with those who have congratulated the rapporteur on the content, etc., of this particular report. I congratulate him on the work he may have put into it, but I totally disagree with the content of it. And I do so not only because of his original text but because of the fact that he steadfastly ignored and refused to consider any views other than those which he himself had concocted at the outset and which, as I have already said, were barely carried by one vote on the final vote. We might have had no report had there been a few more Members present.

The whole basis of his approach seems to be that of concern for the developed farmers and not for those who need our assistance most. He has no regard nor has there been any regard shown in this report, for the undeveloped small family farms of this continent, nor has there been any concern expressed for those who are overdependent or heavily dependent on agriculture and whose small farm size and volume of production is not capable of sustaining them other than in a particular product — namely, milk, which was dealt with in another report and dealt with very hastily and very uncharitably by the same rapporteur, reflecting the same view of the developed farmer — the very highly developed farmer — the big volume production farmer.

(Protests)

You were not here last night to listen. You are all here tonight. Where were you when the debates were being held? You should answer that and...

(The President interrupted the speaker as having exhausted his speaking time)

Mr Giummarra (PPE). — *(IT)* Although the representatives of the Group of the European People's Party were unable to take part in the debate, which ended earlier than planned, I should nevertheless like to seize this opportunity provided by the explanation of vote to express my opinion on the motion on farm prices, an opinion which is shared

Giummarra

by Mr Barbagli, Mr Costanzo and Mr Del Duca. The motion is in itself completely inadequate, because it even ignores the basic fact that there are different rates of inflation within the Member States. It fails to meet the expectations of the agricultural community, since it bears the hallmark of the effects of the preliminary agreement on surpluses reached by the Council of Ministers of the Communities. The agreement is reprehensible for various reasons : firstly, because the co-responsibility tax which is consistently applied indiscriminately and unjustly is being increased ; secondly, because the quota system is a pseudo-measure which in the end favours producers in the countries which create surpluses ; and, finally, because the smoke screen of sacrifices conceals a furthering consolidation of the system of privileges which favours continental producers to the detriment of Mediterranean farming.

(Applause)

Mr Franchère (COM). — *(FR)* In committee, the initial Woltjer report was improved, mainly because amongst others some of our amendments were adopted, but we have had to vote against it because it accepted the European Commission's proposal to have no price rises, supposedly for budgetary reasons.

Now, the European Parliament has not made any basic amendments to the committee's report, but it has rejected our proposal of raising Community prices by 6 % ; it has even rejected the proposal under the objective method, i.e. price rises of 3.9 %.

Therefore, we shall vote against the report, as we did in committee, but in conclusion I must say that the refusal to decide on a price increase is serious and in fact, let's be honest, a betrayal of family farmers' interests. This is to ridicule the Treaty, as we saw when the amendment requesting the application of Article 39 was rejected.

With only three months to go before the elections, farmers will make up their own minds. But nothing is settled. We urge them to fight to force the Council to take decisions, which take account of their right to live and their right to develop and fully exploit the assets of our agriculture.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr Adamou (COM). — *(GR)* The motions for fixing the prices of agricultural products are, for Greek farmers, not only unacceptable, but outrageous. For our basic products such as oil, wine and cereals, prices are being frozen at last year's levels even though the cost of these products has tripled, and inflation is at 20 %. For other products, such as tomatoes for processing, peaches and oranges, the increases are insignificant, since they refer to the target price, which does not help the farmer, whereas the price for some types of tobacco has been reduced by 2 % to 7%.

There is only one solution for Greece, Mr President, where our farmers have so far buried 800 000 tonnes of fruit, where their incomes are falling nearly every year, where they are facing severe problems in disposing of their produce and when Greece has to shoulder the expense of a balance of trade deficit in agricultural products of 50 000 million drachmas : the Greek Government must pursue an agricultural policy which is in accordance with our national interests and must exploit the enormous potential for international cooperation outside the EEC. The Greek agricultural economy has no future in the Community. This is obvious from the experience of the last three and a half years, and finds further confirmation in the even more unfavourable prospects for the current year.

We of the Greek Communist Party will vote against the Woltjer report, especially after the rejection by Parliament of all our amendments and all the other amendments with any value which have been tabled.

(Applause from the Left)

Mr Kyrkos (COM). — *(GR)* The fact that important amendments have not been accepted is very negative. I too am therefore obliged to vote against the motion and by doing so wish to emphasize once more that however much need there is for financial

Kyrkos

discipline, this cannot be brought about at the expense of the small and medium-sized producers. It is not they who are creating the surpluses. Any measure which in the name of equality is detrimental to the small and medium-sized producers is unjust, and amendments and measures which do not allow for the differences in inflation and the unfavourable treatment which Mediterranean products have been receiving for years — which in my country is leading to further reductions in farm incomes each year — must be rejected.

By voting against the motion we wish to support the trend towards a fundamental overhaul of the common agricultural policy and towards a balanced development of the agricultural economy and a stable tiering of Mediterranean agriculture which will be accompanied by the necessary restructuring through the direct application of the integrated Mediterranean programmes.

Mr Maher (L). — Yesterday the President-in-Office of the Council said that budgetary considerations are not the only ones to be taken into account when considering the position and the income of farmers. I must regret that this Parliament is tending to take the budgetary route. I accept that that is important. However, we also have to consider the position of these family farmers, and that has not been taken into account.

Of course, what is important now is the Paris Summit. The British Minister for Agriculture has taken a very strong stance against any alleviating measures for my country, particularly in the milk sector. I would appeal to my British friends not to take this view but to give us an opportunity to have some relief in this sector, since it is a vital interest. We are paying 500 million pounds per year to maintain security because of a problem in the northern part of our country which Britain holds. We have been very cooperative in this regard. It is not our problem, but we have to pay 500 million pounds which we cannot afford. We cannot continue this cooperation if at the same time Britain is taking action against us in an area of vital interest.

We are the United Kingdom's best customers, but how can we continue to buy its industrial products if our agriculture is going to be pushed into the ground? We are dependent on it. We ask you in all honesty to try to see our point of view.

Mr Kaspereit (DEP). — (FR) The report we have just adopted is not bad if compared with the statements made both by the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers and by the Commission.

Unfortunately, the refusal to increase prices by more than 0.8%, as the Commission was recommending, is not only contrary to the spirit of our resolution but is also a decision which is harmful to our farmers.

This is why the DEP Group will vote against the resolution as a whole.

Mrs S. Martin (L). — (FR) The French Liberals consider that the positions we have just adopted only take account of budgetary considerations while blatantly disregarding the situation of farmers.

The rejection of the 3.9% price increase which should have been awarded under the objective method and in view of the duly recorded situation of farm incomes — a rejection to which will be added a certain number of related measures, notably the restriction of milk production — will put farmers, especially young ones and those who have invested, in a disastrous situation.

We are going to be treating agriculture in a way that none of us would dare to treat any other sector of the economy, that is with no consideration for the men whose livelihood it is. For this reason we shall vote against the report.

Mr Antoniazzi (PPE), in writing. — (IT) I am puzzled and not very impressed by the conclusions reached by the Community with regard to agriculture.

Antonozzi

The debate on farm prices has been influenced much more this time than in preceding years by the insuperable ceiling on the budget and the rigid position adopted by the Council of Ministers, which is echoed by the Commission of the European Communities.

Trends in prices have not been the same for all the Member States. Inflation has played a major role in creating differences between countries. And now we have a proposal which in no way corresponds to the actual situation existing in the Community and in the individual Member States, especially Italy, which makes it difficult to decide what conclusions are to be drawn as regards the proposals which have reached this House after such careful preparation and hard work.

The southern part of the Community has been discriminated against in this debate. We would once more request that Mediterranean products be given fair treatment. We hope that the Council of Ministers will think again and will adjust the budget by increasing the current 1% of VAT so that it can increase prices to satisfy, or at least come close to satisfying, the demands of the farming community.

These are our hopes, and the aim of our vote is merely to exert pressure and to provide encouragement for any steps taken in this direction.

Mr Bocklet (PPE), in writing. — (DE) One of the aims of the common agricultural policy, as laid down in the EEC Treaty, is to guarantee an adequate standard of living for those employed in agriculture by increasing the per capita income. Adequate prices are the most important means of achieving this end. For this reason an active price policy plays an important role in maintaining farmers' incomes. Using the 'objective' method, the Commission in the past developed a procedure enabling it to determine the necessary level of increases for agricultural prices. This made it all the more regrettable that in the past the Commission has often failed to keep to the results of this 'objective' method. Despite an enormous increase in productivity, farmers have not succeeded in significantly increasing their incomes in the past 20 years.

The Commission itself recently had to admit that since 1974 the real income of farmers in the Community had slipped 20% behind the overall trend. The inadequate prices forced farmers to improve their income by increasing production. In turn, the growing surpluses made it politically impossible to obtain suitable price increases. In addition, the incomes of German farmers were badly hit as a result of the gradual dismantling of compensatory amounts. The introduction of quotas is now intended to provide a way out of this vicious circle, so that an active price policy will again be possible. This means that the stabilization of markets must for the moment have priority over an active price policy.

It is for this reason only that I can approve a zero increase. This, however, also includes the rejection of the additional accompanying measures proposed by the Commission and which, if implemented, would lead to a further massive loss of income for farmers.

Mr Gontikas (PPE), in writing. — (GR) My vote in favour of the motion can only be interpreted as a vote of necessity.

The Community's current economic situation cannot allow high prices. It is a fact that to fix high prices without at the same time adopting sound accompanying measures can only result in increased inflation and in the Community, whose resources are of course currently inadequate, exceeding the limits of its economic potential.

In the present economic depression which is affecting the whole Community, it is only fair that all classes of producer should bear the consequences. Bearing in mind that all should share equally in the fortunes of the Community, through thick and thin, and that, for there to be proper economic recovery, sacrifices are needed at the present time, I accept the increases proposed in the Woltjer report.

Mr Marck (PPE), in writing. — (NL) Quick but clear-cut decisions, a cautious price policy, offering more than a purely budgetary approach, further development of the common agricultural policy and a refusal to revert to national policies with trade restrictions — those are the basic options which I would like to emphasize in the debate on prices.

Quick but clear-cut decisions : the farmers are sick and tired of the Council of Ministers' dilly-dallying and want to know where they stand as quickly as possible. This means that decisions must be reached before 1 April, but also that these decisions must be clear and unambiguous. This is particularly true of the measures which will result from the quotas imposed in the dairy sector. If these decisions are insufficiently precise and clear, I can foresee a genuine civil war, with one farmer being set against another and the dairies locked in competition with quotas as arguments.

A cautious price policy, which is natural in view of the structural surpluses in certain sectors, but offering more than a purely budgetary approach. Listening to some of the speakers here I occasionally get the impression that the only economic data they know are budget figures. There is economic and social reality to be considered : a purely budgetary approach means bankruptcy for thousands of farmers in Europe who do not have unemployment benefit to fall back on. Anybody who wishes to have a hand in that must also take account of the fact that maintaining a dairy farm costs the Community ten times less than creating a job in industry. Mr Thorn pointed out yesterday what the original purpose of the 1 % VAT was — mainly the funding of the transition from a national to a European agricultural policy. Since that time other policies have been funded more liberally, which I welcome as long as this does not jeopardize the main original aim. New policies require us to find new funds, not give up the only policy in existence. With this I would like to draw attention to the cumulative effect of certain measures : if we adopt the proposals of the Commission in the dairy sector, with a production limit, price freeze and co-responsibility levy the resultant package has an enormous impact on farm incomes, particularly in areas where there is no alternative occupation.

Moreover, the effects on other sectors have to be taken into account : a production limit in the dairy sector can produce a shift towards the livestock sectors. Here, too, production levels are getting near saturation point : draining the milk lake might well leave us with a mountain of pork.

Finally, I would like to make a special plea for a European approach : we are haunted increasingly by the spectre of a return to national policies with all the restrictions on trade which these involve. Let us keep open the internal markets and borders in the field of agriculture, too, and make a joint effort to find European solutions which will bring us all more progress and prosperity.

Mr Paisley, (NI) in writing. — I am opposed to the proposals to freeze the price for milk and to reduce that for beef. Coupled with the proposals to introduce a super-levy on milk production based on 1981 levels of output, a totally unfair burden is being put on Northern Ireland compared to other areas of the Common Market. With dairy and beef production representing over 60% of the value of the total agricultural output in Northern Ireland, the Commission's proposals will wreak havoc on the farming industry in Northern Ireland. There will be far-reaching repercussions for the Ulster economy as a whole. Ancillary industries will suffer and jobs will be lost in an area where unemployment is already running at over 21% of the working population.

The price proposals will be disastrous for Northern Ireland in view of the fact that farmers' incomes there have been running at only half what they were in the mid-seventies in real terms. Incomes again fell back in 1983 by some 15%. The effect of the proposals on farm prices for the coming year will be to take at least 25% from the net farm income of the entire province.

I oppose the plan to abolish the variable beef premium currently operating in the United Kingdom. This will cost Northern Ireland about UKL/20 million this year alone.

Paisley

The proposal for the super-levy on milk production will gravely damage the economy of the province, knocking some 25% off the total net farm income. Production has expanded more rapidly in Northern Ireland since 1981 than in almost any other region of the EEC.

I cannot therefore support the Commission's proposals on farm prices for 1984/85 nor the accompanying proposals to reform the CAP by means of a super-levy on milk production. Taken together, and including the economy measures already implemented by the Commission, the overall effect of all these proposals, if unaltered, would be to reduce by a massive 70% farmers' net income in Northern Ireland.

This is intolerable in light of the lack of possible alternatives to grassland-based production of milk and beef, and in view of the heavy dependence on agriculture of so many of the people of Northern Ireland.

Mr Papaefstratiou (PPE), in writing. — (GR) The issue of farm prices is directly linked with the very existence of the common agricultural policy, which is one of the foundation stones of the EEC, since millions of our hard-working citizens are farmers. The Group of the European People's Party and, in particular, the Greek New Democracy Party is fighting with zeal and consistency for an improvement in farmers' incomes and, in particular, of the incomes of small producers who have to work so hard for their daily bread, especially in the mountainous areas, infertile areas and other regions where problems exist.

I support the principle of the method under discussion for fixing prices in accordance with the special conditions prevailing in each Member State of the EEC, in order to ensure a fair income for the agricultural community. The Council of Ministers should decide on special support for small farmers, since the CAP has not only economic but above all social importance.

In spite of several reservations I support the report since it includes proposals for :

- a) special protection for economic relief for farmers in countries suffering from high rates of inflation ;
- b) the application of the principle of Community preference, so that Community agricultural produce can be absorbed by the EEC markets ;
- c) support for Mediterranean products ;
- d) the abolition of negative monetary compensatory amounts and a fair readjustment of the green rates.

Mr Protopapadakis (PPE), in writing. — (GR) I will vote for the 1984 farm price proposals for two reasons.

Firstly, because I appreciate the French Presidency's race to succeed in reaching an agreement on the issues involved in the agricultural policy, thus winning back the valuable time lost in the unsuccessful six months of the Pasok's Greek Presidency, and ensuring a satisfactory income for the European farmer.

Secondly, because I am satisfied at the favourable treatment accorded to Mediterranean products, which will result in satisfaction for the Greek farmer. We should not be unduly influenced by the 0.8% increase, since it is only for accounting purposes ; the increases in Greece will be much greater, provided that the matter is properly handled by the Greek Government. The policy of the New Democracy Party, which from the beginning viewed the EEC as an honest partner and not as an adversary — as Moscow's allies, the followers and friends of the Greek Communist Party, would have it — has therefore been fully justified.

By voting for this motion we are supporting not only the farmer but Europe as a whole, since a policy of ensuring self-sufficiency in food supplies enables the people to continue to farm European soil and remain in their own countries. The common agricultural

Protopapadakis

policy is, moreover, the connecting link between the peoples of free Europe. If differences sometimes appear between Member States, they are due to the attempt of each nation to hang on to this vital link as firmly as possible, and very often this attempt results in clashes between countries. However, this is a characteristic of unity and faith in the Community, and does not imply disillusion, since the forces involved are centripetal, not centrifugal, and are not directed against any country in particular.

Mr J. D. Taylor (ED), in writing. — It is a reflection upon the relevance of this Parliament that today we are debating a report and Commission farm price proposals which are out of date and have been overtaken by events at the Agricultural Council Meeting in Brussels earlier this week. The President and Bureau of this Parliament stand condemned for their inability, after five years, to so order the affairs of this Parliament that it impresses its opinion on important issues, like farm prices, before the Council reaches major decisions as has once again happened this year.

In Northern Ireland we fully support the principle that Community expenditure must *not* exceed income and therefore we accept that there must be a reform of the common agricultural policy so that vast amounts of Community funds are not directed to the production of further surpluses which consumers do *not* want.

Southern Ireland has a problem. Milk production is a vital element in the total economy of the south. The year 1981 was a particularly bad year for milk production in Ireland and it would be an unfair base upon which to structure restrictions upon milk production levels. I welcome the understanding shown by the Council Ministers with respect to the special problems of southern Irish milk producers and I call upon them to show the same understanding for Northern Ireland. The EEC must not discriminate in favour of southern Irish milk producers and against Ulster milk producers. Milk is also Ulster's largest sector in our agriculture industry. We now produce 10 % of the total UK production. There is no alternative employment for our milk producers who are grass-based. They operate in a province where there is already a 23 % unemployment rate. We implore the Community to acknowledge this special problem of Ulster as it tackles the overall issue of surplus milk production.

In Ulster we are concerned at the new proposal for the abolition of MCAs. Let us remember that positive MCAs exist because of the total failure of certain EEC national governments to tackle runaway inflation rates. The new proposals for the eventual abolition of MCAs appear to mean a further larger annual burden upon the EEC budget and there will require to be much further explanation about how this is going to be funded before I would be prepared to support it. I will not add my name to a scheme which will be yet a further EEC burden upon the taxpayers of the United Kingdom.

As the report refers to farm price proposals which are out of date and since it glibly calls for a further increase in EEC own resources without first fulfilling the necessary condition of a reform of the EEC budget, I will not find it possible to vote for this report.

Mr Thareau (S), in writing. — (FR) This Parliament, only a few minutes after adopting the report for appropriate control of oil and fat imports and then the report on the dismantling of monetary compensatory amounts, contradicts itself by voting for the report on prices for 1984/85 : it rejects the taxation of imported products ; it rejects the improvement of the intervention mechanisms for certain products ; it rejects price increases ; it rejects the exemption of dairy farmers from tax on the first 60 000 litres of milk.

This is an expression of economic liberalism, of the theory 'Let market forces rule both inside and outside our frontiers'. So, through not wanting to organize and control the markets and production, the majority in this House is penalizing all producers to maintain a growth for a minority of them, putting forward the argument, as usual, that farming incomes and employment must be maintained. Well, their conclusions can only make them diminish.

Farmers will not be duped by the hypocritical content of this report. The French Socialists will also vote against it.

Mr Vgenopoulos (S), *in writing*. — (GR) Yesterday Mr Thorn, Mr Dalsager and Mr Rocard presented the preliminary agreement reached by the Council of Ministers of Agriculture on the dairy sector and monetary compensatory amounts. Because of the importance of the issue I should like to emphasize that this agreement is not definitive, since the final decision will depend on the general agreement on the whole package of Commission proposals on prices and associated measures for the restructuring of the CAP.

What worries me most regarding this preliminary agreement is the cost of these new proposals. I have been informed that the extra expenditure for milk will be in the region of 300 to 400 million ECU and will exceed 400 million ECU for the MCAs. And this is of course only a rough estimate. In other words, it cannot be excluded that the sum may amount to even more. Several days have passed since the end of the Council meeting, and I believe that the Commission will have made its calculations; I will therefore ask Mr Pranchère to tell us officially how much will be requested for the implementation of the proposals adopted by the Ministers.

I believe that this issue has special significance for the margins left over in the EAGGF budget for the remaining products and, in particular, for those which specially interest us, i.e. Mediterranean products. It is only logical that, if such amounts are to be spent on milk, there should be supplementary measures for Mediterranean products; otherwise the balance in the treatment of northern and southern products will be disturbed, when it is already tipped against products from the southern part of the Community. This of course means that under no circumstances should the Mediterranean producers be called upon to pay for the problems caused by the surpluses produced by the north.

I attach great importance to this issue because I am very much afraid that attempts are being made to limit other goods even further so as to economize on the funds which will finance the two agreements reached by the Council of Ministers.

I have repeatedly emphasized that we Greeks are against Commission proposals which indiscriminately plan for cuts in agricultural spending. The economy measures which must be taken as part of the restructuring of the CAP must be based on certain criteria and must take account of the individual character of each sector of production. A distinction must be made between products of which there is a surplus and those of which there is a shortage and, above all, these savings must not aggravate the imbalances already existing within the Community. Sooner or later it must be made clear what we mean by surplus goods, because at the last plenary sitting several colleagues maintained that durum wheat was a surplus product, even though the Community is obliged to import a million tonnes each year. Of course these imports have been added to Community-produced wheat and this is how the apparent surplus has been created.

Unfortunately, the fact that Community preference is not observed mostly affects Mediterranean products, which are less protected by the common market organizations. Instead of putting forward additional measures to support Community products which suffer direct competition from the similar products which are imported because of preference agreements, the Commission is placing limitations on the production of Community products of which there is a shortage, such as raisins and durum wheat.

With regard to the Woltjer report, I should like to point out the almost total lack of reference to Mediterranean products. At one point only can a passing reference be found to certain products, and after that nothing. I have tabled several amendments in an attempt to give a greater Mediterranean dimension to the report.

We believe that these price increases should show more positive discrimination towards products in short supply and discourage the production of surpluses.

We also believe that these measures should be more selective and less indiscriminate so as to allow for the particular characteristics of the Member States, especially those with high rates of inflation, and of disadvantaged regions and small farms.

Our vote for the Woltjer report will depend upon whether our amendments are accepted.

SITTING OF FRIDAY, 16 MARCH 1984

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)

1. *Approval of minutes*

President. — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed. Are there any comments?

Mr von der Vring (S). — (DE) Mr President, the minutes of yesterday's sitting contain several errors which I should like to point out. On page 10 — this is perhaps a printing error — it says that Amendment No 38 fell. It was No 48 which fell. At paragraph 11 it says that Amendment No 38, by Mr Louwes, was adopted, but it was Amendment No 48, by Mr Provan.

On page 12 of the minutes recital K in the resolution on oils and fats should be deleted. It has been printed in error even though it was deleted after the adoption of the amendment by Mr Gautier.

von der Vring

Thirdly, I should like the Members who have not yet read the text we adopted yesterday to do so today. They will be amused at what we decided.

President. — The corrections will be made.¹

2. Votes²

ROGALLA REPORT (Doc. 1-1386/83 'SOLID FUELS')

Proposal for a regulation — Article 3: Amendment No 9

Mr Purvis (ED). — Mr President, this amendment involves three changes to the article: first of all, the deletion of 12 words in the first introductory part; secondly, the deletion of the third indent; and thirdly, the addition of a further indent. They are, all three, separate items, and I should like to have them put to the vote individually.

President. — So you want — if I can understand this amendment, which I do not — to split the vote into three parts? The first going up to '1988 at least'?

Mr Purvis (ED). — With the deletion of 12 words. It is really whether you want those deleted or not.

President. — But that is not possible, I think. We have to vote, I think, in the following way.

The first vote should be on the text as far as '1988 at least'.

To qualify for the aid provided for by Article 2, coal undertakings must first have obtained Commission approval for the modernization and restructuring programme for their workings, covering the period from 1984 to 1988 at least.

Is that it?

Mr Purvis (ED). — Right, but then the amendment is actually to delete the next twelve words.

President. — No, as far as I can see, that is not part of the amendment.

Mr Rogalla (S), rapporteur. — (DE) You have read it correctly, Mr President. The first addition is an amended article, and just as you read it down to *at least*. This means that a few lines are deleted from the Commission text. The addition is that there is a new and shorter version of the text.

President. — We can vote only on the whole amendment. If it is rejected, the Commission text will stand. But you cannot reject one part and keep the other.

¹ Petitions — Written declarations (Rule 49) — Documents received — Procedure without report (Rule 99): see Minutes.

² See Annex.

Mr Purvis (ED). — How do we vote for the additional indent at the end if we do not want the delegations, for example?

President. — You then vote against the amendment as a whole. There is no need for a split vote in that case.

Mr Purvis (ED). — But the addition at the end is quite different from the deletions earlier on.

President. — Let us then vote first on the text up to '1988 at least'. If you vote against, Mr Purvis, you re-establish the Commission's text.

Mr Purvis (ED). — Then I have no chance to vote on whether we want the deletion or not: I would vote in favour as far as 'at least' but I am against the deletion. If I may suggest a compromise, we vote on the whole amendment as far as the last existing indent — 'total annual investment by the undertaking' — and then we vote on the final new indent separately. Is that right?

President. — I do not know what is right! I think we should follow a very simple procedure. We want either the Commission's text or the amendment, and those who have still not found their way should propose their own amendments. There is no other way.

Mr Purvis (ED). — If this passes, then nothing more can be done.

President. — Would you care to say something about the problem, Mr Natali?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr President, the Commission is against the amendments to this regulation.

After the adoption of the first indent of Amendment No 9

Mr Rogalla (S), rapporteur. — (DE) I am sorry, Mr President, what you said at first was right. The committee had proposed a new and shorter version and that should be put to the vote, as you wanted to do at the beginning. If Mr Purvis does not agree, he can vote against it.

Mr Purvis (ED). — Mr President, I would object to that advice by the rapporteur. It is not just a matter of shortening the paragraph; it is a matter of chancing the whole sense of the paragraph and the amendment. That is why the Commission is against it.

President. — Mr Purvis, would the easiest solution not then be to vote against and try to get it rejected?

Motion for a resolution — After the vote on all the amendments.

President

We shall now vote on the motion for a resolution as a whole since oral explanations of vote are not permitted.

Mr Spencer (ED). — Point of order Mr President, I am aware of the ruling you have just given. May I ask you if it would be in order for you to reconsider it on the following grounds? Since it was decided to take this report without debate the matter has become one of extreme importance, certainly in my constituency where miners from the Yorkshire region have swarmed across into my coal fields.

President. — Mr Spencer, you were talking about procedure and not explaining your vote. Now you are explaining your vote and not speaking to procedure.

Mr Spencer (ED). — I was merely asking for you to say this is no longer a report suitable for taking without debate.

President. — Mr Spencer, in that case you should have asked on behalf of a number of Members or on behalf of your group. It would then have been sent back to committee.

Mr Spencer (ED). — Mr President, of course we could send it back to committee. We could call a quorum, but that would delay a valuable measure. I was merely asking you to exercise what I suppose is the parliamentary equivalent of clemency, and allow a few explanations of vote to be given orally.

President. — I cannot act against the Rules. One can always interpret the Rules, but in this case the Rules are very clear and very specific. There are only written explanations of vote, and I cannot allow anything else. Once I allow it in this case, I will have to allow it on every issue declared important by any Member who has a constituency.

Mr Spencer (ED). — I am sure my colleagues on the other side of the House would join me in asking you to at least put it to the vote on this occasion.

President. — No, Mr Spencer, I am very sorry but we have to vote on the resolution.

Mr Moreland (ED). — Mr President, this is something of an unusual situation. The reason this is a report without debate is quite simply we debated it at the last session and it was referred back to the committee under the new rules because of the number of amendments. Therefore it is slightly unusual under our normal procedures that we do not have explanations of vote. I understand your interpretation of the Rules, but you will realize that we are in something of a cleft stick.

HOOPER REPORT (Doc. 1-1485/83 'PREPACKAGED LIQUIDS')

Proposal for a directive — Article 1 — Amendment No 1

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) The Commission is against all the amendments, Mr President.

JOHNSON REPORT (Doc. 1-1486/83 'IVORY')

Mr Herman (PPE). — (FR) On the Johnson report, Mr President, I should like a separate vote on paragraph 11 since it is asking for something which has already been done.

Mr Johnson (ED), rapporteur. — As I mentioned at the beginning of this part-session, I should be most grateful if, before you put the resolution as a whole to the vote — if indeed you do put it to the vote — the Commission would avail itself of its right under Rule 66(5) to make a brief statement. This is important because the resolution addresses itself specifically to the Commission in several respects. Since we are taking it without debate, unless we use the opportunity to get a statement from the Commission, we run the risk of throwing away quite a lot of work by the committee and, in particular, by the rapporteur. I hope the Commission will be able to make a short statement.

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr President, when the agenda was drawn up there was in fact a request for the Commission to make a short statement. My colleague who was representing the Commission at that moment expressed his willingness.

We share the concern of the report over the negative effects which the ivory trade can have on the elephant population in Africa. I am sure that all the Members will know that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora entered into force throughout the Community on 1 January this year. In the Council regulation there is also mention of the African elephant. No import licences for ivory will be granted unless there is proof that the import will not threaten the survival of the species or the extent of the territories they occupy.

Next June the African signatories of the Convention will take part in a seminar, organized and jointly financed by the Commission, to discuss the application of the Convention in the various countries. This seminar will be followed by a meeting of the Convention's technical committee. Discussions on how better to regulate the trade in ivory will be a prominent item on the agenda of both meetings.

Natali

I have mentioned all this by way of showing that concern about the plight of the African elephant involves many sides. It would be unrealistic in our view to ignore the commercial interests of the countries of origin. Exploitation of the African elephant and other living natural resources, which considers their survival and shows proper respect for natural balance, is in fact a legitimate activity and a precious element in the economy of many African nations. The Commission will nevertheless continue its efforts both within the Washington Convention and outside in order to ensure the survival of the African elephant. We shall urge the measures needed to regulate its exploitation within the limits which can be supported by the elephant population and to put an end to the illegal trade in ivory and other products.

President. — Thank you Mr Natali, on behalf of the elephants.

EISMA REPORT (Doc. 1-1518/83 'SELF-HELP GROUPS IN HEALTH CARE')

After the rejection of the motion for a resolution

Mr Eisma (NI), rapporteur. — (NL) Mr President, the people who are now voting against this report are the ones who asked me to write it. As far as this report is concerned, neither in committee nor in the House has there been any amendment to indicate that anyone is against it. No one has ever said openly why he is against the report. From the point of view of working together, I find it a disgraceful way of going about things, Mr President.

(Applause)

SQUARCIALUPI REPORT (Doc. 1-1376/83 'WASTE')

Motion for a resolution — Paragraph 1 — Amendment No 8

Mrs Squarcialupi (COM), rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I just want to say something in general about all the amendments. As I said yesterday when I spoke, I am in favour of Amendments Nos 1 to 7 which were tabled by the Committee on Transport. Some of them were not discussed in committee but they nevertheless accord with the thinking of our resolution.

There is just one thing I want to ask, and on this point I have the agreement of the draftsman of an opinion for the Committee on Transport. If that committee's amendments are going to be adopted, we should like them to be taken as additions to paragraph 6 and introduced by the words *in the meantime*. The requests by the Committee on Transport will then follow these words. If Parliament adopts these amendments, they will become subparagraphs and not separate paragraphs and will be lettered (a), (b), (c) and so on.

3. Topical and urgent debate*Free movement in the Community*

President. — The next item is the joint debate on seven motions for resolutions on free movement in the Community:

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1516/83), tabled by Mr Seefeld and others on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on freedom of movement for traffic in the Community;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1548/83), tabled by Mr Nord and others on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, on barriers to the free movement of persons, goods and services;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1559/83), tabled by Mr Provan on behalf of the European Democratic Group, on road transport within the Community;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1560/83), tabled by Mr Nyborg on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the abolition of obstacles to freedom of movement within the Community;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1565/83), tabled by Mr Habsburg and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), on road traffic in Europe;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1566/83), tabled by Mr von Wogau and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), on obstacles at Community frontiers;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1580/83) by Mr Nyborg and others on road tolls in Europe.

Mr Seefeld (S), Chairman of the Committee on Transport. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the difficult situation which we experienced a few weeks ago, for days at an end, at the internal frontiers of the Community has once again clearly and unequivocally brought to our attention the fact that significant portions of the Treaty, which our Community is founded on have still not been fulfilled. For us members of the European Parliament it is impossible to understand why our governments have continued to avoid taking the decision to make significant improvements to the procedure for crossing Member State borders, for both people and goods. I shall repeat what I have already said once before, quite recently in my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on Transport and on behalf of my political group: the frontier blockades by lorry drivers and operators were justified. Their aim was to draw public attention to the continuous inconveniences,

Seefeld

harassment and stress to which they have been subjected for years at the internal frontiers of our Community. Their action was a resounding box on the ear for our governments, for their ignorance and for their inaction during the last 20 years!

(Applause)

Dismantling these frontiers is an obligation which devolves on our governments from the Treaty.

(Applause)

Anything that is done, or may be done, to improve customs clearance at Community frontiers may be helpful, but it is only tinkering with the problem, because the ultimate goal is and remains the elimination of all internal frontiers within the European Community. The goal, therefore, of all of us, as I trust, is and remains not the simplification but the abolition of all frontier checks.

We cannot blame the customs men for the present situation. They are doing their jobs in accordance with valid laws, guidelines and regulations. The guilty parties — this is something which I want to say loud and clear once again — are the ten Member State governments, who unfortunately follow up their pro-European Sunday speeches with not many European deeds. European particularism: that, unfortunately, is the truth of the everyday political situation. Blockades and strikes have not come down on our heads like some phenomenon of nature. It was all foreseeable, because our ministers and our governments have been idle, in their various ways. At this point let me remind you that we, as Members of the European Parliament, have already accused the Council of Transport Ministers of inactivity in the field of transport. This dragging their feet by Member States is the reason for the actions that have been undertaken by lorry drivers and operators. The motion for a resolution which is before the House today attempts once again to draw attention to some of the urgent and necessary regulations, and we are calling for action at last.

I should like, first of all, to say how pleased I am that we have clearly succeeded in combining the many proposals which were put forward into a single motion for a resolution. I should welcome it very much, and shall also justify the support of my political group for the same reason, if we could manage to approve this joint motion for a resolution. We regret that it has not been possible to convene a meeting of the Council of Ministers, but we are glad that a special part-session will take place on 22 March, as Mr Fiterman, the President-in-Office of the Council, announced at the beginning of this week. In the meantime, we are waiting not simply for a meeting to be held but also for a decision to be taken!

(Applause)

For this reason we have called upon the Commission to submit a plan without delay so that by 1 January 1989 all checks on movements of persons and goods

at the internal frontiers of the Community may be abolished.

(Applause)

Perhaps the period of time seems too long to you, but given that nothing has been done for years on end, a certain time is needed to get things started.

I ask you to approve this motion for a resolution and hope that all of you in your political groupings, in your parties, can exert influence on your national governments so that in the end we may achieve some progress. I shall also add, for the benefit of the Committee on Transport, that we have invited all the national chairmen of transport committees to attend the meeting of 3 May in the hope that they will support us and will be able similarly to exert pressure on the national governments. That is the task of the moment!

(Applause)

Mr Louwes (L). — *(NL)* Mr President, Mr Nord had to return to the Netherlands for a political meeting; I shall try to speak for him.

My group has three reasons for tabling this urgent motion. Firstly to express our sympathy with the stranded drivers who have spent a number of days under grim conditions and in great uncertainty; an uncertainty shared by their families. They have all suffered due to our governments' lack of determination to bring about genuine free movement in the Community.

Secondly, Mr President, to express our sympathy with and concern for the companies whose turnover or consignments or both have suffered. Some of these are reported to be in difficulties as a result, and I would like to ask the Commission how this damage can be made good. Our motion demands that, in essence, the Ten Member States be considered responsible, as they have failed to establish freedom of trade and movement. We certainly don't feel that it would be fair to make one Member State responsible, but where can redress be sought from the Ten? This is what I would like to ask the Commission. Where the political responsibility lies is of course, only too familiar.

Thirdly, we would like to express our disappointment at the refusal of the President-in-Office to call a meeting of the Council of Ministers for Transport immediately at the time of the blockade, as was requested by the Dutch Government to our great regret, the President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers missed an opportunity here.

In the meantime the motions tabled have increased in scope with aspects which are, in part, less urgent. My group will support the compromise motion wholeheartedly, just as Mr Seefeld has requested, in particular with regard to direct contact between the national parliaments, which we are greatly in favour of.

Mr Hutton (ED). — Mr President again I apologize to the House on behalf of Mr Provan whose resolution this was. He was taken ill yesterday. I think he is a bit better today and would wish me to apologize to you for his not being here himself.

That great lorry blockade in France did more in a week than all of us — Parliament, the Commission, Council and governments — have done in years to focus attention on the absurdity of these frontier delays. It is one of the greatest irritants to ordinary people right across the Community. Any Member, few of us as there are in this House, will testify from letters and from public meetings that the drivers who caused that chaos were reflecting that general unhappiness which surely must spur on our governments to get on with dismantling these border controls and make sure that our goods move more freely. It was not the fault of the drivers or their firms that they were delayed so long, and I think that, as a gesture of good will towards doing something about this problem, Member governments should compensate those firms and drivers who lost money as a consequence of that blockade. It was really a blockade caused by governments and not so much by drivers themselves.

In the UK people talk about, the EEC as the common market. What common market? It is a joke, Mr President. The biggest single task we face now is creating that common market. It is something that ordinary people can understand. In this election year our commitment to creating this must be absolute.

Tomorrow, in Edinburgh, Scotland will meet France on the rugby field, and the noise you will hear from that ground, from all the people shouting, will be heard across in Paris. I bet, if all of us combined together to shout our need for the creation of this common market and the dismantling of border controls. I bet we would have some effect — more effect than if one Member were to shout alone. Let us all be shouting together as we will at Edinburgh tomorrow.

Mr Nyborg (DEP). — (DA) Mr President, as you know, a few weeks ago several important roads between Community countries were blocked by discontented citizens. Their indignation was very understandable. An understandable impatience with the EEC, with the common internal market, which in certain areas has almost ground to a halt — namely as regards the implementation of the European domestic market, for which the relaxation of border checks is obviously essential. A number of colleagues here in Parliament have, like myself and others, drafted a motions for a resolution to show that we want action. It appears perhaps peculiar that I cannot support all of the compromise proposal agreed upon by a number of Parliament's honourable transport experts. However, I did not really like the form and content of

the proposal. In my opinion it is too ambitious to anticipate the debate on the internal market, to be held in Parliament next month. But if Mr von Wogau's proposal is adopted today, then perhaps there is no need for the debate next month.

Let me say briefly that I have difficulty in accepting paragraphs 5 and 6 in particular, because this would place far too great a burden on the national finances — at least in my country. As regards the form of the compromise proposal, let us not fall into the trap camouflaged with nice declarations of intent. What we need is action, as Mr Seefeld said just a moment ago. I understand that the Committee on Transport wants to hold a debate on the tolls in Switzerland next week. This is a marvellous idea, but it is doubtful whether it is really relevant. We know from the vote the other day on the Baudis report that a majority in Parliament are in favour of completely abolishing tolls. We should build further on this, but the EEC countries themselves are not so good when it comes to discriminating against transport from other countries. Even in my own country foreign buses are required to pay a passenger kilometre tax. It is not called a toll it is called VAT, but the idea behind it is the same. In West Germany it is the tax on diesel engines or fuel taxes which are the daily sources of irritation. I perhaps forgot to say that, in my view, I do not need to be so terribly shocked about Switzerland, since relatively few of our hauliers drive through Switzerland, since they already have a very low load limit. But it is the principle we are aiming at. There are many different methods of payment. This applies to France, it applies to Italy. I know that they cannot be abolished as easily as all that. On the other hand, I have also been told that a scheme is being drawn up in France whereby tolls could be abolished in France over a 12 to 15 year period, and that would be a very good thing.

The point is that, whatever we do, we should do it jointly. Stop all these bilateral agreements entered into behind the back of the rest of the Community countries. What is the point, for example, of West Germany entering into an agreement with Norway, when Denmark cannot reach a similar agreement? Let us try to work and function as a Community.

Mr Habsburg (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, the critical area of this strike was located in my constituency, that is to say, between Kiefersfelden and the Brenner Pass. Right at the beginning of this campaign I had the occasion to go there. I can only assure you that the experience made a very deep impression on me: firstly, because of the social injustice towards the lorry drivers, who not only at times of strikes, but also on all other occasions, have to put up with 15, 16 or 20 hours' wait at these borders; but, secondly, I also had the comforting feeling that we had already achieved a united Europe on that road. There were Dutchmen,

Habsburg

Englishmen, Germans, Belgians and Italians, all protesting jointly at the injustice which was being done to them. This happy feeling is also perceptible here in this Parliament, because, thank goodness, we have a joint European interest, which all political groups support unanimously, and indeed with emotion, as has already been said by Mr Seefeld.

What is really at stake here, at least in the area which I now think I have some knowledge of? First, it is a question of the unfortunate fact that it has still not been possible to implement in all Member States of the Community Directive No 222/77 on the termination of the registration of goods — a fact which is at variance with the spirit of the Treaties of Rome. Secondly, it is a question of the unfortunate techniques adopted by some governments, which are faced with strikes by their customs officers and who then, however, fail to do what is their duty and obligation according to the Treaties of Rome, namely to open their borders and allow the free transit of traffic, instead of which they seal their borders off.

These borders today are of quite decisive importance. Let us not forget that it was precisely our Community which made North-South trade of such great importance today. For the Federal Republic of Germany alone, Italy is today its third biggest trading partner. For us Italy is a more important trading partner than the United States of America.

The railways are not adequate for this task, since they are unfortunately hopelessly antiquated. Eventually we shall have to eliminate hindrances to road transport. It is not only an economic imperative but also a social imperative! One or two of the mass media wrote at the time of the strike that customs officers and lorry drivers had held the public to ransom. That is a scandal because today it is none other than the Member State governments which are holding the public to ransom? If the governments had done their duty there would never have been a strike, there would never have been these difficulties.

We, as members of this House, must say quite clearly and unequivocally that the governments are guilty, because it is they who are standing in the way of progress. So we must voice the will of the people and, if it must be so, we must appeal over the heads of Member State governments in order to implement what is merely self-evident.

(Applause)

Mr von Wogau (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the demonstration by lorry drivers at the external and internal borders of the European Community has drawn attention to a scandal to which we, as Members of this House, have been untiringly drawing attention for many years now. I could have wished that our initiatives had attracted as much attention from Member State governments as the strike by

lorry drivers and transport operators. On this occasion I should also like to say that these men, who have demonstrated on the frontiers, deserve our solidarity and our support.

The scandal consists in the fact that more than a quarter of a century after the signing of the Treaty of Rome, which set up a Customs Union, customs officers and customs houses continue to exist at the internal frontiers of the European Community because the legislation of Member States prescribes it, and at the external frontiers of the Community procedures are implemented which were suited to the feeble trade flows of past decades but which are no longer suited to the enormously increased flows of trade between the countries of Europe in this decade.

The scandal also consists in the fact that existing European regulations to facilitate the flow of traffic at the borders are not being implemented, and that the recommendations of Parliament and the Commission, which have been before the Council for many years, are being dealt with at a snail's pace.

We, as the European Parliament, insist that the Council should finally approve these proposals, the treatment of which it has prolonged for so long, and should turn them into reality. As a first step, one or two things could be implemented immediately, such as the transfer of the collection of VAT from border posts to the interior of the country, a reform which was called for by us. VAT is a simple turnover tax, it is not a duty but a tax, and consequently it is only logical that it should not be collected by customs officials but by the internal tax authorities. If this were to happen, it would constitute a significant lightening of the burden at the internal frontiers of the European Community.

We demand that a uniform document to replace export, transit and import documents should be introduced as soon as possible. We call for the raising of duty-free allowances for ordinary citizens, so that more goods which have been purchased in neighbouring countries can be brought over the national frontiers without the need to pay the simple turnover tax. Finally, we demand that the principle of spot checks at all borders in the European Community should be introduced and that the major border crossing points should remain open around the clock, as ought to be self-evident.

All these practical proposals which we have submitted will bring with them a perceptible simplification at Community borders, but they will not really bring us any closer to our actual goal of abolishing all checks at the internal frontiers of the European Community. We therefore call upon the Commission to submit to us proposals and a plan for the abolition by 1 January 1989 of all checks on persons and goods at the internal frontiers of the European Community.

Mr Rogalla (S). — (*DE*) Mr President, I should like to go into the legal side of things somewhat further, because it is liable to so many misunderstandings. Legal experts are generally inclined to reservations and doubts which I should like to clear up for them from the point of view of Community law.

I should like to begin by quoting from a large circulation German Sunday newspaper which sells millions of copies: 'It is just as if the national governments had aimed to sabotage the economic and customs unions. The governments are ignoring the will of their peoples!' I should like to add that the governments and their collaborators are disregarding the EC Treaties, in particular they are infringing Articles 2, 3 and 9 of the existing Community law which, as is well known, has been in existence since 1958. Under these privileged and superordinate legal provisions, which are also the basis for petitions by individuals, no illegal coercion may take place. Coercion would mean inducing somebody to indulge in unjustified behaviour or acts of omission by means of force or threat, and that is precisely what did not happen in this case. What happened here was that an attempt was made at a necessary rebellion against bureaucracy, and there is also nothing at all objectionable in the means adopted, which is a necessary condition if the illegality of coercion is to be proved.

Naturally, it is not pleasant for anybody, and least of all for private motorists who have been affected by these traffic jams of irate lorry drivers, but the matter should be considered in the light of the legal situation of a customs union with free movement of goods and persons, which has been denied us for 25 years, and the inability of all governments to give the necessary instructions.

With regard to the counter-measures and the protest actions, the question is quite simply one of deciding on the suitability of the means which were adopted during these events at the Brenner, which Mr Habsburg has already referred to. He and I were, moreover, the only Members of the European Parliament who spoke to the persons concerned, on the spot. We were able to obtain some idea of how people who have been annoyed for years by rubber stamps and forms feel.

Quoting from the same Sunday newspaper, I should, finally, once more like to quote the judgment of the broad mass of the people, of the European citizen, to which we should actually pay more attention than we do:

If the EC is to become the economic union which the Treaty of Rome prescribed decades ago, frontiers and customs officers must be proscribed as henchmen of the incompetent policy of their

governments. The idle talk which Messrs Craxi and Kohl indulged in in Bonn is really intolerable, as if it were not the affair of the heads of government to speed up customs clearance and to call the customs officers to order.

That was also a quotation from the voice of the people, and I hope that we are all in agreement.

Mr Moreland (ED). — Mr President, history will probably record that the lorry drivers have done more to develop the internal market than politicians have done over the last 30 years! I suppose I could suggest facetiously that this year's Charlemagne Prize should be given, if possible, to a lorry driver.

I would remind the House that next week we have a special Council meeting which, I hope, will reach agreement on a number of issues which will meet many of the needs of the lorry drivers. What we want to see is an end to the checks and levies on fuel levels at certain borders. We want the single customs document. We want the Commission to be asked to come forward with further proposals on facilitation. We want all countries to agree to introduce the Council directive of last December as soon as possible. We want to see agreement on the phasing out of quotas, as the Commission proposed last year. We want the French Government to agree to abolish the paper called the carnet de passage which, I think, many consider illegal under Community rules. We want the Belgian and the Danish Governments to end their charges on coaches going into their countries. There are a whole load of things that need to be done.

Now I know that it is beginning to be rumoured that the Transport Council next week is going to be no more than a show — just to show a bit of concern — and not much action. Well, on all those items I would like to see agreement. I do not want to see those usual phrases about how the Council has had a useful discussion or that we have had a useful discussion and we have passed it to the permanent representatives. I think Mr Seefeld knows all the phrases that come out of the Transport Council meetings and which mean absolutely nothing. It has to be a Council that means something, because it has become now a matter of urgency.

I also must say that we are deeply concerned about the development of tolls in other Member States. How can I, as a Member from the United Kingdom, say to my electorate that we should allow lorries in without tolls on our roads and indeed with fewer restrictions on entry than quite a number of other Member States? We will inevitably come under pressure to introduce an entry charge, unless something is done in the other Member States.

Moreland

We all know that the Italian/French border has been a disgrace for a number of years; but the border problem exists across the whole Community. It is really about time, as my colleague Mr Hutton said, that we developed the common market as a common market and get rid of a lot of these controls which, I suspect, are there for no better reason than simply to keep customs officers in employment. I hope this House will support the so-called 'compromise amendment.'

Mr Marshall (ED). — Mr President, I should like, first of all, to commend the attempts by the French Minister for Transport to build bridges both between this House and the Council and between our Committee on Transport and the Council. What I cannot commend is the gross misuse of industrial power that we saw in France and indeed the failure of the Transport Council to take decisions over a very long period of time. What we saw in France was a blatant misuse of industrial muscle with people willing to indulge in industrial action, oblivious of the hardship and inconvenience they were causing to others, oblivious of the losses they were causing to firms. That is why there must be substantial compensation for those who were affected by the dispute within France. The real tragedy, however, of the actions of the French lorry drivers was that they added to xenophobic feeling in a number of Member States of the Community.

However, out of evil can come forth good. There are, I believe, a number of areas where the French lorry drivers demonstrated yet again the need for action. They have emphasized the need for a less restrictionist transport regime. We have known for a long time that customs posts all too often are the source of delays and sometimes, let it be said, the source of corruption. Quotas restrict the development of transport operators, documentation is not simple and the result is delays which cost thousands of millions of pounds which, by adding to the costs of Community industry, make us less competitive and restrict job opportunities within Europe. The reason why customs posts still exist is a lack of political will on the part of our leaders. The French lorry drivers' dispute taught us one thing and that is the need to improve the situation.

But the tragedy is this: that this Community has adopted *mañana* as a way of life long before Spain has joined us. Let us hope in the weeks, months and years before Spain does join us that *mañana* is excised from the vocabulary of the Council of Ministers.

Mr Buttafuoco (NI). — (IT) Mr President, on behalf of the Members of the Destra Nazionale, I express our full solidarity with the lorry drivers, who in the last few days have been forced to make enormous sacri-

fices. Without doubt the work they do is one of the most stressful and wearying, and so it is extremely unfair to subject them to even more hassle at the frontiers for an indefinite period of time.

This indicates a complete lack of consideration and respect for workers who do a job which is fundamental for the construction of Europe. We regret that the customs officials are obliged to behave in this way by their governments, simply because of a failure to recognize their inalienable rights. The responsibility of the governments is enormous, their actions are anti-European and if one considers the absurdity of still tolerating such barriers. I am referring, above all, to what happened at the Brenner Pass, especially as only a few days earlier the Prime Minister, Mr Craxi, had met with the Austrian Government, and the whole agenda consisted of important topics concerning transport, with particular emphasis on the Brenner Pass.

Therefore, in this debate in the European Parliament, which is revealing yet again its European feeling and vocation, we can only express our full support.

For this reason I agree with everything that has been said to this effect and I thank the President for calling me.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, there are only a few topics in the Community today and in the impending election campaign for the second direct elections for the European Parliament whose urgency is more obvious than that of freedom of movement for goods, services and, above all, persons across the internal frontiers of the Community, which has still not yet been achieved.

The motions for resolutions which we have before us today are, for this reason, not only welcome, they are a necessary and, in their unity, exemplary contribution by the European Parliament to the political mobilization of all persons who are invested with political responsibility for the elimination of these frontiers. The broad measure of support which the text of this resolution, which was tabled on behalf of the Committee on Transport, has met with shows once again how much the elimination of internal frontiers has become a basic goal of European integration which is shared by all political groups. If I speak of elimination, that means that for the Commission, which is in full agreement with Mr Seefeld, any alleviation of the situation can only be an intermediate stage leading to the definitive elimination of all internal frontiers. Internal frontiers have increasingly taken on the character of annoyance, anachronism, unreasonableness, nuisance and even a curb on prosperity. May the coming election campaign give rise to a broader and more far-reaching justification by the citizens of Europe for the dismantling of these fences.

(Applause)

Narjes

The Members of this House, who are accustomed to till the field of internal market policy with tireless energy, tenacity and perseverance, may observe today that thanks to the events of recent weeks — the initiative taken by lorry drivers — the battle fronts have once again begun to move. These events should have encouraged, particularly in national ministries and national bureaucracies, the awareness that, without any more ado concrete decisions must be taken. Subsequent to the Commission's intervention of 23 February, the Italian Government has now declared that it is prepared — and it has also taken concrete measures — to ensure that the customs clearance of goods even in the event of industrial action will be carried out during office hours, and similarly provisions will be adopted so that the entry and exit of goods vehicles according to the transit procedures remains possible round the clock at the main frontier crossing points. Other measures have been prepared. The Italian Government has been informed that the Commission takes the view that certain excessive checks are infringements of the rules governing the Community's goods transport procedure.

May I draw Mr Habsburg's attention to the fact that the 1977 Directive remains valid Community law — except that in one Member State there are practices which are contrary to the Treaty and we are taking measures to counter these practices under the above-mentioned Treaty rules. In so doing, the Commission assumes that at frontier crossing points where practically every minute a lorry must be given customs clearance to travel south and another one to travel north, any saving of time — even of minutes — can of itself lead to an improvement of the total flow of traffic.

The Commission took the opportunity offered by the meeting of the Council of Ministers on the internal market last week in order to state to the representatives of the national ministries in a clear and open general discussion that the working methods adopted hitherto by the Councils of Ministers are not adequate to deal appropriately with the 'frontier' hindrance to European integration, and for this reason the Commission called for a qualitative leap forward in the decision process. All in all, a positive response to this request was observed.

I hope that this impression will prevail at the meeting of the Council of Transport Ministers on 22 March, which was emphatically called for by this Parliament. It has emerged, in particular, at Council meetings on the internal market that the existing further basic directive on improved internal traffic, along with the transit procedure, namely the directive of 1 December of last year on the simplification of checks and formalities, can be dealt with in greater detail and may also be implemented by accelerated procedure.

France has already formally renounced its right to express reservations to that effect. In addition, the Commission hopes that Italy, Greece and Luxem-

bourg, which have similarly laid claim or which have said they are going to lay claim to exceptions, will also completely or partially renounce their claims. In addition, the Commission has urged the governments to introduce these regulations completely or partially during the present year, that is to say to bring forward the implementation of the regulations and not to wait until the end of the official introduction on 31 December 1984. The Commission has further announced additional proposals in order to improve the content of this directive and to broaden its scope. The Commission will also submit proposals regarding petrol tank contents. As you know, our last suggestion was 200 litres. In the foreseeable future we shall make a further proposal which will take account of the contents of a full fuel tank, and we shall then consider the limit as consisting in the fact that people may not install additional tanks or special large tanks, so that we can arrive at a practical arrangement in normal cases.

As far as the details of the negotiations with Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia are concerned, I should prefer to draw your attention to the direct discussion between the Committee on transport and the Commission and not go into this matter further here. People have also asked what the situation is as regards compensation for damage. In the first instance it is the Member States that are mainly competent in and responsible for this.

The question was then asked whether and to what extent these measures could discriminate against railways as compared with roads, if I may address myself in this abbreviated form to Mr Nyborg. May I repeat that our transport policy is based on the assumption that all branches of the transport industry and all transport companies are to be treated equally.

In addition may I draw your attention to the fact that the directive on the simplification of border controls, of which I have just spoken, is applicable without restriction to all five types of transport — railways, roads, inland waterways and sea and air transport.

A further question has been asked regarding the social aspects of the matter. May I draw Mr Habsburg's attention to the fact that the Commission has submitted proposals the purpose of which is a more flexible supervision of the regulations designed to protect persons working in the road transport business from excessive physical and mental stress. This is also part of the backlog of decisions to be dealt with by the Council of Transport Ministers.

We also hope that the Council of Transport Ministers on 22 March and the Council meeting which was originally planned for 10 May will approach its tasks with a new attitude and will contribute to concentrating its attentions on progress by means of concrete decisions in favour of integration and will not simply regard itself as the echo of differing advice from experts.

Narjes

Over and above that, we know that part of the difficulties at the Community's internal frontiers may also be attributed to the fact that the other Councils of Ministers have not done their homework. We are thinking, for example, of the fact that in the field of agricultural policy there decisions are still outstanding on more than 32 directives which affect veterinary and phytological border checks and which might even end them. To this extent also the meetings of the Council of Ministers are called upon to do more than they have done so far and to contribute to the success of European integration.

There remains, by way of conclusion, the call for a plan for the elimination of frontiers by 1989. Here we have a small methodological distinction. The Commission's aim so far has been to ensure that we arrive as rapidly as possible at decisions without making assumptions as to the final form of the implementation of the decision, because a date like 1989 could result in difficulties in areas such as, for example, the computerization of the entire process of customs clearance. We take the view that it is more expedient first of all to aim at taking all the necessary decisions at the latest by 31 December 1985, that is to say before Spanish accession to the Community, so that we can then proceed with enlargement on the basis of a consolidated Community and a consolidated internal market. But we are of course ready to consult with you in committee on the expediency of any particular solution.

(Applause)

Mr Marshall (ED). — Mr President, a number of us did raise the question of compensation to those lorry drivers affected by the troubles in France. The Commissioner, perhaps in a Freudian lapse, seems to have avoided talking about it.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* Forgive me, but I did raise this point and said that in the first instance this was the responsibility of Member States and not of the Community.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

*Vote*¹

Fishery

President. — The next item is the joint debate on five motions for resolutions on fisheries :

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1549/83) by Mr Battersby and others on restoring the European Parliament's right to be consulted on the implementation of the common fisheries policy ;

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1558/83) by Mrs Péry and others on the serious fishing incident between Spain and the European Community which occurred on 7 March 1984 ;

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1575/83), tabled by Mr Lalor on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on submarine-related incidents in the fishing industry ;

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1576/83), tabled by Mrs Ewing on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on Spanish accession and fishing ;

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1582/83), tabled by Mr Ryan and others on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), on submarine hazards to fishermen and their boats.

Mr Battersby (ED). — Mr President, as you know, after years of joint effort by Council, Commission and Parliament the common fisheries policy was launched on 25 January 1983 by the adoption of a regulation establishing a Community system for the conservation and management of fisheries resources. This regulation spelt out the implementing measures of the system which included conservation measures, the setting of standards as regards fishing gear, the setting of minimum fish size or weight per species and the restriction of fishing activities by limits on catches. It also included the annual setting of the total available catches, the distribution of the tax between Member States, other additional restrictions and specific monitoring measures of a general nature. In effect, therefore, all these important measures were regarded as implementing measures and therefore, as such, do not require the consultation of Parliament. Specific cases where Parliament must be consulted were mentioned, but in practice these consultations will not take place before 1991. We are therefore in a situation where a new Community policy has been launched and agreed with full consultation of Parliament prior to agreement and where from now on Parliament will not be consulted on how it is to operate, what effects it will have on different parts of the Community, what effects it will have on fish stocks or how its effects will determine fishing methods with all the economic and social implications that this has.

Of course this is a ridiculous situation and as chairman of the working group on fisheries I raised the matter in a letter to the President of the Parliament dated 25 March 1983. The President referred the matter to the President-in-Office of the Council by letter of 14 April 1983 and also wrote to the President of the Commission. The reply from the President-in-Office of the Council stated in effect that it was up to the Council to use its discretion on whether to consult Parliament on the implementing measures. The Presi-

¹ See Annex.

Battersby

dent of the Commission said that the Commission would be happy to keep the appropriate committees of Parliament continuously informed of Commission proposals on fisheries resources but — and this is the point, Mr President — no more than that. These answers were not — and are not — satisfactory. In fact, they imply that they are, in a way, superior to and independent of Parliament. The Parliament must be consulted on important matters and not just informed when it suits the Council or the Commission.

There are three basic reasons for this. Firstly, to safeguard the role of Parliament in interinstitutional matters. The Parliament must be involved in a wider and more concrete role in the elaboration and implementation of the common fisheries policy. Decisions on subjects such as those mentioned in the regulation setting up the common fisheries policy are decisions which will have major effects on certain sectors of the Community. It is quite wrong that such decisions should be made by the Commission and Council acting together without consulting the Parliament.

Secondly, this directly-elected Parliament, elected by over 100 million people, exists because we believe in democracy. I consider that part of the democratic process is in this case being evaded.

Thirdly, there are practical benefits which could flow from the advice which Parliament can give or the control and surveillance which it could exercise. We categorically reject the suggestion, which was made by the Commission, that consultation could lead to delays and that this is a valid reason for avoiding consultation. We are stressing in the motion the need for consultation for these reasons and we have made proposals in the working group as to how this consultation should be set up. I would hope that legal action to protect the rights of Parliament could be avoided but this possibility should not be excluded. It may in the end be up to the lawyers to decide the measures which constitute the implementing measures. It seems to me that measures which affect certain sections of the Community in a certain way and have important and long-lasting financial implications should be measures on which Parliament must be consulted.

Council and Commission know from the degree of cooperation and coordination we achieved in the three and a half years run-up to the agreement on the common fisheries policy that only good for the Community can come from closer consultation and involvement in depth of the Parliament.

Finally, with regard to Spain. In fisheries all fishermen are brothers, Spanish or Community fishermen. They all face the same perils and economic difficulties. We, in this Parliament, welcome wholeheartedly the entry of Spain into our Community. However, we must insist that the entry of Spain from the fisheries point of view be as friends and partners and that infringe-

ments of the law be avoided during the negotiating period.

Mrs Pery (S). — *(FR)* Mr President, just a few minutes to explain briefly the circumstances and consequences of the serious fishing incident of 7 March 1984 involving Spain and the Community.

I shall begin my speech by saying how much I regret that nine Spanish fishermen were injured, and I hope that the relevant authorities will do everything to ensure that such events cannot recur.

My colleagues, who are present here, believe that an incident like this can only result from a difficult situation which has lasted for many years — the two Spanish fishing vessels sought to break the law repeatedly, since one has committed ten offences and the other twelve in the last three months alone — and that this sort of behaviour has persisted for many years.

France has the difficult task of enforcing Community law with regard to illegal practices which endanger both the balance of fish stocks and the very principle of a European Fisheries Policy. The law applies to everyone, and its rules do too. The European Parliament must reaffirm this, otherwise we will lose the trust of our fishermen, whom I shall continue to defend.

The decision to use force is always very serious, and maybe the EEC will have to decide to acquire Community patrol boats which are better equipped for the tasks they have to carry out, like the ones I saw in Ireland, which are partly financed by the Community.

This serious incident has made everyone aware of the importance of the fisheries issue for the enlargement of the EEC. Personally, in view of the present very tense situation at the Franco-Spanish border, I wish to speak firmly but at the same time helping to defuse the situation, as the French court did yesterday. Both governments hope to calm public opinion in their own countries, so that the French Presidency of the Council may carry on with the negotiations in progress. It is in this spirit that I have decided to withdraw my motion so as to allow a unanimous vote on Mrs Ewing's motion, which refers to my report which was adopted by this Parliament in December. I confirm the need to help the Spanish fishing regions which are having difficulties, but I also confirm the need for these fishermen to respect Community agreements. At present, acts of violence are increasing at the Spanish border. Several dozen lorries have been set on fire and their cargoes destroyed. EEC fish exports to Spain have had to be stopped because of this violence.

We have just had a debate on the free movement of goods and persons in the Community. I am now appealing for everyone to adhere to this rule. By

Pery

adopting Mrs Ewing's motion for a resolution, the European Parliament will make everyone face their responsibilities and can help to restore confidence to the relations between Spain and the European Community.

(Applause from the left)

Mr Lalor (DEP). — Mr President, in presenting my resolution I may go down in the annals of history as the first Irishman to call for a zero quota for Ireland in a fishery debate. I genuinely seek a zero quota of submarines in Irish fishing waters. Mrs Pery has just been speaking about one aspect of incursion into our EEC fishing waters. I want to deal with another, as I see it, far more serious and, in fact, dangerous invasion — and I use the word deliberately — of the rights and lives of our fishermen. I want this Parliament to initiate a move demanding that a properly applied and supervised code of conduct be drafted to establish limitations on the passage of submarines through EEC fishing grounds. I think this should be done and I shall be amazed if any Members oppose my motion to achieve this object.

In Irish fishing grounds over the last two years, fishermen, have been subjected to many frightening experiences. On 18 April 1982, almost two years ago, the Irish fishing vessel 'Sheralga' was sunk by a British submarine. The fact that none of the five fishermen on board were drowned was due to the close proximity of other trawlers and not to any effort by the submarine crew, who had dragged the helpless trawler at a speed of ten knots for some miles. By the way, no compensation has yet been paid.

However, UK submarines are not the only offenders. Some ten days ago, a US nuclear submarine surfaced in the middle of a fleet of Irish and French boats off our south-east coast. On Thursday of last week, as stated in the preamble to my motion, the Irish fishing vessel 'Oriel' was pulled backwards for three miles, by what, I believe, was a submarine. It is known and recognized that many submarines operate in this area and that other than Irish fishing fleets have also been affected.

For many years now, the Irish fishermen have had gear ripped or lost and have been blaming it on bad luck or on monsters like the Loch Ness monster, but over the past two years they have realized who the real culprits are. Can submarines not be compelled to surface or to stay on top in fishing areas?

Mr President, I feel that we, in this Parliament, have a grave responsibility to take all possible steps to rid ourselves and our waters of these menaces.

Mrs Ewing (DEP). — Mr President, may I first thank Mrs Pery for her pledged support to my resolution and say that no one in this House has done more than Mrs Pery to put the case for the Spanish fishermen. I hope that any of the Spaniards who are listening to

this debate, or who follow it, will just remember that Mrs Pery has been their advocate on the occasions when I have been permitted to attend the fisheries committee, of which, unfortunately, I am not able to be a member.

I now turn to my own resolution, which has now, I understand, the support of Mrs Pery's group and also of Mr Battersby, although he did not actually say so in his speech.

I would like to make a number of points. The first is this. No one, I think, has expressed a greater love of Spain than I have done since 1975. I have totally welcomed Spanish accession at all times. I have taken part in Spanish elections and was one of those who was so happy when Spain took the democratic road; I want Spain very much to join this Community, and as far as I am concerned, the sooner the better. I also have sympathy for the Spanish fishermen, because, as has been said already, fishermen are brothers, and I have often said in this House that if fishermen got together and settled their difficulties, I am perfectly certain they would settle them much more amicably and much more rapidly than the politicians who are actually left to do the job.

There is, however, an admitted problem before us on the Spanish accession relating to fishing, and we do no service to Spain by trying to ignore it or by opting as a Parliament out of our participation in the discussions and by leaving the matter to back door discussions in the Commission or the Council of Ministers. It befits us to take an active part to see if we can find solutions, palliatives or forms of assistance with the problem Spain has with its enormous fleet, three-quarters the size of the EEC fleet, and two-and-a-half times that of the UK. I suggest pre-accession aid, which, I think, might be an assistance to Spain in reducing its fleet. I have often said, and will not rehearse it now, that a partial solution of great benefit to the ACP countries would be to encourage Spain to do what they are doing already to some extent, which is to help train and aid with joint ventures some of the West African countries. So I would urge my resolution now before you.

I understand that there are reservations from a Member — for very understandable reasons — about point C in the preamble to my resolution. But I cannot abandon it, because I am afraid that the evidence I have gleaned, some as late as a month ago, of the prosecutions of Spaniards breaking the rules in the waters around my area, which is an enormous slice of Community waters, shows that these incidents have been on a sharply upward trend. That, I think, is a point that has to be said, and I understand from Mr Harris that if he were in the thorny situation here, he would find it very, very similar to that in the waters down there. So I am afraid I cannot withdraw point C of my preamble.

Ewing

Briefly on Mr Battersby's resolution, I support Mr Battersby's initiative. I agree with the points he made about the importance of a positive accountability and scrutiny on a regular basis by this Parliament. I welcome that initiative.

I withdraw my rather critical Amendment No 1. I think Mr Battersby knows the reasons why it was lost, and we will say no more about that, but I leave my Amendment No 2, because I passionately believe — and I have said this so often — that there should be a fisheries committee. Not a Cinderella afterthought of agriculture. This is something all fishing associations want; it is something that Commissioner Contogorgis welcomed in this House, and what better way could there be to ensure our active participation as a Parliament in all matters concerning blue Europe?

(Applause)

Mr Ryan (PPE). — Mr President, fishermen have an inviolable right to fish without being molested by other vessels. It is intolerable that operators of submarines in the Irish and Celtic Seas and in other Community waters should recklessly sail blind and deaf underwater through fishing grounds indifferent to whether or not they endanger fishermen going about their peaceful, lawful business. The right of a vessel to innocent passage in international waters entails a corresponding duty to take care. I credit the commanders of the submarines which have sunk, damaged or dragged trawlers and their nets with not having the intention of doing harm, but in the light of the terrible accidents which have occurred, it is obvious that undersurface submarine traffic in the Irish Sea, and the approaches to it, are a grave menace to fishing boats. Therefore no vessel should travel dived in the Irish Sea, all vessels must travel on top.

Every country has a right, indeed a duty, to protect its own fishermen. It seems to me that, unfortunately, we have now arrived at a position where Ireland would be justified in taking naval or aerial action to force submarines to surface in the Irish Sea to obviate further interference with fishing vessels. We would, of course, prefer all states with submarines to agree not to travel below the surface in fishing grounds, but failing that, force will have to be used to bring marauding submarine monsters to the surface. Preferring a peaceful, sensible solution to the problem, I have a couple of suggestions. If, for security reasons, the states which own submarines do not wish them to travel on the surface, then let them keep out of the Irish Sea and use instead the Atlantic route. Alternatively, they can equip their submarines with sensors or other sophisticated gear to detect the presence of trawlers and fishing nets and thereby enable submarines to change course.

We ask for a European Community approach and, indeed, the cooperation of the Soviet Union and the

United States, whose submarines are also involved. We would also suggest that where loss is caused to European fishermen by a submarine of unknown identity, compensation should be paid to the fishermen, or their families, from the European Community Disaster Fund or some other suitable source.

Mr Croux (EPP). — *(NL)* Mr President, I would like to thank Mrs Pery for withdrawing her motion. This was doubtless a difficult decision for her, but I think that it is better for Parliament if we all support Mrs Ewing's resolution. This is at any rate our group's point of view. We feel that Parliament would be well advised to make an appeal for moderation. We too are delighted, Mrs Pery, at the moderate verdict to which the Lorient court came yesterday. I imagine that this was also well received in Spain. We feel Mrs Ewing's approach comes to terms more closely with the interests of both countries, particularly in the light of the negotiations over Spain's accession to the Community. We offer our express support for Mrs Ewing's request, in paragraph 2 of the motion, that the Commission prepare a parliamentary debate by producing monthly reports on the course of negotiations with Spain.

In this connection I would also like to remind the Council of its solemn declaration in Stuttgart on 19 June 1983 that Parliament would be consulted when the accession treaties were being drawn up. I think that the time has come to remind the Council of its promise, and I hope that Parliament will draw the Council's attention to this matter in due course through the Bureau.

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Insofar as these various resolutions are concerned, I go along with the Ewing resolution and, naturally, the Ryan and Lalor resolutions since they have already spoken their piece on the underwater menace of these submarines, I am not going to labour that point.

As far as the Battersby resolution is concerned, generally speaking, I support Mr Battersby's views, but one of the things I would like to point out in this short debate on fisheries generally is that I do go along with the idea that we should have a fully-fledged fisheries committee. I have supported this view all along, and will support it in the future, if still around as a Member of this House.

Furthermore, in regard to the regulation of fisheries under our policy, one of the things that all of us must surely deplore is the unregulated situation of marketing and the problems connected therewith — lack of processing facilities, particularly on the west coast of my own country — and that while we are trying to conserve our fisheries by various devices, by allowable catches, by monitoring, the inspectorate we are setting up and all the rest of it, in fact, we are still dumping fish. Fish is being dumped that could, in fact, be used, and I know of such cases, but because

Blaney

the fish had already died and therefore was subject to the intervention price arrangement, it could not be made available to people who are starving for want of food. This, to my mind, is a disgrace. We have so badly arranged things that while we are concerned about conservation — and rightly so — and while we have an eye to the future lest we run our stocks down to a point where we just do not have the fish any more, there are times when the fish, as soon as it has arrived at the quayside, is dead and is returned to the sea. This surely can be avoided, particularly in view of the starving millions of people throughout the world. It just is not good enough, and no matter what we may do by way of a fisheries policy, it surely will stand as a monument — a scandal really — to this institution if we allow people to die from hunger while we ourselves treat a commodity that we must be careful about managing in the future — namely, fish — in this way. This is entirely beyond what we can accept, and we must, surely, bend our energies towards this particular aspect. I will not detain the House any longer.

Mr Clinton (PPE). — Mr President, we tabled our resolution because of the increasing number of serious incidents between fishing trawlers and submarines in the Irish Sea, and because we know of the genuine fears of fishermen in relation to this matter.

No less than five incidents have taken place in the period 1982 to the present time. Three of these have occurred since the beginning of 1984. I am not trying to identify the culprits because, whatever we may say about the British, they at least have admitted the case in which they have been involved and have agreed to pay compensation. But this Community rightly concerns itself with the hazards in the workplace — and God knows that fishermen have to face enough hazards already without being continuously exposed to dangers that can and should be avoided.

Under the terms of the Chicago Convention, every State has sovereignty over the airspace above its territory, including that above its territorial waters. Military aircraft of any other State may not fly over without authorization. Is it not reasonable then to assume that some form of control over submarines operating in the Community fishing waters should be possible? What we are asking, and expecting, the Commission to do is to draw up regulations for approval by the Council to govern submarine traffic in traditional fishing grounds to prevent a recurrence of incidents and to protect the lives of fishermen. Otherwise there is the real danger that fishermen will take the law into their own hands to protect their own lives. This is something that we should all want to avoid.

I feel also that there should be some sort of compensation fund, but, of course, nothing compensates for loss of lives. With the present advanced technology it

should, of course, not be difficult to provide the sort of protection that all of us seem to want.

(Applause)

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(IT)* Mr President, while listening to the debate I was reminded of the Latin tag *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*. The subject is vast and there are only a few of us to deal with it. I hope I am not trying your patience. Even though this is a joint debate, Mr Battersby's motion and the other motions which have been tabled contain differing points of view.

I will therefore begin by replying to Mr Battersby's motion. He will certainly remember that on 7 July last year Parliament discussed a similar motion. On that occasion the Member of the Commission responsible for fishing problems, Mr Contogeorgis, explained the legal and practical reasons which had led the Commission to propose and the Council to decide, that the regulations implementing the common fishing policy should not be presented to Parliament for a formal opinion, but should be adopted directly by the Council and the Commission, in line with the procedure followed for other sectors of Community activity, such as, for example, agriculture.

I should like to illustrate the most recent example of the practical reasons why Parliament should not be consulted on implementing regulations. In mid-December 1983 the Commission submitted to the Council a regulation on the TACs and the quotas for 1984. After subsequent reflection and consultations with Norway, the Council approved the regulation on 31 January, so that for the first time, Mr Battersby, the fishermen will be able to operate for almost the whole year on a solid legal basis. I hope that the Commission and the Council will be able to improve this situation even further and that the TACs and the quotas for 1985 will be approved by the Council itself by December 1984.

How were these proceedings dealt with so rapidly? The main reason was that, once the principles of the common fishing policy had been agreed upon, few decisions were left to the Council. As laid down in the basic regulation, the TACs were established on the basis of scientific opinions and consultations with third countries, and the quotas were allocated according to the principle of relative stability, which means that, in practice, the 1983 percentages were applied again for 1984. We are aware of the fact that, although the establishment of the TACs and quotas is usually a question of routine, every year scientific opinions and negotiations with third countries may make it necessary to increase or reduce the quotas for some types of fish in some areas. These variations only affect some fishermen and so far have had no overall effect on the resources available to the Community.

Natali

Nevertheless, should the scientists' predictions or negotiations with third countries imply significant change in the general situation, or should quotas be established which do not lead to relative stability, the Commission would be willing to recommend that the Council consult Parliament on the proposed TACs and quotas. Obviously, this consultation must not prevent the TACs and quotas being approved quickly, because otherwise there will be legal problems, as I mentioned previously. It would therefore be advisable for Parliament to express its opinion as soon as possible.

Furthermore, Mr President, I would point out, as previously mentioned by Mr Battersby, that the President of the Commission and the Commissioner responsible for fishing sent letters last May to the President of Parliament and the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture in which they offered to keep the relevant Parliament committees constantly informed of the Commission proposals. The Commission has kept its word, and the offer remains open; the Commission would welcome the chance provided by this smooth procedure to benefit from the Members' experience and political instinct.

Mr President, I would emphasize that the practice of consulting Parliament on all questions affecting not only the implementation of the common fishing policy, but also any further developments, will continue. I would mention in this connection the numerous agreements with the African countries, the Community's participation in the conventions on Atlantic salmon and fishing in the Baltic Sea, and the proposal for a solution to the problems connected with the withdrawal of Greenland from the Community.

With regard to the conclusion of new framework agreements, the Commission will look for practical ways to keep Parliament informed and involve it as fully as possible, in accordance with the procedures adopted where other international agreements are concerned, i.e. the Luns-Westerterp procedures.

Parliament will also be consulted when it becomes necessary to modify the regulations and directives on fishing structures, since the fishing sector is becoming increasingly important for the Community.

Furthermore, in Basic Regulation No 170 there are various points which must eventually be decided upon after prior consultation of Parliament.

During the debate the motions and the speeches by Mr Lalor, Mr Ryan and Mr Clinton raised the problem of accidents involving submarines and fishing vessels. These shameful incidents have even led to loss of life. I must say that, unfortunately, as we are all aware, military issues do not fall within the competence of the Commission and the Community. Navigation of submarines, in particular, is the responsibility of the

naval authorities. It would appear that the captains of the fishing vessels and submarines are, according to international maritime law, obliged to keep a proper look-out so as to avoid such accidents. I believe that our efforts should be concentrated in this direction.

I now come to the fishing sector problems connected with the accession of Spain to the Community. We are fully aware of Parliament's interest in the accession negotiations for the fishing sector. These problems will soon be examined at the conference on the negotiations for Spain's accession.

It was mentioned that in December 1983 Parliament debated these problems on the basis of the Pery and Ormesson reports, approved the motions and stated, as you pointed out, Mrs Ewing, that Parliament is searching for appropriate solutions to these problems.

For its part, the Commission, being aware of the problems existing in this sector — problems which are peculiar to fishing and which have been noted in the motion — drafted its own preliminary guidelines on the subject in March 1983, i.e. shortly after the decisions taken on the common fishing policy in January 1983. The Community was therefore able to open negotiations with Spain in June and finally broach the subject of fishing after considerable delay in reaching decisions. I am referring to the establishment of the common fishing policy, which took place after considerable delay, as we are all aware.

It was then necessary to examine thoroughly the technicalities of the problems, and this complex operation is now drawing to a close. The Commission will therefore be communicating its overall proposals to the Member States within the next few days. The words *Member States* are important here, since I would repeat that, in this context, the role of the Commission is to make proposals. It is not the Commission's duty to carry out negotiations itself: Article 237 of the Treaty — and I am addressing you, Mr Croux, after your legal comments is well-enough known for me not to have to repeat that the negotiations fall within the competence of the Member States, who must meet in conference.

Having said that, we are in no position to be able to predict the outcome of the negotiations; we can only follow developments in the negotiations, which do, however, mostly relate to transitional measures, so that the Community *acquis*, which I believe is sufficiently familiar even in the fishing sector, can be applied.

This does not alter the fact that there are also immediate problems, and here I am referring to the speeches by Mrs Pery, Mr Croux and Mrs Ewing. First of all, I should like to join them in expressing sympathy for the Spanish fishermen injured in the incident which took place on 7 March in the Bay of Biscay — a sympathy which was also expressed in your motion, Mrs Pery, which has now been withdrawn but which, together with other motions, was the subject of your

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speech. We are all aware of the facts surrounding the incident, and I do not believe that we should dwell on it any further, especially since this has been the approach adopted for the most part by the European Parliament.

I would only point out that monitoring of fishing in Community waters is first and foremost the responsibility of the Member States, who have to report periodically to the Commission on their inspection activities and on any measures taken should common fishing rules be broken.

The Commission has always been in favour of a strong, efficient and uniform monitoring system, but it is obvious that the Member States are responsible for this surveillance, depending on the situation and the particular geographical conditions of the Member State.

To return to the events under discussion, I should like to assure you that the Commission has, in agreement with the French authorities, already sent a team of Community inspectors to the Bay of Biscay region to monitor the application of Community measures on the conservation and management of resources. I should also like to assure the House that the Commission is following developments very closely and will do everything in its power to avoid any repetition of such incidents. However, I must be very firm here and point out that the Spanish authorities must cooperate in implementing the agreements and subsequent monitoring.

Life at sea can be very hard, as I know personally, and fishermen work under difficult conditions. But I also know that it is necessary to protect our fish resources, since this is the only way of ensuring a future for fishing as an activity. We must all realize this fact.

In the light of these comments, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that things will calm down — and anything we can do to achieve this end will be done — and we hope that, with due respect for the law and agreements, our constructive cooperation will continue with a country, i.e. Spain, which is soon to join us in the Community and will be sharing our responsibilities.

Mr Ryan (PPE). — Would the Commissioner not agree that even naval ships are subject to the same international code regarding ships underway on the high seas? Having regard to the fact that citizens of this Community and their livelihood are being endangered, would the Commissioner and his colleagues not agree that this is a case where it would be very appropriate for the Commission to take an initiative?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr Ryan, as regards the problem of naval ships, I believe, as I have already said, that the Commission can do nothing apart from making somewhat

informal approaches. As regards shipping in general, you are aware that we are taking signatories to a number of conventions. I believe — and this is my own personal opinion — that we should examine closely the possibility of strengthening these conventions.

Lady Elles (ED). — Mr President, under Rule 64 I too wish to put a very brief question to the Commission. Would the Commissioner not agree that this is a matter for negotiation between the two countries, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, when British naval forces are doing their duty as part of the protection of western democracies and of their supplies? Is this a matter which should be negotiated between the two countries in order to ensure that Irish fishermen can go freely where it is lawful and that British submarines can do their duty, protecting not only the United Kingdom but also the shores of the Republic of Ireland?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Lady Elles, the reply I gave during the debate was of a general nature and was not specific. I emphasized that military issues do not fall within the competence of the Commission or the Communities. Nevertheless, at this level, as I stated, action can be taken which is not strictly within the competence of the Community but which can be viewed favourably by the Community.

Mr Davern (S). — Would Lady Elles agree that this is a case of the poacher turned gamekeeper?

President. — The debate is closed.

*Vote*¹

After the rejection by electronic vote of the Lalor motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1575/83)

Mr Blaney (CDI). — Mr President, I do not have my card, but I wanted to indicate my support for the Lalor motion which has just been rejected.

President. — Your statement is noted.

Nicaragua

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two motions for resolutions on Nicaragua:

— motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1562/83), tabled by Mr Pedini and Mrs Lenz on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (CD Group), on free elections in Nicaragua;

— motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1569/83), tabled by Mr Glinne and others on behalf of the Socialist Group on the situation in Nicaragua.

¹ See Annex.

Mr Lentz-Cornette (PPE). — *(DE)* Mr President, on behalf of my group I should like to express my satisfaction that the compromise motion by Mr Gawronski and Mr Haagerup on the elections in Nicaragua has created a basis to which all the democratic parties in the European Parliament could give their support. What is in question is the solidarity of all democrats if Nicaragua is to arrive on 14 November 1984 at genuinely free, equal and pluralistic elections with the participation of international observers.

The initial signs are not favourable. I shall not conceal that the delegation of my political group, in the company of which I visited Central America in September 1983, was very deeply concerned at the developments in Sandinista Nicaragua. Censorship of the press, limitation of the freedom of opinion and assembly, arbitrary arrests of Christian-Socialist, Social-Democratic and Liberal politicians, intimidation of Christian and Social-Democratic unions and the churches by state repression, as well as repression organized by the so-called Turbas, have created a climate in this country which is scarcely compatible with free elections. We are afraid that powerful forces in the military Sandinista government are taking Communist Cuba as their example and are attempting to create a one-party state of Marxist-Leninist stamp. It is up to us, the democratic forces in this Community, whether the Sandinistas' plans work out or whether the parties of the democratic opposition in Nicaragua are to receive a fair chance.

I am appealing in particular to the Socialist Group to cooperate with us and to do everything to see that the Sandinista government keeps the promise it made when the Somoza dictatorship was overthrown in 1979 and guarantees the country democracy and pluralism. We are decisively against any external interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, but we have the right and the duty to put ourselves alongside those who are being denied the right to exercise their basic democratic rights. Let us show solidarity with those who are persecuted, let us not take the side of those who are indulging in the repression of others. If we can collaborate in this spirit, we shall still have one last genuine chance to prevent Nicaragua becoming a second Cuba.

The elections on 14 November 1984 will be a decisive test for the credibility of the Sandinista government. So long as the state of emergency prevails, so long as political opponents are locked up as counter-revolutionaries and mental and physical pressure is applied to persons of differing opinions, we do not believe that the preconditions for free elections will be satisfied. We are also sceptical as to whether the government in Managua is paying anything more than lip service to the proposals for peace and reconciliation which have been put forward by the Contadora group of states, Columbia, Mexico, Panama and Vene-

zuela. I hope very much that our concerns would be shown in practice to be groundless, but our fears have been strengthened by the fact that the democratic opposition as a result of discrimination and the Sandinistas amalgamation of state, army and party, no longer has any chance of an open, fair and political competition for the votes of the electorate.

The resolution before you now is the expression of our concern and expectations. I hope for a broad measure of approval from the European Parliament in the interest of freedom, democracy and human rights in Nicaragua.

(Applause)

Mr Hänsch (S). — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, this debate on the situation in Nicaragua is justified for two reasons: firstly, an official delegation from our Parliament under the leadership of our President went to Nicaragua in January of this year at the invitation of the Sandinista Council of State and was able to find out about the situation there for itself. The second reason why this debate is justified is the aid which the European Community is granting to the sorely tried country of Nicaragua.

Let me say this right at the beginning of my remarks: the Socialist Group will give its support to the amendment which has been tabled by the Liberal and Democratic Group so that this Parliament may give its express blessing to the fact that elections will take place this year in Nicaragua. This much is contained in the Liberals' amendment.

What, ladies and gentlemen, is it all about? First of all, that we welcome the fact that elections will take place this year in Nicaragua. Many Members of this House, who would now like to see the elections put off until 1985, were not so long ago calling for these elections to be held in Nicaragua at last and criticizing the fact that these same elections had been put off from 1981 to 1982 and from 1982 to 1983. For this reason we support the Sandinista movement in its intention to hold elections in 1984.

Secondly, let us be clear that we as Europeans, as Members of the European Parliament, wish for free elections in Nicaragua, that means that the internal preconditions for free elections should be created! I am convinced that the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua is on the point of guaranteeing this. If we have doubts and fears, then let us include this question in our reflections: what is the situation from which Nicaragua is emerging, in what situation does the new society, the new movement, in Nicaragua find itself? Let us reflect on what sort of heritage was taken over from the Somoza regime: a heritage of repression, illiteracy, disease, corruption and violence. Anybody who expects that in such a structure within a few months or even within two or three years such pluralistic societies could develop as we are accustomed to in Western

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Europe after a decades-old or even a centuries-old tradition is mistaken. Let us give this freedom movement a chance!

Let us also consider the kind of external pressure under which Nicaragua functions! Let us consider that there is direct and indirect American support to counter-revolution and pressure from outside! We therefore call upon the United States in these terms: stop disturbing a movement and a people which only a short while ago freed itself from corruption, repression and the rule of violence of a cruel dictator! This external pressure is not only pressure but also war! 30% of Nicaragua's export earnings are destroyed by the fact that time and again there are attacks from outside the country's borders and attacks by counter-revolutionaries within its borders. Let us also consider what that means for the economy of such a country!

What Nicaragua really needs is not pressure but help, Nicaragua does not need to be taught lessons but it needs to be cheered and encouraged. It needs, in other words, to be encouraged to make an attempt at pluralist democracy. We know that there is concern. Along with you, we wish to see press censorship removed, along with you we want social and political pluralism. But let us help Nicaragua to go along that road and let us not drive it into cubanization! The fact is that this country could become an example for the whole of Latin America through these elections and the manner in which they are held. So long as it has not been demonstrated that Nicaragua has abandoned the road of freedom from military blocks, the road of tolerance and pluralism, this country needs our help. Let us give it our support and let us help to see that it can carry on along this road to emerge from a grievous past into a brighter future of human dignity, economic recovery and freedom!

Mr de Courcy Ling (ED). — Mr President, I fear that since the Cuban revolution there has been a tendency to simplify excessively the affairs of Central America and to take a rather simplistic view of them. One only needs to read the writings of Graham Greene to understand that we have a series of extremely confused situations.

I would simply like, on behalf of my group, to say with regard to the joint Glinne/Gawronski that it seems to me that one of the greatest tragedies of recent events in Central America is that the Sandinista revolution has turned away from the path to sovereignty, dignity and freedom for Nicaragua, towards the path of dictatorship — dare I say it — and certainly terrorism. I hope that the Sandinista forces in Nicaragua will understand that they will never have the support of the democratic parties of Europe unless they turn back to the path of freedom and democracy.

Mr Ferrero (COM). — *(IT)* Mr President, we Communists greet the decision of the Nicaraguan

Government to hold elections next November with great satisfaction. We would like to emphasize the value of this decision which, in our opinion, is all the more significant in that it has been taken despite the great difficulties facing that country, difficulties and obstacles deriving first and foremost from the efforts being made, including guerrilla attacks, with the aim of overcoming the revolution which put an end to the brutal dictatorship of Somoza. Let us not forget that these attempts are directly or indirectly supported, financed and even carried out by the Government of the United States of America. Secondly, there are the difficulties deriving from the lack of the technical infrastructure needed for the elections themselves — if only because, during the period of the dictatorship, no records of the population were kept.

In this situation, Mr President, it is not so much a matter — in our opinion — of setting ourselves up as judges of what is going on in Nicaragua. For us Europeans it is a matter — and in some ways it is our duty — of supporting the decisions of the Nicaraguan Government with regard to the elections, decisions which guarantee the parties, including the parties of the opposition, the possibility, of participation democratically in determining national policy.

More generally, we believe it is our duty to unite, as we are constantly being asked to do, with the countries of the Contadora group in accepting and supporting the approach which aims at finding a peaceful solution at regional level, outside of and in the face of the threats of intervention — a solution to the major problems of economic development, of the democratic development of this troubled and critical area of the world.

For these reasons we have tabled an amendment to the text proposed by Mr Pedini, but we are prepared to accept the amendment tabled by Mr Gawronski and Mr Haagerup, which will be voted on before ours and which, if only in some respects, reflects our position.

Mr Haagerup (L). — *(DK)* Mr President, I am sorry to have to begin my brief intervention with some critical remarks. I do not think it was a good arrangement to hold the topical and urgent debate on a Friday. In my view it does not make a particularly good impression on the public when an urgent topic is debated with less than one tenth of the members present, and that we adopt the various matters with such a small majority as circumstance allowed to remain. I am well aware of the background to this, but as Chairman of the Coordinating Committee I would like to point out that it was not a happy arrangement. I presume that it will not happen again.

Furthermore, my Group was opposed to a debate on Nicaragua, since next week the Political Affairs Committee will be holding a discussion on all of

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Central America on the basis of the report drafted by Mrs Lenz, and we expect that to be discussed in Parliament very soon afterwards. The report has been drafted, inter alia, on the basis of the journey made by a delegation of Parliament to Central America, which Mr Hänsch has just referred to, and which was also undertaken by Mrs Lenz as rapporteur.

And so we have had a debate nonetheless, and as a result of the late hour it has been very brief with extremely short contributions, and it was because we in the Liberal Group anticipated that this would happen that we tabled an amendment which we reckoned could gain the support of all sides, and for this reason I can only conclude by referring to the debate we will be holding on Central America and requesting you to adopt unanimously Amendment No 1.

Mr Alavanos (COM). — (GR) Mr President, I should like to say from the outset that we regret that there are only three Members of the Greek Communist Party in this Parliament — until July, of course — and that this prevents us from calling for a quorum to be ascertained, for which ten Members are required, because it is inadmissible that decisions on Nicaragua be taken by 20 Members, half of whom belong to Lord Bethell's party.

As regards the substance, we also oppose the joint amendment tabled by Mr Gawronski and Mr Haagerup and feel that it reflects neither the situation which exists today in Nicaragua or the developments people the world over would wish to see. Our view is that, unlike the Pedini proposal, it too indirectly constitutes an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Nicaragua. As Mr Hänsch stated, in Nicaragua, where 12-year-old children do not attend school like ours, but have had to take up arms to protect their country, we cannot insist on conditions which do not even obtain in our Community countries. We cannot discuss the right of assembly when we learn from yesterday's television that the British Government refuses to recognize the right of miners to assemble. We have no right to discuss democratic pluralism in Nicaragua when we know that in the United Kingdom parties representing 20% of the population are debarred from the nation's Parliament. This is why we believe this motion to be hypocritical. We will vote against it. Is there any way in which the Community could help? There is — the way the peoples of Europe want, i.e. for us to help Nicaragua to pursue a normal course of democratic development. The first precondition for this is that we vigorously oppose, condemn and mobilize peoples against direct and indirect interference by the USA in Nicaragua.

Mr Kyrkos (COM). — (GR) Mr President, we are behind any genuine effort, however small. We shall abstain from the vote, our logic being that we would not wish to vote against an endeavour which, although tiny, constitutes a positive step by this Parliament.

I should like to take this opportunity to say that our Parliament should have faced the facts of the situation and not got into the habit of playing the role of Pontius Pilate. Everyone knows that at this very moment in Nicaragua there are thousands of instances of American interference and this constitutes the greatest hurdle to the normal democratic process in that country.

In view of this, and if we would like to be true to our stance rather than maintain the non-committal approach which, in the eyes of the people, our Parliament always advocates, we must face reality and consolidate democratic procedures, while at the same time expressing categorically our opposition to American interference.

The overthrow of the tyrannical regime was welcomed by us all. We would therefore be hypocrites ten times over were we to fail to realize that at work behind the American interference are the very forces whose overthrow we so welcomed.

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) The Commission welcomes the statements by the Nicaraguan Government confirming the holding of general elections in Nicaragua in November 1984, which is earlier than the original forecast of 1985.

The Commission, for the moment, is not yet informed as to the procedures governing these elections, as the procedures are still being examined by the appropriate bodies in Nicaragua. However, we agree with the principles expressed by the honourable Members, to the effect that elections should be free and representative. With regard to this, the Commission is especially insistent that the emergency laws currently in force, for example censorship, should be abolished or modified so that they will not prevent free and pluralist elections being held.

Mr Patterson (ED). — Would the Commissioner agree that you cannot have free elections without a free press and what is his opinion on the freedom of the press in Nicaragua?

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) In my statement I spoke of an emergency law which is currently in force, which we hope will be lifted.

President. — The debate is closed.

Vote¹

Mr Hänsch (S). — (DE) Mr President, since there is no one down to speak on the motions on human rights, let me suggest on behalf of the Socialist Group that we first of all vote on these motions and then have the debate on the Iran-Iraq war.

¹ See Annex.

President. — I do not quite understand what you mean, Mr Hänsch. Do you mean that your motions should be put to the vote?

Mr Hänsch (S). — (DE) I want us to vote first on the motions for resolutions on human rights because there is no one down to speak on these motions. Then we can have the debate on the Iran-Iraq war.

Mr Haagerup (L). — Mr President, I wonder if I might endorse this because it is in line with what I suggested two days ago. I know there is nobody who wants to speak on this and we could adopt the three resolutions unanimously — and they are really urgent — and then we could proceed with the debate on Sir Peter's resolution.

Lady Elles (ED). — I will not go against the proposal of Mr Hänsch, but I would like to point out that the Iran/Iraq debate is a very important one. The chances are that Members will just vote on the human rights resolutions and then disappear, leaving a mere two or three speakers for this important subject. I do draw that to the attention of the House.

President. — As President, I agree with the suggestion by Lady Elles.

Lady Elles (ED). — Mr President, I apologize. Perhaps I failed to make myself clear. All I say is that I will not object to the proposal of Mr Hänsch to take the human rights issue first, in view of the fact that there will not be many speakers on Sir Peter Vanneck's resolution. But I just do bring to the attention of the House that it is a very important subject and I hope that, after voting on the human rights resolutions, everybody will not disappear but will listen to Sir Peter Vanneck and will vote on the resolution.

President. — I take it that Mr Hänsch agrees to this proposal.

Iran-Iraq war

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1556/83), tabled by Sir Peter Vanneck on behalf of the European Democratic Group, on the effects of the Iran-Iraq war on the Community's oil supplies.

Sir Peter Vanneck (ED). — Mr President, I hope, as does my group, that the House will vote to put this resolution of mine through. We are all aware of the escalation of the Gulf War on the one hand and the importance of free passage through the Straits of Hormuz of oil for Europe on the other.

The present situation is that rocket attacks have resulted in a British-owned ship being abandoned, stranded on a sandbank in the Gulf. I do not know how other nations have suffered but Lloyds of London have doubled the insurance rates, already high enough for this war zone. Millions of pounds for indemnity reasons have had to be banked by Iran in London.

The seriousness of the situation is underlined by the use, the inhuman use, of gas and chemical warfare. Who knows what next? We must strive again for peace. Europe depends on oil from the Gulf to far too large an extent for us just to sit back and pretend nothing is happening. Of course the Americans will safeguard supplies to the United States and Japan but we owe it to our electorate, whose good will we shall count on in June, to demonstrate proper concern on our part.

This motion, Mr President, is not a belligerent one. It is to show our individual governments and peoples this Parliament's deep interest in our jointly taking every precaution possible to maintain these vital supplies at current prices to our various countries. I firmly believe nothing but good can come from accepting this motion for a resolution, and I hope the votes in this House will show sufficient, if not overwhelming, support.

IN THE CHAIR : MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

Mr Croux (PPE). — (NL) Mr President, our Group supports the initiative taken by Sir Peter Vanneck on behalf of the European Democratic Group. The escalation in the war between Iran and Iraq, which has now been going on for years and which has claimed several tens of thousands of human victims, though no one knows precisely how many, has greatly concerned our Group. The victims are often very young people, as we saw in the paper last week. There is also the menace of special types of warfare, such as chemical warfare, which deeply alarms our public. In particular, we support the appeal to the foreign ministers to attempt to bring about a peace conference between these two countries to put an end to this tragic war.

Secondly, as far as energy supplies are concerned, it is indeed extremely important for the Community to monitor trends with close and meticulous attention. Sir Peter Vanneck pointed out quite rightly that 30 % of Community imports come via the Straits of Hormuz, and we would thus like to remind people of the energy policy which the Community wished to map out after 1973 on the occasion of the first oil shock, which had such a major effect on the economy and security of the European Community. This is thus another point on which we support this motion.

But, Mr President, we should also add that this opportunity must be grasped to call to mind how vulnerable our Community and our countries still are as regards the whole question of our energy supplies. All too often we have the impression that this has been forgotten, but just recently the conference of oil ministers of the OPEC countries pointed out that nothing in connection with oil supplies is certain, neither the

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prices, nor production, nor — certainly not now — delivery. This concerns not only petroleum but all sources of energy, including coal, which we were discussing this morning in connection with the report compiled by Mr Rogalla.

We wish to emphasize that the European Parliament probably sees these problems more in perspective than the Commission, and we urge it to maintain the broader view shown today in conjunction with Sir Peter Vanneck's motion and the Rogalla report, and not to lose sight of the overall energy policy for a single moment.

Great sacrifices in both financial and human terms are being made by the mining industry. Just recently we were mourning the death of seven miners in Belgium. We must not lose sight of the financial and human sacrifices and wish to draw special attention to them amidst all the enormous problems caused by the war. We must ensure that a peace conference is convened and, at the same time, must continue to focus our attention on a selective policy in the whole of the Community and to emphasize its importance.

Mr Purvis (ED). — Mr President, I share the view of Mr Croux and Sir Peter Vanneck and hope that we can find some solution to this awful war.

However, I think we ought to realize that we are faced here with an element of fanaticism which makes any likelihood of it being solved in the near future remote. Therefore, I turn to the Commission to ask them whether they really are satisfied that we are protecting our energy supply interests satisfactorily. Today's Financial Times contains a report apparently prepared for the Commission by a consultant group called Petroleum Economics, on this topic. We all know that the Member States are supposed to hold stocks of 90 days supply. The report says that the stocks, in fact, vary from 45 to 100 days. The normal commercial requirements might have to come out of this which would in some cases bring the strategic stocks down to virtually nothing.

Do we really have — as Sir Peter Vanneck asks in paragraph 3 — an average of 90 days supply in the Community? If not, are they sufficient and is the burden equally shared amongst the Member States? I would appreciate a specific answer to that.

Then what happens about Community solidarity when apparently two Member States have more than 90 days stocks and four have nearer 45 days? Is this a situation which will result in solidarity if indeed there is a crisis? Will the Commission confirm or deny this situation? Is the financing of these stocks transparent and similar in all Member States, whether it falls on the State or on the commercial companies concerned?

We have seen what happened before. 1973 is a good example. A threat, panic-hoarding, topping-up at the

petrol stations, queues, prices speculation. The leads and lags come into effect. The one question we have about these strategic stocks is: When such a situation arrives, even the threat of which could cause panic and shortage, are the Commission and the Member States prepared to release enough of the stocks to deal with that speculation and keep it under control? The Americans have declared that they will. We would like to know from the Commission whether they are also prepared to make a declaration that they will use, with the Member States, these reserves when even a sub-crisis is apparent and panic might well develop.

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr President, first of all I would like to make it clear that the Commission fully shares the concern, expressed in the motion which we are examining, on developments in the war between Iran and Iraq.

Reference has been made — and I agree with this — to the Statement issued by the Ten on 27 February last, a statement which emphasizes the serious concern about developments in the war and the dangers of a crisis engulfing the entire region. The statement of the Ten appealed for a ceasefire by Iran and Iraq in order not to jeopardize free movement in the Gulf. The Ten also indicated that they were ready for positive collaboration within the limits of their means, in finding a solution to the conflict, indicating especially that they were prepared to help the Secretary-General of the UN in his efforts to achieve peace.

I wanted to refer to this statement because, obviously, the Commission fully agrees with it. In the same way we agree with the proposals put forward in Parliament's resolution of 19 January 1984, which calls for an immediate ceasefire by the warring parties. And we notice — and deplore — that up till now, not one of the initiatives taken has had any effect.

We are also closely following developments as regards the need for humanitarian aid and, to this end, we are in contact with the different international welfare organizations and agencies operating in the area.

We are of course concerned about the possible effects of a cut in the oil supply as a result of the conflict, and we are studying the changes in the oil flow. The Commission is in close contact with oil suppliers and distributors and stresses that, in the case of a crisis, emergency measures will be taken immediately.

We can confirm that Community stocks are much higher than the levels provided for in the agreements made by the Member States. Specifically, I would like to tell Mr Purvis, who asked me the question, that the present level of our stocks is — as I have said and confirm — much higher than the supply level of 90 days requested by the Council Directive. The present level corresponds to about 120 days of consumption.

The Council Directive does not prevent the Member States from including in these quantities the stocks necessary for the continued operation of undertakings.

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Having said this, the Commission is doing everything to ensure that the available stocks are at the highest possible level and immediately available. Moreover we intend to present the Council and the Parliament as soon as possible with a statement on the whole question of oil stocks, including the problems raised in Mr Purvis's question.

President. — The debate is closed.

*Vote*¹

There are no Members down to speak on the three motions for resolutions which are left. Before the vote is taken, I should like to ask Mr Natali if he wishes to speak on any of the motions.²

¹ See Annex.

² Motions for resolutions by:
— Mrs Squarcialupi and others (Doc. 1-1561/83)
— Mr Glinne and Mr Pelikan (Doc. 1-1568/83)
— Mr Glinne (Doc. 1-571/83).

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr President, the three resolutions are all concerned with safeguarding human rights and the Commission cannot but endorse them.

*Vote*¹

4. *Adjournment of the session*

President. — I declare the session of the European Parliament adjourned.³

(The sitting was closed at 12.20 p.m.)

³ Written declarations entered in the register (Rule 49) — Forwarding of resolutions adopted during the sitting — Deadline for tabling amendments — Dates for next part-session : see Minutes.

*ANNEX**Votes*

The Annex to the Report of Proceedings contains the rapporteur's opinion on the various amendments and the explanations of vote. For a detailed account of the voting, see Minutes.

PAPAPIETRO REPORT (DOC. 1-1445/83 'AQUACULTURE'): ADOPTED**PAPAPIETRO REPORT (DOC. 1-1519/83 'RIGHT OF ACCESS TO FISHING GROUNDS'): ADOPTED***Explanation of vote*

Mr Alavanos (COM), *in writing*. — (GR) The Members of the Greek Communist Party will be voting against the motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Agriculture. The reason is that we disagree with the principle behind it. Under the provisions of the report, the EEC will be given special privileges as regards access to the fishing areas and the management of the fishing resources of the Mediterranean. Moreover, it will essentially replace the Mediterranean countries of the Community in the procedures and negotiations. We, however, believe that the problem of managing the fishing resources of the Mediterranean can and must be solved in cooperation with the Mediterranean countries. As far as Greece is concerned, we can manage alone in these negotiations, and we do not need the EEC to represent us.

* * *

HALLIGAN REPORT (DOC. 1-1535/83 'TOBACCO'): ADOPTED*Explanation of vote*

Mr Alavanos (COM), *in writing*. — (GR) The Members of the Greek Communist Party will be voting against the motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, despite the fact that we accept the fifth extension of the second stage of harmonization of taxes on the consumption of manufactured tobacco. The reason is that we believe that the very principle of harmonization is contrary to the interests of Greek producers. It allows American tobacco easy access to the EEC and violates the principle of Community preference. It makes it easier for American cigarettes to conquer even the Greek market. It adds new problems to what is already a major problem in finding outlets for Greek tobacco. The only ones who will benefit are the large American tobacco companies.

* * *

ROGALLA REPORT (DOC. 1-1386/83 'SOLID FUELS'): ADOPTED

The rapporteur was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendments Nos 5 to 13 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 1, 2, 4 and 14 to 17.

Explanations of vote

Mr Moreland (ED), in writing. — Mr Rogalla is known in this Parliament as a 'kangaroo' but today he is an 'ostrich'.

He is an ostrich because he has successfully eliminated reference to mine closures from the Commission proposals. This hides reality. We have to be realistic and recognize that a number of mines will have to be closed simply because they are depleted, have severe geological problems or are completely uneconomic.

The money saved from closures must be used to develop economic mines in places such as Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire.

Much confidence is needed — particularly at this time — as certain members of the Miners' Union are invading these areas with so-called 'flying pickets' but in reality they are a bunch of thugs terrorizing innocent miners and harming our coal industry.

The industry has a bright future in the Community. It needs the boost of the Council accepting the Commission's proposals on solid fuels and I welcome these proposals but believe Mr Rogalla's charges do more harm than good.

Mrs Phlix (PPE), in writing. — (NL) Firstly, I would like to take the opportunity to pay sincere tribute to the memory of seven miners who lost their lives last week in a gas explosion in the Eisdien mine and to offer our sympathy to the families in mourning. We do not oppose the Commission's proposal to support coal mines with a view to implementing an energy policy for the Community, as this is of undisputed importance. In our opinion, however, it is quite imperative that this support be given in the light of sound objective criteria based on full knowledge of the situation. We feel that a complete scientific investigation of this sector must be carried out before the conditions for granting funds are established.

Bearing in mind the amendments made by Parliament, I shall vote for this proposal in the hope that the Commission will change its mind.

Mr Protopapadakis (PPE), in writing. — (GR) I shall be voting in favour of the report on a regulation concerning the implementation of a Community policy in the field of solid fuels, since it provides for non-repayable aid to undertakings producing lignite and peat.

Greece has large deposits of these fuels, and the Community aid will enable it to exploit them better and to contribute to the production of energy from domestic sources.

I hope the Greek Government will take the appropriate measures so that Greece can receive its fair share of the funds available under this regulation.

Mr Purvis (ED), in writing. — We talk all the time and pass resolutions repeatedly regarding the competitiveness of European industry.

Essential to this competitiveness is the price of energy. It would therefore be absurd to saddle industry with the cost of unnecessarily expensive coal. It will only cost jobs. Furthermore European coal can be competitive in price and secure us against undue dependence on outside sources if we concentrate on investment in economically viable coal mines and new technology.

I am therefore pleased that the Commission rejects all the amendments to the regulation, though it seems to me that the amendments to Recital II, paragraph 7 and to Article 6, paragraph 2 are constructive.

I hope now that the Council of Ministers will now quickly adopt the regulation as proposed by the Commission.

Mr Spencer (ED), in writing. — I welcome the Commission's proposal that we should safeguard our continent's long-term strategic supplies of coal. That seems to me a proper use of Community money and a justifiable argument for an element of Community preference.

Spencer

The best coal in the Community is undoubtedly in Britain, and historically some of that best coal, and the most economic pits, are in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

I am glad that the Commission have maintained their rejection of the weakening amendments to the directive put down by Belgian and German colleagues. It would be wrong for Community money to spread thinly across declining and uneconomic pits. If one believes in a future for coal, as I do, it is a future of profitable production. I proudly and openly declare a constituency interest in that both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire will benefit from the Commission's proposals and I will vote for the Rogalla report knowing that the Commission has maintained its text in the face of Parliamentary woolly-mindedness.

It would be wrong of me not to make another point on behalf of my constituents at this moment. The miners of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have this week been subjected to a vicious invasion by the Yorkshire members of their own National Union of Mine Workers. There has been violence and even death on the picket lines as mine has fought mine. This is not only a tragedy — it is a disgrace. I have long supported moves in this Parliament to give workers a greater share in the decisions that mould their lives at work. Central to such increased participation is the right to a secret democratic ballot. It is exactly this right, a right enshrined in the NUM constitution which is being attacked by the Yorkshire miners' invasions of surrounding counties.

We have experience of such 'boot boy' tactics from the extreme left that touch this Parliament. Three sitting Members of this House have been 'deselected' in recent weeks to be replaced by figures more acceptable to the Left. Included in those is my friend, colleague and former miner the MEP for Nottingham (Mr Michael Gallaher). He has been driven not only from his seat but from his party because he declined to call black white, or put loyalty to a caucus above loyalty to his constituents.

Whatever happens in the coalfields of Britain in coming weeks I trust that the Commissioner and honourable colleague will appreciate that the majority of miners would welcome a sensible European scheme that would secure jobs and coal supplies into the next century.

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VAN AERSEN REPORT (DOC. 1-1509/83 'TSUKUBA INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION'): ADOPTED

* * *

DELOROZOY REPORT (DOC. 1-1482/83/REV. 'EXPORT CREDIT SUBSIDIES'): ADOPTED

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DE GUCHT REPORT (DOC. 1-1397/83 'NON BIS IN IDEM PRINCIPLE'): ADOPTED

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MORELAND REPORT (DOC. 1-1539/83 'POSTAL CHARGES'): ADOPTED

* * *

The rapporteur was :

— AGAINST Amendment No 2.

Explanation of vote

Mr Alavanos (COM), in writing. — (GR) The Committee on Transport's motion for a resolution criticizes Greece and three other Member States for not implementing the Commission's recommendations of May 1979 concerning the application of the domestic postal rates to certain postal deliveries between Member States.

This report is blatantly political, and its aim is to pave the way for political absolutism. The motion for a resolution admits as much in paragraph 4, and it is reflected by the fact that the initiative for the report came from Members on the conservative side of the House.

The Members of the Communist Party of Greece will be voting against the report. At the same time, we would emphasize that we are in favour of reducing the rates for everyday correspondence between the workers, but this must not be done on a privileged basis within the EEC, for reactionary political aims, but rather within the framework of the appropriate international bodies.

The Members of the Greek Communist Party will be voting against this motion for a resolution.

* * *

**PROVAN REPORT (DOC. 1-1488/83 'LABELLING OF FOODSTUFFS'):
ADOPTED**

Mr Hutton, deputy rapporteur, was :

- IN FAVOUR OF Amendment No 7 ;
- AGAINST Amendments Nos 3 to 6.

Explanation of vote

Mr Alavanos (COM), in writing. — (GR) The Members of the Greek Communist Party will be voting against the report by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs for sale to the ultimate consumer.

Apart from more general reservations, we particularly disagree with paragraph 7 which, with an unacceptable justification, 'calls for beer and wine to be dealt with in the same way as far as the listing of ingredients of the alcoholic beverages covered by the present directive is concerned'. This creates new problems for the consumption of wine. It aggravates the problems of the many thousands of wine growers in the EEC to the benefit of a handful of large breweries. We do not forget that, on the subject of beer, Greece has been taken to the European Court of Justice in a way which is unacceptable.

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HOOVER REPORT (DOC. 1-1485/83 'PREPACKAGED LIQUIDS') : ADOPTED

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JOHNSON REPORT (DOC. 1-1486/83 'IVORY') : ADOPTED

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**EISMA REPORT (DOC. 1-1518/83 'SELF-HELP GROUPS IN HEALTH CARE') :
REJECTED**

* * *

**VANDEMEULEBROUCKE REPORT (DOC. 1-1522/83 'EDUCATION FOR
CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS HAVE NO FIXED ABODE') : ADOPTED**

* * *

SQUARCIALUPI REPORT (DOC. 1-1376/83 'WASTE') : ADOPTED

* * *

MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS 'FREE MOVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY'

- SEEFELD (DOC. 1-1516/83)
- NORD (DOC. 1-1548/83)
- PROVAN (DOC. 1-1559/83)
- NYBORG (DOC. 1-1560/83)
- HABSBERG (DOC. 1-1565/83)
- von WOGAU (DOC. 1-1566/83)
- NYBORG (DOC. 1-1580/83)

REPLACED BY AMENDMENT NO 1 WHICH WAS ADOPTED

* * *

MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS 'FISHERY'

- BATTERSBY (DOC. 1-1549/83) : ADOPTED
- PÉRY (DOC. 1-1558/83) : WITHDRAWN
- LALOR (DOC. 1-1575/83) : REJECTED
- EWING (DOC. 1-1576/83) : ADOPTED
- RYAN (DOC. 1-1582/83) : REJECTED

* * *

MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTIONS 'NICARAGUA'

- PEDINI (DOC. 1-1562/83)
- GLINNE (DOC. 1-1569/83)

REPLACED BY AMENDMENT NO 1 WHICH WAS ADOPTED

* * *

**SIR PETER VANNECK MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOC. 1-1556/83
'IRAN-IRAQ WAR'): ADOPTED**

* * *

**SQUARCIALUPI MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOC. 1-1561/83
'SENTENCING OF A PREGNANT WOMAN TO BE STONED TO DEATH'):
ADOPTED**

* * *

**GLINNE MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOC. 1-1568/83 'ARREST OF YURI
BADZYO'): ADOPTED**

* * *

**GLINNE MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOC. 1-1571/83 'POLITICAL
PRISONERS IN URUGUAY'): ADOPTED**

* * *

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