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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.

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IN THE CHAIR: MR PFLIMLIN

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)¹

1. Opening of annual session

President. — Pursuant to Rule 9 (2) of the Rules of Procedure I declare the 1982/1983 session of the European Parliament opened.

¹ Approval of Minutes — Topical and urgent debate (announcement of motions for resolutions tabled): see minutes.

2. Decision on urgency

President. — The next item is the decision on the urgency of various texts.

We begin with the *proposals from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-1067/81): Decision and regulation on the fishing arrangements with Norway.*

I call Mr von der Vring on a point of order.

Mr von der Vring. — (DE) Mr President, is there any reason to depart from the Rules of Procedure on this matter? I don't think we are due to vote until Friday! Normally, there is supposed to be a 24-hour interval between the presentation of the document and a vote on urgency. Since that condition is clearly not

Von der Vring

fulfilled in this instance, I would ask you not to call a vote on it until tomorrow.

President. — I call Mr Sieglerschmidt.

Mr Sieglerschmidt. — (DE) Mr President, there are two urgent procedure votes before us today. So far, however, the Council has not given any reasons for these requests either orally or in writing. I consider it totally unacceptable that Parliament should have to decide on the question of urgency when it does not even know the Council's reasons since, after all, it is the Council which has requested an urgent procedure. I ask you to defer this vote until the Council gives its reasons — as is its duty — for the requests in writing, even if it only amounts to a typewritten page.

President. — I call Mr Kirk.

Mr Kirk. — (DA) Mr President, I cannot speak for the Committee on Agriculture, but I should like to present some comments on the present request for an urgent procedure. The issue involved is after all whether we should enter into an agreement with Norway on reciprocal fishing rights. We have appointed a chairman in the Committee on Agriculture, and he is working on a report on the matter. It should be before the Committee at its meeting next week, as far as I know, so that Parliament will be able to discuss the question during the April part-session. I think the Council is acting unreasonably in asking for an urgent procedure. It did the same thing last year when the agreement with Norway was under discussion. I am well aware of the fact that we cannot blame the Council because we did not receive these agreements in time; the Commission had not completed its work on them. But whatever happens, the same situation arises year after year. The Commission must therefore organize its work in such a way in future that we in Parliament also get a chance to give our opinion before the time limits laid down in the agreement have expired. I therefore recommend that we decline to apply the urgent procedure, so that we have time to debate the matter properly here in Parliament.

President. — I call Mr Battersby.

Mr Battersby. — Just a point of information, Mr President. I was appointed rapporteur on this matter last week. The report was taken by the Committee on Agriculture last night and was passed by them with one amendment.

(Parliament adopted urgent procedure)

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

Mr Sieglerschmidt. — (DE) Mr President, will you not call on the Council before the second vote to put an end to its contempt of our Parliament by at least informing us orally why it considers this matter to be urgent.

President. — The Council will be so informed.

I call Mr von der Vring.

Mr von der Vring. — (DE) Mr President, I regret to have to say that you have violated not just my right but the right of this House and that of the Council. If a vote is taken on a request for an urgent debate and there is a risk that it may be rejected because the Members have not received the supporting documents, the prerogative of the Council to request that we apply an urgent procedure under special conditions is diminished. Rule 57 (2) states quite clearly that vote shall be taken after the document containing the reasons has been distributed at the previous sitting. You passed over that without telling us why. I wish to state that I protest most strongly over this procedure and demand that you bring the matter before the Bureau.

(Applause)

President. — The basic text for the consultation was distributed a long time ago. Moreover, it is for the House to decide, and by a majority it has adopted urgent procedure.

*

* *

President. — We shall now move on to the *Nyborg report (doc. 1-1078/81): Carriage of goods by road.*

I call the Committee on Transport.

Mr Seefeld, co-rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we are concerned here with a decision which should really have been taken last year. The Committee on Transport has protested vehemently over the fact that it did not get the documents from the Commission until October and then had to deal with a complex question in time for the Council to be able to take a decision on it as early as the beginning of December.

We have not had an easy task and we have endeavoured to arrive at practical solutions; these form the delayed proposal which the Committee on Transport is now presenting. The Council nevertheless went ahead and dealt with the matter at its December meeting and reached a decision — subject to the decision of the European Parliament.

Seefeld

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we deeply regret the fact that a whole concept for a transport policy is not before you and that the Commission constantly forces short deadlines upon us. We wanted in our own way to convey the notion that the strength of this Parliament also resides in dealing with projects, under certain circumstances, only in such a way that a proper job can be done, instead of working under the pressure of other institutions which take their time or — as in the case of the Council — often do not even reach a decision.

The Committee on Transport has now arrived at a solution. This solution is contained in Mr Nyborg's report. Since March has already begun and the quotas are applicable to the whole of 1982, my colleagues in the Committee on Transport felt that a decision should, if possible, be taken during this sitting. I think we can do that. Since the matter was not on the agenda, this is only possible under an urgent procedure. We should be well advised to agree to an urgent procedure and then, in the right way, at the right time take a vote on the Nyborg report.

I therefore appeal on behalf of the Committee on Transport for this item to be put on the agenda for this sitting for urgent debate.

(Parliament adopted urgent procedure)

President. — I propose that both items be entered on Friday's agenda.¹

President. — I call Mr Gautier.

Mr Gautier. — *(DE)* Mr President can you ensure that the documents will be distributed by tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. — or this evening — so that we can also move amendments? Although I admit I did get the document on Norway sent to me at home, I did not bring it with me because the subject was not on the agenda. And I have not yet received the report of the Committee on Agriculture since, because of the vote in plenary sitting yesterday, I could not attend the meeting of the Committee on Agriculture. Could you therefore guarantee that the documents will be distributed before you fix a deadline for amendment motions?

President. — I shall see that the documents are distributed, Mr Gautier.

3. Protection of the rights of individuals with regard to data processing (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the second report by Mr Sieglerschmidt, on

behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee, on the protection of the rights of the individual in the face of technical development in data processing (Doc. 1-548/81).

I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr De Gucht. — *(NL)* Mr President, I should like to congratulate Mr Sieglerschmidt on his excellent report. Actually, there is nothing unusual in that; his reports are always excellent. The Liberal Group is in agreement with the analysis contained in the Sieglerschmidt report. The Council of Europe Convention for the protection of individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data is really only a first step, but a step in the right direction. The important principle of prior registration and approval of automatic and manual data banks which record personal information is not covered by it. On the other hand, the correction principle is covered.

There is thus an unquestionable need for a greater degree of integration at European Community level guided by the principle of the highest level of protection. This is perfectly feasible even if all the Member States do accede to the Council of Europe Convention. For example, on the question of registration, the Convention allows a signatory or signatories, this case the Member States of the European Community, the freedom to provide a greater degree of protection. The Liberal Group would therefore in principle favour the preparation of a directive offering a greater degree of protection. In our opinion, however, a question arises as to whether this would be appropriate in the circumstances. The drafting of a Community directive must not be allowed to render difficult or jeopardize the adoption and ratification of the European Convention. We must not put the cart before the horse. Some Member States would prefer not to accede to the European Convention and to wait for an instrument which goes further. We may wonder about the hidden motives of some. Let us not have any illusions. It will be years before a Community directive is adopted. The argument that the ratification of the European Convention may take some time is thus without foundation. We must therefore counter this line of thinking. It is absolutely essential that the European Convention take effect, because it is a first step and in no way jeopardizes a more thoroughgoing approach on the part of the Community, but also because the European Convention will cover a larger number of countries and, without ratification by the Member States of the Community, runs the risk of being weakened. It is for that reason that we urge adoption of Mr Bettiza's Amendment No 14 seeking to lay greater emphasis on the need for early ratification of the European Convention by all the Member States, so that a directive can be worked out in a calm and unhurried atmosphere which, after all, may draw considerable benefit from the experience gained in the implementation of the European Convention.

⁽¹⁾ Deadline for tabling amendments: see Minutes.

De Gucht

To sum up: priority to be given to the European Convention now and more intensive action at Community level aimed at maximum protection for the individual.

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

Mr Cousté. — (*FR*) Mr President, what I have to say centres around two problems. Certainly the individual needs to be protected with regard to the automatic processing of personal data, which in itself is neutral: it is after all only a technique. The individual needs a greater degree of protection than he has hitherto enjoyed at national level, particularly in France (the law there was passed recently), but there are above all, as I see it, two points to bear in mind in this debate.

A convention was drawn up by the Council of Europe after some very interesting debates which it would pay us to study more closely. This convention has been signed by a great many countries: Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, West Germany, Sweden, Turkey, and recently Norway and the United Kingdom. That is all very satisfactory.

But it is not enough for this convention to be signed, it also has to be ratified. It is therefore imperative that we answer the call contained in the motion for a resolution drawn up by Mr Sieglerschmidt, who is to be congratulated on his report, and especially where it says that the principles outlined in this convention should be adopted at Community level, that is to say by the Ten.

These principles are important. What, in effect, do they entail? They say that data must be obtained fairly and lawfully; the storage and use of these data must be compatible with the purposes for which they were obtained. The data obtained must be relevant to the purposes for which they are stored and must be checked for accuracy and if necessary brought up to date. No sensitive data, such as those revealing political opinions, may be stored and above all, Mr President, every person should have the right to have any inaccurate data rectified.

And so we can applaud the Council of Europe Convention and at the same time urge the Commission and the Council to be guided by these directives and essential principles in framing the directive that will have to be drawn up at Community level. That is the first, and in my view most important observation that has to be made and it is entirely consistent with the motion for a resolution which is before us.

The second point is no less important and I would even say that on its own it justifies this initiative and this Community instrument, which we in the Group of European Progressive Democrats have been urging for

years. I seem to remember, in fact, that I myself was calling for it as long ago as 1977. I am referring to the need to protect personal privacy from the consequences of transborder flows of personal data.

In effect, the Community is all about the gradual disappearance of national borders, and to the extent that we do still have borders today they are also borders as regards data flows. We know of course that data are transmitted across borders, if only in the areas of banking, insurance, airline reservations and the communication of confidential information between parent companies and their subsidiaries.

All this should be placed on a proper footing, Mr President, and I dwell on this point because Mr Sieglerschmidt says it, and quite rightly, in his motion for a resolution. Wishing as I do to make a positive contribution to this debate, I should like to say how vital it is that in this area of transborder flows there should be a Community agency with responsibility for regulating and monitoring transnational data transmissions. This is essential and, moreover, will help to reassure not only public opinion but also a number of experienced journalists. May I quote what Félix Colin said recently, and I agree with him entirely: 'Individual liberties are neither an idle dream nor an abstraction; their value is appreciated only when they are lost. There is no alternative but to protect and defend them, and it is up to each and every one of us to do so'.

Perhaps I may be allowed to suggest that it is this Parliament's solemn obligation to urge the Community institutions to ensure that the appeal we made originally here in this House eight years ago should at last be heard and result in an effective, modern and reliable Community instrument that will benefit the people of this Community.

Mr Papaefstratiou. — (*GR*) Mr President, the subject we are discussing today following our colleague Mr Sieglerschmidt's very interesting and most detailed introduction, is indeed a very serious one since it relates both directly and indirectly to questions of individual freedom and human rights, both of these being subjects concerning which this Parliament has always shown great sensitivity. Various bodies of the Community had previously concerned themselves with the subject, notably in July 1974 and February 1975, and I would remind you that there is in existence a unanimous joint declaration of the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the Commission, regarding respect for basic rights.

Besides, the introduction was in direct accord with Article 100 of the Treaty of Rome, which provides for a mutual alignment of those legislative and regulatory acts of the Member States that have a direct impact on the establishment or function of our Community.

A long time ago the Commission sought to develop proposals relative to the establishment of common

Papaefstratiou

legislative acts in this domain. It is common knowledge that with the progress of modern technology, particularly in the field of electronic computers, information science, and the various other electronic means, the right of respect for the privacy of the individual is under severe threat. This is all the more true if one considers that in certain countries of the Community the relevant legislation is non-existent or very inadequate and there are serious loopholes from the standpoint of exposing the man in the street to abuse of the storage and processing of all sorts of information, both private and of other kinds. The reason for this is that jurisprudence is not always in a position to keep pace with the rapid advance of technology characteristic of our century. In these circumstances it will be necessary to examine the urgent need to exercise control at a communal level, as has so rightly been emphasized by previous colleagues as well, over the use and processing of information and technical communications, to neutralize any associated adverse consequences and at the same time grant the citizens of Europe effective protection against the improper use of information, and this by means of general, specific, and effective legislation. The rapporteur also quite rightly emphasizes that serious consideration will have to be given to the possibility of an explicit mention in the provisions of the European Declaration on the Protection of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms, involving the addition of a protocol expressing the inalienable right to enjoy protection of information of a personal nature.

In conclusion Mr President, I would like to emphasize that while technological progress is something that we all respect, it should never be allowed to turn against man himself, placing limits upon him or abusing him by preventing him from defending himself against the collection of information and from ensuring the right of privacy in his life. At first sight the subject may not seem to pose directly too severe a threat. However, when we think that millions of items of information can be stored in a little box a mere few millimetres in size; when on the other hand a tiny object the size of a lentil can be used to monitor a private conversation over a distance of hundreds of metres, we shall all have to take notice of the matter so that a common, effective, communal defence can be laid down to protect the citizens in the countries of our Community.

President. — I call Mr Turner.

Mr Turner. — Mr President, we all agree with the motive of Mr Sieglerschmidt, the rapporteur, which is to ensure effective protection for private systems in the new world of computers. We believe though, as my friends have said, that the European Convention should be given a chance to work before we bring in — if we ever should have to do so, and I hope we shall not — the Commission at an EEC level.

I entirely agree with all of that; but I want to make one warning and express one real concern to the national authorities. In the European Convention, Article 9 (2) (a) allows derogations by public authorities from the provisions otherwise laid down for computer users in respect of State security, public safety, national monetary interests and the suppression of crime. Of course all that is perfectly alright in principle, but I am worried, knowing national authorities as we all do, that they may arrogate to themselves advantages over other users of computers under this derogation; and I feel very strongly that national and public authorities should not be allowed to escape the responsibilities to the public which they should undertake under this European Convention.

They should be no less stringently controlled than are the other users of computers; and if the national and public authorities in any Member State of the EEC were to try to take special advantages for themselves over against the rights of the private individual, then I believe we should hastily bring in the Commission to act on our own behalfs against national bureaucracies.

We must, however, give the Convention a chance to work.

We must put it on good behaviour, and I believe it will work successfully by itself.

President. — I call Mr Ephremidis.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) Mr President, the proposal under discussion is concerned with a well known phenomenon, namely that of the impact of technological development. While the latter is generally of benefit to life and the development of society, on the other hand it involves certain perils.

In the specific case we are considering, we are concerned with technological developments in the handling of information, which are undoubtedly of great help to our society but which also involve certain dangers, above all the danger of an assault upon the basic rights of the individual who may be forced to undergo interference and an affront to his privacy, his honour, and his reputation. From this point of view we agree with the principle and the aims of the proposal, whose object is to promote protective measures for these basic rights of the individual, and we also agree with the invitation that this proposal offers to the Member States to become signatories to and to ratify the relevant declaration of the Council of Europe. We would indeed, raise no objection to the addition of a sixth protocol to the European Declaration of Human Rights. However, we have reservations from certain other points of view. Thus, we feel that what is said in the latter part of the proposal raises a few question-marks of a legal and political nature. For example, the accession of the EEC as such to the Declaration of the

Ephremidis

Council of Europe is not covered by either of Articles 228 or 235 of the EEC Treaty, no matter how broadly we may wish to interpret it. Those articles do not attribute any competence whatsoever, either to the Commission or to the Council, to enter into international agreements concerning matters of this kind, and we are explicitly opposed to any arbitrary extension of the competences of the Community institutions.

Yet from another point of view, in connection with the urgent need for the harmonization and further development of the national legislations by means of the Directive and on the basis of Article 100 of the EEC Treaty, we feel that the conditions of application of that article are not helpful, because the subject under discussion has nothing to do with the letter and spirit of Article 100 and we would not wish to acknowledge a right to create Community legislation that was irrelevant to such matters as are expressly provided for by the EEC Treaty. These are our reservations, and they will oblige us, in voting, to differentiate our position, whether in favour or against.

I also take the opportunity to mention my surprise that the resolution does not address itself to an important and parallel theme. It refers only to the individual rights of individuals, but makes no mention of the flagrant abuses practised on legal entities, political parties, or social organizations that are subject to tremendous pressure, tremendous affront to the inalienable rights that they possess. I speak on the basis of experience in my own country, Greece, and am sure that analogous situations arise in other member countries of the EEC as well, where today's information systems allow files to be built up concerning political parties, organizations, or their supporters and their rank and file. Indeed, in our own country this occurs in a particularly serious form owing to the presence of American service personnel, American military bases, which with the electronic systems available to them can monitor virtually all that goes on in private and public life. It has repeatedly been alleged to the Greek parliament that even when the Prime Minister of the country himself wishes to communicate with members of his cabinet by telephone, these communications are monitored in detail minute by minute, by means of such systems.

This therefore represents another very great problem in connection with the subject we are discussing, and all this, I repeat, makes us somewhat less than wholehearted about voting in favour of this resolution even though it has the positive aspects that I have underlined.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, we support all the positive elements comprised in the resolution but we think it necessary, in addition, to give some thought to

how we are to guard against the serious dangers that threaten the individual rights and freedom of the citizen, in other words against the improper use of stored information. We follow with particular interest the discussions taking place here in France, where there is after all a specific law of 1977. There is no such legal provision in our own country. It is no mere matter of chance that two Greek Members of Parliament, both Communists, have risen one after the other to emphasize the seriousness of the problem.

In Greece we lived through quite a few years during which the man in the street was at the mercy of the police authorities, who determined his work and his freedom on the basis of the contents of a file detailing his political ideas. Not so very long ago, for a man to be appointed as a gravedigger, he had to present a clean bill of ideological health issued by the services that had compiled the information in question. Think what would have happened if these services, the police State as we used to call it, had possessed the present-day technological means. It was not only the Communists who fell victim to this filing system, but the present Prime Minister of the country, Mr Andreas Papandreou, and from a certain moment onwards perhaps also the President of our Republic, Mr Karamanlis himself. In spite of the fact that it was broadcast in our country that these files would be destroyed and that there would be no possibility of using the information in them, it is extremely doubtful whether in fact any such thing occurred, and although our legislation comprises a principle that allows a citizen to be informed of the contents of his file, there is no safeguard whatsoever of his right to correct even erroneous information in his official file. We therefore advocate the strictest safeguards to ensure that the collection and individual processing of information shall not be permitted, that it may not be collected and used for political ends, that severe sanctions will be imposed for any violation of these principles, and that there will be an absolute safeguarding of the right of the citizen to be informed of the material that concerns him, about the use that is to be made of this information, and of his right to correct the information in question.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, the Commission warmly welcomes the second report on the protection of the right of the individual in the face of technical developments in data processing which Mr Sieglerschmidt has presented on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee. This report continues the European Parliament's work in this field, which this House already began in 1979 with a first report from Mr Beyerl.

Even then the Commission placed on record the importance which it attributed to this subject. In

Narjes

answers to many oral and written questions, it has in the meantime repeatedly reaffirmed that it is fully aware of the problems of data protection in a common market with a cross-frontier traffic of information and that it fully intends to contribute to the creation of such a system of protection within the framework of the general international development.

As you know, the OECD and the Council of Europe have recently produced two international instruments which are analysed in detail in Mr Sieglerschmidt's report. We have nothing to add to these analyses. Both instruments aim to set a minimum standard for data protection. While the OECD has merely issued guidelines in the form of non-binding recommendations, the Council of Europe has adopted a Convention which goes much further with regard to its legal obligations. This Convention was presented for signature by the Member States in January 1981.

The Commission took an active part in the meetings of the group of experts drafting the Convention, and in the spring of 1981 it was signed by the Member States Denmark, Germany, France and Luxembourg — all of them countries having legislation on data protection already in force. Somewhat later it was signed by the United Kingdom, which so far has no legislation covering this field.

In this connection, the Commission is wondering whether and to what extent it should develop an initiative of its own. In the interest of a comprehensive European regulation which also covers other States — Austria, Portugal, Norway, Sweden and Turkey have likewise already signed — but also in the interest of the good cooperation, for which this House in particular has repeatedly expressed a desire, between the European Community and the Council of Europe, the Commission sees it as its first priority to ensure that those Member States which have not yet done so should also sign the Council of Europe Convention, i.e. to ensure that it is ratified by all Member States.

With this aim in view, the Commission on 29 July last year issued a Recommendation to the Member States for the incorporation of the Council of Europe Convention and called on them to sign it during 1981 and to ratify it before the end of 1982.

The Commission therefore unreservedly welcomes the fact that the motion for a resolution which is before you contains a call from the European Parliament to Member States to comply with the Commission's Recommendation. The Commission intends early in the summer of this year to call a coordination meeting of the Member States in order to examine the reasons which have so far prevented a number of them from signing the Convention or to learn of the misgivings they have in this respect.

There are, however, limits to the extent to which we can pursue our desire to regulate things in the interna-

tional framework. The Commission in its Recommendation has explicitly reserved for the Council an option to propose that a Directive be enacted pursuant to the EEC Treaty, if the Strasbourg Convention is not signed and ratified within the time limit referred to in the Recommendation. Then of course we should all — i.e. the Commission in close cooperation with yourselves — have to examine how the content of the European Convention, which I have described as a minimum standard, can be expanded into a Community regulation which goes further in its provisions. On this point, the report makes far-reaching proposals, for example: liability for damage which has arisen through the irregular handling of personal data, the introduction of compulsory approval for data banks and the creation of a Community authority for the control of cross-frontier data transmission, i.e. a kind of office for a European data protection inspector with extensive powers of control.

I welcome in this connection the fact that Article 100 is singled out as a possible legal basis for such a directive and that the Legal Affairs Committee has also unanimously approved this in paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution.

Let us be clear in our minds, however, that the drafting of a directive which will regulate all the material questions referred to will be a difficult task. Compared with the large number of officials concerned with this field in the capitals of our Member States, the staff the Commission has available is very small. For work on the approximation of legislation, particularly in the field of data protection, and harmonization, the Commission's staff cover is so stretched that it is becoming a question of politics rather than of internal organization and budgeting.

If we are to draft a more comprehensive directive, we must have additional staff at our disposal.

Also you no doubt share my concern over the time-consuming nature of the procedure for the enactment of a directive. We cannot get it adopted within a very short space of time. As far as the material provisions are concerned, we must be careful not to demand too much of those Member States which up to now have had no legislation of their own on this subject at all. Finally, I should like to remind you that Article 100 requires unanimity.

Once we have embarked on the preparation of a directive, the requirement stated here on one occasion that we should first gather experience will in my opinion be automatically met, as far as the material circumstances are concerned. I believe therefore that at the present time our first concern must be to make fast progress in the completion of the first stage in a comprehensive regulation of the data protection question by securing the signing and ratification of the Strasbourg Convention.

Narjes

We shall then have to examine the concrete follow-up measures which may seem appropriate and the form to be taken by any new initiatives the Commission can pursue with the support of the European Parliament.

Having said that, I should like once more to offer my hearty thanks to the Legal Affairs Committee and most especially to its rapporteur, Mr Sieglerschmidt, for their excellent work on this important subject.

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, allow me to say a few words on the development of the discussion and on the points made by Mr Narjes. But first of all I should like to thank all who have been so kind as to express appreciation for my report and of course in particular those who have stated themselves to be more or less in agreement with it and most of all those who have expressed their full agreement with it. Because of the time available, however, I shall deal only with those points on which I have critical observations to make.

Mr Alber said yesterday that data protection is a legal problem, not a technical one. I don't think you can say it quite like that. Ultimately, I would think that we are of the same opinion on this matter. Nuclear weapons, for example, are not only a problem of international law but also a technical problem because of their immensely greater capabilities compared with conventional weapons. The same applies to the relation between conventional data files and computerized systems.

The most important question which has been raised by more or less all those involved in the discussion relates to the relevance of the Council of Europe Convention to the enactment of a directive. I do not share Mr Tyrrell's fear that working with two legal instruments existing side by side would create difficulties. I should like to remind him that, on the question of liability for defective products, Parliament welcomed the intervention of the Council of Europe in this field with a European Convention. Starting from this legal basis we then drew up our opinion on the Commission's proposal for a directive on defective products.

We should not forget — as Mr Narjes has rightly pointed out — that the preparation of a directive on data protection in the European Community will be a long and laborious process.

Referring now to the question of the Community's accession to the Convention, Mr Ephremidis, perhaps you do not yet know that the European Community has already acceded to other international treaties. This is nothing new, therefore. Now we may say: but we don't want it! That is another matter. Legally, at all events, it is completely unobjectionable. After all, the

Commission — we are glad to know — also has plans for the accession of the European Community to the European Convention on Human Rights!

Mr Narjes, I should like to make two specific points regarding your remarks. If there is really a shortage of staff here which cannot be relieved by transfers within the Commission, and if you can prove that, you will certainly find many Members of Parliament on your side in your efforts to create new posts, for the preparation of an important directive must not be allowed to run aground on shortage of staff. If Parliament — as I hope — in the main approves of the proposal of the Legal Affairs Committee this afternoon — and here I come to my second point — it cannot of course force the Commission to follow it and start work immediately on the drafting of the directive. But, Commissioner, you have already stated your position — before Parliament and in your Recommendation of 29 July 1981. We will take you at your word if the Convention has not been signed and ratified by all Member States by the end of 1982 and assume that you will immediately and *without delay of your own making* start work on drafting a proposal for a directive.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

4. Common transport policy.

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

- the report by Mr Carossino (Doc. 1-996/81), on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on the common transport policy,
- the report by Mr Gabert (Doc. 1-982/81), on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on the future of the Community railway network.

I call Mr Carossino.

Mr Carossino, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, with this report, the fruit of a broad and intensive discussion, the Committee on Transport wishes to call Parliament's attention to the serious situation which has resulted from the lack of a common transport policy. The obligation to create such a policy derives from the Treaties which, in Title IV and in Articles 74 and 84, confirm it in solemn and unequivocal terms.

Although various measures concerning transport have been adopted over the last few years, it cannot be said that the Community now has genuine transport policy. Parliament first called for this policy in 1958, with the Kapteyn report, and it has presented the proposal

Carossino

again on several occasions, the most recent being the Seefeld report in 1978.

The creation of this policy has been prevented by the inaction of the Council of Ministers and by its systematic refusal to make decisions, despite proposals by the Commission and the opinions expressed by Parliament, as is amply demonstrated by the long list of draft directives and regulations which have been awaiting the Council's decisions for years. Nor can it be argued that, since a considerable period of time has elapsed, some of these provisions are outdated, for even the most recent and important proposals lately approved by Parliament have been systematically ignored or overlooked by the Council.

The situation is growing progressively worse.

In the past, Parliament has criticized the so-called 'small steps' policy. Today not even small steps appear to be possible, for the rare meetings of the Council are increasingly inconclusive. Instead of being sanctioned by functional decisions, these meetings usually end with the announcement of postponements for the sake of further hypothetical studies, or else they produce only recommendations to the governments, which leave the situation unchanged.

The most recent, and, in some respects, the most outstanding proof of this lack of concern was offered by the mandate of 30 May, which made no mention whatsoever of transport policy. In fact, we find ourselves in a blind alley, from which we must escape as soon as possible if the very results that have been so painfully obtained over the last few years are not to be compromised and undermined.

The objective of this report, which was occasioned by the motion for a resolution presented by Mr Baudis, is precisely to involve the directly-elected Parliament in the matter in order to change a situation that has become intolerable, to oblige the Council to assume its responsibilities, and, more generally, to include the issue of transport within the broader question of institutional reform with which Parliament is now preparing to deal.

The evolution of the economic and social situation within the Community as made the adoption of a common policy on transport more urgent than ever. One has only to think of the problems posed by the accession of Greece to the Community on 1 January 1981 and of those stemming from the need to adopt a policy of saving and diversification in the field of energy, where transport is a large consumer. Nevertheless, the considerations on the role of transport in the functioning of the common market and in the attainment of the free circulation of goods and productive factors across the frontiers of the Member States remain valid.

The construction of an efficient low-cost transport network is, moreover, indispensable for increasing the productivity of the economic system and for bringing about the integration of all the regions of the Community — especially where the peripheral regions are concerned.

On the basis of this and other considerations which I cannot go into here, we call on the Commission and the Council to submit to Parliament an overall programme including the measures to be implemented from now until the end of the legislature.

This programme should embrace all types of transport and take into account the opinions already expressed by Parliament on the individual proposals: in particular those concerning the role of the infrastructures, measures of social and technico-administrative harmonization, cooperation among railways, and the application of the principles of the Treaty to air and maritime transport.

We are now awaiting a response from the Commission, and above all from the Council. If this final attempt to induce the Council to change its attitude is unproductive, then Parliament will have no choice but to initiate procedure for an appeal to the Court of Justice against the Council of Ministers for failure to act, according to Article 175 of the EEC Treaty.

In a subsequent provision, now being studied by the Committee on Transport and the Legal Affairs Committee, the procedures and schedule for the presentation of this appeal will be set out in detail.

Last week in the President-in-Office of the Council, taking this eventuality into consideration, declared that a good compromise is better than a bad trial. I am also of this opinion, and I hope that such an extreme measure, which would certainly increase the grounds for conflict between Parliament and the Council, will not be necessary, and that all possible political initiatives and actions will be exhausted before resorting to it.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the present state of affairs, the decision no longer belongs to Parliament alone: to a great extent it depends on the Council, and on its willingness and ability to respond unequivocally to needs which can no longer be ignored.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Gabert.

Mr Gabert, rapporteur. — *(DE)* Mr President, colleagues, on 7 November 1979, the Commission presented a memorandum on the role of the Community in the development of transport infrastructure. On 20 June 1980, the Commission sent to

Gabert

the Council a report on bottlenecks and possible modes of finance to be contributed by the Community. Also, in December 1980, the Commission sent a communication to the Council on the Community's railway policy entitled 'Review and outlook for the 1980s'. Parliament has debated the reports drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport by Mr Klinckenborg, Mr Cotrell, Mr Albers and Mr Ripa di Meana and adopted the resolutions contained in those reports. All these documents, Mr President, have been used by your rapporteur in the preparation of his report and unanimously adopted the resolution contained in it.

The Committee on Transport discussed this subject at its meeting on 16 November 1981, took note of the report and unanimously adopted the resolution contained in it.

I urge the House to follow this example, since the railways will have a very important role to play in future European transport policy. The Committee on Transport especially welcomed the fact that the Council of Transport Ministers, at its last meeting in December of last year, finally took a major policy decision on this question. In accordance with that decision, railway policy will have a key role to play in the transport policy of the Community. The Committee on Transport of this Parliament has long since acknowledged the importance of the railways to European transport and, as rapporteur, I welcome the initiatives taken by the Commission, since they serve the Community's aim of restoring economic health to the railways of the Member States. The resolution once again emphasizes that, when financial aid is allocated from Community resources for transport infrastructure, the energy-saving mode of transport constituted by the railways deserves to be given preference.

The resolution recommends that when short, medium and long-term investment measures are selected for the Community railway network and are to be assisted from Community resources, the European infrastructure master plan drawn up by the International Union of Railways should be taken as a basis. The Committee on Transport calls on the Commission on the basis of this plan to draw up a route map of the existing and planned railway network of the Community of Ten and to allocate priorities which the railway administrations of the Member States can use as guidelines for their infrastructure investment and which will clarify the planning objectives of the Community institutions.

The Committee on Transport moreover has expressed its bitter disappointment over the fact that the Council has still not laid down the legal basis for the financing of a common transport policy. The resolution makes an urgent appeal to the Council finally to adopt without delay the regulation proposed as long ago as 1976 on financial assistance for projects of Community interest in the field of transport infrastructure, having regard to the Commission's

amending proposals and the decisions taken by Parliament in June 1980.

The Council makes grand statements about its transport policy but if this regulation, which has been with the Council since 1976, is not finally adopted those statements will be seen to be nothing but hot air. Only if this is done can infrastructure — including that of the railways — be developed and improved with assistance from the Community. Of course, better cooperation between the railway undertakings of the Community is also necessary. Consolidation of the finances of the railway undertakings is an essential prerequisite for this. The administrative barriers to cross-frontier traffic must also be dismantled. During the last few decades, there has been no expansion in the railway network compared with that of the road network — apart from some new urban transit systems. But this expansion is urgently needed, even on existing links, by projects such as electrification, automation and conversion of lines for higher speeds, but also by the construction of new links, for example the Channel Tunnel, a tunnel through the Alps and special high-speed lines.

The railways today are the only mode of transport which is not necessarily dependent on oil, for they are increasingly being converted to electric traction. The share of the railways in the oil consumption of the transport sector as a whole is approximately 2.7%. On the other hand, the share consumed by road transport works out at 81.4%. This comparison can and must be improved by further electrification. If oil prices continue to rise, the railways could take over some of the traffic of other more oil-intensive carriers. Compared with other modes of transport, the railways are very safe in operation and are quite benign in their effects on the environment.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I have already pointed out that the Committee on Transport adopted the resolution unanimously. I can only appeal to the House to follow suit, for the railways — I must emphasize this one again — are of crucial importance to the future transport policy of the Community.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Seefeld. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall begin with a word of thanks to our rapporteur, Mr Carossino. His report is an important one, and my group will vote for it. I also thank Mr Gabert, however, and would add that the Socialist Group will also back his report.

Let me now examine Mr Carossino's very important report in some detail. It has been a long story, ladies and gentlemen: the elected representatives of the

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people of Europe have repeatedly attempted to get the ministers responsible to lay down a general framework for the common transport policy. I'm not going to launch into historical research here, but as far back as 1957 — I repeat, 1957! — a Member of the European Parliament, Mr Kapteyn, wrote a report which in principle demanded the same things as we are forced to continue demanding today, because — as far as I can see — virtually nothing has happened since then.

Mr Kapteyn wrote a second report in 1961 on questions of principle in the transport policy, and our colleague, Mr Mursch, produced another in 1974. I was the rapporteur myself in 1979 and forgive me Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, if I repeat a few sentences from the speech I made at the time, for they have not lost their relevance: 'Again and again Parliament is cast in an admonishing role to issue a reminder that a rational, coherent transport policy is needed in the European Community. Again and again' — I said at that time — 'sound business sense leads to European solutions being advocated. But unfortunately we hit solid granite when we try to get through to the Council.' Then as now. I could read right to the end of the speech, Mr President, and you would see that it is absolutely up to date.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is most extraordinary, it is deplorable, that the ministers responsible have not even bothered their heads over opinions continuously and unanimously put forward by this House. They have failed to acknowledge our opinions, thereby manifesting deep contempt for representatives of the people. We must take vigorous steps to ensure that the ten governments do not play games with this Parliament on the question of transport policy.

(Applause)

Colleagues, it cannot be allowed to continue. We have a mandate from the millions of people in our countries, and transport policy is precisely one field in which the citizens can see for themselves whether anything is being done or not.

I ask here and now: do the ministers really not understand that they are setting their faces against the peoples of Europe by their blinkered defence of supposed national interests? Do the ministers not realize that a firm determination is being shown in the European Parliament to do away once and for all with the ridiculous barriers which the disunity on transport legislation imposes on the economy of Europe and on all its citizens?

Ladies and gentlemen, meetings of the Council take place once or twice a year, seldom more frequently. Council meetings have been cancelled because texts ready for a decision to be taken have not been available. The Permanent Representatives' Transport Group cannot agree, and what is then put before the Council is passed back after a brief discussion — and I

venture to doubt whether it is even discussed — to the same Permanent Representatives who could not agree on it before.

No, if celebrations are now to be held to commemorate '25 years of the European Community', the European Parliament's transport policy experts cannot join in, because — regrettably — '25 years of the European Community' mean 25 years of failure on the question of a unified European transport policy.

(Applause)

Colleagues, our discussions today concern Mr Carossino's report. It is shorter than earlier reports, but Mr Carossino refers back to the preceding reports, and in fact all the reports — from that of Mr Kapteyn to my own report of 1979 and that of Mr Carossino — have to be seen as a single entity. We are not in the European Community talking about the day to day administration and occasional reform of existing legislation but about making ten sets of transport provisions in the Member States into a new common transport policy. Perhaps the Carossino report will make history, for — I should like our colleagues here to know this — the present President of the Council of Ministers, Belgian Transport Minister de Croo, declared to our Committee on Transport during the discussions at our last meeting before this debate his intention of placing the Carossino report on the agenda of the Council of Transport Ministers, if we adopt it here today, let us hope unanimously. He promised me faithfully that he would make sure that it would also be discussed and talked over in the Council of Ministers and that views would be properly exchanged on this report.

We are modest people! If only it could happen once that unanimously adopted texts from the European Parliament were not merely taken account of by the ministers for the record but actually discussed and our arguments considered! If that happened, that would at least be a step in the right direction. Ministers responsible would then be personally concerned with a text, would leaf through it and read a bit and perhaps give a little thought to what these Euro-MP's are actually after.

There is a lot to say on this report. Believe me, as chairman of the Committee on Transport, I could get carried away in my indictment of men who do nothing and yet basically bear a very heavy responsibility.

Let me end with an allusion, Mr President. It is no secret that the Committee on Transport and the Legal Affairs Committee are at present actively preparing to institute proceedings under Article 175 of the EEC Treaty. Our patience is at an end! And we want to tell the citizens of Europe before we are half-way through the mandate of this directly-elected Parliament exactly why the transport policy is not making progress. We are not afraid to follow up words with deeds and we

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are not afraid to come under the critical scrutiny of the electorate. No, before the next elections in 1984, we want to be able to tell the voters it is not because the European Parliament lacks initiatives, ideas and good proposals that nothing gets done, but because the power of the European Parliament alone is not enough to force the governments to make policy for citizens.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, let me say in conclusion: it is time the European transport policy ceased to be the Cinderella of the European Community. That said, the Socialist Group will again, as in the past, stand firmly by the demands the Committee on Transport has drawn up and which, I take it, the House will unanimously adopt.

(Applause)

Mr Travaglini. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Group of the EPP will vote in favour of the motion for a resolution which Mr Carossino has presented on behalf of the Committee on Transport on the common transport policy — I should have said, on the lack of a common transport policy.

The central point of the proposal is the intention to bring an action before the Court of Justice, under Article 175 of the Treaty, against the Council for the reasons contained in the motion for a resolution which I myself, along with Mr Hoffmann and others, presented to this Parliament. With this initiative we proposed immediate recourse to the Court for failure to act. Our position, extremely critical of the Council, results from the latter's demonstrated and persistent near-indifference towards a Community policy on transport, despite the proposals of the Commission and the many and exhaustive opinions delivered by this Parliament.

The Committee on Transport, at the conclusion of an exhaustive debate from which the Council's failure to act emerged very clearly, has once again, with its own initiative report and its motion for a resolution, issued a strong plea to the Council to define once and for all the framework of a common transport policy as called for in Article 74 of the Treaty, and to decide on the Commission's proposals on which Parliament has already expressed an opinion.

We are certain that Parliament, approving the resolution proposed by the Committee on Transport, will initiate legal procedures if the Council does not respond adequately to our request within a reasonable length of time. We will ask therefore only for a postponement of the evaluation of our initiative, and we are ready to recommend such action again in the case of further, deplorable inertia on the part of the Council.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it was certainly not without good reason that the Treaty of Rome indicated transport policy as one of the priority policies of the Community, dedicating an entire Title to it. However, this policy has remained almost totally neglected. It is only too evident that the rationalization and the reinforcement of the transport system are essential conditions for attaining the fundamental objectives of the Community institution.

The common market will never be able to exploit all its potential as a great instrument for the development of the Community economies if we are unable to assure its complete internal mobility, without frontier obstacles, without distortions provoked by the fundamental diversity of the policies and legislation of the Member States in all sectors having to do with traffic, trade, and territorial mobility.

Thus it is impossible, without an appropriate and well-aimed transport policy, to reduce the ever more marked disparities between the richest and the least favoured regions of the Community. It is not by chance that these latter are precisely the most peripheral zones, and they bear heavier burdens in all activities due to the higher effective costs of transport, the extra time involved, and the reduced volume of trade. Have you ever estimated, even if only in numerical terms, the economic handicap suffered by a citizen or operator in any sector of production in Puglia or Calabria trying to maintain and promote trade with the economically stronger areas of Europe and of his own country? Have you ever accurately estimated the role which these difficulties have played in the failure of these regions to develop?

It is impossible to underrate the negative effect which the lack of an organic transport policy continues to have on the restructuring of the mechanisms of production in the Community countries. This restructuring process will never succeed in giving rise to an organic and efficient Community productive system, capable of responding to the challenges of non-European industrial powers, if we are unable fully to exploit national and regional complementary characteristics.

Finally, I would like to stress the need to make an increased effort to profit from the cultural complementarity of our peoples and our regional communities, a process which can become more intensive as the network of Community transport becomes more efficient.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I will not list the proposals the Commission has made which have not been followed up: the rapporteur has done this excellently. I insist on the need to define without further delay an overall framework for this fundamental Community policy, one which takes into account the problems of rationalizing and strengthening the transport system, in close correlation with the development

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of the Community mechanism of production and regional planning. Within this framework it is also necessary to propose appropriate and specific provisions to eliminate the distortions and the bottlenecks which cause serious delay in the process of economic integration.

I am obliged, therefore, to underline the urgent need to define the system of transport infrastructures of Community interest and to approve the relevant regulation for the financial support of the Community which the Commission has been proposing to the Council since 1976. I am well aware that the inadequacy of the financial means available to the Community militates against this, but I believe that a concrete policy for the creation of a functional infrastructural system of Community interest can be initiated by appropriate use of the Community financial instruments which operate with the borrowing system.

The integration of the railway companies is another vital element in the rationalization of the transport system. Where these problems are concerned, one has the impression that the Community has come to recognize that it is virtually impossible to devise any practical course of action in the face of the considerable difficulties which exist, because of the divergent interests of the various countries. Such divergencies are present in the entire transport sector, and, although they are certainly numerous and sharply defined, no overall and incisive effort has been made to tackle them. The guidelines laid down by the Council clearly favour free trade which, at least in this sector is an obstacle to integration, and tends to favour the sectoral policies of certain countries in the absence of decisive action for the effective harmonization of the conditions of competition.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the definition of a coherent Community framework for the development of an overall transport policy and its gradual but prompt implementation can no longer be delayed. Any further delay will lead inexorably to the indictment of the Community bodies for failure to promote European integration.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Moorhouse. — Mr President, first of all may we congratulate Mr Carossino on the excellence of his report. In all his work in the Committee on Transport, Mr Carossino has always shown himself to be a true European, and his report today clearly reflects his deep commitment to a European transport policy, a common transport policy — an objective we in this group most certainly share with him and the other members of the Transport Committee.

Mr President, transport is a major European industry. It is important to you, to me and to all the people who elected us to this Parliament. At the local, national, Community and indeed the world level, we all have a stake in transport. It is an interesting fact that, as I think Mr Carossino has said in his report, no fewer than 17 million people in the Community are dependent for their livelihood on moving goods and people. In the great city of Greater London, part of which I represent, no fewer than 60 000 people work in transport. There is also the fact that transport accounts for between five and nine per cent of Member States' GNP and for an average of six per cent of trade revenue and expenditure. It is no wonder that our founding fathers could see from the outset that a common transport policy was one of the foundation stones of the Community and wrote it in to the Rome Treaty in large print, recognizing that it is at the heart of the prosperity of the Member States whom we are proud to represent and that we need an effective, integrated transport system.

Sir, the tragedy, as Mr Seefeld and other speakers have made clear, is that little has been achieved, not just in the past two-and-a-half years but over the whole span of the past 25 years, and I would say that it reflects very badly indeed, not, I think, on this Parliament, but in particular on the Council of Transport Ministers. I believe it is a fact that there are no fewer — and this figure may already have been stated in the debate — than 55 proposals for action from the Commission and the Parliament lying on the table of the Council of Transport Ministers.

It is to us a matter of regret that there is no representative here today of the Council of Transport Ministers. Mr De Croo was good enough to come to the meeting of the Committee on Transport a week or two ago, but we regret that he is not here in the Parliament itself, Sir, and we feel that he should have been present. It stands in some contrast, if I may be allowed to say, to the offer which has been made by the British Under-Secretary of State to come to a meeting of the Transport Committee, as soon as is convenient to that committee, to discuss further the draft regulation on inter-regional air services, which is yet another measure which has run into the sands.

So, faced with this situation as we are in the Transport Committee and in the Parliament as a whole, it is no wonder that we are seriously thinking of taking legal action against the Council of Ministers. This, of course, is a very serious matter, but it is a measure of the enormous frustration which has built up, particularly in the Transport Committee, but also among a great many other Members of this Parliament. I would urge the Commissioner for Transport to push, push, push the various proposals which are on the table, because nothing less than vigorous action will stave off the legal action which all of us are now contemplating and on which we are taking legal advice.

Moorhouse

Sir, we need a framework of a common transport policy. That needs to be laid down. It is called for in the Rome Treaty dated 1957 — not 1979 but 1957! We need a transport infrastructure fund to give Community backing to great projects like the Channel Tunnel; but there are a number of other projects, large and small. We need to remove the transport bottlenecks at the frontiers, to facilitate the movement of people and goods, and I myself will shortly have the privilege of bringing before the Committee and before this Parliament a report on transport bottlenecks. But is this to be yet another paper tiger; just another academic exercise; or shall we see a practical outcome? That is what we need, since we are representing the peoples of Europe. We need also, Sir, if I may say, to liberalize and create equitable conditions of competition by road, rail and in the air; and part of this is required by the Rome Treaty.

I say once again that I appeal through you, Sir, to the Commissioner to use all his weight and influence within the Council of Ministers. Don't let them off the hook! Keep going! That is the message; because unless within this year some definite measures can be pushed through, we shall have no option but to take legal action as the European Parliament, and I feel confident that the whole Parliament would support such a move if need be, even though we should regret it.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr M. Martin. — (*FR*) Mr President, this debate on the reports by my colleagues on the Committee on Transport, the one about common transport policy and the other about the future of the Community railway network, raises a fair number of questions to do with what are amongst the most practical and everyday realities to which those interested in effective European integration have to find the answers.

It is on behalf of the French members of the Communist and Allies Group that I wish to introduce into the debate one or two thoughts.

Like every one of you, we too are trying to evaluate what stage we have reached in building a common transport policy and to determine what solutions would be most helpful in moving us towards a more harmonious and comprehensive development of the European transport network, taking all means of transport into consideration. The French members of the Communist and Allies Group are less interested in knowing whether the obligations under the Treaty of Rome have been met in spirit and to the letter or totally abandoned, than in finding out to what extent the Community and its institutions can provide the right framework within which genuine progress can be made in establishing a transport policy, and what obstacles it may present that would justify our countries taking independent action.

As far as we are concerned, we do not place the idea of consensus above any consideration of its content. Indeed we welcome the fact that our countries have sufficient freedom to seek out in a free and democratic manner the particular solution to their transport problems which to them seems to be most appropriate. Such an attitude is no doubt totally alien to all those who see integration and the abandonment of national sovereignties as the only hope for the future. But we have to yield to the facts: integration has reached a dead-end. Now that reality is threatening to frustrate their efforts and their plans, it is naturally easy enough for those who have a mind to do so to elevate their bitterness to the level of a theory. Everyone, whatever hopes he may build in the dream, has to face reality. It is not so much the common transport policy that is suffering a setback as the process of integration to which some people had been hoping to adapt it; but integration has come up against insurmountable obstacles.

As for a common transport policy based on cooperation, there is of course still a great deal to be done. But I would say, without either undue satisfaction or concern, that it is, after all, coming along. It is not within the power of any judge, not even a judge at the European Court of Justice, to make it come along any faster or better. Certainly one might see cause for dismay in the fact that we have not yet succeeded in securing agreement among six or nine or ten Member States with regard to certain projects. I am particularly hopeful that by our joint efforts we may bring forward the time when we can find solutions to a host of problems posed for us, for example, by traffic bottlenecks, by the execution of major infrastructure projects, by the extension of the network of fast and easily accessible road links within and between our countries. The Channel Tunnel project is a good example of a positive approach. Anglo-French cooperation on this infrastructure project could, with luck, ultimately attract Community participation in the shape of financial assistance.

Our ambition naturally drives us to make ever greater demands, and what has been achieved always seems to be less than perfect. All we have to beware of is believing that nothing can work outside the context of the European Community. As for the common transport policy, which implies the free movement of persons and goods, the past 20 years have seen an uneven but nonetheless considerable development. Rather than going over all the projects with standard technical specifications which never came to anything, or losing ourselves in academic discussions on matters to do with the Community quota, which incidentally seems itself to be used in a bilateral fashion, we should do better, in our view, to give thought to the new problems imposed on us by the economic situation that our countries are having to cope with, to solutions of a structural character or to new options that such a situation seems to call for. In fact, the economic recession, the essential requirements for reducing our dependence on

Martin

imported fuels, the need to consider the impact on employment of any new policy, environmental considerations and, finally, concern for the safety of the travelling public are forcing us to call into question outmoded options of the past. It is time we restored a certain balance between modes of transport on the basis of the economic and social priorities that we hope to see established.

There has been delay in establishing a coherent ranking according to the relative importance of various modes of transports. What is needed above all is a new balance between the development of road transport and transport by rail and inland waterways, both of which are particularly economical from the energy point of view. We must now seek to put right the damage done by distortion of competition which for years has been biased against the railways. In this connection, when for years the Community has concentrated on encouraging the liberalization of the market rather than on harmonizing competition, we warmly welcome the Council's resolution of 15 December 1981, which seeks to strengthen Community action in respect of the railways. Let us hope that this resolution, which should be followed by a programme of specific measures that the Commission will draw up for us, marks the beginning of a positive approach.

Quite apart from the obvious advantages of easing the crossing of frontiers between our countries we believe that an efficient and more rational organization of the railways would be of considerable benefit to the transport of passengers and goods. In particular, the possibilities that combined means of transport offer would appear to be worth exploring. Similarly, the introduction of faster passenger trains on the major international routes, something like the HST, would help to attract more of the travelling public to the railways. And may I also suggest that if Europe were able to boast of a coherent rail transport system it would find major opportunities for cooperation with younger nations that are industrially backward and lacking in infrastructure, like our partners in the ACP countries. We are convinced that such a policy, which presupposes a new programme of investment in this sector, would pay enormous dividends, both economically and socially.

The French members of the Communist and Allies Group, who have never harboured any illusions nor placed great faith in any possible process of integration, will always actively support any initiative that gives consideration to the growing need for an improved transport system, with particular emphasis on public transport and the development of the railways.

Where sea and air transport are concerned, we see no need for a Community framework, nor for any rigid rules on competition to bring about an improvement in

the situation. In both these areas the world framework, with its existing institutions, seems to us to be the proper context in which to make further progress.

We shall see how this debate progresses and decide how we shall vote accordingly.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs von Alemann. — (*DE*) Mr President, ladies and gentleman, transport policy debates in this House — particularly when they concern questions of principle — have always taken on the nature of laments which end with the realization that, in spite of all the efforts of the European Parliament, it has not been possible to get the Council to take decisions, i. e. to honour its obligations under the Treaty, one of which is to introduce a common transport policy.

I completely disagree with Mr Martin, who has just said that basically he considers arrangements on a national or international basis — as in air transport — to be better than European ones. With the rest of my group, I believe that we must make progress with a European transport policy in order to achieve any unification of economic policy at all. I doubt if we can solve our economic problems if we do not solve the associated transport policy problems.

The rapporteur, Mr Carossino, has presented an abundance of facts in his report which show how important transport is to modern industrial societies, to the working of the common market and to the integration of the Community. The rapporteur describes the dreary state of the common transport policy, a policy which for all practical purposes does not exist. He details the failures of the Council and the Commission finally to produce proposals of their own which would get us out of the impasse.

Anyone who really reads this report, ladies and gentlemen, will realize that the transport policy experts of the European Parliament are no longer content merely to continue filling the Council's filing cabinets with new reports and initiatives. Transport policy is really far too important an element of Community policy for that.

Seen in that light, this report on the common transport policy also has to be assessed in a different way to the previous basic reports of Mr Kapteyn, Mr Müller-Hermann, Mr Mursch and Mr Seefeld. We are not just talking about a new initiative or new proposals here, we are dealing with a catalogue of facts going back over a period of two decades to serve as a basis for an initiative of a different kind.

Two decades! A long time. But that is how long we have been trying to get something done. For all that time the European Parliament has tried again and

Von Alemann

again to give practical effect to its political will in the transport sector. It has not so far succeeded because of the inability of the Council to take a decision.

Only one course remains open to Parliament now — short of a miracle at the last minute — and that is to proceed against the Council on the ground of failure to act, as provided in Article 175 of the EEC Treaty.

The Liberal and Democratic Group discussed this question in detail in November last year. It came to the conclusion then that, after years of fruitless efforts to get a common transport policy underway, there was only one course left — to proceed on the grounds of failure to act. We advocate and support this course of action, in the knowledge that a common transport policy must form one of the key elements of the European Community if we are not to allow further progress in Community policy to be impeded or jeopardized. We shall therefore vote in favour of the Carossino report.

I should like to congratulate rapporteur Gabert for his report and tell him once more that we shall back it. Mr Gabert deals with a specific problem in his report. It concentrates on the investment for the development and improvement of the railway network, which will be necessary in the medium and long term to improve the economic viability and productivity of this mode of transport. Of immediate concern are means of financing, to the extent that these are directly associated with infrastructure measures.

The problem with which we are faced in this field has arisen because, as we all know, a drowning man will reach out for any straw, i.e. he will deal with the immediate problem before thinking about what lies ahead. Transport investment, however, is always investment in the future, not investment which will show immediate returns. We must not lose sight of this principle. Unfortunately we have to face the fact today that those bear the responsibility have lost sight of it. Priority given to securing liquidity for the immediate future has vitiated all longer-term considerations. This is the only way to explain how the budget item 'transport investment' could have become the piggy bank of the Community. It is really a tragic state of affairs.

How has it come about? The easiest area to make cuts is in transport investment. It is often not on the policy-maker's list of priorities. Electoral favour is more easily gained by measures which will produce results in the short term than by longer-term investments. This irresponsible attitude must be changed without delay. To make no provision for transport investment or to make inadequate provision means that, in the future, not only will bottlenecks not be removed but they will become more acute. That will necessarily have its effects on the economy.

Thus the productivity of those undertakings will diminish which, because of siting considerations, are forced to operate under the constraint of the bottle-

necks. Production costs in the economy as a whole will increase in those areas, and the profitability and competitiveness of the firms concerned will decline on national or international markets.

For higher transport costs caused by bottlenecks have an effect which is tantamount to an increase in the economic distance. Not only the firms directly affected will be damaged by this exacerbated siting disadvantage, however, but also possible supplier firms.

Thus we have a chain reaction which we must break. The overall conclusion is that a mismanaged transport policy acts as a brake on growth. This is something which must be said to those who think that transport policy does not need to be given any special priority in Community economic policy. I strongly urge therefore that these two reports, for which, as I have said, my group will vote, be backed and that we be supported in our efforts finally — after over two decades — to get a transport policy underway.

(Applause)

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

Mr Junot. — *(FR)* There are two observations that I wish to make on the Carossino report and both are more of an institutional than a technical nature.

Whilst accepting the general content and conclusions of the report, which on the whole met with the approval of the Committee on Transport, we do however regret the rather excessively harsh criticism it has to make of the national transport policies that have been pursued for a number of years in the countries of the Community. On the other hand, we approve wholeheartedly the Committee on Transport's condemnation of the failure by the Commission and the Council fully to implement the provisions of the Treaty of Rome. The impression of indifference, not to say contempt, which comes across and the consequences of which we are no longer prepared to tolerate is confirmed — as Mr Moorhouse said just now — by the absence from this debate of anyone in a position of responsibility in the Community authorities.

My first observation concerns the procedure. I am not at all sure that the quite exceptional and unprecedented situation that a possible decision by the Court against the Council and the Commission would produce could have any favourable and positive outcome. I would be afraid that the effect might be to divert us off-course, which, you have to admit, is hardly very satisfactory when we are talking of transport.

Junot

Our second remark concerns paragraph 8 of the motion for a resolution, which calls on the Council to forego the use of the principle of unanimity for the decisions that have to be taken. This is to touch on the essential problem of the principle of unanimity or majority, to call into question the provisions of the Treaty and of the Luxembourg Compromise. I certainly do not intend to reopen this fundamental question right now, but we do not think Parliament should be expected to take a decision of principle on the basis of an article in a resolution of a technical character.

I should not like to end, Mr President, without expressing the hope that Parliament, the Commission and the Council will not fail to take this opportunity — this historic and vital opportunity — that now presents itself to take a Community decision on the problem of the Channel Tunnel, which has become something of a Loch Ness Monster, something that is always talked about but never seems to come any closer to being a reality, but which could now at last be resolved. For our part we hope it will be resolved quickly and with Community involvement. I hope that this debate will lead Parliament to arrange a specific debate on this problem in the near future and that subsequently, since the opportunity may never arise again, the Commission and the Council will care to listen to what is said in the House and come up with a solution to this problem that could give the Community as a whole something of which it could be proud.

President. — I call the Non-attached Members.

Mr Buttafuoco. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to express my opinion and that of my colleagues on Mr Carossion's document, hoping that a unanimous stand will emerge from this debate, and that our effort will not remain a dead letter, as has occurred in the past.

We are sceptical about the fate reserved for the work we have so diligently prepared, and for this reason in the committee — expertly chaired by Mr Seefeld — where we heard the observations of a long series of presidents of the Council and representatives of the Commission, we were profoundly discouraged by conduct which we consider to be tantamount to betrayal, on the part of the executive and the Council, of the Treaties of Rome, which indicate that transport policy is fundamental and of priority importance. No other policy, from agriculture to energy, nor any other Community initiative, can ever be seriously developed if a common transport policy is not established, especially after the enlargement of the Community to include even more distant countries, like Greece.

If we do not put an end to this attitude, which I consider anti-European, if we do not provide for the

launching of the financial regulation on infrastructures, it is useless and even absurd, to speak of infrastructures of Community interest like the tunnel under the Channel or the bridge over the Straits of Messina. As a Parliament, therefore, we must assume an energetic and decisive attitude, perhaps one of conflict — to the point of appealing to the Court of Justice and taking whatever other initiative we believe appropriate — so that we can bring an end to this absolute inertia which I will not hesitate to define once again as a 'betrayal of Europe'.

I and my colleagues will also vote in favour of the excellent report drawn up by Mr Gabert on the Community railway network.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Hoffmann.

Mr K.-H. Hoffmann. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall be speaking mainly about the first-class report of my colleague Mr Gabert but, as you will see, I shall not be able to help also making one or two comments on Mr Carossino's excellent work. European transport policy is a complete entity; it is not only sectoral, as in this case of the important railway sector. All transport carriers interact with one another, all carriers complement one another.

For this reason, my group also takes the view that we cannot give priority to one carrier alone; we must direct all carriers on equal terms to the particular functions they have to perform. But the importance of the European railways must not be undervalued here, for they provide the essential links in transport between our Member States and between major regions.

The Union of European Railway Undertakings has put forward excellent proposals. As has been pointed out here on several occasions, it is the aim of this House — not a lament, Mrs von Alemann, but a fact determined by the Committee on Transport, to which we both belong — to get the Council to make a move and to take up those proposals, which the railway undertakings worked out back in 1974. When I think of some major projects such as the Brenner Tunnel or Gotthard Tunnel, I have to note that nothing is happening here.

Mr Martin, I am not so happy with the idea of a series of national measures. We have had the pleasure of inspecting and travelling on your excellent high-speed train between Paris and Lyon, there it is a case of national projects which may be excellent for France but in the Federal Republic of Germany would tend to produce exactly the opposite effects.

When I think of the concept of a high-speed link between Mannheim and Stuttgart where, in contrast

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to the case in France, the same line is shared by express passenger trains and freight trains, it just does not seem feasible. And it is here, Mr Martin, that the European spirit belongs, that Community action in transport policy is required. We do not want differences in track gauge, such as exist between Europe and the Soviet Union. We want a uniform track gauge. We want a unified transport policy, and that must be pushed ahead, not only by Parliament but also by the Council of Ministers.

What happened on 15 December — claimed as an important resolution on railway policy — was nothing more than carpet bazaar haggling. One said to the other: you give me my quotas, and I'll come a bit further to meet you on the railway front. That doesn't sound to me like a coherent concept for a European transport policy. In my opinion it is the worst possible way to go about things.

It is for precisely this reason that I moved on behalf of my group that we finally take the Council to Court for failure to act, and I am glad, Mrs von Alemann, that your group has already drawn the same conclusion and is thus prepared to support our initiative. I hope that the Socialist Group and the group to which Mr Carossino belongs will also feel able to resolve to take this important step with us, for only by this means shall we be able to get things moving.

A common transport policy, in particular, always falls under the shadow of trade policy. In Eastern Bloc trade deals, for example, transport policy is repeatedly used as a means of providing currency for the Comecon States, to enable them by providing transport services to earn the currency they need to pay for other trading operations.

This is not a good line to take, even in these weeks when the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is coming to an end in Spain. The autumn meeting will then be used finally to set a balance between trade policy and transport policy questions.

I think we owe this not only to European transport policy but above all to the people who actually do the work to provide European transport. If it had been up to the Council alone, European transport policy would probably not have worked at all. Transport policy has only worked because the undertakings and the workers employed in the transport sector — whether it be on the railways, in shipping or in inland waterway transport, air transport or road haulage — have taken their jobs seriously and have done them, in spite of the lack of a Community transport policy and in spite of the constant failure of the Council of Transport Ministers.

For this reason, I can only stress again that my group seriously intends to bring an action before the European Court of Justice, for I do not in fact believe in miracles, Mrs von Alemann. The Council will not stir

itself at its June meeting any more than it has in all its previous meetings. We need this action, we must bring it. It is essential, however, that the transport policy initiatives of the Committee on Transport and of Parliament achieve a significant majority, despite differences of opinion. For these reasons, my group unreservedly supports your outstanding report, Mr Carossino; for these reasons, my group unreservedly supports Mr Gabert's report. Together we must endeavour by our legal action to force the Council to move, so that we shall finally get a European transport policy.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: MR NIKOLAOU

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Cottrell.

Mr Cottrell. — Mr President, I should like to start by thanking Mr Gabert for the very positive and constructive document on railway policy which he has produced in response to my own motion for a resolution.

I think it is particularly useful that we are in fact discussing these two topics — the common transport policy and the future of railways — together, because it has always been my view that if we are going to have a common transport policy, there is no better place to begin than with railways and with the railway policy. I have described it thus in the past but I will do so again today.

Railways, I believe, are in fact the sleeping giant of Europe's transport systems. Despite the enormous strides in some areas — the excellent high-speed train in France which the Committee on Transport sampled and, of course, our own high-speed trains in the United Kingdom — there is still a considerable lack of development in the railway network of Europe. The railways have almost entirely missed out on the first stage at least of the microchip revolution. There really is no other form of transport that we have so far which is so suitable to technical and economic transformation by new technology. Yet such technology necessarily depends upon the mobility and flexibility of labour. Without better productivity on the railway systems of Europe there is no good argument for investment in railways, and that argument can perhaps be weakened and even destroyed when there are difficulties with productivity.

In the United Kingdom over the past five or six weeks we have seen the Luddite activities of Mr Raymond

Cottrell

Buckton and his ASLEF train-drivers' union who, over a narrow issue, have virtually derailed and may even have destroyed such possibilities as existed for the widespread electrification and modernization of the UK rail network. It would be a very great pity, Mr President, if such obduracy and foolishness spread across the Channel to the railway systems of the rest of Europe.

Even though I would say that in general railways outside the United Kingdom, in the main industrial nations of Europe, are rather better developed than they are in the United Kingdom, serious problems of overmanning still exist. I would say that notable in that respect are Germany and Italy. There you can see the difficulties which arise when railways become not merely a means of transport but an instrument of social engineering providing employment — perhaps — but at such a cost that it renders the railways less competitive than they would otherwise be *vis-à-vis* other transport modes. I rather agree with my colleague, Mr Hoffmann — as I often do — that what we have heard from the Commission and Council in the past on the subject of railways quite frankly doesn't really amount, in a good old English phrase, to a row of beans. We have had some quite interesting technical observations from the Commission, and no doubt they will be useful. But there has been no really broad approach. I am sure the Commissioner, Mr Contogeorgis, will find it helpful to have this debate at this particular moment because he is planning to produce yet another document indicating the Commission's thoughts on railways in June. I hope it is better than the one his predecessor, Mr Burke, produced which could have been written by any Member of the European Parliament on the back of an envelope.

So far as the future development of railways is concerned, and so far as the Community itself can make a positive contribution, I hope this development will, in some form at least, take place through the common transport infrastructure policy which, I think, this whole House supports. I think we must also recognize, fairly, that there are practical limits to what the Commission can do.

There is, however, one very practical way in which they could start and that would be to ease the cross-frontier movement of railway wagons which is an area in which considerable delays are still a frequent occurrence. These delays make the railways less competitive than they ought to be *vis-à-vis* the road hauliers.

The Community could also knock some common-sense into the Group of Ten and stop them sending railway wagons from Sicily to Copenhagen by the longest rather than the shortest route.

In conclusion, Mr President, I would say that the Commissioner himself would be wise, so far as the common transport policy is concerned, to take full

notice of an alliance which has arisen in this House, and which unites Communists, Conservatives, Socialists, Christian-Democrats and Liberals. We are determined to have a common transport policy.

President. — I call Mr Cardia.

Mr Cardia. — (*IT*) Mr President speaking on behalf of the Italian members of the Communist and Allies Group, I especially wish to express my warmest congratulations to Mr Carossino and Mr Gabert for their good work and for the high quality of their reports. These reports place before our Assembly problems and choices of far-reaching importance, both from an economic and a political and institutional point of view.

As has been mentioned in this Chamber, the common agricultural policy and the common transport policy are viewed in the Treaty as the two pillars of the Community, as the two *traits-d'union*, the two connective policies between customs union and the political and economic and physical unification of Community territory. However, while the CAP, whatever we may think of it, has been implemented — on the excessive scale which we have now come to regret, without anyone in this Chamber openly supporting its rationalization, 25 years later no overall attempt has yet been made to even begin to formulate or implement a common transport policy.

The adverse economic effects, the distortions in the movement of goods and people and the territorial imbalances which are the result of this serious failure to act of this massive deviation from the principles on which the Community was founded are so obvious that there is no need to mention them further. The Council, the Commission and the individual Governments clearly bear entire responsibility for this situation.

The merit of the Carossino report — which was mentioned by all the groups, and I thank them for their remarks — is that it provides the outlines of a possible common transport policy. This policy, if implemented immediately, would be, among other things, an instrument of the first importance for a policy against recession, for technical reconversion, and for the development of backward regions. I am speaking of the peripheral and backward regions, for they will be the first to suffer, as they already do, from an eventual policy of infrastructural investments applied on a case by case basis, with no overall and balanced frame of reference. I am in favour of the construction of the tunnel under the Channel using Community funds, but I fear that by moving in this direction we would tend towards a concentration of investments in the central and northern parts of Europe, abandoning the idea of the physical unifica-

Cardia

tion of Europe and in particular the integration of the peripheral and distant regions of the Community.

It is now up to the Parliament to approve the moderate and responsible approach indicated in the Carossino report. But recourse to the Court remains, and must remain a possibility which can and should be exploited by this Parliament: However, it should be pointed out that it would be fruitless if at the same time there did not emerge in Parliament — and beyond it, in our countries — the practical determination to proceed in the direction of Community unification, to overcome the crisis and to achieve territorial continuity, the physical unity which is the elementary condition for economic, cultural, and political unity. A radical change of direction on this front is urgently necessary: this Parliament can and should give the signal for it today.

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Mr President, our Group has greeted the Carossino and Gabert reports with approval. The present obstacles standing in the way of a good European transport policy should be removed. We deplore the fact that transport policy in the EEC is still underdeveloped territory. We are painfully aware that — as far as the three most important modes of transport, road haulage, the railways and the waterways are concerned — the difficulties have been increased by economic decline, by rising labour costs and by the energy crisis. Yet transport policy in the Community should be playing a major role in the deployment of efforts in fields such as employment and infrastructure.

Transport is an indispensable link in the economic chain since a better transport infrastructure moves markets closer together. By the removal of bottlenecks in the infrastructure transport becomes cheaper, and this leads to lower production costs. Infrastructure projects also have a positive effect on employment. The importance of the transport sector is reflected in the fact that its share in the GNP of the Member States is between five and nine percent. This is larger than that of agriculture. Let us bear that in mind. Six point two percent of the working population in the Community are employed in the transport sector. Through Community integration, trade between our countries is four times as great as it was in 1958.

Mr President, for environmental and energy-related reasons, D' 66 is not an advocate of an unbridled expansion of the road network. We give pride of place to the railways. Nevertheless bottlenecks of all kinds must be eliminated, such as the mountain passes through the Alps, frontier crossings — about which I should like to say something in a moment — combined traffic in the north-south waterway

network. Apart from these problems, as I have said, our priority is the improvement of the railway system.

The Community could play a major role in developing a viable programme on a Community-wide basis for the planning and financing of infrastructure. Within the context of the restructuring of the EEC budget, the so-called mandate question, priority should be allocated to Community financing of projects in the field of transport. This takes on even greater importance in view of the fact that traffic in the Community, hence also the bottlenecks, will increase in the coming decades. Transport networks will become increasingly interdependent and the financing of infrastructure by the Member States will become increasingly difficult.

Mr President, I should like to conclude by quoting Alfred Moser, who said that frontiers are the scars of history. In our view, the regions around the internal frontiers are hardly distinguishable from backward areas, the periphery. We are of the opinion that an improvement of infrastructure, particularly that of transport in these areas in the vicinity of internal frontiers could provide stimulus to the improvement of the social and economic situation in those areas.

Once again, Mr President, we ask the Commission and the Council, within the context of the mandate decisions, to strengthen EEC infrastructure policy. If something is not done without delay to meet this request, we shall support initiatives to bring both the Council and the Commission before the Court of Justice. After years of fruitless attempts to bring a Community transport policy into being, this is only course of action open to us.

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — Mr President, as a most peripheral and isolated part of the Community, Northern Ireland more than most has a vested interest in the provision of a full and adequate transport network. Having been reduced from several to at present one sea connection between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom and this Community, Northern Ireland is feeling the full effects of its isolation. I welcome, of course, the restarting of the Liverpool-Belfast link. Our difficult transport position is compounded by the fact that the road servicing the Northern Ireland port of Larne, which is at the moment our only sea outlet to the mainland, and their counterparts on the Scottish side are woefully inadequate and in need of urgent attention. The previous Commissioner visited both areas, and I trust his successor will also take time to come and see our problems for himself. As a major connection of inter-Community significance, these roads deserve to be treated as a priority. It is my concern and hope that a fully formulated and meaningful common transport policy would accommodate this need. The provision of adequate transport facili-

Paisley

ties is essential for the proper servicing of our manufacturing industry as it is the basic link between producers and consumers. The added costs resulting from a slow and inefficient transport service are, in many instances, the last straw for struggling industry in my part of this Community. Therefore, the creation of an imaginative, forward-looking common transport policy seems an essential component for economic progress and prosperity.

I hope that the proposal of a North Channel tunnel linking Scotland with Northern Ireland might be considered. This is worthy of careful investigation as a progressive and most profitable undertaking, and further studies should be initiated immediately.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall refer separately to the two reports.

First, I shall refer to the report by Mr Carossino, whom I would like both to thank, and also to congratulate for the outstanding work he has produced. Truly, this Parliament is once again discussing a manuscript drawn up by Mr Carossino and I can say that the report we are discussing today may well have important consequences for the development of the common policies regarding transport.

I concur entirely with the opinion expressed in the report, according to which the inadequate development of a common transport policy may have adverse consequences for the progress of other sectors of the common market. It is precisely for this reason, in any case, that the Commission continues its unremitting efforts, within the bounds of the possible, to be able to arrive at a common transport policy that will truly be worthy of the name. In this connection I must express my satisfaction that once again Parliament and the Commission are united in their efforts to search out ways and means of making substantial progress the direction of establishing a common transport policy.

I should like, Mr President, to refer to certain specific points in Mr Carossino's resolution.

Concerning paragraph 5, Parliament calls upon the Commission to review the schedule of priorities before the end of this year and to extend it up to 1984. I can tell you that the Commission is entirely in agreement, and add that we have already begun a fresh and in-depth study and review of all our proposals, some pending from many years ago but some proposals to the Council originating this year, so that we are taking into account any developments that have transpired in the meantime and the discussions that have taken place in the European Parliament to review these, insofar as

any review has proved necessary, with the aim of finding solutions to the difficult problems that arise.

I would also like to tell you that the Commission is working to supplement and extend the schedule of priorities up to 1984, as also recommended by the Carossino report. I think the Commission will be able to produce its new proposals, or as I mentioned earlier, revised ones where revision has been necessary, within the time limit suggested in the Carossino report. This will give a new impetus to the search for a common transport policy, that takes into account the many different needs of the ten Member States of the Community.

As regards paragraph 6, the Commission is fully aware of the fact that its proposals on matters of transport must take account of the differentiation of the initial positions, in other words the points of departure, existing between the various Member States. However, I believe that it will be possible to strike a balance that will be acceptable on all sides.

As regards paragraph 7 of the motion for a resolution, in which the Commission is called upon to make provision in their proposed budget for items that would be needed to make possible the implementation of its proposals, I would like to make the following comments.

I recognize and am fully aware of the political character of Parliament's view in this regard. However, the Commission itself, just like the national governments, is obliged to make the best possible use of the available resources, while these of course, as is known, are limited. For this reason the Commission, within the framework of the available resources, will include in its proposed budget the necessary items, only to the extent that the corresponding proposals would seem to have a certain probability of being approved in the short term by the Council, so making it possible to use the items in question during the course of the corresponding economic year. I hope that the Council will empower us to do this.

As regards paragraph 8, the Commission holds the view that it would be possible to make much greater progress if the directives of the Convention were adhered to in what concerns the decision-making system. In fact, in the transport sector there are many instances in which it is impossible for the Council to make any decisions because of the application of the principle of unanimity. I could quote as an example the subject of the first directive relating to the taxation of heavy goods vehicles, the rationalization of the price of railway tickets and the permissible quantity of fuels when crossing a frontier. As you know, the President of the Commission, Mr Thorn, has also referred in this Chamber, during the presentation of the Commission's programme on 16 February 1982, to the need to bring an end to the Council's inability to reach decisions.

Contogeorgis

I shall now refer to the report by Mr Gabert, whom I would like to thank and congratulate on the proposed resolution that he has put before this Parliament.

Mr Gabert's report and motion for a resolution, though they cover all the aspects of a policy for the 1980s relating to the railways, are centred principally on the harmonious development of the railway network. In this connection I would like to be allowed to make certain comments.

I must first of all thank the rapporteur for his positive attitude to the Commission's announcement concerning the common policy relating to railways. In particular, as regards collaboration I am in a position to announce that a relevant report will be submitted by the Commission by the middle of 1982, in which we shall also take into account the misgivings expressed in the Council's resolution of 15 December last, concerning the particular areas of this collaboration.

The line of action proposed by the rapporteur for the realization of an infrastructure policy responds to the general lines and the misgivings expressed in this connection by the Commission, and we cannot but approve of the general trend, which can be summarized as follows.

The existing means must be used in the best possible way, but in that we note the lack of any Community body active in the sphere of infrastructure, efforts towards a resumption of some effective community action to develop infrastructures are in danger of failing. Thus, it is a matter of essential importance that the Council should determine to approve the proposal to create such a body and make available the means whereby the Community will be able to contribute towards developing infrastructure in the transport sector that is of more general interest.

Paragraph 2 of Mr Gabert's motion for a resolution emphasizes the priority nature of action in the railway sector. Naturally, we are not opposed to the granting of the priority desired by the Committee on Transport in the railway sector. However, we would wish the selection of the schedules to be made in each case on the basis of a consideration of Community interests, and to be founded on all the factors that go to make up this consideration. Without wishing to pre-judge the results of such a process I think it more than likely that the nature of the priority of investments in the railway sector will emerge in an entirely unforced and natural way.

Paragraph 4 of Mr Gabert's motion for a resolution appeals to the Commission to undertake a basic study of the railway sector that will cover the whole of the Community. What the Transport Committee requests is certainly useful, but this basic study would be much more effective if it covered all the various means of transport, and as you know, the Commission is

working on this point and plans to submit a proposal of this kind in the course of 1983.

In paragraph 7 it is mentioned that the coordination of investments in infrastructure is of fundamental importance. In this connection I would like to emphasize the important part played by the Transport Infrastructure Committee, which when called upon by our own Commission, will be in a position to intervene effectively when it acquires competences in the domain of financing such work; as you know, the proposal concerning the regulation of financial support submitted by the Commission envisages a competence of this type.

Before I finish, Mr President, I would like to say a few words concerning what has been said about the construction of the Channel tunnel. This topic will most probably be the subject of an urgent debate on Thursday, but you are to decide this today.

At this time I would like to say the following:

The Commission follow with the greatest interest the course of the discussions concerning this tunnel project, and we are in close contact with the relevant departments in the countries, concerned and do what we can to help the project as a whole.

I can assure you that from a survey of the work that has been done even up to today, I have the impression that we can very soon expect the governments principally concerned to reach the relevant decisions. Beyond this, of course, the share of the community in carrying out the work is a function of what has been said before, in other words a function of the Council's decisions to approve the Commission's proposals for a regulation concerning community participation in infrastructure work in the transport sector.

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) On a point of order I should like to ask if the Commissioner can indicate why he only deals in his answer with the draft resolution and gives no consideration whatsoever to any of the points we Members of Parliament have raised in this debate. It would seem almost that the Commissioner's answer was already prepared before we made our contributions here, and that is unworthy of a Parliament.

President. — I note what you have said. However, the Commissioner is entitled to answer as he sees fit.

I have noted your remark but I cannot say anything else from the chair.

President

I call the Commission.

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) I should like to say something about this. The main text of my answer was of course prepared, both because a draft of the report we are discussing was available to us from last week, and because it would have been a serious omission if in replying to the two reports we had not done our work, I personally had not done my homework in advance. However, this does not mean that my reply was not adapted throughout the discussion to the questions that arose in the meantime. I think that all the points touched by the honourable members were covered by my reply.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

5. Raw materials supplies

President. — The next item is the report by Mrs Moreau, on behalf of the Committee on External, Economic Relations, on supplies of mineral and vegetable raw materials in the European Community — survey and further outlook (Doc. 1-873/81).

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Moreau, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, in view of the Community's high level of industrialization, supplies of mineral and vegetable raw materials — I mean vegetable raw materials for industry, of course — are an essential factor for maintaining a prosperous economy and hence for the employment prospects of its people.

Europe's exceptional development since the industrial revolution, with its unprecedented economic growth, would not have been possible without intensive exploitation of natural resources. Over the past few years there has been a growing realization, brought on mainly by the energy crisis, that natural resources were not available in unlimited quantities and that the rate of regeneration was in many cases slower than the rate of consumption, that they were unevenly distributed through the world and that it was precisely those countries that consumed most that had scarcely any of their own, and, finally, that the countries which had resources intended to profit from them, either by giving free rein to market forces, or by using them to strengthen their position in international negotiations.

Europe, the victim of a system based on growth, avid for raw materials which are scarce on her own territory, is therefore in a position of extreme weakness.

Overall, the Community is dependent on the outside world for 75% of its supplies of basic products, although the figure for Japan is even higher at almost 90%, whilst that for North America is only 15%. The industrialized countries hold 40% of mineral raw materials reserves, the remainder being divided between the developing countries (less than 30%) and the countries of the Eastern bloc (over 30%). However, four-fifths of these reserves are in the United States, Canada, Australia and South Africa. Certain countries enjoy a virtual monopoly in some materials, with South Africa and the USSR, for example, claiming most of the world's platinum and chromium. Moreover, five countries hold more than 75% of the reserves of 16 minerals. It should be pointed out, nevertheless, that proven reserves and resources should last for many years and that as regards security of supplies the industrialized countries have less to fear in the coming years from physical shortages than from economic crises.

It is against this background that the situation in Europe should be seen. We have to realize that we are not safe from temporary disruptions of supplies and, to illustrate this, we need only look back to 1979 when the Soviets, who are the major suppliers of titanium sponge — a product of first-stage processing used in the manufacture of titanium — suddenly cut off their exports.

Now, no titanium means no planes, for this metal, vital to the construction of heat exchangers for power stations, is also widely used in the aircraft industry. This posed an immediate threat, for example, to the Airbus programme in France.

Other factors can play a part also, as when in 1978 events in Shaba led to an explosion in the prices of cobalt, almost 70% of world output being controlled by Zaire and Zambia. Paragraph 7 of the motion for a resolution points out, therefore, that there is a risk of supply shortages caused by imbalances between supply and demand or sudden disruptions of supplies as a result of external events. Paragraph 9 of the resolution goes on to draw the attention of the governments of the Member States, the Council and the Commission to the disastrous consequences this could have, in particular for employment.

That is where our political responsibility comes in and we begin to understand just what that means when we think that a breakdown in the supplies of a single metal could suddenly bring a whole industry to a standstill. Without yttrium, the production of colour televisions is threatened. Without cobalt, essential for the manufacture of magnets, or without copper, the whole electronics industry is affected, and there are endless similar examples. A motor car, for instance, contains fifteen different metals. It is imperative therefore that the European Community as a whole should immediately undertake a detailed analysis of the short-, medium- and perhaps even long-term situation,

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and that it should encourage the governments of the Member States to adopt a concerted strategy.

In his reply to an oral question I put to him some eighteen months ago, Commissioner Davignon said this: 'We are faced with a difficult analytical problem: We do know that the European Community does not have any significant raw materials resources, but what we do not know and is very difficult for us to decide is to what extent this lack constitutes a real threat and whether it calls for any action on our part. This is where we have to gauge the situation particularly finely, for the fact that we are dependent for 75% of our supplies does not in itself present any danger if our sources of supply are many and various. On the other hand, if we depend perhaps for only 60% and at the same time find ourselves in a situation where the growth in demand indicates that there is a risk of shortages or, alternatively, where those who do have the raw material are in a position to exercise economic or political pressure, then in a case like that it would be difficult not to start considering the options.'

Mr Davignon's observation is taken up again in paragraph 6 of the resolution, where it is pointed out that 'an examination of statistics on the degree of self-sufficiency does little to explain a phenomenon as complex as the situation of the market in raw materials, which depends more on whether or not there are reserves and resources in the Community, the location of deposits and production or processing sites in the world, the degree of concentration of producers and consumers and the current macro-economic need to integrate raw materials into international trade, mastery of technological developments, and the replacement procedures available given the current level of technology'.

That is why in paragraph 21 it is suggested — and this is the whole object of this motion for a resolution — 'considering that the various raw materials require specific short-, medium- and long-term strategies, taking account of supply and demand, known reserves and their locations, the prospects for increased demand broken down by consumption sector, and recycling and substitution possibilities', that the Commission should submit 'for each raw material a report on the Community's supply prospects in mineral and vegetable raw materials' — and I repeat that this refers to vegetable raw materials for industrial use — 'together with recommendations on the implementation of an appropriate Community policy and asks it to consider setting up joint consultative committees composed of representatives of the Council, the Commission, the Parliament and international experts'. How else in fact can we go about obtaining, as paragraph 10 of the resolution advocates, 'advance information at Community level on possible shortages', if not by just such studies and research into supplies prospects? How, without these vital discussion papers and analyses, can we prepare ourselves against the threat to our economies, and therefore to

employment, that difficulties in maintaining supplies would pose, how can we reduce the risks if at all possible and how can we minimize the impact in the event that disruptions in supplies should after all arise?

We are not entirely powerless to act. The first thing we can do or try to do is to improve the Community's degree of self-sufficiency — paragraph 11 of the resolution — 'by improved information on its own potential and better use of its deposits, by promoting new technologies which will make it possible to exploit hitherto inaccessible deposits or those of insufficient size or yield, by making more rational use of resources in the industrial process as a whole, including the useful life of products, by more efficient recovery and recycling of waste, by research into further substitution possibilities'. In this connection it is worth noting that DG XII has already published some very useful surveys on copper, lead, zinc, aluminium and phosphates, and as regards the scope for substitution, it has also published the results of its studies on chrome, silver, tungsten and tin. The second area in which some action needs to be taken is in multiplying and diversifying our external supply sources.

It is not enough that the resources exist on this planet, they still have to be identified, produced and made available to the consumer, which requires a world trade undisturbed by political troubles, embargoes or other discriminatory measures. There is accordingly a vital need for extensive studies and research to be undertaken, as paragraph 12 of the resolution suggests, for example in relation to the mineral resources of the sea bed. But the fundamental obstacle that has to be overcome today is the low level of investment in mining. It is a known fact — paragraph 13 of the resolution — that 'research and investment expenditure in mining has been unevenly spread geographically and that major investors are beginning to lose interest in mining operations'.

Political and financial instability, the breaking of certain agreements, the lack of bank guarantees, all these have forced the mining companies, already suffering to some extent from low commodity prices combined with higher operating costs, to scale down their operations in certain countries of the Third World — I am thinking particularly of the African continent — where, despite the efforts of several international agencies, there has often been nothing to take their place. According to the United Nations, nine-tenths of investment expenditure in mining exploration is at present in the hands of the industrialized countries: the United States, Canada, Australia and South Africa, the rest being shared mainly by Brazil, Chile, Indonesia and the Philippines. That is why paragraph 14 of the motion for a resolution, in the face of a situation which is mainly the result of a sharp rise in investment costs and non-commercial risks becoming prohibitive, calls on the Commission 'to propose to the Council a series of measures designed to give a fresh boost to investment, for example by extending to a

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wider framework the provisions contained in the Lomé Conventions for repayable loans in the event of successful exploration, the partial financing of feasibility studies, increased financial participation by the Community's financial institutions in investment, and improvements to non-commercial risk guarantee arrangements'.

With the present climate of uncertainty resulting from a growing variety of factors unrelated to economics, a new phenomenon is beginning to appear with the increasing politicization of supply problems. Three very clear trends are emerging as a result. The first is the policy of giving aid to mining exploration and development. This is clearly where the provisions relating to mining in the Lomé II Convention come in, which it is hoped will persuade European operators to overcome their reluctance by encouraging research in the associated countries, particularly in Africa, a move that has won broad approval in our Parliament. There is also a move to encourage the mutual involvement of the mining companies in the producing countries on the one hand and the user industries on the other, in cases where there is a natural, geographical or technical compatibility between a raw materials source and a major consumer market. I believe this is one of the most promising trends for the future.

On the level of international relations, France has, for example, consistently supported the idea of signing product agreements between producing and consuming countries. Such agreements, which regulate the prices of raw materials and reduce their fluctuation, offer a guaranteed income to the producing countries and a continuity of supplies to the consuming countries. As we emphasize in paragraphs 5, 15 and 16 of the motion for a resolution, the desire for a greater degree of stability in our trade with the developing countries is an important factor in maintaining adequate and regular supplies for the Community. We all know that the developing countries, many of which have an economy based on the export of a limited number of basic products, are dependent on the industrialized countries, the Community in particular, for their outlets.

And finally the third aspect, which involves the accumulation of national stocks to lessen the effects of any shortages which may, as I have already said, have their origins in non-economic events and also in errors of judgment or insufficient resources of the operators. France is the first country of the Community to have taken this course of action. The decision to accumulate stocks of mineral raw materials was taken in 1975 with a target of approximately 5 000 million francs stock value by 1985, representing overall about two months' supply. As regards this policy of strategic stocks — and I am of course talking of industrial strategy, since defence matters do not lie within our competence — France is ahead of all other countries with the exception of the United States. The Germans tried to introduce a similar system but came up against

financing problems. As for the British, they are so far as I know, still at the planning stage.

That is why we felt it appropriate, in paragraph 20 of the resolution, to call on the governments of the Member States, the Council and the Commission 'to devise a coordinated policy and consider setting up a flexible Community structure designed to give partial cover in the event of a temporary shortfall in a Member State's raw material supplies'.

Clearly, the problem of raw materials is closely linked with other fundamental questions relating to our economic, social and political future. How can we produce more and produce it better but using smaller quantities of primary products, and not only fuels? How can we maintain employment in the face of pressure from our traditional and new competitors? In what terms — confrontation or interdependence — do we see our relations with the Third World when the future of the world as a whole depends so much on whether it develops or stagnates?

The answer to these questions are most likely to be found through the people of Europe adopting a united front and working in cooperation.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul. — (DE) Colleagues, Mrs Moreau's report is the result of some highly commendable work which has demonstrated the need for a Community policy for planning in the field of raw materials supply. It is commendable in particular from the point of view of the strategy which she proposes in order to secure more intensive utilization of domestic resources and the recycling of raw materials and to achieve the application of technologies which will conserve resources.

Because time is short, I will refrain from mentioning other positive points on behalf of my Group to make some critical comments on the report, in particular on the question of strategy. A number of clear positive amendments have already been introduced at Committee stage.

Firstly, the report is too one sided in its concern for European interests and does not tie these in sufficiently with those of our partner countries, which supply or are supposed to supply these raw materials. I get the slight impression that a number of these developing countries are — entirely in the colonial manner — considered solely in terms of their function as suppliers of raw materials without their interests being taken into account.

For example, our Group would welcome the inclusion of a passage in the report which would facilitate direct development agreements between the European Community and other, non-associated developing

Wieczorek-Zeul

countries. A motion has been tabled for this purpose, for there is one thing we as Europeans must realize, in spite of our dependency in regard to raw materials supply: trade in raw materials in the European Community only accounts for 4% of the EC gross domestic product, but it accounts for 75% of the income of some developing countries. We must therefore be concerned to ensure that relations with these countries are stabilized and, in particular, that these countries are able to increase the prices of their raw materials. It is in our interests also for the reason that they then become partner countries and contact countries with greater purchasing power and thus acquire greater value to the Community. I think that, in the same connection, we should also accept that these countries have an interest in the downstream processing stages and should not be regarded solely as raw materials producers for the Community or for industrialized countries.

Secondly, Mrs Moreau does indeed refer at several points in her report to the fact that the Soviet Union occupies a very important position in certain raw materials sectors. She mentioned titanium, and the report also mentions antimony, cobalt, nickel and vanadium. But the report and its rapporteur have not considered the consequence which is currently relevant, what that would mean, for example, in relation to the threats which are being repeatedly issued these days by the European Community or one or other of its Member States and in particular by the United States, in relation to a policy of trade restrictions against the Soviet Union.

I will spell it out myself here and now: when we look at the facts as presented by Mrs Moreau, we must say in all honesty that in the European Community's own interests a strategy of sanctions against the Soviet Union is out of the question, unless we are prepared to risk certain countermeasures which will have consequences for the sectors in question. The Americans may perhaps be in a position to carry out such actions. Mrs Moreau said at the beginning, and I will repeat it: the Community imports 75% of its raw materials, the USA only 15%. At rates such as that, you can afford to call for boycott measures.

Thirdly, the report to some extent dodges the issue — and unfortunately it did not prove possible to change that in Committee — and fails to grasp the hot potato of the role of the big transnational corporations in the process of raw materials extraction, processing and trade. A review of the dependency of the European Community on the particular firms which control this trade and this exploitation was just as necessary as the highly commendable review which Mrs Moreau has produced here of the Community's dependence on the raw materials supplying countries.

The report stresses the need for greater stability in the trade. but how is that to be achieved if the pricing poli-

cies of those corporations and their frequent speculative activity evade all public control? I remind you, colleagues, that raw materials account for 40% of international trade. A very important sector is thus outside official control.

My last point is a comment of my own. In the explanatory part, Mrs Moreau, when dealing with the subject of agricultural raw materials, advocates a self-sufficient European agricultural policy. This can only be a reference to the repeated demand for a selective European Community export strategy in agricultural products. Allow me to say in conclusion, since this is a topical issue, that I am strictly opposed to such a strategy for two reasons. Firstly, it prevents us from reforming our own EC agricultural policy, and it also impedes the development by the developing countries of their own agricultural production.

President. — I call the Group of the European Peoples' Party (Christian-Democratic Group.)

Mr Müller-Hermann. — (DE) Mr President, I should like first of all to thank the rapporteur for her extraordinarily instructive report, because it directs the attention of the public and the European institutions to long term global problems associated with our raw materials supply.

I would limit my remarks to three points. Referring back to what the rapporteur and the previous speaker have just said, the European Community in its raw materials supply is very dependent and very vulnerable, but of course the raw materials producing countries are in a comparable position, for they are also dependent and vulnerable. Raw materials are to some extent their only source of income, and they are only just starting to diversify their means of livelihood.

The conclusion this suggests is that we must systematically develop in depth the dialogue which has begun between the industrial nations — particularly the European Community — and the countries of the Third World, on equal terms as we did previously in the Lomé Agreement. We must carry the talks on our raw materials supplies forward without ideological blinkers and without any unnecessary burden of politics.

The previous speaker referred to the need to trade with the Soviet Union, on whose supplies we are very dependent in some sectors, but of course the same thing applies to South Africa. There is in fact a South African-Soviet axis in the production of raw materials such as platinum, gold, manganese and chromium — I will not list them all — in respect of which the two countries jointly hold a very strong position. I mean by this only that we should address the problem from all sides and, as far as possible, without blinkers.

Müller-Hermann

Basically, we are in the same boat as the developing countries which supply us with our raw materials, and I feel we must adjust — this is also mentioned in the report — to a new international division of work. We cannot in the long run expect some countries to supply the raw materials, while we use them. We must adjust to the fact that raw materials will increasingly be processed at or near to the sites of production. The inevitable consequence will be a need for structural change on our part.

Hence my question — perhaps the Commission can answer it — what can we do to make more intensive use of the existing European facilities — the European Investment Bank, provision of credit, risk guarantees and STABEX — for this necessary dialogue?

The Club of Rome a few years ago gave us a terrible scare with warnings of the limited availability of resources. I am not so fatalistic as the Club of Rome, but I think it was a worthwhile initiative to draw our attention to this crucial problem. I am not so fatalistic because I believe strongly in the power of human invention and of the human imagination, which has found ways of dealing with other problems in the past. However, we must strengthen public awareness of the need to conserve raw materials, of the need to do more in the field of recycling and reprocessing and of the need to look around for more ideas on the substitution of raw materials. All this depends upon our staying in the forefront of technological development. Those in the Community who proclaim the evils of technology and think that they are offering salvation and a future for the world are, in my opinion, treading a very dangerous path. Only if we fully exhaust the possibilities of technology shall we be able to deal adequately with the raw materials problem.

In conclusion, one further comment on the warning contained in Mrs Moreau's report of the disastrous consequences of an interruption in supply. We recently discussed the protection of shipping routes, and I think that is a crucial problem. Unlike the United States, which has a great many raw materials of its own and a great many sources of raw materials more or less close at hand, we have to depend on shipping routes which are not entirely safe and at the moment are protected and secured in the first instance by the United States.

We have not so far found an answer to the question how we are to deal with this problem — other than by stockpiling, of course. As we all know, the best way would be to have a secured peace in the world. But how do we achieve security in raw materials supply in the face of those who seek to exploit our raw materials dependency?

I think we must pay greater attention to this problem in future. That exhortation applies to the Commission but also to ourselves. We must not bury our heads in

the sand. Raw materials policy, with all that it involves, will continue to engage us at Community level, for at least it is by now generally realized that no Member State can achieve a solution to this problem alone. Here we have a genuine Community problem, but we have not yet got to grips with it!

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Sir Peter Vanneck. — Mr President, I will confine myself to two particular paragraphs where, with the other two right-wing groups, we have put down some amendments. First of all, I refer to paragraph 8 in which, if Mrs Moreau will forgive me, I think the tenor is a little pessimistic. We would, as you will have seen from the amendments, like to substitute, because of our ideals, the importance of free market forces. What we really want is that the Commission should produce a framework within which free market forces can apply, because from experience — and I speak as a free market operator myself — the forces of a free market in supply and demand, without distortion, are the best forces you can have in securing supplies.

I should like to reiterate much of what Mr Müller-Hermann has said on the question of strategic raw materials. I shall confine myself to ferroalloys which I know something about. The importance of alloys for steel relates not only to industry in general in the free Western world, but particularly to the defence industry. The alloy additives of chrome, cobalt, manganese and vanadium are absolutely vital to steel-making, particularly high-technology steel, such as is used in the defence industry. If one reads carefully through Mrs Moreau's explanatory statement one learns that one-third of ferrochrome is supplied to the free world — to the world, indeed — by South Africa and Zimbabwe. And those two countries have 96% of world reserves. As to cobalt, Zaire provides half of world consumption. As to manganese, two-fifths come from the Soviet Union; South Africa is the next largest supplier, and indeed, the primary world exporter. As to vanadium, two-fifths come from South Africa, followed by the United States as an exporter, and then Soviet Russia.

As Mr Müller-Hermann has said, and as Mr Diligent's report and Mr Damseaux's motion reiterate, we are vulnerable in the West. We are vulnerable to interdiction of our sea routes from Southern Africa. And while we are vulnerable, it behoves us to take every precaution we can against interdiction of those routes, against whatever geo-political weaponry may be used. I might also mention tungsten and titanium, and sea-routes in general, but I will confine myself simply to sea-routes around the Cape of Good Hope and up the East coast of Africa, until we reach the NATO umbrella, where we are immensely vulnerable. I would ask my colleagues to appreciate the policy of destabilization in Southern Africa, a policy that the Soviet

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Union could so easily apply in a surrogate manner, in order to interrupt those ferrochrome, manganese, vanadium and cobalt supplies, so vital to the defence of the West.

I should like to stress the importance of stockpiling which our amendment to paragraph 20 underlines by adding 'stockpiles' after 'partial cover'. We must have stockpiles, as the Americans do. Stockpiles are not only important for our defence, they are also very valuable to the supplier countries, in that they give a certain stability to the price structure for our friends in the Third World who supply us with these vital raw materials.

I therefore commend these two amendments to the Parliament along with the whole report, for which I am most grateful to Mrs Moreau.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Pauwelijn. — (NL) Mr President, colleagues, today we have before us an important project which the European Parliament launched on its own initiative.

Mrs Moreau's initiative report is to be highly commended.

And I congratulate her.

It presents a clear picture of the raw materials market, reflects the extent to which we are dependent on external supplies and is at the same time forward-looking. Europe at the moment still has the necessary raw materials available to it. But this situation may change, and the logical consequence is that a European raw materials strategy will have to be developed.

Mr President, colleagues, the raw materials question hinges on four main aspects. Firstly, our own natural resources. Secondly, the natural resources of non-Community countries. Thirdly, prospection for importable raw materials and, fourthly, security of supplies for the future. A clear overview and study of these aspects is essential, and the report which has been presented is a major contribution to that. Moreover it draws our attention to the low level of European self-sufficiency and to the risks associated with a possible serious shortage of raw materials. With regard to the latter point, I am rather uneasy. While in the United States industry is encouraged to build up stocks of strategically important raw materials, Europe lives on in an illusion of blissful security.

Raw material dependency is not a problem in itself, provided supplies are assured, in other words, provided supplies are not jeopardized by commercial and political factors. But this is precisely what we cannot guarantee. The Community, for example, is 99 to 100% dependent on imports of three essential raw materials, mainly from South Africa and the Soviet Union. The possibility of an embargo arises with regularity following particular political events in these countries. The countries concerned could, however, bring down upon themselves countermeasures, so that the danger of commercial repercussions is more real than we think. It cannot be denied that the shutting off of supplies to Europe would have disastrous consequences, in the social as well as economic fields. The European Parliament has already addressed this problem by identifying the need for the surveillance and protection along which the countries of the European Community obtain their supplies of energy and strategic materials. This proposal, however, is a delicate issue from which we may expect little political mileage. Moreover it is hardly more than a plaster on a wooden leg, for the resources in question are located in unstable areas, and there is hardly any point in securing transport if the products are being withheld at source. What we do need is a European raw materials strategy. All in all, this means that Europe must improve its relations with the producing countries, that the exploitation of auxiliary resources within Europe and the recycling of raw materials must diversify our imports and, last but not least, Europe must itself establish strategic stocks in order to prevent the possibility of major industries being abruptly paralysed.

Indeed there are no programmes in the Western European countries or Japan for the establishment of such strategic stocks. The United States on the other hand, Mr President, have already established, for example, a national defence stockpile covering some sixty raw materials which are essential, in particular, to the aircraft industry. The American administration now wants to encourage industry to build up bigger stocks so that, in an emergency, the crucial raw materials are available. Following this example, contrary to what the report says, the European governments can in fact take their own measures to secure supplies, even at the level of enterprises. Everyone today is convinced of the need to develop a viable European energy policy but, in order to keep our industry in operation, we need raw materials as well as energy. The development of a European raw materials strategy also merits an equivalent degree of attention.

Mr President, colleagues, 'prevention is better than cure' is a saying still too infrequently heard in European discussions. Europe must therefore meet this new challenge and compensate for its dependency in raw materials supplies by a coordinated policy which must provide life assurance for the survival of our industrial economy.

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

Mr Paulhan. — (FR) Mr President, in 1979, on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, Mr Ansquer put down a resolution with a request for urgency on supplies of raw materials in the Community. He made the particular point that, whatever advantages there may be at present in importing ores that are cheaper to process and whose final production costs are therefore occasionally lower than that of Community ore, one had to take into consideration not only the social cost but also the serious impact on regional economies of the decline in the Community mining industry. To prove what I am saying, page 24 of Mrs Moreau's report shows that 58% of our antimony comes from Asia even though the Community has its own reserves of antimony! This is the case in my region, where all the mines are closed down.

Our group were always of the opinion that, generally speaking, the Member States should make every effort to arrive at an optimum exploitation of the Community's natural resources. We did say that an inventory of the Community's natural resources, however small, needed to be drawn up as quickly as possible. We are therefore all the more pleased to commend your report today, Mrs Moreau, and we congratulate you on the work you have done.

Our economic development, particularly since the active phase of industrialization that we have enjoyed for the past 25 years, has led to an exponential growth in demand for natural resources, to the point where a number of futurologists were beginning to show signs of anxiety.

Our group welcomes the fact that the rapporteur did not yield to the temptation of taking a cataclysmic view of the problem. All the same it seems to us, from reading the report, that in the coming decades the Community could, if it continues on the same basis, find its economic growth restricted if for no other reason than that the world's mineral, and even vegetable, resources so far discovered and discoverable are finite.

I should like nevertheless to make three observations. Firstly, we must beware of making projections purely and simply on the basis of trends in the consumption of raw materials over the past few decades. Whilst it is true that a marked drop in the consumption of resources will not be felt immediately, particularly as any such drop will be masked by increased consumption in the developed countries, nevertheless certain changes of emphasis are apparently beginning to make themselves felt: substitute products are being discovered, the virtues of economy are being rediscovered, or rather people are learning to be less wasteful.

Secondly, let me say to those who fear that eventually our mineral resources will run out and who base their conclusions on the notion that the earth is what mathematicians call a finite space, whose deposits are limited and non-renewable, let me say to them that necessity knows no law. For example, we already know that the next thirty years will see the development of the only two sources of energy that are capable of satisfying our needs in the long term and for which the resources are infinite, namely solar and nuclear.

Lastly, let me say that the notion of reserves is not merely a matter of statistics. It is in fact extremely difficult to define for it depends on a great many parameters which are themselves extremely variable: the dynamics of prospecting, political and legal influences, territorial and non-territorial sea-beds, price movements, and so on. As yet there has been no serious study to discover what effects price increases have on decisions relating to the exploitation of reserves.

In conclusion, food resources are a special case. They do in fact require a different approach because these resources are subject to widely varying regeneration cycles. We know that today the human race is quite easily capable of feeding itself. Unfortunately this is not happening and one thing is quite certain, that none of the Malthusian policies advocated by some people are going to improve the situation. But it is precisely in this area that the Community has much to offer.

President. — I call the Committee on Development and Cooperation.

Mr Fuchs, draftsman of an opinion. — (FR) Mr President, the problem of the EEC's raw materials supplies is a crucial one — others before me have said the same — as the Community is dependent for 75% of them on imports. The security of our economic system, and indeed our political freedom of action, are thus very much at stake. What the rapporteur should have done, therefore, is to have considered in detail two questions that I believe to be fundamental: firstly, the geographical origin of our imports and, secondly, the nature of the commercial operators from whom we obtain them.

Unfortunately, on these two points Mrs Moreau's report seems to me to be seriously deficient, as I should like to demonstrate.

As regards geographical origin, the report quotes just one set of figures: I am speaking here of imports, not deposits. The figures are, it is true, important, namely that 49% of our net imports come from the industrialized countries, 45% from Third World countries and 6% from Eastern bloc countries.

As regards the first figure, there is at least one question that I should like to ask. What proportion is taken

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up by South Africa? And, with all due respect to Mr Müller-Hermann and Sir Peter Vanneck, is not this proportion too great? A high degree of dependence seems to me, in fact, to be doubly dangerous. It is dangerous in the long term, for it would mean that we are trading with that country as though it were not a place where the most flagrant violations of human rights are being committed. And it would be no more than just if in a few years' time the country's black majority should prefer to supply those who have supported them in the difficult days of apartheid. But it is also dangerous in the short term, for it is quite clear that so long as the system of apartheid, whose days we know to be numbered, continues to hold sway there, South Africa will have to be regarded as an unstable State.

I should like now to devote a little more attention to the developing countries's share in our imports. At present it is almost equal to that of the industrialized countries and will certainly be larger in the future, for as we know it is the developing countries that hold the bulk of the world's untapped wealth. The role of the Third World in supplying the Community does I believe raise a fundamental political problem. Should we, on this question, adopt a confrontation approach or a contractual approach? It is clear that Mrs Moreau's report — and the same applied to her motion for a resolution as it stood before the incorporation of some of the amendments which I, as draftsman of an opinion for the Committee on Development and Cooperation, was arguing for — leans towards the latter approach. Now, in point of fact, there is nothing to suggest that we are necessarily in a conflict situation or in a position of unilateral vulnerability. The truth is that the EEC and the developing countries are in a position of mutual dependence, that is to say in a position of interdependence.

It is worth quoting a few figures to illustrate this. It is quite true that we depend on the Third World for 95% of our uranium, all of which comes from the ACP countries, 82% of our copper (ACP — 52%), 62% of our aluminium, all of which comes from the ACP, 60% of our phosphates, 100% of our coffee (ACP — 42%), 99% of our cocoa (ACP — 86%), 47% of our groundnuts, from Senegal. But, conversely, 44% of exports from countries which are not oil-producers are made up of primary products. And it should be pointed out that, for example, Zambia and Mauritania derive over 80% of their export earnings from copper and iron ore, and that over 50% of their export earnings are accounted for by just one product, as in the case of Ghana with her cocoa, Mali with cotton, the Cameroons and Burundi with coffee, Guinea-Bissau with groundnuts, the Ivory Coast with cocoa, Benin with cotton and cocoa, to mention but a few.

I am especially pleased, therefore, by the addition to Mrs Moreau's original motion for a resolution of

paragraphs 4 and 5, and also paragraphs 15 and 16, which the Committee on Development and Cooperation suggested, in order, firstly, to promote this idea of interdependence and, secondly, to indicate some of the conditions necessary for laying down the basis of cooperation rather than allowing the development of a situation of conflict. Similarly, I welcome the support given by the Community to product agreements, to the Common Fund of raw materials, and also to geographical agreements along the lines of Lomé II. On the other hand, as I said before, I deplore the fact that no accurate geographical analysis of where our imports come from was made and, in particular, that the important place that the ACP countries hold was not underlined. This last point is incidentally taken up in an amendment that I have put down together with Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul.

However, it is when it comes to a consideration of the nature of the economic agents through whom we obtain our supplies that Mrs Moreau's report seems to me to contain the most serious shortcomings. The fact that, despite its 71 pages, the report fails to make any reference to the multinationals would have been puzzling had the omission been unintentional. As it was not, I have to say that it is a scandal. It is after all a well known fact — I shall confine myself to giving you just these two highly significant examples, although I have others in my files — that, as regards molybdenum, which is essential for the manufacture of special alloys for the aerospace industry, a single company, Amax, controls over 38% of what is produced and two companies control together over 51%. As regards platinum, a key catalyst in the petrochemical industry, one company, Reustenburg Platinum Mines, controls 49% of production and two companies together control nearly 84%. And we know also the extent to which companies such as these are involved in economic speculation and often exert, with the encouragement of certain States, a destabilizing political influence.

It is not all that long ago, I believe, that the assassination of President Allende helped also — may I remind you — to break up SIPEC, the cartel of the copper-producing countries.

But I want to stay with the immediate issues raised by this debate and devote some time to considering another of the unfortunate consequences of the part that the multinationals play in the area of raw materials: under-investment. I need hardly remind you that, since 1973, over 80% of investment in mining around the world has been in the hands of just four countries: the United States, South Africa, Canada and Australia. Is it just because those are the only places where the most promising deposits are to be found? I do not believe that and all who know something of Africa will share my view. What is true is that the multinationals today set greater store by security than by profitability. Thus, fearing possible nationalization and faced with the quite legitimate desire of the developing countries

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to regain control of their natural wealth, the majority of multinationals involved in mining are today reacting by what amounts to a virtual boycott of the Third World.

We have first of all to recognize this fact — that is the purpose of another of the amendments that I have put down — then we have to do something about it. It may be that, in this respect, we need to follow the example set by SYSMIN and its role in the Lomé II Convention and the mining loans offered by the European Investment Bank. But, fundamentally, I believe it is the idea of a genuine co-development between the Community and the Third World, on the basis of mutual guarantees of investment and supplies at State or regional level, which offers the best hopes for the future. I should therefore like to see all of these ideas included in the report that the Commission has been asked to produce.

Mr President, through the medium of this debate on supplies of raw materials in the Community we are presented with the task of choosing between a strategy of confrontation and a strategy of cooperation. I for my part have never quite been able to understand how the famous Rapid Deployment Force, which is supposed to guarantee the security of American supplies in the Persian Gulf, could, in the event of confrontation, conjure up anything other than an image of oil in flames. On the other hand, if the Community were to set an example of cooperation, we could see a fundamental change on the world scene, offering ultimately the possibility of turning our back on East-West confrontation, of pursuing a genuine North-South dialogue, of securing a peace based on meaningful development, that is to say development that does not exclude, as it does at present, three-quarters of the world's population.

President. — I call Mr von Bismarck.

Mr von Bismarck. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it should perhaps be more usual practice in this House for speakers who take the floor somewhat later to address themselves to what previous speakers have said.

I should like first of all to offer a little light relief in connection with what Mrs Wieczorek and the previous speakers have said. They just had to throw in a number on the multinationals! This morning I hit on an amusing solution. There is a launderette called *Multiwäsche* on the way from here to Offenburg. Perhaps our two colleagues might care to go and 'multiwash' their souls before we get down to business, so that we can have our discussions in a less constrained atmosphere. There are of course positive and negative things to say about the multinationals, but what would we do for oil now if it were not for the multinationals? Who would invest in risky raw

materials resources other than firms big enough to carry on activities in several countries? So I recommend a multiwash for the soul on the way to Offenburg, and then we can get down to a serious discussion on this subject another time.

With regard to a strategy for agricultural exports, Mrs Wieczorek, I say 'no' if it is to be subsidized by the State but of course an unconditional 'yes' if it is for the export of our agricultural surpluses. When the market operates, it gives us the true picture — our exports are always more expensive than those of the developing countries. So let us have no misleading posturing! State subsidies for exports are wrong, but an export strategy on the market is right.

Raw materials determine our lives in almost every respect, and I agree with all the speakers who have urged that this valuable report serves to instil in us an awareness of the extent to which our peace and freedom, and indeed our satisfaction with what we are doing, depend on our ability to sit down together and solve the raw materials problem. I emphatically agree with the previous speaker.

We must bear in mind that for thousands of years raw materials have been used and abused as an instrument of power and of power sharing and indeed as a means of preparing for the sharing of power, and they are still being abused in this way. In this connection, a word on South Africa: I do not share the optimistic view that the situation there will become more stable if a different regime is installed. Experience throughout the world argues against it. And before we commit ourselves in that area on purely ideological grounds, we should ask ourselves what consequences this may have for Europe and our peacemaking mission in the world. We must also convince those who are not present today that the raw materials question is for us a question of conscience, which we must resolve in a different way to our predecessors in the last three millennia. We must learn that in times of scarcity we cannot simply go out and take from others what they have.

In my opinion, we must first of all understand what has been put before us here in such detail — but certainly not with any suggestion of colonialism, Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul, you are wrong to pin that one on Mrs Moreau. We must also understand the following: if we regard ourselves as representatives of all the people of Europe, we must be aware that a rational raw materials supply policy is a precondition of all our objectives, i.e. peace and freedom, the fight against hunger and the securing of full employment. This means that not only power but also our daily lives are affected. We need only think of the rise in oil prices and its consequences: balance of payments deficits, inflation, unemployment. Our main aim must be to reduce the potential threat inherent in world power without anxiety.

von Bismarck

Something has already been said on the establishment of stockpiles and the substitution of raw materials, but I should like to recall what we have already discussed here. If we do not want to be threatened, we must also be in a position to counter threats militarily. It is inadmissible to say simply: the responsibility we bear requires us to tell those who toy with such ideas — and they do exist — that we shall if necessary meet this threat with force. I warn against imposing a taboo here. Our duty is much more to reflect on how we can ensure that no-one is tempted to try and blackmail us with armed intervention over raw materials.

It is essential that we continually discuss our interest in the furtherance of peace with all raw material supplier countries, particularly the developing countries. It is irresponsible to think that we need only look out for ourselves and forget all else apart from that. It is irresponsible for the reason that it would also damage our own interests. Only when the developing countries realize that we are thinking of them will they make compromises in their arrangements with us and arrive at sensible solutions. And in that connection of course — as one of my colleagues has already said — solutions based on freedom are to be preferred as far as possible.

Only the market gives the true picture, not State-imposed contracts! This is difficult because — and here I must agree with those colleagues who have spoken about monopolies, which are not by any means necessarily wielded by multinationals — these monopolies are our real enemies for, if someone has the power to operate a world monopoly in a particular raw material, a problem arises with which we must come to grips. I fully share your opinion on that point! But, instead of making general accusations, we should be working out proposals for concrete solutions.

In view of these facts, we shall finally have to tell the Council and the Commission — I name them in that order since the Council, not the Commission, is the responsible institution — that, if Europe fails to understand that political union is an urgent and current necessity — not for the distant future, but for now, this moment — I really do not know what else we can do to convince people. If the ten EC States do not cease grabbing what they can for themselves and laying in stocks for themselves alone and deciding for themselves individually whether we should negotiate with the Soviet Union or not, I see no hope for us being able to play our role in world peace — let alone our role in relation to the developing countries!

If the report is adopted in the course of these proceedings therefore, I urge you to decide that our next step should be to charge the Council once more with failure to take adequate steps to ensure that the political machinery is there for us to play our role in the furtherance of peace.

President. — I call Mr Ephremidis.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) Mr President, it seems that the moment of truth is approaching, at which once in their life, people or systems must account for their crimes. This is the critical time for capitalism which, after the most savage exploitation, achieved over-accumulation and overproduction of raw materials within the common market area, to bring about the overdevelopment that the authoress of this report mentioned to us. This capitalism is now forced to struggle, is forced to admit that it is burdened by a dependence on the raw materials, both mineral and vegetable, that are needed for the manufacturing industries of Western Europe. The rapporteur has highlighted a series of dangers of constraints, in other words dangers of interruptions in the supply of raw materials, and thus interruptions in the operation of a range of industries, with the danger of increased unemployment, etc. But, Mr President, from where and how did these dangers arise, and how can we meet them? The rapporteur suggested that further mineral prospecting should take place to locate yet more minerals and vegetable raw materials within the countries of the common market, and that these should extend offshore. This suggestion is correct because the area covered by the sea, which is much larger than the land area on earth, contains proportionately many more minerals. The rapporteur also spoke of a balanced distribution of the relevant consumptions, and about means to encourage investment, so that we may avoid all the dangers that threaten us. We have no objection to the measures she proposes, but we wish to say that they do not get to the heart of the matter. Mr President, there is at this time no real shortage of raw materials. There is a glut. The problem is this: will the supply, and consequently the exploitation of these raw materials take place under the old mentality of colonialism, or even with this disguised by the methods of neo-colonialism in the hands of gigantic monopolies and multinational companies, or will Europe bring herself up to date and survive, if she wishes to remain independent, by conforming to the demands of the times that impose equal partnership with all the countries of the Third World, the socialist States and particularly the Soviet Union, Cuba, and others that offer unlimited wealth in such raw materials? Will developed Western Europe pursue an equal partnership of mutual benefit, or if you like, with mutual interdependence as well, so as to be able to survive and continue her development, or will she insist on the old ways, the ones we are now hearing, the ones which recently have been discussed in Parliament, where the reactionary majority determines measures involving sanctions and economic blockades against these countries? And how is it possible for one to wish for these materials to be readily available, how can one wish to continue the predatory exploitation of the countries of the Third World, and why does the rapporteur express fears concerning the possible industrial development of the Third World countries, instead of rejoicing,

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instead of promoting this development, so that there may be a mutual and equal benefit that will in turn allow the free circulation of raw materials?

From these points of view Mr President, while we acknowledge and agree with the matters highlighted by the rapporteur, we feel that we cannot agree with the methods she proposes, since these are not based on an equal partnership between the developed countries and those other countries which, whether developed or not, represent sources of raw materials.

In concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to mention Greece which, though a small country, has a wealth of unexploited mineral resources, and I ask the rapporteur and my other colleagues: in what rational way is the necessary investment to take place? How can this country be assisted to locate, to search out this wealth when such large investment is required that Greece herself cannot accomplish it? Will the Council and the Commission be disposed to grant the necessary help so that this mineral wealth can be located and developed, always provided that this is done on a basis of mutual benefit and not predatory exploitation?

And finally Mr President, we must all disagree with what was said by the previous speaker, Mr von Bismarck. In so many words, he told us that there is still another way of securing raw materials: the use of force. It seems that our colleague is living in another age, and has not understood that in our times there is no alternative solution beyond peaceful coexistence and peaceful collaboration. Anything else would lead to mutual destruction.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (*GR*) Mr President, the text of the report contains many interesting assertions and proposals. However, the tenor of the report is somewhat biased against the countries that are producers of raw materials, and this was pointed out by Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul who spoke to us about a colonialist prism. I feel that this shows up the limitations of the policies that can be exercised by the economic circles that have such a decisive influence on the centres of the Community decisions. However, it is just this very logic that should be transcended by the Community, by formulating relationships of collaboration with the countries that produce raw materials, so as to avoid the dangers of interrupting the flow of the latter. Thus, from the standpoint of the current crisis we need to set our sights on the world of tomorrow and concentrate our attention on this, perceiving the dynamic nature of development. Tomorrow then, and I think that nobody can doubt it, belongs to a new international order, in which the countries that produce raw materials will not be regions, as in the days of colonialism, ripe for exploitation and predation, but contributors to an equal partnership which

will also be based on their own industrial development. Instead of speaking the language of protectionism, which constantly pushes us to make colonialist or cold-war oriented value judgments, and even to extremes such as those arrived at previously by Mr von Bismarck, we shall have to recognize the obligation of the Community to progress within the framework of a reorganization of its own industries without fearing that it might be lending strength to potential competitors.

I asked to speak, Mr President, in order to assert that in our opinion these reports underestimate the problem of agricultural raw materials, and to comment how correct, in other respects, are the ideas that advocate expanding our search for mineral wealth in Europe. There are countries every centimetre of whose surface has been surveyed decades ago from the mineralogical point of view, but there are also countries like Greece, rich in metallic and non-metallic materials, which still remain to be surveyed and developed. And I must make it very clear that this delay, as well as the predatory exploitation of other elements of our mineral wealth, is connected with the dominance that has existed up to now in our country by a variety of foreign trusts that reap the profits on the world's markets.

It is very probable that within the area of the Community there will be found some solutions towards meeting our need for raw materials. We can certainly limit wastage by changing the patterns of consumption, and this is why we need programmes, searches, investment, and the transfer of technology to countries that, within the Community area, can contribute to providing a solution.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — (*FR*) Mr President, I should like to congratulate Mrs Moreau on her report, which is an outstanding example of the kind of excellent work that can come out of this Parliament. To us it seemed a balanced report and, contrary to what Mr Ephremidis said a moment ago, we believe that the interdependence between the developing countries, who are the producers, and the vital supply needs of the Community has been stated very well. We believe that, on this question, it is essential to keep a cool head, and here I should like to express my considerable dismay at the impassioned and political remarks made by Mr Fuchs, which were to my mind highly irresponsible considering they came from the representatives of the party charged with running its country.

Mr Fuchs, I have no love for the Soviet political system, but this has never prevented me, when it came to the common agricultural policy, from voting to continue with our agricultural exports to the USSR. My feelings as regards imports of raw materials from South Africa are the same. We, for our part, do not

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believe in applying double standards. The Socialist capacity for double-think is completely alien to us. And what is a scandal — to use Mr Fuchs' own words — is the way in which his speech was filled with sterile rhetoric directed against the multinationals, not to mention the incredible way he manages to link the death of President Allende with certain aspects of Mrs Moreau's report.

Yes, there are indeed several scandalous, and to my mind contemptible, aspects to Mr Fuchs's speech.

Returning now to the matter in hand, Mr President, as regards the outlook for the Community that this report develops for us, I see it evolving along a number of different lines. The Community can and must take it upon itself to coordinate measures to improve and make greater use of recycling techniques. These are of very great importance to us. In France, 30% of our raw materials supplies, excluding fuels, come from recovery and recycling. Which shows how vital it is to develop this sector and for the Community as such to act as a prime mover in this.

Secondly, the Community can and must undertake studies and research to prospect for and exploit mineral resources in the sea bed, which hold the very greatest potential for the future. That is why I particularly deplore the fact that some of our colleagues in this House should have prevented the setting up of a committee on the sea, which could have played a determining role in this area and would have allowed Europe to take the lead in developing the mineral resources of the sea bed.

Finally, the Community can and must build up buffer stocks for certain raw materials where there is a real risk of supplies being disrupted. These stocks would be in addition to certain national stocks, complementarity here serving as a symbol, as Mr Paulhan said, of the Community's efficiency and common sense of purpose. This idea, if it is what underlies paragraphs 20 and 21 of the motion for a resolution, could have benefited from being more clearly expressed.

In conclusion, Mr President, the Liberal and Democratic Group propose to vote in favour of this report, which is a credit to Parliament. We look forward to the day when the Community introduces a genuine policy on raw materials and energy, both of which seem to us to be, now more than ever, complementary.

(Applause from the Liberal and Democratic Group)

President. — I call Mr Fuchs.

Mr Fuchs. — *(FR)* Mr President, as Mr Galland has attacked me personally, I believe I have the right to a minute in which to reply to him. There are two points on which I wish to take him up. I think in fact, and I

believe this opinion was expressed by my government as early as June 1981, that it is consistent with our concern for human rights progressively to scale down relations with South Africa. There is nothing new in that and I am frankly surprised that Mr Galland finds anything shameful in it.

As for the role of multinationals — and in particular Kenecot, the ITT copper multinational, — which is in the telecommunications field, in the destabilization and overthrow of the Unitá regime in Chile — if Mr Galland does not know his history there is not much I can do about it. I suggest that he has a word with a few of the refugees from the country, who will explain to him exactly what took place.

President. — I call Mr Galland.

Mr Galland. — *(FR)* Mr President, what we have just heard Mr Fuchs say is very interesting, but unfortunately it does not in any way constitute a point of order as defined by the Rules of Procedure. May I draw your attention to the fact that his intervention was not in the nature of a personal statement but a means of continuing the argument. I consider this to be quite irregular and I felt I had to point this out to you.

President. — I call Mrs Pruvot.

Mrs Pruvot. — *(FR)* Mr President, on behalf of the Liberal and Democratic Group, I too should like to congratulate Mrs Moreau on her excellent report and to consider briefly, since my time is limited, one or two points in it.

The first is paragraph 2, about which I have some doubts. Here it says that reserves of mineral raw materials are so large that there is no immediate need to worry about their running out. Personally, I believe it is unrealistic to consider the problem of the security of supplies and related problems in the area of mineral raw materials unless one first comes to grips with the fundamental problem of when these raw materials will be exhausted. Clearly, in the case of several of these raw materials there are still adequate untapped reserves and consequently the problem of depletion is less great; but this does not apply to all raw materials. I would refer you to a publication by the Club of Rome which appeared under the title 'Limits to growth' and in which this very problem is discussed. True, the matter is not as urgent as it is in the energy sector, but surely no one would dare suggest that we wait until the reserves are depleted before reacting.

At the present rate of consumption, how long, for example, will our oil resources last? Twenty years? Thirty years? Who can say? In any case we are very close to that limit and one of the lessons to be learnt

Pruvot

from the problem facing the energy sector is precisely that one has to intervene before the resources start to run out. Otherwise, society will have to be prepared for very much larger investment programmes to compensate in the short term for the inevitable.

The second point I wanted to take up concerns the position of the developing countries. Now, I have to point out that the report takes the position of the Community as its starting point. Its analysis gives an excellent picture of the supply situation for several raw materials, but I should like to try and turn the problem around and look at it from the point of view of the developing countries. There is, as you are aware, a divergence of interests between the Western world with its need for economic growth, particularly in the European Community, and the export opportunities of the developing countries. Nevertheless, we have for a number of years now been conscious of the fact that the development of the natural resources of the Third World countries does not, in the long run, hold the key to their economic problems. Often, these countries develop into 'mono-economies', that is to say become dependent on a single product. The consequence of this is that they are to an unacceptable degree dependent on the world market and its prices, to the point where the entire economic basis of a development and investment programme of a country can sometimes disappear, entirely as a result of movements in world prices. In the case of some products, we have seen in recent years what opportunities there were for speculation. I am thinking in particular, although other examples abound, of the well-known case of American investors, for instance, manipulating prices, which in the short term has benefited the producers but in the long term has had a negative effect since the price, after the speculators had come to grief, fell on the world market.

The third matter I want to discuss is the development of resources in the sea bed. It is very difficult at the present time to estimate how large these resources are. The Conference on the Law of the Sea, which is dealing with this subject, has not yet come to an end, so we do not yet know the results on the basis of which we should work. It is very important for industry in the European Community to be involved in developing these resources. The Commission must therefore ensure, through a programme of investment and through direct contributions from industry, the availability of a sufficient and accessible pool of know-how so that industry in the European Community can be competitive.

May I, in conclusion, come back to paragraph 1 and point out that, whilst we might have access to resources that we have not hitherto been able to exploit, this should not encourage us to indulge in reckless consumption, either on the European or world level. So long as we continue to consume raw materials the reserves will continue to dwindle and it will become increasingly urgent to find new resources.

President. — The debate will be continued after Question Time.

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

6. Question Time

IN THE CHAIR: LADY ELLES

Vice-President

President. — The next item is the first part of Question Time (Doc. 1-1075/81).

I call Mr Purvis on a point of order.

Mr Purvis. — Madam President, on the Friday morning of the December part-session when the now President, Mr Dankert, was in the chair, I enquired whether we could have a version in Polish of the Polish resolution that this Parliament had just passed, and he indicated that he would attempt to arrange that. I wonder if you could indicate whether that version is now ready or likely to be ready in the near future?

President. — Thank you for that enquiry, Mr Purvis, I will make an enquiry of the officials of the Parliament and see that an answer is given to you. If it has not been translated I will ensure that it is so translated, as the President undertook.

We begin with questions to the Commission.

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

Question No 2 by Sir Fred Warner (H-594/81):

What representations are being made by the Commission to the Government of the United States to ensure that clause 601 of the US Copyright Act is repealed with effect from 1 July 1982 and what steps does the Commission intend to take in the event that repeal is frustrated by the bill HR 3940 introduced in the House of Representatives on 17 June 1981?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission has repeatedly pointed out that the American provisions on this question constitute a barrier to trade to the extent that they restrict the exports of the Community printing industry. The

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

Haferkamp

Commission has made approaches to GATT on this matter, and we can state clearly that the early removal of these barriers to trade is incontestably in the interests of the Community and of the industry concerned. The Commission has on several occasions drawn the attention of the US authorities to this problem. It has since also made official representations and will continue to press the rights of the Community under the rules and provisions of the GATT Agreement.

Sir Frederick Warner. — While thanking the Commissioner for his reply, may I point out that the solution to this problem lies to some extent in the hands of the US Congress and there is a fear that they will try to reimpose the existing provisions when they lapse. Is the Commissioner aware that representations have been made by the Parliament on this subject to the US Congress through Parliament's delegation to the US Congress, and will he please do his best to see that these representations are followed up in every possible way?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) We have of course conveyed our views to the American legislative bodies in suitable ways and, should there be no response to our approaches, we should — as we have indicated — take the matter up with the GATT institutions. We hope that the decisions in the United States will be taken with due regard to the GATT rules, which are also applicable to the United States.

Mr Tyrrell. — Would the Commissioner be so good as to state unequivocally that, if this section of the US Copyright Act is renewed after 1 July 1982 when it expires, the European Community will institute retaliatory measures against the US book trade by introducing copyright law in the Community which exempts books printed and published in the English language in the United States from copyright protection anywhere in the Community? Would he agree that this is one of those instances where one can demonstrate that the Ten acting together can achieve justice for the traders in the Community, which the Ten acting separately could not?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) I should like first of all to point out that we should distinguish in dealing with this affair between the GATT rules and the rules of international copyright. Strictly speaking, the latter have nothing to do with this issue. The world copyright agreement has no specific effects on the question of trade in printing products. In any case the United States has not acceded to the Berne Convention on this question. On the other hand, I have just said that, should our efforts to obtain results through bilateral contacts with the United States not meet with success, we shall apply all procedures and exercise all rights available to the Community under GATT.

Mr Enright. — Will the Commissioner state quite clearly that he will not hide behind niceties, but that he will take retaliatory action. It is quite crucial that this be done in the defence of Shakespeare, among others.

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) If we are not satisfied by the US legislation and consider that it infringes GATT, we shall of course, as we have already announced, make representations to GATT and open the necessary proceedings against the United States.

President. — Question No 3, by Mr Deleau (H-631/81):

Has the Commission made appropriate arrangements for an effective campaign against fraudulent importation which is often based on false certificates of origin?

Has the Commission acquired the requisite technical and administrative means to enable it to react quickly in the cases of fraud which it uncovers, and what are these preparations and means?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) A comprehensive solution has admittedly not yet been found to the difficult problem of fraudulent imports in the context of the self-limitation agreements on textiles; however, the Commission has taken certain steps with the result that much more effective control has recently been gained over cases of fraud.

The Commission has taken measures at two levels. Firstly, much better coordination has been achieved between the work of the investigating departments in the individual Community Member States. The Commission has a key role here since it acts as a clearing house for the exchange of information between the Member States and guides and harmonizes the control activities of the Member States at joint meetings.

Secondly, we have been able to achieve much closer cooperation with a number of Third countries. These supplier countries have fortunately been made to realize that it is in their own interest too for clarity to prevail over the origin of goods in international trade in textiles; similarly, it is in their own interest for their market prospects in the Community not to be impaired by fraudulent practices on the part of other exporting countries.

These efforts have been concentrated on the further extension of administrative cooperation of the kind which already exists under the double-check procedure. From 1 January last this procedure has even been extended, in the case of the Asian countries, to products which are not strictly speaking subject to quantitative ceilings so as to safeguard as far as possible for these countries the advantages they have already enjoyed in their previous trade with the Community by excluding fraudulent imports. In this connection,

Narjes

subsequent spot-checks are being carried out by officials from the Commission and the Member States; in the past such checks have produced highly satisfactory results. In several cases they have already provided the basis for an adjustment by which the goods are imputed against the quotas of the real countries of origin.

Finally, I would like to point out that all these measures will figure more prominently in future bilateral textile agreements.

Mr Deleau. — (FR) Is the Commission prepared to step up its efforts so as to put an end to this situation or, at the very least, bring about an improvement?

Mr Narjes. — (DE) Yes, I hope you will have gathered from my answer that we are working jointly with the Member States over the whole range of possible frauds in order to limit evasion and improve the situation.

President. — At the author's request Question No 4 will be transferred to the April agenda.

Question No 5, by Mr Moreland (H-661/81):

Given the required and important role of coal in meeting the Community's future demand for energy, does the Commission consider that the technical coal research allocation in the 1982 ECSC budget is sufficient to maintain research and development in this area at the necessary level?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission shares the honourable Member's view that the appropriations earmarked for coal research in 1982 cannot do justice to the situation and needs in this area. Budget appropriations have had to be reduced because of the extraordinarily difficult situation in the iron and steel industry and the resulting impossibility, as we see it, of increasing the levy rates. We did not wish to impose an even higher levy contribution on an industry which is facing difficulties.

We are currently engaged on a reappraisal of the possibilities and needs in the area of coal research and are trying to define new areas of research which could better meet the needs of the energy sector.

The Commission intends to concentrate aids for coal research primarily on coal-winning techniques, coking methods and safety in the mines. We also intend to propose that funds should be made available from the general budget for research and development in the area of solid fuels processing technologies since we believe that, over and above the interests of the coal industry in the Community, a general contribution

must be made to the improvement of our energy situation.

Mr Moreland. — I welcome the answer from the Commission and the fact that the Commission seems to be on the side of the angels on this issue. I note that in its recent publication, 'The role for coal in Community energy strategy', the Commission makes a number of proposals in this field for coal research. Can the Commissioner tell me if it is his view that these should now be costed and presented to the Parliament so that, perhaps for 1983, we can have a much bigger budget for coal research than at present?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) In recent weeks the Commission has submitted a series of energy policy proposals to the Council of Ministers and is now engaged in detailed discussions. We hope to arrive at a new strategy which will enable practical conclusions to be drawn at the earliest possible opportunity from these reports and proposals. We are now awaiting decisions and guidelines which will enable us to make the necessary funds available for energy research in 1983.

Mr Martin. — (FR) Having regard to the economic sanctions called for in the resolution adopted by the EEC-ACP Joint Committee at its recent meeting in Salisbury, does the Commission not think that steps should be taken to bring about a substantial reduction in coal imports from racist South Africa? This could be done firstly by encouraging production in the Community countries, especially France which has now set itself a target of 30 million tonnes in 1990 to correct the policy of pit closures pursued in recent years, and secondly by encouraging the Member States to replace South African coal as far as possible by imports from the ACP countries, for example Zimbabwe and Botswana or the front-line nations?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) The Commission has no specific budgetary resources for this purpose. As you know, our general programme of measures to develop the economy of the associated countries attaches particular importance to the promotion of the energy economy in those countries. We quite naturally give priority to two sectors in the promotion of energy supplies: firstly to production in the Community itself and secondly to production in the associated countries. This is a perfectly natural scheme of priorities to the extent that we have resources and instruments at our disposal for this purpose.

Mr Boyes. — I also regret the cutback in the amount of money for research in the coal industry, and I share some of the anxieties expressed in the previous supplementary question by Mr Martin. I should like to

Boyes

concentrate on the research and development aspect. I don't doubt some of this money will go towards the obtaining of oil from coal. There is a certain amount of Community money involved. My concern is that because of the link-up between coal producers, between the multinational oil companies, this technology might in fact get to South Africa. What safeguards is the Commission taking to make sure that new technologies and advancements in obtaining oil from coal do not reach the vicious murderous South African Government?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) The results of research promoted by us are of course available to the Community and not to third countries.

Mr Seligman. — Perhaps the previous two questioners from the Socialist Group would address their question about South Africa to the French Socialist Government who continue to draw coal from South Africa. That might be a better target for them.

The Commissioner, in answering the question, referred to fast fuels — that is the way that it came across in the translation. Could he elaborate on that? I do not know what he means by fast fuels. Meanwhile will research be concentrated on such things as underground and undersea gasification and also the enhanced recovery of coal from narrow seams and defunct coalmines? New technology should be able to overcome that problem and give us a great additional reserve of coal.

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) There must have been a mistake in the interpretation. I did not refer to fast fuels but to solid fuels.

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

Mr Seal. — Madam President, whilst I accept your desire to get through all 56 questions, I feel that you put that to the House without taking the opinion of the House. Some of these questions are much more important than others and will therefore require more comment. I hope that you will bear that in mind when actually taking the questions.

President. — Of course I bear that in mind, but I think that you have had quite a good run on these supplementary questions. I think that the Commission has answered very fully and that there is probably nothing more you can extract from the Commissioner. I would point out to Mr Seal, if he would refer to the minutes of the last session, that it was agreed by the House that this was the procedure they wished me to follow.

Question No 6, by Mrs Poirier, taken over by Mr Denis (H-668/81):

According to the FAO the food situation in the developing countries, and especially in the least developed countries, is likely to continue to deteriorate over the next decade. Does the Commission not consider that the EEC should do everything within its power to guarantee the security and independence of the developing countries with regard to food so as to put them out of reach of political pressure or financial speculation?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — (DA) Madam President, the Commission's intention, in accordance with its programme for 1982, is to give food aid of 1 090 000 tonnes of grain, which is an increase of approximately 50% over 1980, when we have 720 000 tonnes. Thanks to the support of the European Parliament for the Commission's proposals, a better balance has been achieved in the Community's budget for food aid, so that we are able to do more to meet the needs of the developing countries, i.e. food aid in the form of sugar, vegetable oils and pulse crops. In the Commission's view there should be a further increase over the coming years in food aid to meet the needs of the developing countries, particularly the poorest ones, with due regard at the same time for the difficulties and risks which this kind of aid may involve. For security of supply and independence in the food sector to be achieved, however, a series of interdependent measures must be implemented. The Community has thus found it necessary to extend its programme of action to combat starvation in the world beyond the granting of further food aid to take in measures which will increase the ability of the developing countries to solve their food problems themselves by an increase in local production.

Measures will also be taken under the plan to increase the security of the developing countries with regard to supplies of food from abroad. The Commission has already put forward proposals to this end under which the Community is to draw up certain export policy measures in the form of long-term agreements, and it lays emphasis in addition on the need for a better organization of the world market for grain through the wheat agreement and, if it is not possible to arrive at an agreement, at least in this sector, for the introduction of further medium-term support measures.

Mr Denis. — (FR) We shall have occasion to return to this question because aid falls far short of the needs at present as the Committee on Development and Cooperation has noted; however, I wish to put a different supplementary question.

If we are talking about the needy countries, as the representative of the Commission said, I note that in answer to Written Question 1329/81 on the subject of persistent ostracizing of food aid to Vietnam, the

Denis

Commissioner deliberately missed the point by speaking of indirect aid in pharmaceutical products . . .

(The President requested the speaker to put his question)

How can the Commission justify an attitude which is tantamount to using food aid as a weapon, a practice which has been condemned in particular by the EEC-ACP parliamentary meetings?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — *(DA)* Madam President, as the honourable Member already indicates in his reference, the Commission has in fact answered the question which has been put in respect of aid to Vietnam. The Commission has on several occasions drawn Parliament's attention to the fact that we are following developments in Vietnam very closely indeed. However, the Commission stresses again that we cannot ignore the question of controls over the use of possible food aid, to which we attach great importance, since otherwise there is a risk that the food aid will not achieve the aim intended. There is thus no question of using this food aid as a weapon. With regard to the present situation in Vietnam, the Commission does not feel that it has sufficient assurance that the distribution of the goods locally can proceed in a satisfactory manner, whether milk or other food products are involved, and we do not therefore feel that it is reasonable at present to put a proposal to the Council for a resumption of this food aid.

On the other hand, as has also been pointed out, the Commission has recently taken a decision on the granting to Vietnam of 300 000 ECU in emergency aid, which is to be shared out among various organizations which will provide the necessary guarantee that this aid will in fact reach those who are in need of it. As has also been said it consists mainly of the purchase of medicines and medical goods to be distributed free of charge to the population or to be used in conjunction with medical treatment provided free of charge.

I should like to add that the Community, as hitherto, will be giving food aid to the Vietnamese refugees living in camps in other countries in the region.

Mr Lomas. — I would just like to pursue the last point that was raised and the answer from the Commissioner, if I may, because there is no doubt that food aid is being used now as a political weapon. Both the President of the Commission and Lord Carrington have recently said that they will not agree to food aid to Vietnam until the political situation changes. Now my question is: how can the Commission reconcile that situation with the sending of food aid to the quite brutally oppressive regimes of Haiti, Chile and Uruguay?

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — *(DA)* The important thing as far as the Commission is concerned first and foremost is to ensure that the aid we give really reaches the population groups who are in need. When the Commission has the assurance that the aid actually gets to these population groups, we are of the opinion that we can provide aid for them. If we do not have adequate assurance of this, the Commission is more circumspect and sends the aid as far as possible through channels other than the usual ones.

Mr Turner. — May I ask the Commissioner whether the Commission is making use of all the EEC cereal which is available, notably barley, and whether they are taking steps to increase the use of barley in the Third World and whether they are able to provide barley under the programmes for animal feed as well. I would like to know what steps are being taken.

Mr Dalsager, Member of the Commission. — *(DA)* The food aid which the Commission gives in the form of cereal consists mainly of wheat for human consumption. But clearly, in certain situations, barley can also be used as a form of aid to particularly hard-hit areas. But I do not have information relating to the very specific question which has been put.

President. — Perhaps I should point out that Question No 7 has been deferred until April and it will therefore give an opportunity to those Members who have not been able to put any further supplementaries to the Commissioner to raise this issue again in the April session. At the author's request, Question No 7 will be transferred to the April agenda. Question No 8, by Mrs Le Roux, taken over by Mr Frischmann (H-670/81):

Rising fuel costs are leading to higher production costs for fishermen. Is the Commission prepared to offset this trend by proposing a regulation on aid for fuel used in the non-industrial inshore fishing sector?

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — *(GR)* The entire fishing sector of the Community has in recent years been undergoing radical changes in the conditions of its operation.

One of the principal factors in these changes has certainly been the considerable increase in the price of fuel.

The Commission considers that we are dealing here with an organizational and not a random factor of the operating conditions in the fishing industry, which will from now on have to adapt to a steadily increasing cost of energy compared to what was the case in the past.

Contogeorgis

Consequently, maintaining its firm position on this issue, the Commission does not deem it to be economically purposeful to provide for grants of national or Community subsidies in connection with the fuel used by the fishing industry. This would constitute an artificial means of solving an organizational problem.

On the other hand, the Commission believes that other measures of an organizational character are not only useful but also desirable, to enable fishing concerns to adapt permanently to the new operating conditions. For this reason, the Commission raised no objections to the help of this kind approved by the Member States. Moreover, the Commission has submitted to the Council specific proposals for the adoption of an organizational Community fishing policy, and as you know, these proposals have been approved by Parliament.

Mrs Ewing. — Will the Commissioner accept that there will be considerable disappointment at his answer in peripheral fishing communities because large numbers of fisheries are simply having to tie up their boats? As he is aware, there are ten jobs on the shore for every fisherman at sea. What can he say that I can pass on to my fishing communities that are being blitzed, a whole generation of which is not going to go to sea, and where there are no alternative jobs — what am I to say as the Council of Ministers has not even fixed a date for the next fisheries meeting? I am afraid I must ask the Commissioner to do better than this.

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) In connection with the comment by Mrs Ewing I would like to say the following:

As regards the specific case of recognizing the need to provide assistance towards meeting the high cost of fuel, the position of the Commission is that this would not constitute a correct policy because the high cost of fuel is not incidental. It is a phenomenon that has now become permanent. This is an organizational problem that cannot be solved by subsidies. In the long term such a policy would be erroneous. On the other hand, Mrs Ewing is right in pointing out that the inshore fishermen are facing certain problems. To meet these problems the Commission has made proposals that are now before the Council of Ministers, awaiting decisions. The next meeting of the Council will take place in April and we hope that progress can be made in connection with all the outstanding matters relating to the fishing industry.

Mr Seligman. — I welcome the Commissioner's answer about that because is this not part of a much bigger picture? If we encourage the use of more fuel, we shall continue to be plagued by the oil importing problem. If oil is going to come down in price, consumption is

going to rise again, and then we shall be back to the old problem of inflation caused by oil prices. So I welcome the Commissioner's answer and feel that we should allow oil to find its own level and not subsidize it. If there is a lower oil price, it should benefit industry and fishermen in some other way, not in reduced prices for oil.

President. — Mr Seligman, I am not quite sure how your question ended. I think it was rather more of a statement, but I will ask the Commissioner, nevertheless, if he wishes to comment on your comment!

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) I would like to say that the subsidy of fuel consumption would indeed conflict with the general policy of the Community relative to the saving of energy, because the cheaper fuel becomes, the more wastefully it is used. I wish we could meet the eventuality of assisting the inshore fishing industry in this respect. However, as I have told you, it is a matter of principle and of policy, and the Community does not consider that subsidies are the right way to solve the problem.

Mr Paisley. — Is the Commissioner aware how hard-hit Northern Ireland is, with unemployment running higher than anywhere else in the Community? Is he aware how hard-hit the inshore fishermen off the County Down coast have been, not only with, first of all, the ban on herring fishing, but now that they have got back to fishing, the rising costs of fuel? And if he is going to talk about a long-term solution, surely he should come to a short-term solution to help these fishermen over the problems they have at the present time by following the line advocated in the question?

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) The Commission is fully aware of the difficulties encountered by the inshore fishing industry, and is doing all that it can to help the industry. I have mentioned that there is a series of integrated proposals for this purpose. As regards the subject of a ban on the fishing of herring and certain other species, this is motivated by the need to protect the resources of the Community and is imposed only when there are scientifically well-founded reports that indicate the need to limit fishing so that the fishing resources of the Community can be conserved. This may represent a temporary inconvenience for the industry, but in the long term it is in the industry's own interests, because if the stocks are allowed to become exhausted and destroyed it is certain that the fishing industry would be the first to suffer.

President. — Question No 9, by Mr Papaefstratiou (H-679/81):

It is a well-known fact that several thousand citizens of the Member States have been forced to leave African

President

countries such as Zaire, Angola and Zimbabwe, frequently in tragic circumstances, and to abandon small or large assets without any compensation after several years' residence in and service to the country in question. The Community grants economic aid to a number of these African countries. What steps is the Commission thinking of taking to aid European refugees from African countries, and to what extent could it grant temporary financial aid pending final reimbursement of the lost assets by the ACP States?

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) The responsibility for these matters does not lie with the Community but with the Member States whose citizens may have been affected by occurrences of this kind.

Mr Papaefstratiou. — (GR) I confess that I had expected the Vice-President of the Commission, Mr Haferkamp, to give us a somewhat more satisfactory answer because the Member States, as individuals, of course do what they can for their own subjects, but the point is what is the European Economic Community doing? The EEC offers aid to African countries that have expelled as refugees people who are subjects of the Member States, and who had to leave behind substantial fortunes without compensation.

Does not the Commission consider that it should take some action on behalf of these citizens?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) As I have already said, the Community has no way of intervening. It is a matter for the Member States which may be able to intervene on behalf of their citizens according to their respective national statutory provisions and financial possibilities. The honourable Member's specific question related to the possibility of financial support and compensation in these cases. That possibility is not open to us.

A totally different question is whether the Community can, in the context of its constant cooperation with the associated countries in the institutions of the association — at administrative, ministerial or parliamentary level — draw attention to cases which present difficulties and thus attempt to dissuade the associated countries from creating intolerable situations for nationals of our Member States. That is a totally different matter and we should be perfectly willing to act on these lines.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) Does the Commissioner realize that we maintain links through the Lomé Convention with all these countries which have robbed Europeans and that the Community therefore has a direct responsibility both to our Europeans and to the countries concerned? You cannot therefore simply fob us off with a reference to the responsibilities of the national governments.

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) I was not trying to evade the issue when I stated that we have no financial resources for this purpose which was the purport of the question put to me. I went on to answer the question as to whether we could seek to prevent or alleviate such intolerable situations in cooperation with our associated countries. That is obviously something which we are willing to take up.

Mr Denis. — (FR) In the light of the Commissioner's words to us, does he know that workers in European countries, for example in France, are having to leave their jobs after years of hard work without having been able to set aside large or even small fortunes? Does he not therefore think it improper for the money of taxpayers in the Community or in the ACP or other associated countries to be used to reimburse fortunes built on colonialist exploitation?

Mr Haferkamp. — (DE) I did not take the question which was supposed to be put to me. The honourable Member made an observation and I have taken note of it.

President. — Question No 10, by Mr Israël, taken over by Mr Méo (H-705/81):

Can the Commission detail its intended policy to help to improve the position of Cambodian refugees in Thailand and can it indicate whether, as has been suggested, it intends to reduce radically or even halt all emergency aid to voluntary organizations looking after Cambodian refugees in Thailand?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The fate of the Kampuchean refugees in Thailand continues to be a source of concern to the Commission. Accordingly, under the 1981 programme, 10 000 tonnes of cereals in the form of rice were allocated to the World Food Programme to assist the Kampuchean people. Distribution is due to begin in February, and depending on the priorities set by the WFP, all or part of the aid may be used to help Kampuchean refugees or displaced persons at the frontier.

Under the 1982 programme, the Commission has proposed a further allocation of 12 000 tonnes of cereals, to be distributed to the refugees by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Finally, the Commission does not rule out the possibility of making a request to the budgetary authority, if circumstances warrant, for a transfer of appropriations to Article 950 for the continuation of emergency operations to assist these people.

Mr Méo. — (FR) I was pleased to note the information you gave to us that last year's figure for food aid to the Cambodian refugees in Thailand is to be

Méo

doubled. I further note that this particular aid does not entail the difficulties of control over utilization and security which arise in connection with other types of food aid in the same region.

Mr Richard. — Only to clear up one possible source of misunderstanding: the figures I gave were that this year it was 10 000 tonnes and next year it would be 12 000 tonnes. That is not exactly a doubling.

Mr Méo. — (*FR*) The interpreter quoted a figure of 20 000 instead of 12 000. May I point out that this increase is not proportional to the increase in food aid planned by the EEC whose representatives, through the Commission a few minutes ago, said that aid would be increased by 50% from one year to the next. I therefore believe that an effort still remains to be made for the benefit of the Cambodian refugees in Thailand.

Mr Richard. — Only to say that it may well be that if Kampuchea again has a serious shortfall in 1982, this might prompt the Commission to propose further food-aid operations if a request is made by the organizations operating in Kampuchea. We are very conscious of this problem and we are anxious to do what we can to help on it.

Mr Pearce. — Despite what Mr Méo said, I did not hear the Commissioner satisfy us that the Commission has a guarantee that this aid will not go to military forces located in that area. Would the Commissioner therefore please tell us what steps the Commission takes on the spot there to guarantee that the aid goes to refugees and not to soldiers, guerrillas or insurgents?

Mr Richard. — What I said was that in 1982, the 1981 allocation of 10 000 tonnes is to begin to be distributed depending on the priorities set by the World Food Programme, and that under the 1982 programme the distribution to the refugees will be carried out by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. So we are, in fact, using two international organizations to try and make sure that the food goes to the precise places where I think the honourable Member and the Commission would wish it to go.

President. — As its author is not present, Question No 11 will receive a written answer.¹

Question No 12, by Mr Patterson (H-726/81):

Does the Commission not agree that in the light of the very high unemployment rates and poor job prospects in

many areas of the Community, it would be both undesirable and unfair to seek to require that vocational training and preparation courses for young people should be directly linked to current specific labour-market needs?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — Vocational preparation and training are by definition aimed at labour market needs. This does not mean, however, that it must necessarily be linked to current, specific labour-market needs, either in times of high unemployment or, indeed, even in a satisfactory employment situation. More emphasis will have to be placed on helping young people to better develop social skills and competences necessary for adult and working life which would allow them to continue an active life even during periods of unemployment.

Mr Patterson. — Well, I am very glad to hear that answer, but is the Commissioner aware that during a meeting of the Working Group on the Social Fund Advisory Committee on 11 February, his Commission officials handed round a note proposing radically different criteria for Social Fund allocations concerning young people and in particular, stating that the United Kingdom's Youth Opportunities Programme was linked insufficiently closely to labour-market needs? The new criterion would in effect have reduced the UK allocation in 1982 to one-twentieth of 1981. So did the Commissioner know and approve of this note, in view of his answer just now? Will he confirm that there is no change in the Social Fund guidelines for 1982, as compared to 1981, as was announced in May 1981? In particular, will he confirm that there is no question at all of national quotas when allocating the Social Fund?

Mr Richard. — I am aware that at this meeting of the Social Fund Committee a document prepared by the services of the Commission was passed around which, if my memory serves me right, says that negotiations and discussions should thereafter take place with member governments. May I make it perfectly clear to the Parliament and to the honourable Member who asked the question that no decision whatsoever has yet been taken on how this issue should be dealt with.

I ought to say to the Parliament that there is a problem. The problem is caused by the fact that the number of applications in respect of young people, the number of calls being made on the Social Fund, is now so great that there will be insufficient money in the Fund to meet them. One of the ways of dealing with it is to try and do what my Commission services suggested as a possible solution at the Social Fund Committee. Another way of dealing with it might be to have a supplementary budget. Another way of dealing with it might be to have some kind of weighting on the applications. What I am prepared to

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

Richard

say today, and to give a firm assurance to Parliament on the point, is that no decision has been taken upon this and, indeed, will not be taken upon it until I have had an opportunity of discussing it, not only with the services inside the Commission and my fellow Commissioners, but with the Member States most directly concerned, including the United Kingdom, with whom I have already been in some communication.

Mr Seal. — Would the Commission consider stopping the Social Fund grants to the United Kingdom for training, which, I believe, at present, pay for about half the amount spent in the United Kingdom, until the present reactionary Tory Government amend their recent terrible White Paper on vocational training in line with the amendments which have been put forward by the trade unions and many other informed bodies in the United Kingdom?

Mr Richard. — The short answer to that question is No. I would not do anything like it. I do not believe the honourable Member expects me to do anything like it, and I must say that while I enjoy British politics as much as anybody in this House, I really do not think that the Social Fund and its contribution to young unemployed people in the United Kingdom should be a part of the party game.

(Applause)

Mrs Tove Nielsen. — *(DA)* I have a supplementary question for the Commissioner.

I should like to ask, considering the kind of economic crisis all the Member States find themselves in, whether the Commissioner does not think that it is absolutely essential for us to go all out to foster the only real raw material we have in the Community, a well trained labour force.

That is what prompted me to put the question, for I feel that the Commissioner is dodging the issue by simply making fine and airy statements about acquiring skills so as to be active in society. Surely the real issue is that our industry should have a capable workforce, because we can only work ourselves out of the economic crisis by having capable people ready to produce goods we can sell at competitive prices!

Mr Richard. — I am sorry if I sounded unclear and uncertain. Of course I agree with every word that has just been said. I totally agree with it. The whole objective of the Commission's policy in relation to this part of the Social Fund is to do precisely what the honourable Member wants us to do.

Mr Kellett-Bowman. — Would not the Commissioner accept that his helpful reply to Mr Patterson's supplementary raises budgetary consequences? Was it not agreed in the budget that guidelines on this matter for 1982 would be the same as for 1981? And if the guidelines are to be changed, will he assure the House that Parliament will be consulted?

Mr Richard. — I am perfectly prepared to give an assurance to the House that the proper procedures will be gone through if in the event it turns out that there has to be an alteration as far as the budget is concerned.

President. — I hope the House will agree that we have had quite a lot of supplementaries on this question and that we should now move on, following the guidelines that we have laid down ourselves for Question Time. Every group that has asked to do so has had an opportunity to put a question, and I think the Commissioner has answered very fully the questions that have been put to him.

As its author is not present, Question No 13 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 14, by Mr Gerokostopoulos (H-740/81):

On 7 May 1981 (OJ No C 144, p. 92), Parliament adopted a motion for a resolution tabled by former MEP Mr G. Dalakouras and others (Doc. 1-141/81), concerning kind of assistance for the preservation of the artistic treasures of Mount Athos, in Greece.

What action has the Commission taken — if any — on the above-mentioned resolution adopted by Parliament?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* After Parliament had itself introduced and approved an item in the 1980 budget, the Commission was able to make a financial contribution to the maintenance of a historic building in Edinburgh. However, that is the only instance in which the Commission has so far taken direct action to preserve a specific monument. Action by the Community to preserve historic monuments is nevertheless useful and important. Our aim is firstly to train personnel qualified in the various conservation methods, including craft skills, needed to preserve monuments and, secondly, to utilize a new technique known as the impregnation process which has proved particularly effective. Turning now to the specific case of the monastic community on Mount Athos, I must say that the Commission attaches the utmost importance to the buildings concerned but is awaiting the return of a group of visiting Members of Parliament who will be preparing a report; we shall then examine whether and to what extent we can take

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

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practical action. However, I must point out straight away that, given our lack of funds, there is at present little likelihood of positive results leading to any real change in the situation.

Mr Gerokostopoulos. — (*GR*) I am grateful to the Member of the Commission for his answer to our question, which contains certain elucidatory information.

I would like, however, to plead that special note should be taken of the following fact, of which the Commission should be aware in promoting and continuing its efforts to meet the problem.

As is known, the community of monks on the Holy Mountain, or Mount Athos, constitutes a separate, autonomous State that is recognized and safeguarded by the Constitution of Greece. Consequently, I think that any further action ought to take place only after consultations between the Greek Government and the Commission if the proposed plan is to succeed.

Mr Narjes. — (*DE*) The Commission will bear the honourable Member's comments in mind.

President. — Question No 15, by Mr Boyes (H-765/81):

Over 10 million are now unemployed within the Community, more than 3 million within the UK alone, and the numbers are rising. Evidence exists to demonstrate a link between rising unemployment and an increase in incidents of suicide, mental illness and death.

Is the Commission aware of this evidence and, if so, what is it doing about it?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The problem of unemployment has been a source of concern to the Commission since the first energy crisis of 1973. It has brought much hardship. It has been unevenly spread. It has been alleviated for many, but not all, by the high degree of social protection given by unemployment and social security benefits.

It has been suggested that the impact of unemployment includes adverse effects upon health, and in support of this there have been recent reports in the scientific literature which present findings of a statistical association between the rates of unemployment and mortality. However, I have to say to the House that these findings have been heavily criticized for their statistical methodology, and other research in this area has been unable to produce similar results. The Commission could not, at this stage, therefore accept the reported association as clear-cut evidence of a direct relationship. The same is true of allegations linking unemployment directly with ill-health: again, the evidence is circumstantial rather than clear. There

is, in our view, a need for further research in this area to determine whether unemployment can itself be a risk to health. The Commission is seeking ways to develop such work in collaboration with Member States and with other organizations.

I think there is hardly need for me to emphasize that irrespective of the findings of scientific research in this particular area, the Commission considers the fight against unemployment as the major priority for the Community, not least on account of the massive human distress and the social instability that unemployment has already brought in its train.

Mr Boyes. — I do not agree totally with what the Commissioner said, because I believe there is a direct link between suicide and the rise in unemployment. The Government of the UK, Mr Commissioner, is guilty of cold, calculated murder of the people in my country by ignoring that fact. And further, the butchering swine governing Britain at this very moment — Budget Day . . .

President. — Would you kindly put a question to the Commissioner?

Mr Boyes. — I will. I am on my way there, Madam President.

President. — Would you kindly get there immediately?

Mr Boyes. — I can't get there because you are tapping that thing up there.

The butchering swine governing Britain are probably making decisions today — Budget Day — that will ensure that tens of thousands more people go to an early grave. Therefore I appeal to the Commissioner, when he said in his answer that further research is going to be carried out: will he give me an assurance that it will be an early report, and will he give me an assurance that adequate funds will be made available to check this link between suicide and unemployment?

Mr Richard. — The assurance I think I can give is that, while as regards further research we don't necessarily have the financial resources available to support it, we hope that a concerted action method will be selected for health research within the third medical research programme.

And can I say this: we are following with interest the research in this area being undertaken within the Community, for example in the United Kingdom by Messrs Brenner and Farrow in Cardiff, by Professor Ashton at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical

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Medicine and by Professor Preston at Queen Mary College. So we are interested in this area, we are looking at it, we hope that the research will eventually yield some results which are more clear than the present somewhat insubstantial evidence, and if it does, then I will be pleased to come back to the House and give it our considered views.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Does the Commission share my view, precisely in the light of these figures, that policy should be directed much more towards preparing people for less employment or no employment at all? Although it will be difficult to change ways of thinking, it seems more realistic for the 10 million unemployed today and the many millions of unemployed in the future to help them to experience the fact of not working less as a source of shame. Does the Commission agree with this point of view?

Mr Richard. — I think that question raises slightly wider issues, but insofar as I can answer it now let me say this: the Commission is intensely interested in those aspects of policy in some Member States which deal with the possibility of sharing out the existing amount of work that is available, perhaps more equitably in the future. We are following, for example, what is going on in France, with great interest. I think I should not perhaps go further than that at this stage, but merely to say that with the thrust of the honourable Member's question, I find myself in considerable agreement.

Mrs Clwyd. — I was sorry to hear the answer that the Commissioner gave because last year 19 Health Ministers meeting in Madrid did in fact find a very strong link between unemployment and ill health. One exception was the United Kingdom Health Minister, and I am sorry to hear him echoing the view of the United Kingdom Government. Is he aware that over a five-year period directors of social services in Wales who have no political axe to grind have estimated that the number of deaths in Wales will be increased by 2 500 if unemployment increases by only 1%? And can I ask him to produce a paper on this subject because there is very real concern throughout the Community about this link? It is not true to say that Professor Brenner's research has been discredited — quite the opposite. In fact it has been strengthened by subsequent research in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. In fact, applying the same work to British data Brenner found that in the past a 1% increase in the unemployment rate over a five-year period has been associated with approximately 40 000 extra deaths. That is a very serious allegation and one which the Commission should take very seriously indeed.

Mr Richard. — I take the allegation extremely seriously and I want to see the evidence. That's all I said. And as far as the . . .

Mr Boyes. — The evidence is on hand!

Mr Richard. — With great respect, there are differing views as to the effect of the evidence. My experts tell me — and they may be less qualified than the honourable gentleman who is shouting out from his seat — to judge the evidence than he is that at the recent meeting of European Ministers of Health in Madrid there was disagreement amongst ministers about the wider social effects of unemployment and they disagreed about this particular issue. All I am saying is that if research is being conducted, the Commission would indeed be extremely interested to look at the results of that research. But I am not prepared, on behalf of the Commission, to accept blanket allegations of this sort unless they are proven. Because, with great respect to those people who are asking me to do it, if we accept that this is the result of it, and it is proven, we will have to do something about it and I am not prepared merely to make the allegations and not be prepared to follow it up with firm action.

Mr Frischmann. — (FR) As an extension to the question by Mr Boyes and to the observations by Mrs Clwyd, I would just like to point out that the Commission concedes every year that unemployment is increasing while at the same time proposing, every year, policies which make the situation even worse.

My question therefore is this: when will the Commission at last come to realize that the time has come for it to undertake a thorough reappraisal of its policies and make employment and investment which creates employment the central features of a system of economic management whose primary aim is to combat unemployment? This is particularly relevant now that the Commission's guidelines are no longer being followed by every Member State; a majority in France, for example, has recognized the harmful nature of previous policies and embarked upon the path of change.

Mr Richard. — I think the question is somewhat wider than the terms of the original question. I would be delighted to have a great debate on the Commission's policy and approach to the problem of unemployment in Europe in general.

On the other hand I was asked a specific question by Mr Boyes about whether I accepted certain specific allegations. I have given my answer to that and at this stage I do not think it would be either useful or helpful for me to go into a general debate on the Commission's attitude towards unemployment.

President. — I think the Commissioner has answered as fully as he can on the facts available the questions which have so far been put to him.

President

As the authors are not present, Questions No 16 and 17, will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 18, by Mrs Ewing (H-484/81):

Does the Commission agree that the Regional Fund Regulation in its present form does not contain any efficient mechanisms to prevent Member States receiving aid from the Fund from reducing the amount of national aid correspondingly; does the Commission find this situation satisfactory; if not, has the Commission considered proposing the introduction of new mechanisms, guaranteeing respect of the principle of additionality in connection with the next revision of the Regional Fund Regulation?

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission. — (GR) The Commission considers that the mechanisms of the European Regional Development Fund do not in fact today make it possible to secure in a satisfactory way the additionality of the aid provided by the Fund, even though some results have already been achieved. It was for this reason that the Commission's proposals of last year regarding a review of the regulation of the Fund envisaged a series of directives that were designed to improve the application of the principle of additionality which concerns, for example, the financing of programmes in accordance with agreements that ensure a better control over the disposition of the Fund's resources, and consequently adherence to the principle of additionality; the directives were also intended to improve the method of payment from the Fund, to foster greater participation by regional and local authorities interested in the development of the area in question, and to constitute an element of control over the way the Fund's resources are used and also an appropriate means of publicizing the aid offered by the Fund, so that the part played by the Community could be better recognized by the beneficiaries.

Mrs Ewing. — While thanking the Commissioner for his answer and agreeing with his view that the new proposals take us a long way in the right direction, nevertheless, may I ask the Commissioner whether he will state categorically that he deplors this practice that I have mentioned in my question which cannot be a good thing in the eyes of the public and their view of the European Community, as it seems to them to savour of a degree of fraud? So will the Commissioner at least state that he condemns the practice adopted by certain Member States?

Mr. Contogeorgis. — (GR) As I have said, the purpose of the resources held by the Regional Fund is to supplement, and not to replace the national resources, and the Commission recognizes that in today's situation this additionality of the resources available is not guaranteed. I am glad that Mrs Ewing

acknowledges that the new proposals of the Commission currently before the Council are directed exactly at this point, namely at ensuring additionality.

As regards present-day public opinion concerning the way in which the Fund's resources are disposed of, in other words concerning the impression that certain frauds are involved, there are no figures for this and I cannot therefore answer. There may be certain sporadic opinions on the matter, but the Commission has no figures to justify these fears.

Miss Quin. — The Commission has unfortunately failed to get the principle of additionality respected with regard to the quota section of the Regional Fund, but I would like to ask the Commission if in its discussions with the Council over the non-quota section of the Regional Fund it has managed to obtain from the Council a commitment to additionality in this section of the Fund?

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) The Commission's proposals are before the Council, but discussions concerning them have not yet started. Thus, I can add nothing at this stage. Of course, as regards the non-quota section of the Fund we shall try to ensure the additionality of these Community resources to strengthen the national resources.

Mr Paisley. — Is the Commissioner aware how sadly Northern Ireland has fared in regard to additionality? For example, taking the new extension to the airport facilities there, millions of pounds allocated by this common market were not forthcoming to the Northern Ireland Airports Authority. And would he take up with the British Government the need that every penny that comes from Europe should go as additional money to Northern Ireland in its unemployment plight at the present time?

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) In certain cases the Fund's resources are made available directly to the Member States, to supplement the national budget and through this, to be channelled to assist the various projects. In the specific case in question I think that was the procedure adopted, in other words the Irish Government received the contribution from the Fund, and of course was responsible for channelling it.

As I have said, today's situation does not guarantee control precisely over this, and for this reason we are trying with our new proposals to ensure the correct utilization of the resources.

Mr Pearce. — Would the Commissioner agree that the public's view of the problem of additionality in the Regional Fund would be improved if the Commission

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

Pearce

gave immediate and detailed information to Members of this Parliament on all grants made so that adequate publicity could be given to them locally and will he agree to carry out this course of action in future?

Mr Contogeorgis. — (GR) The Commission always lays before Parliament all the information requested concerning the utilization of the resources of the Regional Fund. I would also like to say that in the official bulletin of the Community analyses and figures are published concerning the financing of projects, broken down by country, by project, by region, and generally all the information that might be useful for the control of the way the Fund's resources are used.

Mr Boyes. — I do not like challenging your chairmanship, Madam President, because you were quite kind to me in my supplementary question, but your ruling that there should be one supplementary from each political group seems to me a little discriminatory. I do not mind how many questions and supplementaries Mr Paisley asks, but it seems to me he has a decided advantage in a group of one, more than myself in a group of 120, and more than the Liberals in half the size again of the Socialist Group. I am not going to ask you to change your mind this afternoon, but perhaps you would ask in the enlarged Bureau whether one per group means that Mr Paisley gets a supplementary on every occasion, when I get one in every 120 questions.

President. — Mr Boyes, I should just like to correct you — you are entitled to ask a supplementary every time if nobody else from your group puts one, and judging by the number of people from your group here today, I think you should have a pretty good percentage. (*Laughter*) However, I will of course look at this matter. It is a very difficult matter in which to make a decision. I put it to the House last time before taking a decision and the House agreed without any objection whatsoever. We do have a great many questions to get answered and I think out of courtesy to the Members who have put these questions it is my duty to try and get as many questions answered as possible so we have to take this into account. But, of course, I will reconsider if there are any objections from Members to this way of trying to get through questions — I will take it into account and we will try to do it another way next time, with your cooperation.

I call Mr Prag, on a point of order.

Mr Prag. — I was going to make this point of order at the end of Question Time but since Mr Boyes has raised the point I must say that it is a very important question because there may be matters of particular concern to a particular political group. A case in point

was Question No 12, of greatest importance to the United Kingdom. You thought that this question had been fully dealt with. My view was that we had not got a satisfactory answer at all from the Commission and that the question should really have been pushed much more strongly. Now, one of the problems of Question Time is the anodyne answers we frequently get. If the presidency is now going to make it even more boring and uninteresting by taking all the bite and spontaneity, all the cut and thrust, out of Question Time then I think we shall have even fewer people here than we have at present.

President. — Thank you for making the point, Mr Prag. Of course the Commission have to answer to the best of their ability and I do want to get as many political groups and nationalities represented in putting supplementaries and we therefore have to come to some decision as to how we handle this. As I say, I had put this to the Parliament at the beginning of the last session of Question Time and this was by total agreement of the Members present and with no objections. But of course I will take into account the points that you have raised and see if we can perhaps handle this in some other way in view of your objections. I consider it my duty as President to have an overriding responsibility to all Members of this House, whichever party or nationality they come from. There are 56 questions tabled and we do have to try and get through as many of these as possible.

Question No 19, by Mr Galland (H-488/81):

Since Article 52 of the Treaty stipulates that 'restrictions on the freedom of establishment of nationals of a Member State in the territory of another Member State shall be abolished by progressive stages in the course of the transitional period', such progressive abolition shall also apply to restrictions on the setting up of agencies, branches or subsidiaries by nationals of any Member State established in the territory of any Member State, and since, in particular, Article 53 expressly states that 'Member States shall not introduce any new restrictions on the right of establishment in their territories of nationals of other Member States', what steps will the Commission take to ensure that the French Government complies with the rule on freedom of establishment in all fields, including the banking sector?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Neither the French law on nationalization nor the information supplied to the Commission by the French authorities give reason to fear that new limitations on the freedom of establishment have been or are being introduced in France. Undertakings established in other Member States of the Community are still at liberty to set up agencies, branches or subsidiaries in France. Similarly, a national of another Member State has exactly the same right as a French national to establish an undertaking in France.

In the specific case of banks, new branches of French and foreign banks can be set up in conformity with the

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French statutory provisions applicable to the credit sector.

As the guardian of the Treaty, the Commission has the task of seeing to it that the freedom of establishment stipulated in Articles 52 and 53 of the EEC Treaty is maintained and respected by the French authorities.

If any infringements of this principle are brought to the attention of the Commission it will initiate the procedures laid down in the Treaty to ensure respect for this basic principle.

Mr Galland. — (FR) If I heard the Commissioner correctly and fully understood what he was saying since I saw that he was reading his answer, he mentioned new restrictions on the freedom of establishment in France. If the Commission now speaks of new restrictions this means that it is at long last recognizing the fact that restrictions on the freedom of establishment do exist in France.

Can the Commissioner confirm that reference to new restrictions on freedom of establishment in France? He also said that foreign nationals could set up banks under the same conditions as French nationals. Is the Commissioner aware that, contrary to Article 9 of the Treaty, French nationals can no longer establish banks in France in the same way as foreign companies are authorized to do; discrimination has thus been introduced against French nationals in the French nationalization bill.

Mr Narjes. — (DE) May I repeat that I said the exact opposite of what the honourable Member thought he understood in his first comment on my answer. Neither the French nationalization law nor the information supplied to the Commission by the French authorities give reason to fear that new restrictions have been or are being imposed on the freedom of establishment in France. That is the carefully balanced wording of my answer.

As to second part of his comments I should be grateful if he could indicate one single specific instance in which a French national has been prohibited from setting up a bank after the enactment of the law to which we have been referring.

Mr Chambeiron. — (FR) I am rather embarrassed because I should have liked to put two supplementary questions following those by Mr Galland and Mr Calvez. But since I am not allowed to speak twice I shall try to respect the rules you have laid down, Madam President, and kill two birds with one stone.

I have no intention of disputing the right of any Member to . . .

President. — May I clarify? The ruling by the House was that when we are dealing with supplementaries to one question, only one person from each group should generally be called. But this, of course, in no way prevents you from putting a supplementary to the next question should you so wish.

Mr Chambeiron. — (FR) I take your point, Madam President, but I wanted to help you by complying with the indications you had given.

I have no intention of disputing the right of any Member to put questions, but is the Commission not now beginning to consider perfectly inappropriate this long series of questions put month after month with the intention, through various references to the Treaty of Rome, not so much to call into question the French Government's policy of nationalizations which respects wishes of a majority of the French people, because the authors of these questions have no power to do that, but rather to stir things up in a manner which is somewhat out of place now that Mr Thorn has stated here that the French nationalizations are compatible with the rules of the common market.

Mr Narjes. — (DE) The Commission is the guardian of the Treaty and bears full responsibility for its application and implementation. If Members of this Assembly have any doubts about the application of the Treaty, the Commission has a duty to dispel those doubts.

President. — Question No 20, by Mr Calvez (H-505/81)

Article 3 (c) of the Treaty of Rome states 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'. This fundamental rule on the free movement of capital is being contravened by the nationalization of three French companies, CII Honeywell Bull, ITT France and Roussel Uclaf, 'which are notable for a high level of foreign shareholding' (from the nationalization bill of 23 September 1981, introduced by Mr Pierre Mauroy). If, in these circumstances, a Member State intended to bring this matter before the Court of Justice, what action would the Commission take under Article 170 of the Treaty of Rome?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission has already had repeated opportunities to indicate its position on the question as to whether the French nationalization bill of September 1981 is compatible with Community law. Our position is as follows: the French bill as such does not conflict with Community provisions — including those on the free movement of capital. The Commission will of course give close scrutiny to the provisions for implementation of this bill and to the conduct of the nationalized

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undertakings. If actions are brought by a Member State pursuant to Article 170 of the EEC Treaty and indeed in all other cases, the Commission will be guided by this view alone.

Mr Calvez. — (FR) Your answer does not fully satisfy me, Commissioner, and my colleague, Mr Chamberlain, will readily understand that the repercussions of nationalizations may make themselves felt over a period of months: I do not think it is his intention to deprive of the right of recourse nationals of Member States who may feel that their interests have been damaged.

The Commission is well aware of this because it set up an inter-departmental group chaired by the Director-General of the Legal Service to examine the question of compatibility with the Treaty of Rome: either the Commission was being very cautious or it thought there was something to look into.

My question, Commissioner, is this: can you tell me how many files have been opened by the inter-departmental group set up by the Commission itself to look into the French nationalization?

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Since detailed knowledge of that kind is not at my disposal I should have to give that answer to the honourable Member in writing.

President. — Question No 21, by Mr Seligman (H-586/81):

The Council having amended the 1973 arrangements for coking coal and coke for the iron and steel industry of the Community, 27 October 1981, does the Commission consider that the ECSC budget for 1981 is sufficient to maintain technical coal research at the necessary level?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — The Commission is fully conscious of the fact that funds for coal research have been reduced from the ECSC budget rather than increased. We are also aware that current allocation of funds is inadequate. This reduction has been made as a result of the extraordinary budgetary constraints imposed to meet social obligations, notably the restructuring of the steel industry. It is due also to the decision not to increase the levy at present. The latter measure would, in our view, have a negative economic effect upon both the coal and the steel industries. The situation which is contrary to what is necessary in the coal sector will prevail throughout 1982, though the Commission can only hope that it will be transitory.

Mr Seligman. — Can the Commissioner then tell us what is going to happen in the 1983 budget? Can he

say whether the Commission has rejected the idea of energy rebates for ECSC loans and if not, would that not be the best way to conduct this sort of finance in the next budget?

Mr Richard. — I am afraid I can only give equally unsatisfactory answers, although I hope they are not as boring as some of the ones I gave a little earlier on to Mr Seligman. As far as the 1983 budget is concerned, I am afraid it is a bit too early to tell. As far as the energy rebates are concerned, it seems to me that goes somewhat wider than the existing question and I should have to write to the honourable Member with the answer.

Mr Rogalla. — (DE) Can I have rightly understood from a communication from the Commission to the Council that the Commission intends to provide budgetary appropriations other than those under the ECSC budget for coal research and possibly also to promote the use of coking coal, and that it is proposing to include provision for this already in the 1983 budget?

Mr Richard. — I am sure if the honourable Member read that in a recent communication from the Commission to the Council of Ministers, it would necessarily follow that it is something which is at present being considered by the Commission.

President. — As the author is not present, Question No 22 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 23, by Mrs Tove Nielsen (H-671/81):

With a view to the prospective enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal, will the Commission state what steps it intends to take to ensure that, as from the date of enlargement, interpretation to and from Danish is available during its meetings on the same basis as interpretation to and from English, French, German, etc.? Moreover, does the Commission intend to extend to its established Danish interpreters the same facilities to follow necessary language courses during working time as are available to English, French and German interpreters?

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — In order to solve the problems of Danish interpretation, the Commission has undertaken a whole series of actions for the training of conference interpreters qualified to work with that language. It realizes further difficulties will arise with the addition of Spanish and Portuguese and will pursue its efforts to overcome them as best it can. Furthermore, the Commission can confirm to the honourable Member that staff interpreters, whatever their working languages can, in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 of the Staff Regulations,

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

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attend the language courses organized by the Commission for the benefit of all its officials, including during working hours.

Mrs Tove Nielsen. — (DA) I should like to thank the Commissioner for what I feel is a positive answer. I would just add that I very often get questions expressing fears that the minor languages such as Danish, Dutch and Greek will be forced out, because some people hold the opinion that these languages do not rank equal with the others, and of course — after what the Commissioner has said — we can be sure that they do.

But to be absolutely sure, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Commissioner: can I henceforth tell all who ask me that, of course, there is no doubt about it — Danish interpreters will have fully equal status in respect of both interpretation at meetings and training arrangements?

If I receive an affirmative answer I think many of us will be very pleased.

Mr Richard. — I can only repeat what I said in my original answer, which is that as far as staff interpreters are concerned their working languages are irrelevant in terms of their entitlement to attend the language courses organized by the Commission. So the answer to Mrs Nielsen's question would seem to be yes.

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

I would like to assure Members that I will take into account the comments made as to the number of supplementaries that have been taken during this sitting. I would draw to the attention of Members that there are still 33 questions to be answered by the Commission in the time allotted: they will understand that it is not easy for the President or for the Commission to ensure that satisfactory answers are given if we are to extend supplementaries. As I say, I give an assurance to Members that the points that they have raised will be taken into account.

7. Raw materials supplies (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the report (Doc. 1-873/81) by Mrs Moreau, on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations, on supplies of mineral and vegetable raw

materials in the European Community — survey and further outlook.

I call the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

Mr Schinzel, joint rapporteur. — (DE) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, in discussing supplies of raw materials to the European Community we are discussing a lifeline of our industry and economy. But our debate has even wider implications: we are also considering a complex network of economic relations between the European Community and the countries of the Third World and other industrialized nations; then again, under the heading of wastage of raw materials, we are also considering the plundering of the world's resources. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs therefore considers it all the more surprising that the European Community has still not developed a common policy on raw materials since Mr Schwörer drew up his report in 1976/77.

This is all the more surprising as the dependence of the European Community on the countries which supply raw materials has in no way diminished. I must of course add that in principle there is no likelihood of a general shortage of raw materials in the next two decades; however, we must not just go on dreaming until one day we have a rude political awakening, as happened with oil. We therefore need a forward-looking and responsible policy at Community level on raw materials; and we need that policy right now. Its main features should be a reduction in our dependence on raw materials while at the same time intensifying and giving Community support to research into the extraction and reprocessing of raw materials; we must also promote the potential use of raw material substitutes, take steps to lengthen the working life of products made from these materials and make energetic efforts to save raw materials.

All this would have substantial positive effects. It would reduce our balance of payments deficit and create new permanent jobs — not just a short cyclical upturn. A Community policy on raw materials would thus help to set in motion a process of structural change in the Community leading to the creation of permanent employment. A prerequisite for this would, however, be an inventory of the policy on raw materials pursued hitherto by our individual Member States.

I must make one further point here: all our rapporteurs today have made it quite clear that no single Member State is now able to overcome problems and bottlenecks in raw material supplies on its own. We therefore urgently need a common policy on raw materials.

However, this must not result in the formulation of unilateral European interests; unless we place sufficient emphasis on cooperation with the raw material

¹ See Annex of 10. 3. 1982.

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supplier countries based on complete and equal partnership we may experience very real complications and difficulties in obtaining supplies of raw materials, having regard to the development of the countries of the Third World. The spirit of by-gone days is unfortunately abroad even in Mrs Moreau's report. The fact is that neither the Third World nor the Europeans can have any interest in a repetition of the old era — the days of colonialism as they are now called. The enormous dependence of the European Community for supplies of certain raw materials on countries such as the USSR shows, however, just how destructive might be the consequences for Europe of an economic war between East and West of the kind which the present US Government seems to be advocating.

Mrs Moreau's report has been substantially improved at the committee stage so that the critical opinion of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs can now be moderated somewhat in many respects. I should still like to stress two points. It is not sufficient to refer to the serious risks of a temporary interruption of raw material supplies to the EEC or to a shortage and its consequences; we must also define the action which needs to be taken if we are to be in a position to face such problems.

One appropriate line of action would be to maintain security stocks at Community level structured in such a way as to make a short-term interruption of raw material supplies improbable while mutual assistance could be given within the EEC if difficulties arose at one particular point; this would avoid adverse consequences on employment. The importance of Community policy on raw materials must therefore be stressed.

One further point in conclusion: the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs has repeatedly emphasized the need to pursue rather than merely formulate a European structural policy. In connection with the report which is the subject of our debate today, it must be noted that unless a forward-looking structural policy is laid down, if a critical situation arises certain sectors of our economy will quite simply collapse and industrial activities will have to be limited with a serious impact on employment. Without advance planning and progressive preparation of alternatives, the process of restructuring our economy will therefore be accompanied by heavy sacrifices both by workers and by undertakings. On behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, I therefore wish to make a final appeal to the Commission and Council of the European Community to take, at long last, decisive steps forward towards a common, long-term structural policy in the European Community.

One closing remark for the Bureau: the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs which has primary responsibility for considering questions of raw material supplies to the Community would like, if this

topic comes up for discussion again, to be made the committee responsible as was always the case in the past; the topic of raw material supplies to European industry and to the European economy does after all fall within the terms of reference of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

IN THE CHAIR: MR LALOR

Vice-President

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to thank the rapporteur most warmly for her excellent report and lively introductory speech; I am grateful to her and to the whole House for this own-initiative report by the European Parliament on the important topic of raw material supplies.

You have dealt with the subject in detail without seeking to avoid any of the issues. In our view your analysis is accurate and we share your concern. Some of your suggestions coincide with proposals that we have already made or with political measures that we are currently preparing.

Time is unfortunately too short for me to answer in detail the many suggestions that were made this morning. The subject is of great importance and further discussion would really have been appropriate.

I shall have to concentrate on a few points. The subject of raw material supplies is a classic example of teamwork in which economic policy, foreign policy, scientific policy and development policy have an identical interest and should all be equally involved.

This whole subject should be taken up by European political cooperation or a future political union if only because of the aspect referred to this morning of the security of sea links and other security problems in the broader sense of the term referred to in the Colombo-Genscher proposal.

Unlike the United States and the Soviet Union, Europe's interests are coloured primarily by the fact that it has to import 75% of its raw material needs; I would add that we should show caution in interpreting the interests of other participants.

In all probability less than one-third of all the world supplies of mineral raw materials are to be found in developing countries while two-thirds are situated in

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the Eastern bloc or in industrialized nations. This means that the developing countries as importers of processed raw materials will be hit far more severely by excessively high prices than they are able to benefit in their capacity as exporters of raw materials — it seems to me that this aspect is not always sufficiently taken into account.

The problem is at present of such topical and political importance simply because the operation of the world markets in the sector of raw material supplies is being impaired; this is because Article 1 of GATT, i.e. the fundamental rule of non-discriminatory access for all participants to world raw material supplies, is not at present functioning as we should all like and as Europe in its capacity as a major processing area would hope.

The discussion today has rightly concentrated on mineral raw materials. This is as it should be because it means that our discussion has not been overshadowed, as is so often the case, by energy supply and agricultural problems. Mineral raw materials are important enough to warrant great political interest. The various steel price supplements which have been repeatedly mentioned today are one particularly difficult aspect of raw materials supplies.

My next point is the time horizon for dealing with this problem. You must not think here in years or legislative periods, but in decades or even generations. I mention this because, at the Conference on the Law of the Sea which is now in progress, Chapter 11 dealing with deep sea mineral extraction, will govern European access for many future generations to the resources of the seabed which are not even fully known at present; access will be either facilitated or excluded by the Conference. The most topical problem of European raw material policy is now being discussed in these negotiations in New York.

That was one reason why, a few weeks ago, the Commission sought to make our raw material interests clear in a special document.

I come now to the subdivision of the different phases of supply, i.e. from prospecting through production and marketing to the processing stage. A monopolistic situation arises when a country which has satellite photographs of the world's raw material deposits fails to make the information available to interested parties. Supply problems may also arise through the concentration of certain processing stages even if the sources are more diversified than the processing stages.

A distinction has repeatedly been drawn between Community measures and action by the Member States. The fact that there is no Community storage does not mean that there is no exchange of information between Member States on raw material stocks. The fact that the Member States diversify their sources of supply does not necessarily mean that this level of

diversification is considered to be an optimum by the Community authorities. To that extent there is a considerable need for coordination. We are therefore bound to support the views of all those speakers who regretted the passive attitude of the Council of Ministers.

I also agree with all the speakers who referred to the need for a solution based on cooperation rather than confrontation. But even when investment is based on cooperation the investor needs a certain minimum level of security and the lack of security for investments is one main reason why investment in the raw material production sector has shown such a sharp fall in many developing countries over the past ten years, with all the regrettable economic consequences which this brings in its train.

I believe that I have said more about this subject with these few remarks than if I had repeated in detail the observations made on various specific points. I assume that the committees responsible will be returning to the subject again in more detail in the future.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

8. *European footwear industry*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-640/81) by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli, on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations, on the situation in the European footwear industry.

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, firstly, allow me to protest against the Bureau and the enlarged Bureau as well, because the European Parliament must now examine a report which was drawn up approximately a year ago. I believe that this sort of thing lessens the weight of Parliament's decisions. Indeed, the decisions we are making apply to a situation which has undergone a change. It is clear that public opinion, which had been awaiting parliamentary action for some time, no longer takes an interest in what we may be able to do now.

This report springs from a motion for a resolution presented some time ago. The rapporteur worked in close contact with the unions, with the authorities in the manufacturing industry and with the Commission. I believe it is my duty as a member of Parliament to thank all the people and all the institutions which cooperated with the competent parliamentary

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committee. Furthermore, our work was in some ways useful to the Commission when it drew up its own documentation on this subject.

Our objective was to hold tight to our guiding principles: that is, the free circulation of goods on the one hand, and on the other our policy of remaining accessible to the Third World, and to relate these principles with the needs of European industries and workers in the present critical situation.

For this reason, the provisions which we suggest to the Commission are aimed at improving the apparatus of production in order to increase its competitiveness.

I do not intend to explain here what is already contained in the report and the motion for a resolution, whose terms seem to me to be sufficiently clear. Since certain changes have taken place in the general condition of the footwear industry over this period of time, I would like to ask the Commission to answer some questions in its reply, so that Parliament can be fully informed before it votes.

Firstly, I would like to be informed on the situation which has developed in France due to the agreement between marketing and production and its possible adverse effects on free circulation. I would also like to know if the expectations entertained with regard to the agreement with Canada were fulfilled by any positive results. It appears to me personally that things did not go so very well. I would therefore like to know if it is true that, in Australia, the new system of tariff quotas is more restrictive than the simple quota system. This would make the situation worse than it was when the report was drawn up. I believe that Parliament also wishes to be informed on the course and results of the consultations with Taiwan, China, and Korea. Finally, I would like to know if initiatives were undertaken with regard to Japan, which is a great source of difficulty to the European footwear industry, or if measures have been projected to deal with the price fluctuations in skins and leather.

Having said this, Mr President, I will give my opinion of the amendments that were presented as briefly as possible, so as not to exceed the limits of the time allotted to me. I do this also in order that those of my colleagues who wish to speak may have a clear understanding of the rapporteur's position.

I am against Mr Welsh's amendment No 1 because I think that the situation of the footwear industry cannot be entrusted, without specific provisions, to the sole control of the free market. Also, I cannot quite understand — perhaps Mr Welsh will explain it to me — what is meant in the last part of the amendment, where there is a reference to the need to broaden the framework of the GATT provisions.

In regard to Mr Louwe's amendment No 2, I believe that it is for the Committee on Economic Affairs to

deal with this directive, together with the Committee on External Economic Relations, since this is a matter of credit policy. This having been said, I admit that I am not against the amendment a priori; its adoption would not mar the general spirit of the resolution in any way.

In regard to Mr Louwe's amendment No 3, I believe that its proponent is anticipating the event, since the outline of general policy towards Spain can be discerned only when the negotiations have been concluded. It would be possible to add a recommendation to the effect that the difficulties of the footwear industry should be borne in mind during the period of transition, but I wish Mr Louwe would think about it a little, for it seems to me that even this would be somewhat premature.

I am definitely against amendment No 5, for I feel that the low-cost manufacture of footwear in developing countries causes notable distortions in the market. For this reason I am against this suppressive amendment, and if necessary I will ask for a point by point vote.

I would tend to be in favour of amendment No 6, which more or less repeats under the letter a) what is expressed in amendment No 5. I wish to point out, however, that the task of promoting the forms of association and cooperation mentioned in point a) properly belongs to the Office of the Commission which deals with the *rapprochement des entreprises*. The same can be said for point c): I agree on the establishing of special technological institutes, even though this is the function of the European Confederation of Industry, which has already carried out studies on the subject.

I cannot, on the other hand, support amendment No 7, which projects a sort of national cartel which appears to me to be in clear opposition to Community policy. For this reason I do not believe that we can insert into the text of the resolution 'the creation of national associations and/or national bodies of exporters'. I am in favour of Amendment number 8, however, even though the activity which it intends to promote should be carried out by the aforementioned European Confederation.

Having said this, ladies and gentlemen, I do not believe that a vote of the European Parliament, coming so late in the day, can change the situation in the footwear industry. It should be borne in mind, however, that the footwear industry is an important industry in my own country and in all the countries of Europe, and that it is one of the industries that is able to exploit a raw material produced within the Community itself. Moreover, the workforce employed in the principal sector and in the related industries, about half a million people, is skilled in a specialized type of craftsmanship. For this reason, the entire policy which we wish to revitalize in favour of crafts-

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manship and small and medium-sized industries concerns the footwear industry as well. A favourable vote by Parliament would be all the more useful and desirable for this reason.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Rieger. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the report by the Committee on External Economic Relations has clearly shown the reasons for serious concern over the situation of the footwear industry in Europe. The speech by the rapporteur has also highlighted the problems with which we are having to contend in this branch of industry.

I wish to thank Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli on behalf of the Socialist Group and to congratulate her on her report. She has submitted a thorough analysis of the situation of the footwear industry in Europe and drawn precise conclusions. Apart from the minor amendments and additions proposed by my group, we support this motion for a resolution and the accompanying explanatory statement,

I should like nevertheless to make a few further brief remarks. The footwear industry in the European Community is suffering above all from the present unfavourable commercial policy conditions. The extent of the difficulties can easily be assessed when we consider the decisive role of exports for this branch of industry.

The European Community is the world's most important manufacturer of footwear. For many years, annual exports of Community production stood at about 17%. Moreover our degree of self-sufficiency in leather is about 80%. From that angle too the footwear industry makes an important contribution to the Community economy.

In the late 1970s consumption began to flatten out while imports rose sharply. The report shows for example that production fell by 7% in 1980 as against the same period in the previous year while exports dropped by 24%. The Community was not able to maintain its market position in most third countries. Since this trend has continued, the market share attained by imports from third countries has now risen from 18% in 1972 to 30% in 1980. This is explained by the fact that the European Community has left its market relatively open to imports, and is still doing so, while our exports are hampered by a high wall of trade barriers.

This report by Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli examines a series of protectionist measures taken by our trading partners and makes particular reference in this context to Japan, Canada, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and other countries. It also refers to the preferential

tariff agreements which the Community has concluded with a number of third countries. The commercial result of this policy is the continuous loss of market outlets at the very time when we are facing a rising pressure from imports. It is easy to imagine the consequences of this situation for employment.

A further consideration is that the footwear industry is often not established in highly industrialized regions and therefore there are few sources of alternative employment for the workforce. In the 1970s some 80 000 jobs were sacrificed to restructuring measures. In the Federal Republic, stocks are increasing sharply while short-time working is rising and is expected to rise further. Unless the conditions of competition change, this bad situation, which appears particularly threatening against the background of the overall unemployment figures in the Community will not show a turn for the better.

Unfortunately efforts to remove tariff and non-tariff barriers through negotiations in GATT have not yet proved successful. The praiseworthy endeavours made by the Commission, particularly in relation to Japan and the USA, have also failed to restore balance to trade relations.

The Socialist Group emphatically supports the demands made in the motion for a resolution. In particular, we call upon the Council and Commission to use all the means at their disposal to safeguard access for products of the European footwear industry to the markets of third countries and to conclude appropriate agreements for this purpose.

At the same time we ask the Council and Commission to make every effort in multilateral negotiations, especially in GATT, to clarify the situation and to insist on the need for international rules to be respected. We consider this to be the only way of bringing the necessary assistance to an endangered branch of industry and especially to the persons who are dependent on employment in this branch.

(Applause)

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

Mr van Aerssen. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Christian-Democratic Group in the European Parliament will support the draft report and resolution by Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli. We have doubts on a number of points which we have set down in motions for resolutions and amendments but we still believe that Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli's document deserves general support.

In my opinion we shall have to deal increasingly with cases of this and a similar kind in the near future. An

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increasing number of hard-pressed sectors of the European economy, parts of our general economic system, are turning to us for help and support in preserving employment, investments and export markets. We should make our future strategy perfectly clear once again. Certain colleagues in this House and large interest groups are trying to persuade us to resort to the instrument of protectionism and we are most grateful to Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli for specifically refraining from doing that in her report; we do not see protectionism, sealing off our own markets against third countries, as the height of wisdom. Quite the contrary: we see it as a drug which might alleviate the immediate symptoms but would finish up by poisoning us. The strategy proposed by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli is therefore the right one. She avoids the trap of protectionism and draws attention to alternative remedies to the problems of the hard-pressed footwear industry. Her report therefore deserves our support.

Many people do not realize that 380 000 persons, including a particularly large number of women, are employed in the European Community footwear industry. We should remember this fact. We should not merely pay lip-service to emancipation but also concentrate on specific problems where we can do something to help working women. In this industry many jobs are occupied by women in regions which are in some cases underdeveloped. Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli therefore quite rightly points out that the footwear industry needs more than mere sectoral aid; it must also be helped in specific regions where there are no alternative forms of employment for the local population.

There is a third, very important factor. The European Community footwear industry has an extraordinarily high capacity; if my memory serves me correctly, we exported 200 million pairs of shoes in 1979 alone. In this sector too we are the world's leading exporter. The small and medium-sized undertakings in this branch form the backbone of the footwear industry and Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli has put forward proposals in her report for making structural improvements to these small and medium-sized undertakings.

Mr President, we in the Christian-Democratic Group believe that our strategy should concentrate on four aims. I am most grateful to Mr Rieger for taking up this point and in principle advocating the same strategy.

The most important need is for export markets to be opened in those cases where barriers still exist. The countries concerned have been named, e.g. Japan, Australia and also Canada. We should be grateful to the Commission for telling us in its answer how far negotiations with these countries have progressed and whether the countries concerned are willing to lower their export barriers in this hard-pressed sector, thus opening new export possibilities for us.

Secondly, I believe that we should concentrate on obtaining cheaper imports of raw materials for our footwear industry. We still have to import some 20 to 25% of our raw material needs. Countries such as Argentina and Brazil are trying by measures which are not compatible with GATT, to force prices up and are thus creating increased costs for the footwear industry — a contributory factor in the present crisis. I therefore appeal to the Commission to act on raw material imports and to tell us what prospects there are at present for helping the hard-pressed footwear industry.

There is a third important point: we are expecting the Commission and Council to support the restructuring of the footwear industry and to take carefully planned measures, in the context of the programmes and financial resources available to us, to increase the productivity of this industry. The Commission does have instruments at its disposal to assist small and medium-sized undertakings. I should be interested to hear from the Commissioner how he is proposing to solve the problem of information since we often find that the instruments are available but that many owners of small or medium-sized businesses, in this case in the footwear industry, do not know what possibilities exist. This problem of information seems to me to be an important issue which must be solved. If assistance from the national governments is necessary for this purpose we should like to be told that clearly so that we can make the necessary representations.

However strongly we support free world trade and open Community frontiers, we would agree to temporary monitoring of footwear imports if that could be used by the Commission as an instrument for working towards a medium-term solution to the structural crisis. We appeal to you, Commissioner, as stated once again in our amendment, to use GATT as the international forum for discussion of these problems — concentrating on Canada, Brazil, Australia and Argentina. We should make every possible endeavour not only to bring about the removal of export barriers but also to improve our import conditions by strengthening raw material imports. GATT is the ideal forum for this. We would welcome a statement by the Commission that this topic will be placed on the agenda of the next rounds of GATT negotiations.

Furthermore this topic must also be placed on the agenda of the accession negotiations with Spain. According to our information the response has not so far been particularly satisfactory. If Spain joins the European Community, some countries — members of the present Community — will be facing still greater difficulties in the footwear sector. I believe that Spain is entitled to learn fairly and in good time from us in negotiations how we propose to solve this problem.

To sum up, Mr President: we support Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli's report. We are grateful to her for her excellent study and hope that this four-point strategy

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will be followed. We look to the Commission and Council of Ministers for appropriate action.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Kellett-Bowman. — Mr President, I too would like to congratulate Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli and the Committee on External Economic Relations on this report. Not surprisingly, an Italian rapporteur has taken time to stress the Italian situation. The United Kingdom figures in Section 4 of the report show a very sorry situation, a desperate situation, in Britain. This caused my group, the European Democratic Group, to set up a working party some 15 months ago, and our research bears out the findings in the report of the Committee on External Economic Relations.

The survival of the footwear industry in Europe is being threatened by major distortions in international trade. European markets are open to imports from cheap-labour or State-subsidized industries at the same time as the markets of the exporting countries are closed to European footwear manufacturers. The industry itself cannot challenge these tariffs and other barriers: only the Commission has the political and economic leverage needed to redress this market distortion. The question is whether the Commission has the will.

Footwear does not have the strategic or physical visibility of the steel or motor-car industries. The future of the Community does not rest on footwear, as it does on steel or cars. There is no outdated machinery where replacement would make a difference to the industry's productivity. There is no magic formula that would turn the industry around and make it profitable once more.

This is an industry which employs relatively low-paid female labour. It is spread out in small units in far regions of the Community. Manufacturers have a product which is a consumer necessity with pressure for a low price. The industry must construct its case with care and with new and relevant arguments. Protectionism is not an argument which the Commission can accept. Indeed, the European Footwear Federation, when we spoke to them, did not ask for protection: they asked for free trade. That is why this group has put down an alternative to paragraph 4 in the motion for a resolution.

The first step is for the European footwear industry to put its own competitive house in order. Then the case against unfair competition becomes clear, and the Commission will be able to refute the inevitable complaint that the EEC is acting to prop up inefficient industries.

What can the industry do? Its broad strategic aim must be to prove to the Commission that it can survive and flourish when markets are open. Success in the European and American markets, which are open, would make this point. The fall-off in Italian exports to the United States actually produced the opposite result. In the home market, where high fashion must sell the product, manufacturers must work closely with distributors and retailers. Market planning and design cooperation between these two sectors of the industry must improve. We have a highly sophisticated channel of distribution in most parts of the Community, and we must, at the same time, use modern marketing techniques. We must encourage all members of the industry to work together towards their aims. The diffusion of effort throughout the industry does not augur well for any concerted efforts to persuade the Commission to believe their point of view and to work on their behalf.

Once the industry has established itself as sound, progressive and potentially productive and profitable, the Commission can be persuaded to act. It can insure the internal market for shoes. At the same time, the Commission should make sure that those countries in receipt of Community aid — whether through trade, grants or development projects — are made aware that with a prosperous EEC manufacturing base, there would be less of a market for their own products and there would also be less aid. Aid is a two-way street. A more prosperous Community can be more generous with aid and is a more open market for foreign goods.

Voluntary action on the part of the less developed countries will serve them well in the long run. It is up to the Community to make this point. Unity of Community action will help. Present bilateral agreements between individual Community countries and external footwear manufacturers exist to the detriment of other Member States. The Community should use its trading power to negotiate sensible, voluntary deals with Third World countries.

The barriers to European footwear put up by virtually every Third World country are flouting any kind of equitable trade cycle that may be possible. The Community has to take action where national governments cannot. The great argument from the national governments is that these Third World countries do buy high technology from us — power plants, steel mills. Only unified Community action can override such domestic considerations.

The Commission should use its resources to monitor officially the progress of industry. As has been seen in the past, when the Commission does a job of monitoring, the unscrupulous partners in unfair trading are faced with the facts and it becomes easier to negotiate.

As with other European industries, the future lies with increased technology, with higher value-added production than in the past. Only by increasing the level

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of our products can we keep one step ahead of the developing countries. The bringing to bear of innovation and imagination to produce high-value products, to create new markets for these products and to make aggressive and successful marketing the keystone of the industry, should not be beyond the capability of those involved.

Mr President, I hope the European footwear industry will take some comfort from this report. This House understands its problems. If the Commission takes the steps we recommend, the industry can have confidence in the Community and that confidence will be justified. If the Commission fails the industry, the cost of supporting former footwear areas will be huge. Textiles were an example footwear should not follow. An MFA for footwear areas should not be required. Further unemployment in the short term in the industry can be avoided if only the Commission will get these markets open. A prosperous footwear industry will benefit the Community: a neglected one will be an unnecessary Community casualty — a European failure.

(Applause)

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

Mr Paulhan. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it has become a convention in this Assembly to highlight the most glaring aspects of the commercial policy pursued by third countries in dealings with the Community. We invariably hear the same criticisms but they are all too seldom taken into account.

On the one hand, as the rapporteur has pointed out, Europe is too open: our customs duty is only 8% for leather shoes; on the other hand many third countries are setting up a growing array of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

The situation described in one report after another is so similar that we feel bound to ask certain questions. Why is Europe obliged to stand idly by? Why does it not react by, for example, increasing its customs barriers, taking an eye for an eye? After all the footwear market is not a declining market. From a figure of 2 000 million pairs in 1973 it will have risen to over 5 000 million in 1985.

But there is another, if not more serious at least equally disturbing, factor because the blows are not being dealt only by Asia and other third countries: right here in Europe Italy is failing to respect the rules of normal competition.

This situation has two major consequences. In economic terms our industries — not merely in the

footwear and leather sector — are suffering under the effects of an economic policy which has been unacceptably set up as a *de jure* system; politically, the international context is too sensitive for Europe to afford to play the sorcerer's apprentice with democracy. As Gogol once wrote: 'It is not the mirror's fault if you have a crooked face.' In other words we should start by setting our own house in order.

The Group of European Progressive Democrats asks for concerted action and for joint resolutions to be adopted to impose penalties both within and outside this Community on all developments which, through calculated design or by taking the easy way out, are, let me repeat, endangering not only our economic activities but also our political existence.

(Applause)

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Almirante. — *(IT)* Mr President, permit me, in the first place, to claim for my group and for myself — as indeed, the documents show — the initiative for this resolution, which is objectively very important for economic and social planning in my country. This is due to the fact that the serious crisis in the Italian footwear industry is affecting three regions of central Italy and may cause a further deterioration in the already critical unemployment situation.

I would like to address my warmest thanks to the rapporteur, Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli, for having dealt with this subject with so much feeling and so much competence, broadening and improving our initial motion for a resolution.

I wish to say that if we believe in Europe, it is precisely because forms of honest cooperation exist in this Parliament on a higher level than that of partisanship, which certainly does not happen in our national parliaments and especially — I am sorry to say — in the Italian parliament.

In regard to the substance of the problem, that is, the crisis of the footwear industry in Europe and particularly in Italy, I fully support the report, with a few reservations about point 3 only, where the rapporteur draws a parallel between the principal exporting countries. Such a comparison between Italy and producing countries of Asia which are still in the process of development within a system which differs profoundly from that of the European Community does not appear to me to be valid. This is precisely the problem: the anomalous penetration of low-cost footwear from third countries on the Community markets, particularly the Italian market. One has only to recall that in the first nine months of 1980 Italy imported 33 million pairs of shoes as compared to 12 million for the corresponding period of 1979.

Almirante

Do we ask for protectionist measures, contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Treaties of Rome? Certainly not. We ask exactly the opposite, because protectionism must be combated wherever it appears, but above all we must oppose the kind of reverse protectionism must be combated wherever it appears, but by countries — in this case the Asian countries like Taiwan and South Korea — which pay very low labour costs and are not yet fully developed from the viewpoint of social security. This enables them to mount a devastating competition which destroys — socially even more than economically — the working conditions in Europe, and, in this area, especially in Italy.

Mr President, we are not defending the great State-supported industry, nor yet the multinationals. We are defending the healthy connective tissue made up of craftsmen, and small and medium-sized undertakings, which no one is defending either at the European level or at the national level, in Italy at least.

It is in this spirit that we again address our thanks to the excellent rapporteur and recommend that this resolution be adopted.

President. — I call Mr Orlandi.

Mr Orlandi. — (*IT*) Mr President, a very brief speech only to give an explanation of vote and to express agreement with the report and appreciation to the rapporteur.

In the course of the debate ample reference was made to protectionism or to its opposite, and some people have said: we are not asking for protectionism. It seems to me that no one in this Parliament has asked for protectionist measures: The problem is that we do not want a one-way protectionism which ends up by damaging Europe, which is notoriously the continent most open to competition and thereby most vulnerable to the machinations of other countries. And when we speak of countries closed to competition, we are not referring only to the developing countries which have been mentioned here: third countries like India, China, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, which attack by means of their exports but close their domestic markets to the import of the same objects, the same goods with which they seek to invade other countries. We are referring also to the closed policy of some highly industrialized countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, and to a certain extent Spain as well.

Furthermore, statistics have been quoted here, and the importance of the footwear industry for the European economy has been mentioned as well as the role of this industry in creating jobs in other sectors. For this reason, I share the observations and recommendations of the rapporteur and agree with the answers she gave

in regard to the acceptance and rejection of the various amendments.

President. — I call Mr Papaefstratiou.

Mr Papaefstratiou. — (*GR*) Mr President, we have listened very carefully to Mrs Caretoni's introduction and in principle we agree with her submission. The subject is not at all trivial and has wider implications, of concern not only to the specific sector of the footwear industry but also to a large sector comprising the producers of similar products.

The report mentions quite correctly that unfortunately the negotiations known as the Tokyo Round did not reach a happy outcome, and thus whereas within our own Community efforts are being made to abolish the various quantitative limitations, certain developed countries are applying exactly those limitations and creating very serious difficulties for producers within the Community. Unfortunately there are several examples of this, among which we may mention Canada, Australia, New Zealand and perhaps Japan as well, the latter being a country which as we all know derives particular benefit from her exports but which does not seem to comprehend that she will have to apply a similar system to imports, a system that will allow a fair utilization of products from other countries.

Mr President, colleagues, we must protect the European footwear industry, which is undergoing hard times leading to a further disorganization of the industry and an extension of the crisis to a larger fraction of the economy.

The Commission had recently made important efforts to improve access to certain other countries, but up to now these have proved unsuccessful since they have encountered, and are continuing to encounter categorical refusals for any concessions of certain facilities by the countries in question.

Examining all the above and taking into account the wide fluctuations in the prices of the raw material, leather, which are often due to profiteering and have a negative influence on the situation as a whole, we agree with the suggestion that there is an urgent and emphatic need for coordinated action by the Commission and the Council in all the directions mentioned, to produce solutions to the above problems and at the same time to safeguard employment at this time of a more general crisis and unemployment in a sector basically comprising small or medium-sized firms that, besides, have few possibilities of converting to other activities.

As regards my own country, Greece, I would like to say in summary that the production in Greece is of the order of about 25 million pairs per year, while the

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domestic consumption is of the order of about 18 million pairs.

A proof that something must be done to assist this sector is that there are exports a proportion of which, about 43%, are exported to countries in our Community, with 57% going to other countries. Of these exports to other countries, a proportion amounting to about 41% is absorbed by the United States. Thus, it is clear that it would be possible for the Greek footwear industry to be very productive if it were not for the problems encountered in other countries, as I mentioned earlier, such as Japan, Canada, Australia, etc.

Consequently, I would like to ask the Commission to direct its best attentions towards taking measures as soon as possible, aiming to protect this sector of industry that involves mainly small and medium-sized firms in all our countries, but that offers very good potential for exports to the Third World.

President. — I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh. — Mr President, I too would like to compliment the rapporteur on her report and, if I may, I would also like to thank her personally for the extremely accommodating way in which she has prepared it and the way she has succeeded in representing the views of the committee as a whole. We are very grateful to Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli for both her grace and her courtesy.

She will not, I know, take it amiss, however, if I do quarrel with one point in her resolution and I refer, of course, to paragraph 4. Now I think that every speaker so far has actually said that we are against protection. Being against protection is like being against sin. We are all against it. However, in paragraph 4, as it is written, the Commission has asked to take unilateral measures on a provisional basis before consulting its trade partners in the GATT and that is a straightforward protectionist act. The Community in pronouncement after pronouncement has declared that it is committed to the preservation of the open trading system. Indeed, the leaders of the free world, at the OECD conference at Ottawa, made the same declaration. It is not for us here to go behind that. No sector, however significant, and however grievous its plight may be, can justify the destruction of the open trading system as a whole which provides the Community with its economic lifeblood and our best hope of maintaining and improving our living standards.

Protection has a debilitating effect on the industry itself. Tomorrow we shall be debating another 'fix' to the textile industry in the form of the Multifibre Arrangement. The textile industry has become so dependent now on these protective barriers that it actually cannot survive without it. Do we really want to

see the great footwear industry go the same way? Protection is arrogant. It denies the consumer his fundamental right to make the choice of goods which represents best value of money for him. It is inflationary; it contracts world trade and I would remind my Socialist friends that it discriminates directly against developing countries because it effectively neutralizes their one economic and competitive asset which is the ability to provide cheap labour. Above all, it invites retaliation against the Community's own exporting and expanding industry. It is because we feel so strongly about this that we have moved our amendment to paragraph 4 which points out that the correct forum for solving problems of unfair trade and distortion of markets in the GATT.

It may be that the Commission has been less than vigorous in using the mechanisms of the GATT to solve this problem — it may be that the Commission did not do as good a job as it might have done in the multilateral trade negotiations, but wherever our hearts may be and wherever our emotions may lie, that is no reason for turning our back on the GATT and resorting to unilateral measures which can only in the end destroy the system which keeps us going as free nations. I hope very much that honourable Members will support the amendment to paragraph 4 and I would ask the rapporteur at this late stage whether she could not see her way to accepting it because I fundamentally believe that this represents the proper view of the Parliament as a whole.

President. — I call Mr Paisley.

Mr Paisley. — Mr President, the chill winds of depression which have been affecting the footwear industry right across Europe have been felt particularly sharply in Northern Ireland. Through the 1970s, the industry declined rapidly until, in January 1980, only 1 229 people remained in its employment. Even that figure has been almost halved in the subsequent two years so that in January 1982 a mere handful of people, 670, remained in employment in the footwear industry in Northern Ireland. Of these 670 many are on short-time work, so the picture in Northern Ireland on the footwear manufacturing scene is one of compelling gloom. What we have is a dying industry which is under relentless attack on its own market from floods of foreign imports and which, at the same time, is hampered on the export markets by insurmountable tariffs. It is this blatant inequality which exists between Europe's import policies on the one hand, and those of the rest of the world on the other, which has devastated our industry.

For once, it is not the current economic situation which has caused the crisis. World footwear consumption is increasing, but whereas the European industry ought to be expanding, competitors from third countries are monopolizing the markets. I am glad that this

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report has highlighted this fact and called for action to remedy it, but unless those calls are heeded, and heeded quickly, then our entire footwear industry will disappear.

The Members of this House, Mr President, might wonder why you look so conspicuously happy this afternoon. Well, it is no secret that the leader of your party, Sir, has become the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic, an elevation I of course, as an Ulster Loyalist, deplore.

President. — Thank you, Mr Paisley. I am very happy to hear the news and I regret that you are not as happy as I am.

I call Mrs Nikolaou.

Mrs Nikolaou. — (GR) Mr President, I would like to begin by making a very small correction; the name Nikolaou is quite common in Greece, and it so happens that two of the 24 Members from Greece have the same name.

The amendments referred to earlier by Mrs Romagnoli were submitted not, as was reported, by Mr, but by Mrs Nikolaou.

And now I shall come to the subject in hand.

Mr President, in the phase of development in which industry within the Community finds itself today, it is logical for interest to be centred on electronics, motor manufacture, and generally high-technology areas. On the other hand we should recognize that in the European Parliament we have relatively few opportunities to discuss the problems of the traditional sectors, which however are extremely important to Mediterranean countries like Greece. For this reason Mr President, we take note of today's opportunity with particular satisfaction.

The footwear sector in Greece is characterized by a predominance of small-to-medium firms. According to the census of 1978, 98% of the total number of units and 78% of those employed in the sector are concentrated in firms employing up to 50 people. We must emphasize that the sector as a whole employs about 23 000 people, most of them women, and represents an important source of employment in the country. In spite of the crisis that has beset the footwear industry in recent years, it is one of the most dynamic branches of Greek industry and it has achieved important organizational transformations that ensure a high level of productivity and competitiveness.

Its production potential has increased to 25 to 30 million pairs per year with relatively modern equipment. The average size of the shops, counted in numbers of employees, has increased from 3 people in

1969 to 7 in 1978. In the same period, production assumed a marked orientation towards exports. Today, 30% of the products are exported, the main export item being footwear for women and the main destinations the EEC countries (43%) and the United States (41%).

From 1976 onwards the industry has been beset by a severe crisis, mainly due to a decline in exports. Characteristically, while the exports of shoes increased from 2 million pairs in 1971 to 7.5 million in 1976, they fell to 5 million pairs in 1979.

Other characteristics of the crisis are the high proportion of idle production capacity, about 50%, and the stagnation in the level of employment. Basically, Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli's report is right in emphasizing the worsening situation of Europe's footwear industry, and pinpointing the causes of this crisis and proposing measures for the protection and development of the sector. We too thank her for this. However, we would like to point out that the report does not lay sufficient emphasis in the importance and the role of small-to-medium firms in this sector.

As is generally accepted, production in the footwear industry is characterized by steady savings in size, which means that the production costs are not significantly dependent upon size. This also explains the fact that although the industry is dominated by small-to-medium firms it can boast of high performance in the field of exporting. This gives the European Parliament the opportunity to proclaim explicitly its decision to assist the small or medium-sized firms in the Community.

As regards the savings in size that are undoubtedly taking place in the domains of entrepreneurial activity, such as the supply of raw materials and the sales, we can take advantage of these by promoting cooperative types of collaboration between the small and medium-sized firms.

In connection with this point we should note that in contrast to what happens in the developed countries, in Greece attempts to concentrate the production by means of take-overs of the productive units have been shown to have very little success. Moreover, as we mentioned earlier, such attempts do not serve any economic purpose.

Consequently, we think it purposeful that Parliament's resolution should explicitly call for the Commission to reinforce the relative significance of small-to-medium firms in the footwear sector.

To improve the competitiveness of the industry, beyond the measures proposed by the report itself we consider it essential to found special institutes for leather technology in the main producer countries of the Community. The basic aims of these institutes would be to encourage the introduction of technolog-

Nikolaou

ical innovations into the methods for processing leather and for producing leather products, the design of new products, the provision of technical assistance and information to interested firms, etc. This would have to be combined with the creation of model production units in areas with a high level of concentration of the industry, which would serve as living examples for imitation by the already existing units.

In conclusion we would like to point out that the problems touched upon in this report are very important, particularly in the framework of broadening the Community towards the Mediterranean countries. These problems do not concern only the footwear industry, but also cover a very substantial part of the processing activities in those countries, so that they have a bearing on the employment situations of about 50% of those working in the processing sector.

We hope that the amendments we have proposed will be acceptable; in our opinion amendments supplement the report at important points of the latter.

The Greek European parliamentarians of the Pasok party will vote in favour of the report by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli.

President. — I call Mrs Pery.

Mrs Pery. — (FR) Mr President, Mrs Caretoni's report points out that the Community is the world's leading producer of footwear. This is therefore an important sector of our economy especially as 80% of the raw material, the leather used for processing, is of European origin. Nevertheless this industry is in danger. For the past two years we have witnessed a sharp increase in imports from low-wage third countries at the very time when our trading partners, such as Canada, the USA and Japan, have been introducing protectionist measures. Some Member States, such as Italy, France and the United Kingdom, are particularly hard hit. In the two latter countries 25% of workers in the footwear industry are unemployed.

In France there are 65 000 wage-earners in the footwear industry. Our government is obliged to take measures to redress a situation characterized by excessive imbalance. In 1981, for example, French imports of Spanish shoes increased by 36%. France has therefore recently set in motion a plan for the recovery of this industry. In December 1981 French footwear manufacturers and distributors signed, under the aegis of the Ministry for Industry, an outline agreement aimed at regaining a share of the French market over the next 18 months. The term 'regaining' is used in France simply to denote an improvement of productivity in certain sectors of industry and not an attempt to obtain any derogation from the free movement of goods within the common market. As Mr Mauroy has stated, France wishes to pursue a determined

policy to regain the domestic and Community market in a spirit of the fullest possible competitiveness; he has added that France will not introduce import limitations in any sector.

The plan for the recovery of the footwear industry includes purely voluntary undertakings. The Commission has not considered these arrangements to be in conflict with the Treaty of Rome. The French Minister for Industry has also pointed out that there was no question of resorting to protectionism but only of encouraging industrialists to make an effort over a limited period of time to redress a situation which has rapidly deteriorated: imports from third countries stand at 30% but the figure is 60% for slippers, and shoes with textile and plastic uppers imported primarily from Taiwan, Korea and China. The appearance of China as an exporter of textile footwear is a new phenomenon on the trade scene which has dealt a hard blow to Aquitaine, the region in south-western France. You may perhaps have heard of the Basque sandals or plimsolls which are made of string and canvas. Twelve million pairs are sold in France each year. But one year ago, in January 1981, orders were found to have fallen by 50 to 70%. What had happened?

In 1980 a Luxembourg company purchased four and a half million Chinese plimsolls and resold two million in France, two million in Italy and 500 000 in Holland. These plimsolls can be bought for between 6 and 6.55 francs per pair whereas the French equivalent costs between 10 and 12.5 francs. Just look at the figures. In 1978, 50 000 pairs of Chinese plimsolls were imported into France. Two years later, in 1980 the figure had risen to two million and reached three million in 1981. As a safeguard measure, the French Government has decided to limit plimsoll imports in 1982. Licences will enable the 1981 figure to be reduced by 50%. But the industrial interests are still worried. I therefore turn directly to the Commission now: these manufacturers are asking to be reclassified under the textile heading so that they can benefit from application of the Multifibre Arrangement to sensitive products. In Aquitaine where one industrial worker out of ten is employed in the footwear sector, 18 600 jobs have been lost, equivalent to a loss of 10% in one year. We find here the same picture as in other parts of Europe: 65% of the workforce are women employed in local factories established in small rural towns with a population of 2 000 to 5 000: closure of these factories is not offset by the creation of any other jobs.

This is why the European footwear industry must be defended. Negotiations must be opened to arrive at a self-limitation agreement with some low-wage countries; those countries have already concluded an agreement of this kind with the United States. Further negotiations should open new markets in Canada and above all Japan. Opening of the Japanese market would enable European exports to progress very

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rapidly. They could be multiplied tenfold. In brief we must resolutely pursue a more active commercial policy.

President. — I call Mr Seeler.

Mr Seeler. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen: Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli's report and our debate today have clearly revealed the continuing deterioration of the situation of the European footwear industry over the past few years. As several speakers have already pointed out, the principal cause of this lies in growing imports from newly industrialized countries which have created increasing competition on the domestic market of the European Community. At the same time it has become more difficult for the European industry to export, not least because many countries which used to buy shoes in Europe have now erected a variety of trade barriers.

In many respects — and here I agree with my colleague Mr Welsh — the trend in the European footwear industry is comparable to that in the European textile industry. It is therefore not surprising that we are hearing repeated calls for a world footwear agreement — as though the world textile agreement had really helped the European textile industry. In reality, or at least this is my belief, many problems of the textile industry have merely been covered up and not solved by this agreement. I therefore warn strongly against any attempt to solve the problems of the European footwear industry by analogy with those of the textile industry.

I accordingly warmly welcome the series of specific proposals made by the rapporteur to restore the competitiveness of the European footwear industry both on the domestic market and on export markets. Here there is a real opportunity for the European Community to take carefully planned measures to eliminate the structural weaknesses of this branch of industry, thus safeguarding existing jobs and perhaps even creating new employment — even in Northern Ireland . . . but I see that Mr Paisley has already left! He only comes to talk about Northern Ireland and then disappears again.

(Applause)

Mrs Nikolaou's proposals have a similar tenor. She too wishes to help this industry to become competitive again using its own resources. I hope these suggestions will gain the support of the House.

I want now to appeal strongly to the Commission to take rapid action on this vote by the European Parliament; in that way we shall be able to demonstrate the ability of the European economy to safeguard and further develop this branch of industry by improving its production and marketing structures without

protectionist measures such as import quotas, high tariffs and so forth.

We have heard that the EEC generates close on 25% of its domestic product by exporting goods and services. We therefore have a strong interest in the continued existence of free trade in the world and must fight protectionism wherever it may appear. This is essential if we are to further develop our standard of living and safeguard jobs in Europe.

But in the long run free trade cannot be a one-way traffic. We cannot accept a situation in which countries which export large quantities of shoes to the Community close their own markets to varying degrees against imports from the Community. Any country which wishes to take part in free world trade and supply its products to the European market with the least possible encumbrance must in turn be prepared to open its own market to European exporters. There will of course have to be exceptions to this basic rule for certain developing countries. But many of the countries which supply shoes to us have long since ceased to be developing nations.

In conclusion I would ask the Commission to consider whether the European Community should not adapt its import provisions and free trade practices to those of its trading partners. A country which makes access to its own market difficult or even impossible for shoes, cars, or other products from Europe should in return be given little or no access for its products on the European market; as I said a moment ago free trade is not a one-way traffic. Free trade must be based on fair competition on both sides.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(DE)* Mr President, the report and our debate today have once again drawn attention to the social importance of this sector which provides jobs for more than 330 000 persons and also to the economic importance of its high turnover. In 1980 shoes to a value of 1 300 million ECU were exported. 1980 was the first year for a long time in which we registered a deficit, i.e. there was a surplus of imports over exports, the difference being in the region of 70 million ECU. In previous years this industry had always earned export surpluses and the figures so far available for 1981 again point to a slight surplus, i.e. they are once again exporting more than we are importing in value terms.

Despite the deep concern which has been expressed in this debate, I would like to point out that this branch of industry has every reason to be proud of its high performance and deserves recognition since it must also be noted that this performance has been achieved

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despite the world economic crisis and the difficulties to which repeated reference has been made.

Attention has already been drawn to the need for us to continue to take steps to keep our markets open. We must then be logical with ourselves and cannot fall back on a protectionist policy involving the closure of our markets. I therefore have serious doubts about paragraph 4 of the motion for a resolution. I cannot therefore envisage an agreement for the footwear industry similar to the Multifibre Arrangement — quite apart from the fact that any attempt to conclude such an agreement would fail because of the unwillingness of our trading partners to participate.

Obviously steps must be taken to prevent impermissible practices such as dumping; we are already taking the necessary action and shall act even more energetically if the need arises.

We must exert pressure on the industrialized and industrializing countries to open their markets to exports from the Community. We have taken a series of steps in this area and I shall answer your questions briefly.

The United States imposed limitations on imports temporarily until 30 June 1981; they then lifted those restrictions. The market has now been liberalized again. In our consultations with Canada we managed to obtain an exclusion of leather footwear from the quotas. However we indicated that this was not sufficient and that we could not accept continuing quotas for non-leather shoes for the next three years; we have said that unless our bilateral talks with Canada prove successful, we may have to envisage measures under Article 19 of GATT.

The same applies to Australia where, despite our representations, no satisfactory solution has as yet been reached on access to the Australian market. The Community has therefore notified GATT of its decision to unbind a series of tariff headings if our access to the Australian market is not facilitated.

Japan still poses the most difficult problem. The special situation has already been described. In December last year we once again asked for the Japanese market to be opened to leather shoes for a period of five years, for an import quota of 4 million pairs of leather shoes to be opened during the financial year 1982/83 and for further tariff reductions and quotas. In making these requests we bore in mind the fact that according to Minister Tanaka, Japan should not merely give declarations of intent about opening its market but actually take the necessary steps.

We are still engaged in discussions with Japan and shall take the matter up again next week in further talks with the Japanese Government delegation.

A further aim of our efforts has been to protect the Community market against excessive imports from low-price countries which have been causing us difficulties in this sector. These imports come mainly from Korea, Taiwan and China. We have called in every case for moderation and understanding. Korea agreed to reduce its exports in 1981 by 6% below the 1980 figure. We expect Taiwan to do likewise for 1982 in comparison with 1981.

Our negotiations with China have not yet achieved satisfactory progress. Consultations are continuing and we have made it clear to China that we cannot accept the scale of its exports especially in the case of footwear, such as slippers, made from textile products.

I come now to the question of secure access for the Community to raw materials. In our relations with Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay in particular we have followed a policy designed to enable our industry to obtain the necessary raw materials under stable conditions and above all without export restrictions by these countries.

We raised the same subject in the first negotiations last January in the India-EEC Joint Committee. We have made progress in every instance and we hope that in the case of India the situation for our industry will improve.

One particularly important factor is of course the efforts which we in the Community can ourselves make to help our industry to remain competitive. The Commission has therefore actively encouraged all the plans of this industry for renewal; it has taken an active part in research programmes and is in constant contact with the industry to ascertain how these measures can be further strengthened.

The Commission has given particular attention to the specific concerns of the small and medium-sized undertakings. We are examining these matters with the social partners in a joint committee of the footwear industry.

A word now about the importance of our domestic market. The rapporteur put a question to me about the French measures. The purpose of those measures has already been explained in the course of our debate. We were given an assurance by a French Government delegation that the purpose of these measures was to improve the situation of the industry through close cooperation from the research phase through to the production stage. We were again assured last Friday by the French Prime Minister that the French measures are in no way intended to partition the French market off from the other Community markets. In this context Prime Minister Mauroy used the term 'reconquête du marché communautaire'.

I think there is no need for me to stress that if the Commission finds that Community rules are being

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infringed it will not hesitate to take the necessary measures.

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

9. *Topical and urgent debate (announcement)*

President. — Pursuant to Rule 42 (2) the list of subjects for the topical and urgent debate to be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday has been drawn up.

The President read the list of subjects¹

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

Mr Moorhouse. — Mr President, I wish to raise a point of order concerning the wording of the motion for a resolution on the financing of a fixed link across the Channel.

President. — Mr Moorhouse, that is for tomorrow. If you have sufficient signatures you can propose tomorrow to introduce the Channel Tunnel link as a proposal.

Mr Moorhouse. — Would you allow me, Sir, to make a point concerning the wording in the English resolution as distinct from the French and the Danish resolutions? Because if you would care, Sir, to turn to the terms of the resolutions, the French version refers to 'la décision imminente', whereas the English version talks about the 'forthcoming decision' and the Danish version is the equivalent of 'imminent'. I would submit to you, Sir, that there is a gross mistranslation in the versions which you, Sir, and others were considering which may have had a considerable bearing on the

decision taken. I hope very much indeed that the House tomorrow will give me the opportunity to reverse this.

President. — That if for tomorrow, Mr Moorhouse. In the meantime I can only accept your complaints about translation. We shall revise the texts and I hope they will be corrected.

I call Mr Forth on a point of order.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, do I understand that you and the chairmen of groups are seriously suggesting that this House is going to debate seven or eight subjects in the space of three hours? Are you telling us that we are going to be able to give due attention to these matters in that period of time? I can scarcely believe this, and I am very disappointed if that's so. Are you not able to come to us with a smaller list of subjects for our fuller attention?

President. — Mr Forth, the list is established and proposed as it is proposed. You can modify it tomorrow.

I call Mr Kallias.

Mr Kallias. — (GR) Mr President, this morning notice was given of a motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Herman and others and relating to renewed negotiations on Cyprus. Please tell me, please tell this House, what has been done about this resolution.

President. — Mr Kallias, if you want to change that, I again repeat, you have to table a motion tomorrow with sufficient signatures and an adequate justification. That is what the Rules stipulate and I hope that everybody will read the Rules.

10. *Votes¹*

President. — The next item is the vote on motions for a resolution on which the debate has been closed.

We shall begin with the *De Gucht report (Doc. 1-1082/81): Request for the parliamentary immunity of a Member to be waived.*

I shall now take explanations of votes.

¹ See Minutes.

² Speaking time: See Minutes.

¹ The report of proceedings records only those parts of the vote which gave rise to speeches. For details of the voting the reader is referred to the Minutes of the sitting.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, I shall be voting against this report because it is against natural law. It seems to me utterly absurd that we should be asking for immunity for an offence which was committed before a Member became a Member. It is just as if one was saying that somebody who committed a murder when he was sane and later became mad should be excused for that murder on the grounds of his later madness. That is quite wrong, it is not acceptable, and we should not be playing about with immunity in this way. Therefore, I urge the House to vote against this report.

Mr Megahy. — The present position on parliamentary immunity is totally unsatisfactory and members of the Legal Affairs Committee have got to try to put themselves in the shoes of national parliaments in trying to make some kind of decision. There are tremendous disparities. Nevertheless, this Parliament is building up some kind of case-law on this to which I am totally opposed and we will be voting against the De Gucht report which I think is a thoroughly bad decision. I think first of all one has got to note that Mrs Castellina herself asked for this immunity to be waived in order to continue her political battle in the courts in Italy. I think it is a gross interference with the right of a Member of this House that we should take political sides and try to prevent her from continuing that fight in the way that she herself chooses to do so.

Secondly, as Mr Enright has said, the matters referred to took place long before there were direct elections at all, and I think that it is very bad to be making retrospective judgements of this kind and throwing the cloak of parliamentary immunity around people for matters that were committed before they were Members of this House. Indeed I think there might well be a danger, that in certain countries it could conceivably be thought that the only way in which one could in fact escape punishment in the future is to become a Member of the European Parliament and automatically acquire parliamentary immunity. Therefore, on those grounds I shall certainly be voting against it and I hope other Members will do so as well.

(Parliament adopted its proposal for a decision)

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President. — We shall now vote on the *Sieglerschmidt* report (Doc. 1-548/81): *Protection of the rights of the individual with regard to data processing.*

(...)

Paragraph 3 — Amendments Nos 8 and 1

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, the Legal Affairs Committee obviously had no further

opportunity to consider this matter but I am working on the basis of the unanimous vote by the committee on the resolution submitted. On that basis I can indicate that amendment No 1 to paragraph 3 does not represent a change of substance. I can therefore agree to it. Amendment No 8 on the other hand would bring about a substantial change and I must therefore reject it.

(...)

Paragraph 7 — Amendments Nos 9 and 2

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, my observation on amendment No 1 also applies to amendment No 2: it falls within the scope of the resolution as submitted and I therefore accept it.

As regards amendment No 9 there is some doubt as to whether a vote can even be taken on it because we have just voted, if I may draw your attention to the exact wording, 'considers rules on the protection of personal information within the European Community to be both possible and necessary'.

That clearly relates to a Community instrument. When we now read the words 'is of the opinion that the possibility of a draft directive should be considered if' etc. the question arises as to whether a vote can be taken on that text. It is for you to decide, Mr President, but if we do vote I am against.

(...)

Paragraph 9 — Amendment No 3

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, a minor linguistic amendment has presumably been made in the German text only on which I agree with the author of the amendment: the word 'gleichbedeutende' must be replaced by 'gleichwertige'. I have ascertained that this corresponds to the text in the other languages. We agree on this amendment and I therefore support it.

President. — It seems to me that it is correctly formulated in French. Consequently the German text must be brought into line with the French.

(...)

Paragraph 15 — Amendments Nos 11, 4 and 14

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) First, amendment No 4: I reject it although it is rather less radical than amendment No 11 but it too does not correspond to the clear wishes of the Legal Affairs Committee. If I may just make one point, Mr President, this amend-

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ment would delete the obligation to inform the individual concerned, a proposal which was supported by the European Democrats in the Legal Affairs Committee. Mr Tyrrell wishes to delete all this. I obviously cannot agree.

(...)

Paragraph 16 — Amendments Nos 13, 12 and 5

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) To start with amendment No 5: I leave it to the discretion of Parliament to decide whether to use the term 'expedient' or 'indispensable'; the difference is not very substantial. I personally believe that the wishes of the committee, in line with the decisions already taken by Parliament, are best expressed by the word 'indispensable'. I must reject amendment No 12 because it conflicts with the tenor of the Legal Affairs Committee's proposals; the same applies of course to amendment No 13.¹

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Mr Megahy. — Mr President, I shall be voting against this. I must pay tribute to the vast amount of work Mr Sieglerschmidt has done on this report and I share his concern, but I depart from him on the central theme which is that we need a Community directive and a new Community institution to police it. Now, as I understand from the vote, we have in fact wiped out the new Community institution but we still have the proposal for the Community directive. Of course, I accept that in today's world of surveillance and computer data banks each and every one of us is on record somewhere. But we have to know who has the records, whether they are accurate and who is allowed to see them. There must be laws relating to the collection and distribution of personal information, and to guarantee access to check and to correct records and files, and generally safeguard the right of privacy. But I cannot accept that a Community directive is a step forward apart from bringing the Community into this affair which I think is a rather dubious use of Article 100. It would also distract attention from the other matters which are mentioned in the report, namely, the ratification and signing of the Council of Europe Convention and consequent legislation in each of the States concerned. As the Commission has indicated, there will be great difficulty in terms of staff should the Community take this step. I do not accept the view of the rapporteur. . .

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

I am voting against it for the reasons given.

Mr Seal. — Mr President, I shall also vote against this report. Whilst I am not against data protection, I think it is important that we vote against this report. While I endorse the reasons given by Mr Megahy, I should also like to say that Community legislation is not suitable in this case. It tends to be compromise legislation. It would be wishy-washy. What we need is national legislation as well as bilateral legal agreements between Member States and countries outside the Community.

My second point is that the report does not go far enough. Every organization that keeps personal data on a computer should be legally obliged to send a printout of that information to the person concerned, as with a bank statement. It should then be possible for that person to appeal to some local committee against that information if it is incorrect. It is not good enough to say that people should have access to this information. That would make it possible only for professional people or middle-class people to find this information. It is necessary for every person on whom information is kept on a computer to know what that information is, and to be able to correct it if it is incorrect. So I shall vote against this report.

Mr Sieglerschmidt, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, we must know the background to this vote: the whole subject of the need for effective data protection in the European Community runs up against national interests and certain economic interests. I am perfectly familiar with the letters which have been sent by multinational undertakings to all Members of Parliament and I shall therefore not fall in with the wishes of those who would like to prevent effective data protection in the European Community by voting against the motion or abstaining through irritation at the fact that the vote has given rise to certain limitations. On the contrary I shall vote in favour of the motion and appeal to my colleagues to do likewise.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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President. — We shall now vote on the *Carossino report (Doc. 1-996/81): Common transport policy.*

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

President. — We shall now vote on the *Gabert report (Doc. 1-982/81): The future of the railway network*

(...)

Paragraph 2 — Amendments Nos 2 and 3

¹ The rapporteur spoke IN FAVOUR of Amendments Nos 6 and 7 and AGAINST Amendment No 10.

Mr Gabert, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, I am opposed to both amendments. I believe that the committee's wording is clearer.

(...)

After paragraph 8 — Amendment No 4

Mr Gabert, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, I am against this amendment because the committee has already submitted a special report on this matter.

(Parliament adopted the motion for a resolution)

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(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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President. — We shall now vote on the *Moreau report* (Doc. 1-873/81): *European Community's supplies of mineral and vegetable raw materials.*

(...)

Paragraph 6 — Amendment No 10

Mrs Moreau, rapporteur. — (FR) The committee has already rejected this amendment and I am opposed to it.¹

(...)

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Mr Baillot. — (FR) Mr President, the report now before us contains a number of value judgments on which proposals which we approve are based. It states for example that the lack of knowledge of the resources existing in the Community and throughout the world makes it necessary to draw up the most detailed possible survey. Similarly it points out that if the Community is to be made less dependent on outside supplies, everything possible must be done to exploit all its own resources. However, a political determination is clearly necessary to attain these objectives. We must no longer allow the multinationals to rule the international markets and should instead

seek to stabilize the price of mineral and vegetable raw materials. We must also adopt a constructive attitude towards the producer countries, more specifically the developing countries which must no longer be plundered; long-term agreements should be concluded with them as the basis for fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation. External purchases of raw materials should no longer permit one country to exercise any form of pressure on another. We must therefore move forward towards balanced agreements with counter-part provisions for trade in raw materials, in particular compensated agreements. We consider that this document has both positive and negative aspects; we in the Communist and Allied Group shall therefore abstain.

Mrs Baduel-Glorioso. — (FR) Mr President, I want to make a few observations on behalf of the Italian Communist Group to say that we agree with some parts of this report; above all we consider the underlying initiative most interesting. For the first time we have noted a form of competition between the Committee on External Economic Relations and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. There is a very interesting opinion by Mr Schinzel which was approved by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. I think that we should consider this whole problem in more detail to make progress and look into the structural causes of this totally unjust international division of labour which, through the most sophisticated forms of neo-colonialism, today places us in a situation of plundering and imbalance between supply and demand, i.e. between our needs and their needs. We should therefore speak of cooperation rather than inter-dependence because inter-dependence is an objective fact while cooperation is a matter for political resolve. We must also speak frankly about the action of the multinational companies; we must say where they are active, with what ultimate aims and for what reasons they dominate certain sectors and how they transfer their capital from one sector and country to another. I think this situation must be made more transparent because our economy and the jobs of our workers depend on it; we must show our political determination and say whether or not we wish to contribute to the establishment of the new world economic order. For all these reasons we shall abstain.

Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul. — (DE) Ladies and gentlemen: the Socialist Group will abstain from the vote on this report for the following reason: firstly, the improvements made at the committee stage were largely removed again when the vote came to be taken. Through paragraph 15 a majority of Members of this House decided only to give support to international agreements on raw material stocks if such provisions appeared appropriate; in the past Parliament and the Community had always supported such agreements. That is a strange attitude when measured against certain declarations by the international legal community. It also represents a substantial step back-

¹ The rapporteur spoke IN FAVOUR of amendments Nos 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15 and 18 and AGAINST amendments Nos 12 and 14.

Wieczorek-Zeul

wards which we can at best attribute to a lack of attention to the details of this matter.

Secondly, a majority of Members of this House were unwilling to add to the six existing recitals a seventh paragraph referring to the situation on the market for raw materials; quite by chance this very recital which was not adopted referred to the most important problem of the market for raw materials, namely the role of the multinationals. This really does leave us with the impression that there is a deliberate intention at work here.

Thirdly, this House — yes Mr von Bismarck, we should send you to the 'multi-laundry' as we heard in our debate this morning, and I look forward to seeing you there — rejected by a majority vote the request for extended agreements on the basis of equality with a number of developing countries. Mrs Moreau's report contains many good points but these factors make it impossible for us to vote in favour. We shall therefore abstain.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now consider the *Carettoni Romagnoli report (Doc. 1-640/81): Footwear industry.*

(...)

After the fourteenth indent — Amendment No 5

Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli. — *(IT)* Mr President, I request the author to withdraw it, because the same things are said in amendment No 6, which I accept.

President. — Has Mrs Nikolaou withdrawn her amendment?

Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli. — *(IT)* Mr President, I defer to the vote of the Assembly.

(...)

Paragraph 6 — Amendment No 3

Mrs Carettoni Romagnoli. — *(IT)* Mr President, I am against amendment No 3 where it replaces my own text. I would favour it only if the amendment in

question were to supplement the text of the resolution.¹

(...)

President. — I shall now take explanations of vote.

Sir Fred Warner. — In deciding how to vote on this matter I have been struck by the fact that both the resolution and the debate have passed over one very important aspect. We have all looked for a more efficient and competitive industry, but the assumption by all speakers has been that it will be slimmed down and will never rise to the same levels of employment as it knew five years ago. In other words we have discussed this industry as we have often in the past discussed the steel industry, the textile industry, the shipbuilding industry, etc. These industries have had programmes made for them by the Commission and have had large sums expended on them from both the Regional Development Fund and the Social Fund in order to re-train and replace workers. It is on the assumption that the Commissioner will be in touch with his colleagues responsible for those two funds and that the Commission as a whole will entertain sympathetically requests for proper programmes to take care of the displaced workers that I am prepared to vote for this resolution.

Mr Bonaccini. — *(IT)* Mr President, the Italians of the Communist and Allies Group will vote in favour of the resolution drawn up by Mrs Carettoni because we believe that it achieves an adequate balance between the need to deal with the not always legitimate pressures exerted on our internal European market and the simultaneous need to keep our markets sufficiently open. Above all we will vote for it because this resolution constitutes a summons to the Commission, calling upon it to apply a true Community strategy to the problems of this sector — a strategy capable of incorporating the requirements of cooperation with the developing countries and the many possibilities of innovation and improvement provided by this cooperation. Such a strategy should be pursued throughout the Community, which is very late in turning its attention to the problem.

Mr Møller. — *(DK)* I shall refrain from voting at the final vote on this proposal, which I otherwise view very favourably. But there is under the auspices of the European Communities a joint committee on which the employees and employers in the footwear industry are equally represented. The views of that committee have not been sought on this matter, and for that reason I shall abstain in the voting.

¹ The rapporteur spoke IN FAVOUR of Amendments Nos 2, 6 and 8 and AGAINST Amendments Nos 4 and 7.

Written explanation of vote.

Mr Frischmann. — (FR) The report by Mrs Caretoni Romagnoli rightly stresses the need for Community measures to protect the market of the Community Member States against imports from third countries (such as Taiwan, Japan and the United States) when the latter fail to respect the GATT agreements and if such imports present a threat to industry and employment. In this connection we would point out that the enlargement of the Community to include Spain constitutes a very serious threat to this sector and, first and foremost, to thousands of jobs.

We therefore reaffirm our opposition to this enlargement. There is a further contributory factor to the crisis and unemployment: the imbalance in intra-Community trade. We see a need for national measures to recover the domestic market; this entails a policy to revitalize a footwear industry in France through higher productivity, professional training and investment to create new jobs. Excessive imports which threaten employment and create unjustified competition for national production must be limited. If we are to put an end to the increase in unemployment and reverse the present trend, we must abandon the policy of excessive concentration on exports which has caused too much damage and unemployment.

Finally, there is an essential prerequisite for the success of efforts to create employment and develop the industrial footwear and leather sector, namely an increase in purchasing power. The austerity advocated by the Commission and the inadequate increase in incomes in all our countries can only prevent the successful attainment of these targets. But we must attain them!

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

*

* *

President. — In order to facilitate the vote on the Seitlinger report (Doc. 1-988/81) scheduled for tomorrow, I would inform Members that a list setting out the order in which the amendments to this report will be taken is available from distribution.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, while welcoming what you said about tomorrow, my latest information is that all the amendments put forward to the Seitlinger report have not in fact been circulated and will not be ready until tomorrow morning at some stage. This makes it very difficult for us, some of these being our own, and it makes us very nervous about the way things will proceed. I thought you ought to know.

President. — Mr Fergusson, I am told you are right: we are on the way to distributing the amendments — not all will be available before tomorrow morning. But the list is already there and that means you have a little more certainty because I assume that the members of the relevant committees know approximately what it is about.¹

(The sitting was closed at 7.10 p.m.)

¹ Agenda for the next sitting: see Minutes.

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 10 MARCH 1982

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IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

(The sitting was opened at 9 a.m.)¹

1. Application of the Rules of Procedure

President. — The Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions has informed me of its interpretation of Rule 7(3) of the Rules of Procedure concerning the resignation of Members. I have received the following letter signed by Mr Nyborg:

At its meeting of 9 March 1982, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions examined once again, in answer to your request of 8 March 1982, the question of the interpretation of Rule 7(3) concerning the resignation of Members.

¹ Approval of minutes — Documents received — Membership of committees: see minutes.

At that meeting, the committee adopted the following provisional interpretation of Rule 7(3):

- I — The President of Parliament must satisfy himself as to the validity of a letter of resignation before informing Parliament thereof;
- II — Should objections be raised in the House on the grounds that the resignation is thought either to have been imposed on the Member or to be in contradiction with the provisions of the Act of 20 September 1976 or the Rules of Procedure of Parliament, the President shall postpone the establishment of the vacancy and shall request a written justification of the objections raised;
- III — During the following sitting, the President shall inform Parliament of the substance of the objection, and shall then request the House to vote, without debate, on whether the objection should be considered. In the event of an affirmative vote, the objection shall be referred to the appropriate committee. A negative vote shall mean that Parliament has no objection to the vacancy being established.

President

Since the committee had already decided to examine in greater depth the provisions of Rule 7(3), the above interpretation is only a provisional one and is without prejudice to any subsequent interpretations of the committee on this question.

This communication will be printed in full in the minutes of today's proceedings. If the interpretation is contested, Parliament will be asked to vote on it at ten o'clock at the beginning of tomorrow's sitting, in accordance with Rule 111(4) of the Rules of Procedure.

I call Mr Pannella.

Mr Pannella. — (FR) Mr President, am I right in thinking that there is going to be some kind of debate at ten o'clock tomorrow morning if the House perhaps does not agree with the opinion of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions?

President. — No, Mr Pannella, there will be no debate. You will have an opportunity to consider the content of this communication at leisure — it is going to appear in the minutes — and if it is contested we shall vote on it at ten o'clock tomorrow. If rejected, it will be referred back to the committee.

Mr Pannella. — (FR) I see, just like a committee report.

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — There is one further point. Can we have your assurance that no resignations are actually going to be placed before this Parliament until the vote has taken place — if there is a vote — on the recommendation by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, because the time scale is getting very tight?

President. — Of course, Mr Patterson, that goes without saying.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — I wonder if you would be kind enough to make one thing clear at the moment. I know that yesterday, Mr President, we passed the minutes of the Thursday of the last part-session. Could you just tell us whether a vacancy has been established now — or is it still on ice in respect of Mr Clément?

President. — Are you talking about Mr Clément? That matter is settled; it is Mr Fanton's vacancy that is on ice.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a very full agenda today. If we cannot get through it all, some items will be carried over until tomorrow, which might mean — I am sorry to say — that Mrs Maij-Weggen's report on seals could be dealt with during the evening sitting. I must ask you to play the game and to be careful not to go over your speaking time. I would ask you to keep very carefully to the time which has been agreed.

I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Mr President, I regret causing a delay in our proceedings, but we are not to blame for it.

Yesterday we got hold of a press report which states that an official delegation of the European Parliament has set off for Washington to take part in an Afghanistan Day declaration in the White House on 10 March.

Annexed to this press report was a resolution which was adopted by the European Parliament but which mentioned nothing about the visit of such a delegation to the White House. It states firstly that the European Parliament has decided to proclaim Afghanistan Day and secondly that it considers that this initiative will be supported by all the peoples of the European Community.

And so I would ask you, with regard to such a serious political event as the participation of a delegation from the European Parliament in the anti-Soviet goings-on in Washington . . .

President. — Mr Alavanos, I would ask you not to bring up the subject of Afghanistan, because it is not on the agenda.

I understand your question and I can give you an answer. The decision was taken by the Bureau. I shall forward your question and you will receive an answer from the Bureau. Let me remind you of Rule 25(2) of the Rules of Procedure:

Any Member may ask questions related to the work of the Bureau, the enlarged Bureau and the Quaestors. Such questions shall be submitted to the President in writing and published in the Bulletin of Parliament within thirty days of tabling, together with the answers given.

Your request will therefore be complied with.

I call Mr Hord.

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I wish to bring to your attention the situation of three groups who are due to visit Parliament this week in consequence of the devaluation of the Belgian franc. The groups in question,

Hord

who were assured that part of the fare to Strasbourg would be refunded, have discovered that, although Parliament intends to change the way in which the fare is calculated on a kilometre basis to take account of the devaluation of the Belgian franc, this will not be sufficient to compensate fully for the devaluation change. Can I have the assurance of the Presidency that these three groups will not suffer any financial loss over and above that which they were informed of before they came to Strasbourg?

President. — That is also a question to the President. Please submit it in writing and you will receive an answer.

2. Uniform electoral procedure

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-988/81), drawn up by Mr Seitlinger on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on a draft uniform electoral procedure for the election of Members of the European Parliament.

I call the rapporteur:

Mr Seitlinger, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is my honour to submit to you on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee a report which considers the question of a uniform electoral procedure.

I should first like to stress that on this question this House has the power to act granted to it by the Council Decision of 20 September 1976, Article 7 of which gives us the mandate to draw up such a proposal.

First the subcommittee and later the Political Affairs Committee have worked on this report for two years, through a great many sessions during which every political group has contributed. I should tell you that those contributions were made with complete objectivity and in a spirit of honest cooperation, and I should like to take this opportunity of thanking my colleagues, first those of the subcommittee and secondly those of the full Political Affairs Committee for their valuable help to me as rapporteur over the long period of this task.

The first point I should make is that uniform electoral law does not mean identical law. Uniform, of course, means having a common denominator of all the fundamental features of electoral law without necessarily being identical in every respect, so as to take account of the diversity, the wealth and the individual characteristics of each Member State.

The Political Affairs Committee felt that in its motion for a resolution it should distinguish between the electoral system as such and the question of active and passive electoral rights. Naturally, a second report will be submitted to you later, in which other problems will be considered, such as those of incompatibility, the eligibility of candidates, deposits, the number of signatures, and the major problem of electoral disputes and the part played in them by national parliaments, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice. In other words, we are fully aware that this document is not exhaustive; however, the Political Affairs Committee has opted deliberately for such a formula so as to keep within time limits and not to overload the report; the fact is that after this House has voted, the Council must also give its agreement and national parliaments must then ratify. If we wish to be ready for the 1984 elections, the countdown has already started.

The Political Affairs Committee also wished to avoid abstract doctrinal discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of the various kinds of ballot: straight majority, proportional representation and all the variants between those two extremes used in the Member States, whether for the 1979 European elections or for national elections. In my own country, France, we use a system of individual constituencies with two ballots for the national elections which gives a strict majority election. For the 1979 European elections we used a national list, with integrated proportional representation. In other words, the two systems can exist side by side in the same country. For this reason, the Committee preferred a pragmatic approach by seeking criteria which the rapporteur would use to set out his guidelines.

Thus, amongst the various criteria which the Committee considered, there are two which I regard as essential. The Committee made it plain that the future uniform electoral law should ensure that the principal political parties should be represented — which is of course a euphemism, a way of saying that they rejected the concept of the straight majority, and that the system should rather be proportional in character. However, for the second criterion, the Committee added that it considered essential that there should be some link between the electors and their representatives, by which they meant, with particular reference to those countries with 81 seats, that it would be better to opt for a mixed system, that is a system based on proportionalism with an element of personalization.

Using these criteria as a basis, we set up two working hypotheses which, naturally, both met the conditions of proportional representation in the allocation of seats and added to it an element not of majority election but of personalization, so as to meet this criterion of forging a link between the electors and their representatives. Initially, then, we set up a first alternative which was broadly analogous to the electoral law

Seitlinger

governing the election of representatives to the Bundestag in the Federal Republic of Germany. However, the Committee then rejected that working hypothesis in favour of the second alternative, namely the principle of regional lists for a minimum of 3 and maximum of 15 seats, on the understanding that Member States had open every one of the possibilities which mathematics provided within that range. Thus in a country with 81 Members it is possible to have 27 three-seat constituencies, or 6 or 7 constituencies, and any of the permutations possible between those two figures. We also decided that there would of course be one man one vote, that, particularly to take into account the Belgian situation, preferential voting is an option, and that vote splitting is prohibited.

Next, we included in the text that setting thresholds is optional because there is already a technical threshold according to the number of seats available to a Member State. In Luxembourg, for example, with 6 seats there is a technical threshold of 16.5%. For Denmark, with 16 seats there is a technical threshold of 6%. In the 81-seat countries, on the other hand, unless a technical threshold is set at 5%, the true threshold is only 1.24%. The nature of the problem differs according to the number of seats a country has, and that is why the political affairs committee has left the question open.

In Article 4 (2) we have provided for derogations taking account of ethnic and geographical factors, but we have added — and this is critical — that they must already be founded in the constitution of the State concerned. The committee did not wish to name individual cases, as has been proposed in a number of amendments, because this is not something which should be fixed and immutable. Accession of new countries may lead to new situations, but I believe that such factors must have constitutional recognition and we have, incidentally, added a footnote to the effect that this includes both written and unwritten constitutions — as is the case with the British — as well as law having the same effect as a constitution. If these conditions are not met then the derogation cannot be applied, and I believe that this formula will give every guarantee that is needed.

I do not turn to the question of the active and passive right to vote. The active right was one on which there were differences of opinion. The Committee eventually decided upon two principles: firstly, by a majority vote, to include in the text that the nationals of Member States resident in a country other than their country of citizenship must have the right to vote in the country of their residence. Secondly, that those who have been resident for less than five years and who are thus obliged to vote in the country of their own nationality must be granted every facility to vote in the country of their origin. As regards the passive right to vote, the committee has not made any conditions regarding residence.

Lastly, the Committee proposes that elections should be held over a period of no more than two days, namely a Sunday and Monday.

Turning now to the amendments, there are a few translation corrections, one of which, relating to Article 4, paragraph 2 involves all languages; three others relate only to the German version. Lastly, as regards Amendment No 56 by Mr Schieler, I believe that this amendment can be consolidated with Amendment No 18 by Mr Tyrrell and Mr Price. I should add that I am prepared to accept Amendments 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34 and 35, which are of a technical and legal nature aimed at harmonizing this text with the Council's Act of 20 September 1976.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, that summarizes the report which it has been my honour to submit to you on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee.

(Applause)

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, I would suggest to the House that so as to organize our work in the best possible way, and perhaps even to accelerate it, the list of speakers should be closed in 15 minutes. I would point out that there are already 31 names on that list.

I call the Legal Affairs Committee.

Mr D'Angelosante, draftsman of an opinion. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as has already been said, Parliament has an obligation to submit to the Council a draft uniform procedure for the election of Members of the European Parliament. That obligation derives not from the Act of 20 September 1976 but from the Treaties themselves; in the case of the EEC Treaty, from Article 138 (3).

At its meeting of 27 October 1981 the Legal Affairs Committee approved the draft opinion and I am bound to its conclusions, conclusions which are called for in the sixth indent of the preamble to the motion before us. The Legal Affairs Committee reaches the following conclusions, and I quote:

the concept of an 'election by direct universal suffrage in accordance with a uniform procedure in all Member States' calls for the introduction in the Community, of an electoral system based on universally applied principles.

The uniform electoral procedure should therefore be free of differences that might adversely affect the representativeness of the European Parliament.

For its own part, the Political Affairs Committee has maintained that 'uniform' does not mean 'identical' and that the uniform procedure can be brought about in a number of stages. And if such notions are difficult to maintain from the point of view of strict interpreta-

D'Angelosante

tion it can nevertheless be said that implementing them to a limited extent may be necessary politically.

None the less, Article 4 (2) of the draft electoral procedure allows a general and unconditional derogation inasmuch as it sets out conditions of unlimited and unverifiable scope. Furthermore, allowing individual States the sovereign right to deviate from the principles rules out, for practical purposes, any possibility of a uniform electoral procedure for this House, since the electoral procedure actually used will depend on the particular derogations selected by individual Member States. All the evidence is that this derogation will allow those Member States who wish it — and in some cases that wish is a certainty — to implement not the proportional system provided for in the draft we have before us but the system of single Member majority elections.

Under such circumstances there is little comfort to be derived from the knowledge that 'uniform' does not mean 'identical'. There has to be an explanation of how it is possible to have contrasting electoral systems in different States under a uniform procedure. In our view this violates the principle of uniformity: the proportional system which, it is claimed, has been chosen, is not actually implemented and yet a mechanism is put forward which contains a certain element of legal obligation. What is then enacted is a parody of a law which can be respected to the extent that each individual wishes: it is so flexible, ladies and gentlemen, that uniformity, no matter how you define it, is meaningless.

The effect of the proposal before us is that the situation will remain exactly as it is today. Every Member State may implement proportional representation or majority voting at its own discretion; it will be able to choose or reject preference voting; it will be able to select a threshold or not; just as can be done today under the ten electoral laws which govern election of Members of this House.

That will be a serious blow to the credibility of this House, which would no longer be recognizable as a Parliament, being unable to carry out the duties entrusted to it by the Treaty and failing to apply the majority principle which is a feature of this Parliament and of any other independent assembly worthy of that name.

Pages 12 and following of the explanatory statement are an attempt to justify the derogations with which we are concerned on the basis of the derogations contained in the Act of 20 September 1976 and in individual national legislation.

Ladies and gentlemen, to refer to national procedures as an explanation of uniform procedure is incomprehensible; the fact remains that none of the derogations mentioned represents a direct attack on the electoral system in the strict sense and, taken as a whole, they

are relatively limited in scope compared with what is now being proposed; with one or two exceptions which are now no longer relevant — such as the Italian minority groups which were allowed to pool their lists, which is generally accepted nowadays — with those exceptions it would be preferable to remain with those derogations than to apply the principles set out in Article 4 (2). It would also be preferable from the point of view of avoiding ridicule. The fact is that an assembly charged with innovatory enthusiasm would show itself to be incapable of keeping not only to its obligations but also to its rights and privileges.

(Applause from the left)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Schieler. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, there is much public criticism of the fact that the directly-elected European Parliament has too little power, and in particular that it has no right to initiate legislation off its own bat. However, there is one area in which the European Parliament does have a right of initiative of some considerable political significance. According to the provisions of the Treaties of Rome, as quoted by the rapporteur, 'the assembly shall draw up proposals for elections by direct universal suffrage in accordance with a uniform procedure in all the Member States'.

That is the only case in which a right of initiative on the part of the European Parliament is enshrined in the Treaties. While it is true that any electoral legislation passed by the European Parliament still has two very difficult obstacles to overcome, in that it requires a decision on the part of the Council and subsequent ratification by the parliaments of the Member States, the fact remains that a decision taken by the European Parliament on a uniform electoral procedure is of major importance in terms of this House's legislative functions.

It therefore follows that it would be an unpardonable sin of omission — not to say a major disgrace for this House — if we were to fail to take the opportunity and accept the obligation placed on us by the terms of the Treaty. It is not only a question of a Parliament's natural right to decide on where it should meet, but also of its right to decide according to what legal provisions the Members of this House should be elected in the ten Member States.

Given that the Treaty enables — and indeed requires — the European Parliament to formulate proposals for general elections according to a uniform procedure in all the Member States, it follows that this House must have a vital interest in seeing that these provisions are put into effect.

There can be no doubt that the duty imposed here on the European Parliament is fraught with considerable

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difficulties. National electoral traditions are too deeply rooted in many of the Member States of the Community for it to be reasonable to expect a uniform procedure to be created more or less from scratch.

Let us take a look, then, at the main characteristics of any such uniform procedure. In the interests of optimum balance, any system we eventually decide on must guarantee a maximum level of uniformity, and should help towards creating close and direct relations between the voters and their elected representatives. Moreover, the electoral system should be as simple and clear as possible to make it comprehensible to the man-in-the-street.

It must also guarantee representation for the major political groupings in the European Parliament, and we take the view, in a European spirit, that all the people of the Member States of the Community whose place of residence is within the Community should enjoy both active and passive voting rights.

Finally — and I make this point with certain reservations — the electoral system eventually chosen should wherever possible be linked to the tried and trusted procedures well-known to the people of the various Member States. It is here, though, that we come up against a problem which makes the task of this House look something like a mathematician's efforts to square a circle. Most of the ten Member States have so far been using a proportional representation system — in various forms — whereas the United Kingdom has traditionally used the majority voting system.

The rapporteur has already explained the wide variety of considerations borne in mind by the Political Affairs Committee and its subordinate working parties with a view to finding a reasonable compromise between these two diametrically opposed electoral systems which would stand a chance of receiving the support of a majority of this House.

I shall refrain from going into all the details of the committee's deliberations as the rapporteur has already covered that ground.

The first thing we should be clear in our own minds about is that the concept of a 'uniform electoral procedure' does not necessarily mean that all the electoral provisions need be absolutely identical in the ten Member States. The important thing is that there should be no shortcomings in the major aspects of any such electoral procedure which would have an effect on the composition of the European Parliament. Mr D'Angelosante rightly pointed out on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee that it seemed impossible to sanction any electoral provisions which favoured the interests of one Member State or another or even of one national party or another and which, by artificially affecting this House's representativity, tended to weaken and damage the European Parliament.

After difficult discussions in the Legal Affairs Committee and its subordinate working parties, a large majority of the committee took the view that the seats must be distributed according to a proportional system to ensure that the major political groupings were represented in the European Parliament.

The Political Affairs Committee proceeded on the assumption that direct relations between the voters and their elected representatives should be fostered, and with a view to achieving this aim, the electoral system should incorporate certain aspects of election by personality, in that the candidates would be elected in multi-Member constituencies with between three and fifteen candidates.

You could call this kind of electoral system incorporating personal features a regional list system, but the very fact that we have incorporated personal features is a guarantee that the candidates will have to present themselves for election in multi-Member constituencies with a resultant direct link to the voters rather than appearing more or less anonymously on a list.

I should like to give notice on behalf of the Socialist Group that we shall be supporting this draft legislation. We believe that it incorporates sufficient uniformity to give equal weight to each vote cast and is thus a guarantee of fair representation in the European Parliament. On the other hand, it incorporates a variety of opportunities for adapting to national conventions and thus retaining a degree of flexibility.

That is true, for instance, of the proposal already referred to by the rapporteur to the effect that 'the Member States may make provision for preferential voting within a list', a facility which has already been used in certain Member States and which guarantees the voter a wide scope for democratic choice. It applies also to the proposal for the introduction of a threshold designed to ensure that the available seats are not split among myriad political groupings. This facility was used in the first direct elections by France and the Federal Republic of Germany.

As I said earlier, the introduction of a uniform electoral procedure does not necessarily mean that all the legal questions to do with the election can be solved identically. For instance, the draft legislation proposed by the Political Affairs Committee does not include any ruling on the minimum age for the active and passive right to vote. This would have been perfectly feasible as regards active voting rights, as the minimum age for exercising the active right to vote is now 18 years in practically all the Member States. Logically, however, we would then require a ruling on the minimum age for the right to stand for election, something which is much more difficult to lay down in European electoral legislation. The fact is that the minimum age for a potential candidate in the Member States of the European Community varies between

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18 years in Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany and 25 years in Italy and the Netherlands.

The fact that the not unimportant question of the minimum voting age is not covered by this draft legislation shows clearly that what we have here is merely a preliminary, i.e. incomplete, standardization of electoral legislation provisions for the second direct elections to the European Parliament. Of course, other provisions will have to be standardized at some later stage, to include not only the voting age but also the admission of parties and electoral groupings or the increasingly urgent question of the reimbursement of campaign costs for the parties involved in the election.

One highly important provision which received the support of a majority of the Political Affairs Committee is set out in Article 5. Paragraph 1 says that 'the Member States shall grant their citizens the right to vote irrespective of their place of residence, provided that this place of residence is situated in a Member State of the European Community'. It was an intolerable shortcoming of the first direct elections to the European Parliament that a large number of Community citizens were unable to vote because their place of residence at the time of the election was not in their country of origin. That is something which must not be allowed to happen again, and we therefore very much welcome this move as a first step towards the creation of a future European nationality.

Another important step forward is taken with Article 5(2) of the report, which was — as the rapporteur mentioned — adopted by a majority of the committee on the initiative of the Socialist Group. According to this provision, 'the Member States shall grant the nationals of the Member States the right to vote providing they have been resident in the country for at least five years'. It must be made clear, however, that each person is allowed only one vote, and I should therefore like to ask you to give your support to the clarifying Amendment number 56 tabled by myself on behalf of the Socialist Group.

It would indeed be a major step forward in Europe if we were thus to guarantee that a Community citizen who has lived for some length of time in a country other than his country of origin has the chance to participate in the election in his country of residence rather than his country of origin. I would add that a majority of Socialist Group does not think it reasonable for this alternative right to vote to be granted after only two years' residence. On the other hand, we think it essential for the proposal put forward by us and incorporated in the draft as Article 5(2) to be included in the report on the grounds that the opportunity to vote in the country of residence constitutes a definite step forward in Europe.

No fewer than 95 amendments have been tabled, thus demonstrating the amount of interest there is in this subject. However, some of the amendments are clearly

directed at reversing the outcome of the Political Affairs Committee's deliberations. As I said before, our decision on this draft legislation is a question of pre-eminent political importance for the European Parliament. It is in fact a demonstration of this House's self-respect. We realize that our draft still has to clear the Council and national parliament hurdles, but it must not be allowed to come to grief at the hands of the European Parliament itself.

(Applause)

The aim of the draft we have before us today is to lay down balanced provisions so as to enable as broad a spectrum as possible of personalities to be involved in the construction of Europe. The aim is to open the door to the kind of Members who have a genuine political desire to work towards that end, and to ensure that, in the second legislative period of the directly elected European Parliament, we have a House which is ready and willing to take decisions and prepared to make progress in the interests of Europe. A uniform electoral procedure is an important step on the road to the creation of a specifically European consciousness and a significant milestone on the road towards European Union.

(Applause)

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

Mr Bocklet. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, any decision on an electoral system goes beyond the mere technicalities of the election of Members and in fact constitutes a decision of principle on the political system of which the elections are part.

For that reason, it is impossible to prescribe a particular electoral procedure without bearing in mind the existing party structure and the special characteristics of the political room for manoeuvre available to us. The question of which criteria should be applied to such an electoral system is particularly valid in the case of a political Community whose decision-making structure is still in its infancy.

The answer to this question of the right form of electoral legislation constitutes essentially an answer to the question of the status of the European Parliament within the institutional structure of the European Community. In more specific terms, what this amounts to from our point of view is what is the task of the European Parliament and what should it be doing in the interests of the people of Europe. Mirabeau said in his famous speech in 1789 that parliament should be a map in miniature of the people. His concern — as the heir to the protagonists of Rationalism and the Enlightenment — was to ensure that the various 'estates' — equating to today's parties or political movements —

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were represented in parliament in proportion to their standing in society. And let me add — in acknowledgment of our British colleagues — that the idea of comparing a parliament with a map was nothing new at the time of the French Revolution. In fact, it first saw the light of day in the writings of Edmund Burke and James Wilson in the second half of the 18th century, but — because of specifically British circumstances — it had no electoral repercussions in Britain itself. As far as we Christian Democrats are concerned, the essential element in the quest for a uniform electoral procedure is to ensure that the European Parliament genuinely represents all the people of the Community, because the fact is that, without representation, people cannot become a part of the political opinion and decision-making process and thus cannot become integrated into the political life of the Community. That seems to us to be all the more important given that the European Community is still only feeling its way towards integration in the form of political union. For that reason, it is important that as many Europeans as possible with differing views should meet together in the European Parliament, which means in effect that the European Parliament must reflect a politically miniaturized map of Europe, as Mirabeau said. That is the basic justification for our demand for the establishment of proportional representation in elections in the European Parliament.

There is another reason, though. In a Europe in which the concept of national equality is of paramount importance, we cannot simply accept the principle that votes cast be given the same quantitative weight. We must commit ourselves to ensuring that each vote is also bestowed with more or less the same success value, and that is precisely the essential advantage of proportional representation over majority voting, i.e. the fact that virtually no votes are 'lost'.

It is, of course, true that one of the disadvantages of the list system which is always used in conjunction with proportional representation is a tendency for votes for specific persons to be given something of a back seat, and this is a phenomenon which is bound to be of concern to a Christian-Democratic party, one of whose tenets is the principle of personality. Given the impracticability of a combination of constituency and list voting on the lines of the elections to the Italian Senate or to the German Bundestag of 1949 — as a result of the insuperable problem of excessive mandates — we have therefore come out in favour of regionalizing the proportional representation system, using multi-member constituencies with the possibility of a 'preferential' list system. The advantage of this combination is that the kind of regional cohesion which is characteristic of the majority voting system can be retained to some degree even within a proportional representation system on the grounds that multi-Member constituencies which are flexible enough to be adapted to regional circumstances are in themselves a regional basis for the compilation of lists and the election and political work of Members and

thus enable personal links to be retained to a large extent on a regional basis.

Moreover, this electoral procedure for the first time elevates the regions of Europe to the level of representation of the people of Europe in the European Parliament, which means that the Member States represented in the Council will be confronted with the full range and variety of the regions of Europe — the other face of Europe is represented by the European Parliament. As such, this procedure will greatly assist the process of integration, and for this reason, we are unable to support the amendment which seeks to reinstate national lists in favour of this regional solution.

In the run-up to today's debate, we have sometimes heard the fear expressed that the proposed uniform electoral procedure would not in fact be a uniform procedure at all because certain details would be left up to the Member States. The fact is, though, that uniform is not synonymous with identical, but is aimed simply at guaranteeing roughly the same success value to all the votes cast. It therefore makes sense to leave all those details which do not have to be decided on at European level to the judgment of the Member States to enable a certain degree of account to be taken of the different political traditions in the various Member States. What we have here, then, is a European framework with national development potential, which none the less complies with the uniformity criterion in the sense of a roughly similar success value for each vote cast.

Article 4(2) is no exception to this rule, as it merely sets out to cover certain special cases and is now formulated such as to allow neither the extension *ad infinitum* of the list of special cases nor the resignation of an entire Member State. I believe this point has been recognized by the British Members, otherwise they would not have tabled an amendment seeking to add historical factors to the existing special geographical or ethnic factors.

Let us be quite clear about this: the relative majority voting system can in no circumstances be introduced or retained in a Member State as a special factor by virtue of Article 4(2).

Nor do we think much of the idea of listing the special cases in Article 4(2). For one thing, the list in the proposed amendment is incomplete, and for another, it would create precisely the grounds for complaint for others which we have set out to avoid in the existing text. Finally, no consideration whatsoever is given to the new Member States resulting from the southerly enlargement of the Community.

As the present draft produced by the Political Affairs Committee is on the whole in line with my Group's own ideas, we have confined ourselves to tabling just a few amendments which are mainly of a technical nature and which serve the aim of harmonizing the

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Act of 20 September 1976 with the present draft legislation and of clarifying a number of points in the present draft. Only on one point are we requesting an amendment to the existing draft, i.e. Article 5(2) and (4). Our aim in so doing is to ensure that every citizen of the Community can take part in the elections to the European Parliament in his own country, either physically in the country itself or by postal voting or by depositing his vote in one of his country's consular offices.

Even the most European of sentiments cannot ignore the fact that the right to vote is linked to rights of citizenship in one of the Member States, and that the number of Members per Member State is laid down in the Treaties. If people were to be granted the right to vote after completing five years' residence in another Member State, a major change would take place in the representation structure of that Member State, a fact which is brought out with dramatic clarity in the case of Luxembourg.

Let me say in conclusion that we agree that this draft is not the last word on the question of voting rights, but will have to be supplemented and filled out on certain points at a later time.

The decision we are called on to take today — and we should like to thank our colleague Mr Jean Seitlinger most sincerely for the preparatory work he has put in — constitutes an acid test for the ability of the European Parliament in the legislative field. It is up to us today to rise to the occasion.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Lord Douro. — Mr President, the Treaties require the European Parliament to devise a uniform electoral procedure for the elections to this House. The drafters of the Treaty must have realized what an immensely complicated and daunting responsibility that places on us. In the Political Affairs Committee and a subcommittee thereof, we have worked for the last 2½ years to produce a system which would, we believe, be acceptable in all Member States. That work began well, and we were fortunate in having Mr Seitlinger as the rapporteur. In one of his first documents, he defined the criteria for a uniform system. These included the following:

- a) there must be maximum uniformity;
- b) room must be allowed for national peculiarities;
- c) the electoral system should resemble the models tried in each Member State and trusted by their citizens and should not neglect the values at the core of political life; and
- d) the electoral system should help to create direct contact between voters and their representatives.

Unfortunately, it is the opinion of this group that the system proposed today does not meet these admirable criteria. We have accordingly tabled Amendment No 46. This amendment seeks to establish, as our common electoral system, the additional-Member system. Under this system, there would be a mixture of Members elected directly in single-Member constituencies and those elected from regional or national lists to top up the numbers of each political party. This system is used in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a compromise between the system used in the French national elections and the French European elections. It is, in our opinion, sufficiently flexible to be acceptable in all Member States. It does conform to those criteria of Mr Seitlinger which I have already mentioned and would guarantee the representation in this House of the main political forces in each Member State.

Mr President, we oppose the system proposed in the Seitlinger report, because it destroys the direct relationship between a voter and his personal representative here in Strasbourg. We also oppose it because it is open to too much abuse — the same abuses which we have seen already in the last 2½ years with our present different systems. For example, the possibility for leaders of national political parties to stand for the European Parliament and never take their seat, or rarely attend, . . .

(Applause)

. . . The possibility for Members from the same party to be changed around *ad infinitum* without reference to the electorate. These abuses do not further democracy in the European Community nor in this House.

This group, Mr President, has firmly supported the principle of a uniform electoral system. We have sought to be constructive at every stage of the work of the subcommittee, as those who served on that subcommittee will know. The system which we are proposing today is recognized as one of the main systems of proportional representation, and it was one of the first proposals of the rapporteur.

In proposing the additional-Member system, many members of this group are conscious that it might well involve them losing their seats. This is a measure of the steps we have been prepared to take in order to seek compromise and consensus. We do not feel that other groups have been prepared to make such personal sacrifices.

It is my opinion, Mr President, that it is most unlikely that the Council will be able to accept unanimously the Seitlinger proposal unless it is amended. (I am very glad to see that the President-in-Office of the Council is present here today to listen to this debate, and in a sense my following remarks are addressed to him.) We have therefore tabled a further amendment, amongst others, to invite the Council to refer this matter back

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to Parliament in case they are unable to agree. The Treaties only give to Parliament one opportunity to initiate legislation. That opportunity we are taking today. Once we have voted this afternoon, the initiative will be over. There will be nothing further that Parliament can do if the Council is unable, or refuses, to agree and to enact the proposal. We therefore believe it is in the best interests of those who wish to see a uniform system that the Council should refer this back to us rather than do nothing.

There is a further danger in what we are doing. Many of us gave a commitment to do our best to ensure that in 1984 all citizens of the Community, resident in the Community, could vote in European elections. Because of the controversy surrounding the electoral system it is most unlikely, unless the Seitlinger proposal is amended, that it will be put into effect by 1984. It is therefore important to persuade the governments of the Member States to legislate separately on this point, or to enact part 2 of the Seitlinger proposal on its own. This is the substance of Lady Elles' Amendment No 44, which I commend to the House.

Mr President, we much regret that we are unable to agree with the proposal contained in Mr Seitlinger's resolution. Everyone should understand that this group has not been and is not being obstructive. In a continued spirit of compromise we urge this House to support the amendments tabled in the names of my honourable friend Mr Fergusson and myself on behalf of our group, so that we may have a uniform electoral system for this House as soon as possible.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Piquet. — (FR) Mr President, we are today carrying out the mandate conferred upon us by the September 1976 Act, and this project on which we have been working must of course follow the normal path: first the Council of Ministers, where every Member State will express its own views, and then the appropriate constitutional path leading to adoption by the national parliaments. I would add, though, that as we all realize there is a wide difference of opinion amongst the Ten on this problem and we must therefore be realistic about it. I would also add that if the election method has its own significance it is not that — as some of our colleagues are maintaining — which is bringing our work into disrepute. That, in our view, stems from our own inability to solve the real problems facing our Community.

Having said that, we support the proposal in the main although there are a number of points such as the system of political alliances which we cannot support, remembering the scandalous political effects they have had in our own country. We agree that the proposal before us should be based upon proportional representation, that is to say on the system which allows the

elector to express his choice in the most democratic manner possible. You will already be aware that in France the new majority has declared itself in favour of proportional representation in all elections. In other words we are supporters of proportional representation at national level just as we are at the European level for the election of this Assembly. However, precisely because we wish to see such a democratic step forward, we are fully aware of the different history and reality of other countries, and we realize that those differences prevent all ten Member States from keeping in step all the time.

In our own country, therefore, there can be no question of going backwards: proportional representation already exists within a system of a single national constituency. That is why we are proposing that each country should progress at its own pace towards a democratic electoral system within the Ten and — this I stress — decide for itself. For us democracy implies a respect for diversity and for national characteristics. That is the reason behind the two amendments which we have tabled, which aim at instituting greater electoral democracy through proportional representation, whilst at the same time leaving to each Member State the responsibility for implementing the principle depending on its own situation. It is of course, Mr President, upon the success or failure of our amendments that our own votes will ultimately depend.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Haagerup. — (DK) Mr President, how often do we hear complaints that this Parliament has too little influence and that it spends its time on too many trifling details which are way above the heads of the people of Europe. Today we are concerned with a question which affects all Community voters and which is the responsibility and task of this Parliament. As regards harmonization, I hope and believe that we shall today adopt a proposal for a uniform electoral procedure for the 1984 European elections. The Treaty requires us to do so, the Council has asked us to do so and now, after 2½ years' work, which has by no means been easy but which is now at last completed, it has become possible.

As it will be appreciated, the Liberal and Democratic Group, perhaps more than any other group, welcomes that result. Here is an electoral system based on democratic principles which gives all our citizens the vote, irrespective of where they live in the Community, and here is an electoral system based on proportional representation which will thus correctly and fairly reflect the wishes of the electorate in the coming European elections. The importance which we Liberals have attached to the adoption of such an electoral system may be seen not only from our many pro-

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ouncements and manifestos over the years, but also from the fact that my group has, since the task was broached in Parliament in 1979, made our most prominent member and Parliament's most experienced European, Jean Rey, available for that work and, with Parliament's consent, made him Chairman of the sub-committee concerned with the future law on elections. Our thanks are due to that great European also for that spade-work he put in during his first year as a member of this House, before deciding to retire on grounds of age, but not as everyone knows, of old age. I should also like to thank our spokesman, Mr Seitlinger, for the sterling work he has done and I extend my thanks not only on behalf of my own group, but also in my capacity as Chairman of the special sub-committee which until recently had the difficult task of attempting to draw all the threads together and which is once more supporting Mr Seitlinger in his attempt to find a proposal which will carry a large majority in this House today. Mr President today is a milestone in the history of both the Parliament and the EEC. At a time when unfortunately there is all too little to rejoice about in the way things are going in the EEC, we are delighted to note that a significant majority of almost all groups and parties and of almost all Member States are making it clear that they would like a more uniform electoral system in the 1984 European elections and in future elections. I say 'almost all' since, as we all know, the British electoral system for the European elections is a real stumbling block in this matter and I shall therefore deliver the rest of my speech in English and address myself especially and more directly to my English friends and colleagues.

President. — I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — I simply want to ask Mr Haagerup whether he is aware that the British group, as he calls it, is in fact in favour of a uniform system and has consistently held this view.

Mr Haagerup. — (DK) As I have just said, I shall give the rest of my speech in English.

(The speaker continued in English)

And I must say that I am slightly disappointed by the interruption of my friend, Mr Fergusson, because I think he ignores the fact that I listened most attentively to what his colleague, Lord Douro, said as the first speaker for the European Democratic Group.

Yes, I am absolutely aware of the position the European Democratic Group — and I repeat the European Democratic Group — has taken in this Parliament.

Now the fact, Mr President, that we are here faced with a situation where the British position as such constitutes a special problem is, of course, something which is by no means overlooked by me or by my group. I can assure Mr Fergusson and his colleague that this is the case.

May I remind him and this House, Mr President, that the parties fighting jointly on the Liberal and Democratic platform in June 1979 polled almost 12 million votes and secured 39 seats. The parties now making up the European Democrats polled less than 7 million votes and got 63 seats. Now, Mr President, no doubt democracy is inevitably a rough and ready affair, but no form of democracy can justify so great a distortion of the will of the people.

Mr President, this is not just a question of injustice to the British electorate; it is a matter of importance for the whole Community if one Member State, and especially one of the larger ones, has an electoral system which makes it possible for a party polling half the votes to get three-quarters of the seats for that State and a party polling over 12 % to get none at all. This means that the whole balance of the European Parliament is upset.

Now, it is quite possible, — and I remind all Members of Parliament of this — that in a future election a relatively small shift of votes to anti-European socialism — and I am not in any way accusing the group I am addressing now of being anti-European — in Britain could produce an unrepresentative and unfair left majority in this Chamber, if the present system is maintained in the United Kingdom. I think, Mr President, that this is worth recalling.

But of all the arguments — and I did listen carefully to what Lord Douro had to say, — marshalled against the proportional system as envisaged by a large majority of this Parliament, there is one that I think is more serious than others, and that is the one which concerns the personal link between the voter and his representatives in this Parliament. I think a parliament that unavoidably meets hundreds of miles away from the great majority of its voters, and is in fact in continental isolation from Great Britain, makes it very difficult for any Member to have close personal links with his or her voters. This is not a problem peculiar to Britain; it is a problem for all of us. It is so difficult, Mr President, that an opinion poll conducted 18 months after the first European elections by the British Consumers Association's magazine *Which* found that only 5 % of British voters knew who their Member of the European Parliament was. That, Mr President, in spite of the fact, as I am only too happy to testify, that the British Members here work hard and are conspicuous by their attendance.

Now why is it being alleged, Mr President, that a proportional system adopted here by this Parliament,

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and hopefully by the Council, would be contagious and would infect, it is claimed, the House of Commons? I see no reason for that. We are not trying to impose a specific system on British national elections.

Now, of course, I have a personal preference, but that's neither here nor there because I'm not a voter in Great Britain. I think I should be allowed to remind this House, Mr President, that during the time we have had opinion polls on proportional representation in British elections, support for such a system has never fallen below 60 % and the support for the existing system has never reached 30 %. In fact the latest poll, published on 20 February in the *Guardian*, showed 65 % in favour of proportional representation and only 18 % against. Now I am far from thinking that politicians should only pay attention to opinion polls, but in the face of such repeated and clear-cut evidence it would not be correct to say that proportional representation is unwelcome to the British people, and I am happy to note that Lord Douro made no such claim in his speech.

Mr President, I shall now conclude. It is our duty — that is the duty of this Parliament — to make proposals in this matter. It is the duty of the Council and of the parliaments of Member States to dispose. If we speak clearly today and if the Council and national parliaments have the interest of the Community and the values of parliamentary democracy at heart, then this report and this resolution will take their place among the historic constitutional advances of the people of Europe.

(Applause)

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

Mr de la Malène. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I have four very quick comments to make on the debate which we are holding here today.

My first is that any electoral law must be drawn up with a view to the function it is to serve. Depending upon whether the objective is a constituent assembly, a government majority or quite simply a government one will quite normally tend towards a proportional system for a constituent assembly or a majority system if one is seeking a working majority and a government. There is, therefore, no absolute truth but a series of laws which must be adopted according to the objective which is being sought. That is my first observation.

My second observation is that I can see no conflict in the fact that there exists in a single country an electoral law of one particular type for the national parliament and a different law for the European election. Within a country one is concerned with finding a majority to govern in such a way that the government representing that majority is in a position to govern: the majority requirement is therefore imperative. Within this assembly, on the other hand, we are concerned with bringing together the various currents of European opinion so as to gain a wide-ranging view of European problems.

In consequence it is perfectly acceptable and normal, and in no way inconsistent, that in a single country there should be a majority law for the management of the State and a proportional law in the same country for European elections. There is no inconsistency in that. And that is my second observation.

My third is concerned with the objective which we are pursuing today, namely to arrive, if possible, at a uniform system. Why should we be doing so?

Firstly, because we must respect the Treaties. Secondly, because quite clearly any diversity of electoral law will diminish the already diminished legitimacy of this Assembly. We must also see, though, that beyond the reduced legitimacy which stems from differing electoral laws there lies a little further down the same road something very much more serious which will very quickly become an obstacle if we wish to make progress towards legitimacy, and that is the ratio of seats to electors. If we wish to be an assembly which is moving towards legitimacy, we must, evidently, raise the question of the number of seats per country and this will be the next stage of our debate. One man, one vote is a democratic truth, and if we wish to advance towards true democracy we must, quite apart from our concerns of today, take steps in that direction. This must not be forgotten.

What kind of uniform law? As an assembly we are, with the exception of a few budgetary matters and the question of censure, essentially a consultative assembly. Our Assembly is here to express currents of thought on particular Community problems as they cross Europe. It seems quite normal that as a Consultative Assembly with an obligation to represent various shades of opinion we should tend towards proportional representation. That is what the rapporteur is proposing to us and I think that it is indeed the direction we should be taking. The rapporteur proposes a proportional electoral law within a framework . . .

President. — Mr de la Malène, will you please be so good as to conclude. You have already exceeded the four minutes which were allowed to you.

Mr de la Malène. — (FR) I am grateful to you, Mr President, for pointing that out to me, and with your warning in mind I shall be concluding.

The rapporteur is proposing a local law. Though we are not, on the face of it, against the proposal, we are not in favour of it either. We are not here as the elected Members 'for', but as the Members elected 'by', that is to say that we are here as the representatives not of local interests but of regional interests. We are not middlemen, and we are not representatives of local interest. In consequence, we consider that the argument for personal representation and local representation is not conclusive. It is for that reason that we tend to favour a general proportional system and that, Mr President, you will be pleased to know, is my conclusion.

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

Mr Gendebien. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it is my wish that one day there may be a united federation of European peoples which will form a single vast electoral constituency covering the entire territory of the Community, that one day every candidate may quite naturally count on the vote of every European citizen, no matter what his nationality or where he lives. The Parliament so produced, the Parliament of the people of Europe would of course be balanced by a chamber of European peoples, in other words a regionally-based senate in which, following the example of the senate in the United States of America, each region designated an equal number of representatives in such a way that neither weight of numbers nor party politics exercised undue influence.

What today seems like revolution will seem tomorrow like no more than reform. Put another way, today's utopianism is tomorrow's realism. If you doubt me, ladies and gentlemen, I would simply ask you what, otherwise, could our predecessors who believed in the impossible have succeeded in building in 1945.

I know that the times are hard — have they ever, in fact, been otherwise? — and my dream is therefore that, if we are to make progress despite everything, the 1984 election should be founded on a few major principles: perhaps a little less ambitious than those I have just put to you.

The European electoral system of the future must, evidently, first of all be *European*. The proposal before us is a step forward since any individual may stand in

his own country no matter where his residence. Certainly, in the future an individual must be allowed to stand in any country. And the right to vote must be given to any citizen aged 16 or over from any Member State, without any particular requirements as to length of residence.

The second basic principle is that the system must be *simple* and the proposed proportional list system has our approval in this respect since it is understandable and therefore likely to encourage the elector to vote.

Thirdly and lastly, it is essential that such an electoral system is *democratic*, a shining example of democracy, and recognizable as such by the elector. And here I must unhesitatingly oppose the proposal put to us by the Political Affairs Committee, that of the electoral threshold which has been in force in France and in Germany since 1979, under which a list is ignored in the allocation of seats if it fails to reach a preset percentage of votes. Such a practice is inadmissible in principle and dangerous in practice. By what principle, I ask, by what basic right can one throw out in advance a given number of votes? The very principles of universal suffrage are at stake. From the practical point of view where can the limit be set? If it is 3% or 5% now, why should it not be 10% tomorrow? This practice courts political prohibition, but it is absurd as well. Imagine a country in which a dozen lists all achieved fewer than 5% of votes cast but between them achieved 45% the other 55% would between them elect every single member. The rapporteur has been bold enough to say that 4.9% is an unrepresentative minority. That is very serious. Yes, it is a minority but unrepresentative — what can he mean by that? With 5.5%, 6% or 7% of the votes are the German liberals representative or not? Looking at things in that way I can say that I am much more justifiably representative here than Mr Bangemann, since my list obtained 20% of the votes in the 1979 elections!

I must therefore plead with Parliament to reject this concept of an electoral threshold. There are already *de facto* technical thresholds: they are enough. Why add to them a blow against democracy? Europe sees itself as the model of political liberty and yet here in Strasbourg, in France, the home of human rights and universal suffrage, we are proposing to raise barriers against minorities who are no less than us a part of the substance of Europe. If a majority approves the principle of an electoral threshold then it will be taken as an admission by the traditional parties that they are afraid of the unknown and the new. People will say that those parties are admitting that they have done nothing to further Europe's progress during the last 20 years, and that they are afraid of a challenge.

Mr President, what is also involved in this question of an electoral threshold is the necessary diversity of

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thought in European society: that diversity is an indicator of our vitality and of our individuality.

IN THE CHAIR: MR POUL MØLLER

Vice-President

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr De Goede. — (NL) Mr President, we welcome the European Parliament's initiative on the electoral procedure to be adopted for the 1984 elections, if only for the fact that we found it very difficult to give our support to the way in which the 1979 election was carried out, for two reasons. Firstly, the system used in the United Kingdom meant that the Conservatives won 60 of the 81 seats, far more than was proportionally their due, the result of which is that the balance of power in this House is weighted too heavily to the right. Secondly, there was too much bungling, with the election being held on different days and with days of waiting for the final results.

Is the Seitlinger report really a major improvement? We think not, and I should like to explain why. To my mind, the idea of establishing a uniform electoral procedure was to give the elections a genuinely European character. However, in the draft as it stands, what we have are still essentially national elections. The draft we have before us really does not do much more than round off the sharpest edges of the British constituency system, while at the same time the other Member States are required, by way of compromise, to make substantial concessions on proportional representation. We shall only have truly European elections once it is possible for proper European parties to be founded, and there is no indication of that in this proposal. Dutch citizens are still able to vote only for Dutch candidates.

Unless I am very much mistaken, Article 2 prescribes a kind of toned-down constituency system, although the text of paragraphs 2 and 3 is highly misleading. Paragraph 2 refers to constituencies, whereas what is meant in fact is electoral districts, which is quite different from what we in the Netherlands understand by 'constituencies'. As a result of our system of lists and the amalgamation of uniform lists in different constituencies, what we have in fact is a single coherent electoral area. However, Article 2 states that there must be different candidates in the various constituencies and that 'a minimum of three and a maximum of fifteen representatives shall be elected'.

And, what is more, paragraph 3 refers only to combining the lists submitted in the various constituencies, and not to combined lists for several constituencies. The main objection to this toned-down constituency system is that if, for instance, fifteen members are elected per constituency, the threshold is in fact 7% of the votes cast, compared with a threshold of 30% for three-member constituencies. In other words, what we have here is not proportional representation.

If this system had been in operation in 1979, the probable result would have been that we should have had not four, but only two Dutch parties in the European Parliament. According to Article 3, the d'Hondt system is to be used for the allocation of the remaining seats, and here I take issue with paragraph 2, which states that 'in the case of preferential voting, the seats shall be allocated on the basis of the number of votes secured by each of the candidates on the list concerned'. I wonder why paragraph 2 does not include the rider that the Member States may decide that the list order can be altered in certain cases as a result of preferential voting.

As regards Article 4, I wonder what is the point of leaving it up to the Member States to introduce a threshold when, after all, fifteen representatives can be elected from a single constituency, which gives an effective threshold of 7%. And there is still the question, as I mentioned just now, of whether the threshold is a fair one. We think not. The cut-off point in elections in the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, is 5%, and the second paragraph of Article 4 is just as vague. The fact is that the Member States can take account of special geographical factors in dividing their territory up into constituencies, as provided for in Article 2(2). Nor do I find it any easier to imagine what is meant by taking account of ethnic factors. Does it mean that, for instance, Scots should cast their votes only for Scottish candidates? Finally, Mr President, Article 5 is just as illogical in that the Member States are required to 'grant their citizens the right to vote irrespective of their place of residence'. Given the provisions of paragraph 1, it is difficult to see why there was any need for paragraph 2, which states that 'the Member States shall grant the nationals of other Member States the right to vote provided they have been resident in the country for at least five years'. In other words, some people will be able to vote twice.

Finally, we have Article 7, which is the only part of the proposal for which I can raise any enthusiasm. According to this article, the elections are to be held in the Member States on, say, a Monday, so that the results of the election can be made known immediately afterwards, unlike the situation in 1979, when the ballot boxes had to remain sealed for a number of days, with all the attendant risks.

President. — I call Mr Penders.

Mr Penders. — (NL) Mr President, is the Seitlinger proposal the ideal European electoral procedure? Of course, it is not, because otherwise we would have genuinely European lists covering a single European constituency. So long as a citizen of Ireland cannot vote for an Italian candidate, there can be no question of genuinely European elections.

But we must be realistic. Given the current state of integration — some people would even say disintegration — such an enormous step forward would be reminiscent of kamikaze tactics. None the less, the Political Affairs Committee and Mr Seitlinger in particular have succeeded in drawing up a uniform electoral procedure. The reason why this is such an important move is that we are thereby complying with the terms of Article 7 of the Act of 20 September 1976. It will thus rid us of the criticism heard from governments, parliaments and the public at large to the effect that we, the European Parliament, are not putting our own house in order. We must not give the Member States' governments and parliaments the opportunity and the excuse to dodge the electoral legislation issue and then put the blame on the European Parliament.

Mr Seitlinger concentrated on two very important issues, i.e. the voting system and the right to vote. I should also like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr Bocklet for all the work he has put in with a view to clarifying the situation.

So what system should we choose? Of course, we must be reasonable in all this. We cannot simply expect our respective national systems to be adopted by the other nine Member States. For instance, we in the Netherlands are firmly committed to the principle of proportional representation, but we have shown ourselves ready and willing to accept certain slight elements of a constituency system. The German system would seem to have definite attractions — basically a system of proportional representation, with a constituency system for the allocation of seats. However, I have come to the conclusion that the German system would not work in the Netherlands, where you would have 12 or 13 electoral districts, but many times that number of parties contesting the election — and that is, after all, the incorrigible Dutch way. As a result, you would have practically no one elected on the constituency system, with everything being left up to the list, and the upshot would be a chaotic situation which would totally confuse the voters. The system currently in use in the Netherlands — strict proportional representation and subsequent allocation of seats by reference to electoral districts divided, for instance, by the major rivers — is perfectly acceptable to us.

In conclusion, Mr President, I realize that our proposal is expecting a lot of our British colleagues in the Community. However, I believe it is something we must do. The United Kingdom is the only Member State of the European Community where the principle of proportional representation is not used in European elections, and even in the UK, there are cases where PR is used — for instance, in Northern Ireland. If I may be allowed to end on a somewhat critical note, perhaps it is worth giving some thought to what is going on in party politics in the United Kingdom and what repercussions that will have on the British electoral system. Perhaps our British colleagues do not realize how progressive, modern and forward-thinking they would be in supporting the Seitlinger report.

President. — I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, as the Political Affairs Committee was concluding its work on this matter, I gave notice that I would not leave the Parliament ignorant of the circumstances in which it reached its opinion. I hope that those who are unfamiliar with this unhappy fragment of Parliament's history will listen and take warning. The subcommittee on electoral procedure, which first met under our respected colleague Mr Jean Rey, eventually ended its efforts last October when the Political Affairs Committee proper set up yet another working party charged with bringing the business to a conclusion, with definitive recommendations based both on constituency members and those supplied from party lists, an added Member system. At that point, an extraordinary change came over the progress of this report. The working party, joined by colleagues from Germany, and notably one of the Liberal persuasion — Parliament will note that there is no German Liberal present who would be here except for his presence on the list — that working party, in defiance of the Political Affairs Committee's agreement, decided to consider and eventually brought forward an exclusive list system for the committee's approval. That is now before you. It will be noted that this development closely coincided with the mounting excitement of the presidential election campaign. Quite suddenly, a large majority was found in the committee for a system which, two months previously, it had specifically rejected and which, as the number of amendments now before you perhaps indicates, it has failed properly to consider. Let it be absolutely clear that the current proposals were not reached in that committee in any spirit of compromise whatever, that they closely reflect the specific electoral requirements of a particular set of Members in this Parliament, and cannot be said to be brought before this House uninfluenced by extraneous political considerations.

My group's own amendments, as you are aware, attempt to restore the position which the Political

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Affairs Committee had freely reached last autumn. Mr Haagerup in his speech did not seem to have realized that the European Democratic Group has in fact accepted a PR system. There are two other systems proposed today by members of his group. This seems to me a tragic end to the European Parliament's first attempt to exercise its sole right to initiate legislation. It is tragic because, although Parliament may technically have fulfilled its obligations, we all know that there is not the ghost of a chance that this system will be accepted by all Member States in the Council or, for that matter, by all the national parliaments.

I speak not only for Britain. My group was working for a proportional system which at least had some chance of getting through the Council. So when we come to a vote, let there be no doubt of the choice really facing the Members here.

The cynicism of which I have spoken still continues. Look at Article 4. Beyond the proposition of a list system, there is no uniformity in the present proposals, either as to the size of constituencies, the make-up of lists, the method of voting or the manner of resolving subsequent disputes. Everyone in the Legal Affairs Committee knows that these new proposals do not conform to the Treaty. We have not even had the Legal Affairs Committee's opinions on them. Why not? Is there anyone here in the Legal Affairs Committee who will explain?

Finally, may I draw your attention to the Liberal leader's Amendment No 13, to Article 2(2) aimed at removing the upper limit to the constituency list of members. This gives the whole game away. By throwing out the last traces of uniformity, he is removing any need for France, for instance, to change her chosen system of a single national list by improving his chances of getting his way. Some people never learn.

The rapporteur has done his job honestly, but the committee's operations have latterly been devious, spurious and disgraceful. These proposals do not reflect the considered opinion of the subcommittee, do not meet the requirements of the Treaty, have not had the essential opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee, will not be accepted by the Council, represent a base political arrangement between certain sections of this Parliament and ought to be rejected.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

President. — I call Mr De Pasquale.

Mr De Pasquale. — *(IT)* Mr President, the task we have before us today is a duty to legislate directly

which is hallowed by the Treaties. We are called upon not to express our opinions or our hopes, but to draft a law which, if it is to be a law, must have the necessary characteristics of precision, of clarity and of coherence. Our responsibility is all the greater since we are faced with that most delicate of questions, the electoral rules which shape the quality and the very nature of this House itself.

The uniform electoral procedure, should we finally adopt it, must indeed serve to consolidate the institutional stability of the European Parliament, to give the House greater legitimacy within the Community and greater representative strength as regards both the people and the governments of the Ten. That is why in committee — and here, too — we did our utmost to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

Alas, the solution reached by the Political Affairs Committee is anything but satisfactory and it cannot be accepted: if it is left as it stands then we shall be obliged to vote against it.

During the first direct elections which took place as a result of the Act of 20 September 1976 eight countries, and subsequently a ninth, adopted a proportional system in more or less due form, and one — the United Kingdom — adopted the majority system. Consequently, to bring about uniform European electoral system the problem which remained to be solved — and still remains — is in essence very simple: either extend the system of proportional representation to include the United Kingdom, or extend the straight majority system to include the other nine countries. Any attempt to mix the two systems has been shown to be impractical. The Political Affairs Committee reached a decision of principle favouring proportional representation and we fully support that decision: if a parliament is to be the reflection of the country it represents, the only method which bears critical examination is that of proportional representation, which provides for a balance between the number of votes cast and those who are finally elected. The same is the case *a fortiori* for a parliament representing several nations, like our own, which has neither to form nor to support a government but which has the duty to represent and bring together in a unique democratic assembly every tendency and view represented in the vast and multifarious political theatre of Western Europe.

The fact remains that, having made the right choice, the Political Affairs Committee has compromised it by including the second paragraph of Article 4, under which Member States may derogate from the principle of proportional representation for reasons no better described than 'special geographic or ethnic factors'.

Such a broad based, wide ranging and permanent derogation destroys the uniformity of the system and

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allows one or any Member State to do as it sees fit, in the last analysis giving us the possibility of ten electoral systems each of them different from the other nine. If we wish to be serious, therefore, we must delete the second paragraph of Article 4. However, the objection is being made that the present political situation does not allow such an explicit choice to be made, and that we should move slowly, as was the case in 1976. We can understand these objections; we believe in gradual change too. But the change must be forward, not backwards, and that is why we are proposing that there should be a time limit to the derogations, and that they should be allowed once and once only, in the 1984 election.

We would like to raise analogous arguments, Mr President, as regards the right of every European citizen to vote and to be elected in the countries in which they reside and to whose development they have contributed and continue to contribute their physical and intellectual efforts. With that in mind, the rule provided in Article 5 (2) does not go far enough: it is an absurdity politically, morally and legally, to allow an elector the right to vote but to deny him the right to stand for election. The active and the passive side of voting cannot, under a democracy, be separated and for that reason we believe that the right to election should be granted to those who have resided for not less than five years in a Member State other than that of their origin.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have reduced our observations to a minimum and glossed over a great many other shortcomings which are all too evident in the proposals and which must be put right. We have preferred to restrict ourselves to what is essential and to state clearly that we are only prepared to change our opposition to the proposals if they are amended as we have suggested.

President. — I call Mrs Ewing.

Mrs Ewing. — Mr President, if we fail to achieve a uniform system, this will be quite clear proof to the man in the street of our inability to compromise. It will be an admission of defeat and strengthen the impression that each State can quite cheerfully ignore the rules if it pleases — the man in the street is going to say: 'If the Member States don't respect the rules, why should we have any respect for the institution?'

On the question of proportional representation it will not be any surprise that I, as the only member of my party out of 81 British Members, favour proportional representation, as does my party. Mr Haagerup put it in a nutshell when he gave the example of the Liberals, — perhaps the most disgraceful example in Europe, — but I could give many other examples of the absurdities

that the first-past-the-post system regularly produces, such as minority governments with no mandate. Another absurdity arose in my party when, with 31% of the poll in Scotland, we had far fewer seats than the Conservatives who won 25% of the poll. This can no longer be seriously regarded as fair. There is a UK precedent in the case of Northern Ireland, so it is really very hard to see why the UK cannot relax its stance. Mr de la Malène made the point: that, for the moment, it could be tried out in the European system. I am in favour of it, of course, in all systems, but it could be tried to see how it goes. I am in favour, therefore, of proportional representation.

I now turn to Article 4. My country, Scotland, is of interest, I think, from the constitutional aspect. I support the amendments that have added the words 'historical and constitutional' to the existing words 'geographical and ethnic'. This House will remember that I have explained before that we have our own system of law, our own domestic civil service for most purposes of administration in Scotland and that, ethnically, we represent the bastion of an ancient culture. There are two ancient literary, sophisticated and philosophical languages in Scotland, and those who wish to iron out national individualities can only be regarded as philistines. Europe will only be the poorer unless a system is found by which people like me, representing my political current, end up here. I think it was Mr Schieler who said that it should be impossible, by changing the rules, to deprive a genuine representative of a political current of the right of representation. I believe that it would weaken Europe if every political current were not represented here.

Mr Seitlinger argues that we must trust our Member States. Now while I make my support of Mr Seitlinger quite clear, I must say that its behaviour towards Scotland gives me no reason to trust my own Member State. In the three referenda held prior to the Scottish referendum we always had the first-past-the-post rule. But when it came to the Scottish referendum Britain changed the rules. Rule Britannia, Britannia waives the rules. That is what happened to the aspirations of the people of Scotland. We won the referendum but lost it because they changed the rules. You may say 'rubbish' — it is a fact. Mrs Thatcher herself says one vote will do, as did Harold Wilson and Callaghan, except on the one question of the aspirations of the people of Scotland. In the great constitutional referendum on whether or not to stay in the Common Market one vote will do — but not when it comes to the aspirations of the people of Scotland. Since my party has no reason to trust the Member State to which it belongs, we look to the European system, and support Mr Seitlinger, to make sure that my current political trend remains represented here at the next election.

President. — I call Mr Vandemeulebroucke.

Mr Vandemeulebroucke. — (NL) Mr President, there can be no doubt that the Seitlinger report takes us a

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good deal closer to a more democratic and simpler electoral procedure. The substitution of the principle of proportional representation for that of majority voting is a major step forward. As a regionalist and federalist, however, I regard this as a compromise report which can certainly lay no claim to definitive status. After all, any such definitive decision must answer the question of what electoral procedure offers the most democratic guarantees, for all the regions as well as all the people. A definitive system must also leave sufficient latitude for new ideas and for the political expression of those ideas in a parliamentary institution like this. Let us not forget that society is not a static entity, but is always in a state of flux. These are essential and crucial factors which we feel do not feature sufficiently in the report, with the result that the draft legislation we are being asked to support here tolerates a number of what we regard as intolerable elements, such as the objectionable use of thresholds, which will thus continue to be used in a number of Member States. How much longer can we tolerate a situation in which, for instance, five million voters throughout Europe have cast their votes for the ecological movement lists, only to find that they are denied all representation in this House? The system of thresholds adds to the privileges enjoyed by the so-called major parties, which already receive Community subsidies on a lavish scale and which can always rest assured that they will get their deposits back. The retention of thresholds makes even less sense when you consider that the proportional representation system already incorporates an automatic threshold.

Another extremely important principle on which any general European electoral system must be based is the revalorization of the ethnic and regional factors which have so long fallen victim to the all-powerful levelling propensities of the nation State with a tendency to overcentralization. The introduction of the constituency system at least gives a democratic sporting chance to the regions to be represented specifically as regions. However, it is irresponsible that the Member States themselves should be empowered to decide whether or not to recognize this distinction. And, what is more, the Member States are empowered to draw the boundaries of the electoral constituencies in such a way that the so-called cultural and linguistic minorities are once again artificially split up. The exemption provisions which rightly apply to such places as Greenland and Berlin must be applied consistently so that Frisians, German-speaking Belgians, Bretons and Alsatians are represented in the European Parliament along with Corsicans, Occitanians, Galicians, Welshmen, Scots, South Tyrolians, and so on. So long as this is not the case, any electoral procedure is bound to be a negation of the federalist principle that a community must be recognized as such. Federalism is the mortal enemy of streamlined uniformity. Federalism goes hand in hand with genuine respect for differences, and for that reason, this draft can be no more than a transitional document. The definitive system

must be a bicameral one whereby the first chamber is proportionately representative of the Community as a whole and the second chamber is based on equal representation for the various regions. That is what I mean by genuine federalism.

Mr President, that may still be a utopian outlook today, but the lesson of history is that utopian visions are in fact becoming reality all the time. In fact, history is a series of utopian visions come true. It is in that spirit that I have tabled a number of amendments to this report and I would ask this House to give them its support.

President. — I call Mr Pesmazoglou.

Mr Pesmazoglou. — (GR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the subject before us today is of very great political significance to our peoples and to the European Community. I consider it my duty that I, too, should thank Mr Seitlinger for his very thorough report. I also consider it my duty to refer to the major achievement of Jean Rey and to his dedication to the vital subject of the development of the European Community.

I feel it goes without saying that the adoption of a uniform electoral system for electing the Members of the European Parliament is necessary for reasons not only of democracy but also of the political standing of our Parliament. I also think that the differences which exist in the various countries can be dealt with. We must therefore come to an agreement on the principles on which such a uniform electoral system must be based, and on the basis of these principles we must endeavour to devise as soon as possible a uniform system for the whole of Europe.

These principles cannot be any other those of simple proportionality, since this is the system which ensures that the will of the people of Europe is reflected in the fairest and most representative way, while taking account of the special circumstances obtaining in the various countries as a result of the national problems confronting them.

I find that Mr Seitlinger's motion before us has two serious weaknesses, in Article 2 and Article 4 respectively. In Article 2, the laying down of a maximum number of representatives for each constituency is not justified. The aim should be to lay down the largest possible number of candidates per constituency, and if possible the principle of a uniform list for each country. This system has very great advantages, and it will be in any case a serious weakness if in each country there are constituencies with different numbers of candidates. This would lead to a grave distortion of the election result. In Article 4, we are strongly opposed to the possibility of introducing a threshold below which a list obtains no seats, since we would like it to be

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possible for a Member to be elected irrespective of the political grouping to which he belongs. As many other Members have stressed, this is not justifiable on democratic grounds, I think that this possibility provided for in Article 4 should be deleted.

I should like, Mr President, to refer very briefly to another subject: the unity of the electoral system is of fundamental importance. But it is also necessary to adopt a uniform practice with regard to European elections. This means that all the parties represented in the European Parliament must have an equal opportunity to present their views to the people whom they represent. This means that both on questions of internal/national interest and of course on questions of European interest all the parties represented at the moment in the European Parliament will be able to have access to the mass media in their countries. This is particularly important when political forces are represented in the European Parliament but not in a national parliament, as is the case at present in Greece as a result of the particular electoral law in force there. I think that this principle is fair, helps to make our election more democratic and representative and also ensures the maximum possible publicity for the major European questions and their influence on our national life. As a result of such a procedure it will gradually be possible for national developments to be influenced by European life, the European Parliament and European political developments, and I think that such a prospect is fundamentally important for development, progress and peace in Europe.

President: — I call Mr Didò.

Mr Didò. — *(IT)* Mr President, our Parliament has been given the mandate to define an electoral system based on direct universal suffrage, and that is a fact of enormous political and social significance for the European Community.

The fact is that a uniform electoral procedure strengthens the identity of our Parliament and guarantees the same measures of representativeness to every member, which can only strengthen the position of the Community institutions. We must add, though, that this uniform electoral procedure will not, alas, be achieved, even if we restate the principles on which it is based.

Although the Seitlinger report may be regarded, as it is by the Socialist Group, as a first step in the right direction, Parliament cannot be said to have fulfilled its obligations under the Treaties. On the other hand, we must take note of the new proposal contained in the report, and trust that the Council will take note of it too: it is of great political significance in that it gives every European citizen the right to vote in the country in which he is resident.

That is a first step towards defining what is meant by citizen of Europe even though, in our view — that is to say in our view as Italian Socialists — since it is probably Italy that supplies the greatest part of the mobile labour force within the Community, the condition of five years' residence reduces the effect of such a proposal and, in particular, conflicts with the target of a European social area in which labour is free to circulate. We have tabled two amendments as regards this: the first to reduce that limit from five to two years, and the second to implement the passive electoral right, that is to say the right also to stand as a candidate in the country of one's residence.

Furthermore, this innovation in Mr Seitlinger's report forms part of a greater process which is being called for in every Member State, which is the process of strengthening integration within the Community, by allowing workers and citizens resident in other Community countries to enjoy electoral rights for local elections. In all truth I cannot understand what the objections can be to acknowledging such a liberty and such a strengthening of democracy.

Our own attitude is therefore one of cautious criticism; we shall be attempting to have included in the motion for a resolution — which, as it stands, is no more than a statement of principle — the amendments to which I have referred, which will in practice make a first step down the road indicated in the mandate given to us under the Treaties.

President. — I call Mr Antoniozzi.

Mr Antoniozzi. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentleman, in a debate of such fundamental significance as this only a few minutes are available for us to express a number of thoughts of critical political significance. As a result we must be all the more incisive.

Broadly speaking, I am in favour of Mr Seitlinger's motion for a resolution and his report. I have tabled amendments on a number of articles which I believe deserve Parliament's attention. In its present form the European Parliament derives from its election by direct universal suffrage a particular strength and political validity, and must constantly restate our ability to act as the political driving force of the Community. A common electoral law can be a significant means of relaunching the European ideal through processes which allow us to come a little closer to the objective of a political union.

To those members who have reservations as regards the choice of one particular electoral system rather than another I would say that it is by reducing certain aspects of our own chauvinism — particularly as regards home elections — that Europe will be built. And it should not be forgotten that within certain

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Member States there are differing electoral laws ranging from proportional representation to majority ballot for the election of different democratic organizations.

I myself said in my own country as a Member of the Italian parliament that I had reservations about proportional representation in local elections, and that my own preference for local institutions was a majority ballot, although at the same time I preferred the proportional systems for elections to the lower House for which elections I also proposed the ballot paper which is used in Italy today. The greater the geographical area and the political importance of the body being elected, the greater must be the element of proportionalism in the electoral system, particularly in the case of supranational institutions where no shadow of doubt must hang over the legitimate basis of its representativeness, the strict reflection of the wishes of the people and the proper legal basis for a political mandate offering a real guarantee of European identity through electoral consistency.

For thirty years the European Parliament in its previous incarnations has overlooked providing itself with a common electoral law, despite the terms of the Treaties: Article 21 (3) of the ECSC Treaty; Article 138 (3) of the EEC Treaty and Article 108 (3) of the EAEC Treaty. There was a difference even so: previously Parliament was responsible only to the national parliaments which delegated Members; nowadays we are responsible to the voters of Europe. The authority for the present system comes directly from the Act of the Council of Ministers dated 20 September 1976, ratified by the national parliaments. Ladies and gentlemen, this House frequently enough points an accusing finger at the Council, criticizing it for a lack of will and of concern to make faster progress down the European road. This is the occasion on which we can show that we have it in us to carry out the duties entrusted to us and that we have the ability to demonstrate realistically the political will which we would like to see in the other institutions and which we so frequently call for on the part of the Council.

I would be a serious matter indeed if we proved incapable not only of passing the electoral law but of doing so in a decisive way so as to give proof of the nature and the extent of the political will at our command. That is the underlying political importance of today's debate which quite transcends all individual aspects of the debate, no matter how significant they may seem. Today, too, is a good opportunity, an opportunity not to be missed, of facing the Council with its own responsibilities. It was the Council, which approved in 1976 the Act which gives us elected responsibility; it is now up to the Council to carry on the task and move forward with this and other institutional developments. Our former colleague, Mr Tindemans, who is now President-in-Office of the Council, has given us great cause for hope. Those are the essentially political

reasons which should lead us to support this resolution.

It is my hope that that will happen, otherwise we ourselves shall have to doubt the existence of a future for Europe, a future for which we are responsible and which has been entrusted to us not only by the Governments and Parliaments who passed the Act and ratified it, but by almost 300 million European citizens.

President. — I call Mr Tyrrell.

Mr Tyrrell. — Mr President, we in our group accept Mr Haagerup's criticisms of our system and he knows that we accept them, and that is why we have embraced in our amendments the additional member system, a type of proportionality, which was at one stage the favourite runner in the Political Affairs Committee. What Mr Haagerup did not say in his attack on the United Kingdom system of election was why he prefers the system now advanced by the Political Affairs Committee — the regional list system — to the additional member system, and that is the crucial question.

Now Mr D'Angelosante, speaking this morning as rapporteur on behalf of the Legal Affairs Committee, expressed the view in strong language that the system that is now being put before the House is not a uniform electoral system. If one looks at the opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee, which is set out on page 45 of the English translation of Section B of Mr Seitlinger's explanatory memorandum, one sees in paragraph 44 these words: 'Without prejudice to the observations made in paragraph 42 above, (which is the part that Mr D'Angelosante quoted this morning) the Legal Affairs Committee accordingly endorses the principles set out in the draft Seitlinger report, rev. IV, part A', that is, the additional member system, so what the Legal Affairs Committee was saying was that the additional member system is a uniform electoral system.

Now we have something which many of us think — and which the Legal Affairs Committee's rapporteur thinks — is not a uniform system. Mr Fergusson went through a number of the matters which make the system proposed in the present draft before us not uniform. One only has to look at the crucial Article 2(3). — Member States shall decide this, Article 4 — Member States shall decide this, Article 4(1) — Member States shall decide this, and Article 4(2), which says, in effect, Member States can decide whatever they jolly well like.

Now what is this? We who have worked for this Parliament and believe in this Parliament must regard it as a very sad day, a day almost to make one weep, that Parliament should approach this, its only essential

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task under the Treaties in initiating legislation, in such a sloppy manner. To those speakers who said that this was just a start, let me remind them, as Lord Douro said, that we do not get a second chance. Once we have delivered this document to the Council of Ministers, then Parliament has lost its opportunity to put forward a system which is uniform within the meaning of the Treaties and realistic and would work in practice.

Now why has this come about? Let me look at Article 5. That is the article which incorporates the important principle, with which we all agree, that the uniform system should grant nationals of any Member State the right to vote in the European Parliament elections. It is an article which is drafted in an appallingly sloppy manner. It draws no distinction between citizens and nationals, but nationals of course is a term apart in Community law. It draws a distinction between country and Member State. What does country mean? Does it include the French dependencies? Does it include Gibraltar, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and Greenland? What does it mean? It grants the right to vote to children, to lunatics, to bankrupts, to others who would be disqualified in their national elections from voting.

These matters one has attempted to put right in Amendment No 18, and the rapporteur — and I am not criticizing him for a moment — is in the unhappy position of having to say that we need to have another look at this. There are 95 amendments here. Of course we need to have another look at them. I earnestly hope that that is what Parliament will do.

President. — I call Mr Ephremidis.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) Mr President, the subject before us is a highly political one and is thus of the utmost importance. A multinational body which comprises so many contradictions and where so many different views are expressed according to the countries and ideological positions which are represented is being called upon to adopt the motion for a resolution before us, which means that direct or indirect pressure will be exerted on the Member States of the Community to devise and introduce a uniform electoral system, and electoral law, which, in our opinion and I think also in the opinion of all those present in this House, constitutes an institutional law approximately equivalent to the constitutions which govern the lives of every nation. It is not possible, in our view, that a multinational body should decide on such a matter. We consider that this right and this competence belong exclusively to national bodies and comes under the sovereignty of the people and thus under national sovereignty, and we do not accept pressure or restriction of any kind. And our opposition is not lessened by the fact that the Treaties provide for something of the sort, namely that the Parliament can take

such a step, since we were and still are against our country's entry into the Common Market and we are struggling for its withdrawal, and consequently we are not interested in commitments under the Treaty.

What we would consider acceptable, however, would be for Parliament to address itself to the national bodies and issue a guideline in the form of a wish, so that the national bodies decide, with the sovereign right which is theirs, on the introduction of an electoral system which is more or less uniform for the whole Community.

I should like, however, to make two specific remarks, Mr President. Article 2(1) states that representatives are to be elected by proportional representation, but it is not specified what kind of proportional representation is meant. And I would refer to the experience of my own country, where under the name of proportional representation such sharp practices have taken place that the votes of the people are completely exploited by falsifying and distorting them, a matter to which Mr Pasmazoglou also referred earlier, and I agree with him on this point. If you adopt such a system, it is absolutely essential that you stipulate at least that it will be based on simple proportionality and that no scope is left for falsification.

My second comment concerns Article 5(1), which provides for voting rights for citizens of a country who live in a country other than their home country. I should like to say two things on this point. This paragraph stipulates *in a Member State of the European Community*. And what will happen to those citizens of a particular country who do not live there but live in another country which does not belong to the EEC? Will they be deprived of this right? Since we recognize such a right and grant it, these people must also have it, and this plays a special role for our country and, I think, for Italy and very soon possibly for the Spaniards and Portuguese who live in many countries of Europe which are not Member States of the EEC.

My third remark is that this right will have to be granted and that emigrants must be allowed to vote for candidates from their own countries and not candidates from the countries in which for various reasons they are obliged to reside, live and work.

President. — I call Mr Nyborg.

Mr Nyborg. — (DK) Mr President, I should like first of all to place on record that I am all in favour of having a common electoral system for elections to the European Parliament. We ought perhaps to have thought of settling this question in the old Parliament for the first direct election, since we are now in a truly remarkable situation where we sit here together in this Parliament, some of us elected with relatively few votes and others with several million votes. That some-

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times gives us a strange sensation. We know also that there are certain minor movements which despite receiving in the region of a million votes, did not manage to get any Members into the European Parliament, and this and other factors are prompting people to demand some kind of adjustment, so that we manage to get at least a fairly uniform electoral system.

I consider that, on the whole, Mr Seitlinger's document has been well drawn up and constitutes a first step towards an eventual common electoral system. I have, however, tabled two amendments and should like to explain why.

I have tabled an amendment dispensing with the upper limit in Article 2(2). Article 2 provides that the various Member States should be divided up into constituencies in order to give a minimum of three and a maximum of fifteen representatives in each constituency. I cannot see any plausible reason for setting the upper limit at fifteen, since if a country wishes — as does Denmark, for instance — to regard the whole country as one constituency, why should it not be allowed to do so? There is absolutely no need to split it up into smaller regions, since this will in many cases produce distortions which are very difficult to iron out. If, on the other hand, we say that all the Members from a given country represent all regions within that country, then the entire electorate can keep an eye on all the Members, tell them that they are not doing their job and that they ought to be doing this, that or the other. I therefore hope that Amendment No 57 will be approved.

Finally, I have tabled Amendment No 58 on Article 3(1), suggesting a departure from the d'Hondt distribution method in favour of a simple proportional system.

With these few words, Mr President, I should like to recommend that Mr Seitlinger's report be approved and of course, in particular, that my two amendments be adopted.

President. — I call Mr Romualdi.

Mr Romualdi. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, as we have been told, this draft — for which we must thank Mr Seitlinger — is the result of two years' work, during which every attempt has been made to produce a law which is uniform, if only in part.

Alas, we have — in our view — failed, for the reasons which are summed up in Article 4(2) in which it says:

In order to take of special geographical or ethnic factors recognized by the written or unwritten Constitutions of a State concerned, measures deviating from the principles set out in Articles 2 and 3 may be adopted by the Member States.

Which, as has already been pointed out, means to all intents and purposes that each State can act as it sees fit. How far can this go?

The question must also be asked whether or not Article 2(1), which defines the system of proportional representation as the general standard, applies to everyone — as indeed it should if we are to guarantee that the European Parliament is truly the direct and full expression of the will of the people of Europe and of every political grouping it contains.

Considering the foregoing, I cannot but remind you, ladies and gentlemen, of the threat implicit in setting any threshold and any artificial disqualification. We must speak out firmly against Article 4, the first paragraph of which provides for such a threshold, leading it as an option open to individual countries: that temptation must be removed: this Article must be rejected.

I now turn to what appears to us to be the new and remarkable element in in this proposal, namely allowing the right to vote to citizens resident in other Member States, as provided for in Article 5. Plainly, we must draw your attention to the moral and political significance of such a proposal which, as has been said, is of great importance both in consolidating Community integration and from the point of view of the social objectives at which that integration is aimed; the Community social space here.

These are fine and solemn words but, in our view, rather hollow: they are neither social nor political. Recognizing the right of the European citizen to vote, no matter where he resides, is a great step forward, when one considers not only the right to vote but the right to be elected which here is defended, strengthened and made possible, in contrast with the situation we had in the last election for this Parliament. There is a difference, though, between voting or being included in a list in one's own country and voting for the lists for parties or candidates of the country in which one resides.

As things stand at present, until we have the single European list proposed by Mr Gendebien, any pan-European, integrationist enthusiasm is premature. As things stand at present, those resident abroad would generally be asked to vote for parties and candidates they know nothing of and which know nothing of them.

Five years is a long time, but it is not enough to allow hundreds and hundreds of thousands of men and their families to integrate fully: not enough to understand and to be understood in the complex reality of problems which are a feature of their living abroad. It is one thing to vote for the local government of the area in which one lives and which affects one's day to day existence; it is quite another thing to make a political choice as important as this. What is involved here is not so much a question of integration as a threat of

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uprooting, of abandoning one's own origins, of an attack not only on one's own national identity but on one's own human and cultural identity, which is not a matter of five years but a slow process lasting for generations. That is why we — and not only we — will be arguing in Italy — successfully, we hope — that our emigrant workers (for it is to a large extent our migrant workers who are involved) should have the right to vote in their own country, and why they have always had the right to vote for their party and their people and to be elected.

A uniform electoral system then, and equal rights for all, but we must recognize reality and respect individuals and individual historical and cultural traditions, which must remain at the foundation of any integration process unless we wish to see such a process become one of faceless assimilation or become an act of inadmissible moral or political violence.

President. — I call Mr Lomas.

Mr Lomas. — Mr President, I do not suppose it will be entirely surprising if I advise Parliament that I shall not be putting forward the majority point of view in the Socialist Group. It has been agreed that I should be able to put forward a minority point of view on behalf of the British Labour Party Members.

The Treaties say quite clearly that the Assembly shall be required to make proposals for a uniform election system, and this report goes on to make it clear that that does not necessarily mean that all systems have to be exactly alike. It does not mean total uniformity. We would argue that we already have a uniform electoral system throughout the Community, in the sense that every country has free democratic elections in which all of its people can take part, with certain exceptions about living abroad, and that really is all that should matter to this Parliament.

Even if this were not completely fulfilling the Treaties. I would say: so what? Countries are breaking the Treaties constantly; all the major policies of the EEC are in disarray; so why this passion now to have uniformity on what, quite frankly, is a relatively minor, unimportant matter of uniform election procedures?

These proposals are, quite frankly, alien to the British system of elections. They totally fail to take into account the historical developments in our country, the traditions of our country. I would be the first to break with traditions if I thought this was going to benefit the ordinary people, but nobody, surely, can argue that this is so. I have heard comments made earlier in this debate that somehow or other, if we introduce this system of proportional representation, people will be more enthusiastic about going to the polls and taking part in this great European experi-

ment. Well, I can tell you, I cannot see the electors in my constituency in the East End of London eagerly rushing to the polls, chatting with each other about how marvellous it is now to be on the d'Hondt system and voting by proportional representation for the European Parliament. It really is not the case. Speaking quite frankly, we resent the attempts to impose upon a country a system which is quite clearly not acceptable to the majority of its people; and I want to tell you that if this report is adopted today there is not a snowball's chance in hell of its going through the British Parliament. I would remind you that in 1977 the British Labour Government, in a remarkable fit of Community spirit, actually put forward proposals for proportional representation for the 1979 direct elections. Why, I really cannot imagine; it must have been a momentary lapse of mind; but they did so, and these proposals were emphatically rejected by the British Parliament, and I have no reason to believe that the same would not apply again if this proposal were put to the British Parliament.

Mr President, we really do prefer in our country the one-Member constituency system. There is direct accountability; we are answerable to our constituents; we are at a place where they can come to us and say: Look, we want you to do this or we do not want you to do that. We are accountable. Of course, some people who are opposed to that and want proportional representation would very nicely be able to get out of those obligations, and doubtless one or two Members — I am sure they are in the minority — would not mind that situation. What I am saying to this Parliament is that we believe that is the best system. We believe it would be the best system for every country in the Community, but we would not presume to tell other countries that they ought to have this or that method of electing their representatives. Consequently, we resent their coming to us and telling us that we should have this of that method of representing the people.

Mr President, let me refer very briefly to the proposals made with regard to voting and standing for election, because the amendments which I have tabled seek to remove not only the recommendations for the proportional representation system but also these regarding voting and standing for election. I really do not believe it is a proper thing that, people who have, quite voluntarily and willingly, decided they no longer want to live in Britain but prefer to live and work and put down roots in, say Brussels or Athens or anywhere else for that matter still have the right to influence which representatives shall represent the people of our country. I cannot believe that this is a fair proposition. And it is even worse, Mr President, when it goes on to say that these same people should be able to stand for election, so that you could actually have someone permanently living in Brussels and representing people in the East End of London. That cannot be fair or democratic.

Lomas

Finally, Mr President, we have another concern. We believe that this would be the thin end of the wedge towards proportional representation in our national elections, and I think anyone who does not recognize that is being naïve in the extreme. There may, of course, be people who would prefer to have proportional representation in our national elections, but we do not; and — I have to say this in the kindest way — there are a number of countries in Europe who have recently gone through elections by proportional representation and have ended up in what can only be described as chaos. There are other countries where a political party can only govern with the kind approval of other parties who are fundamentally and totally opposed to the policies which that majority party wishes to pursue. So I say finally, Mr President, let us stop trying to impose systems upon countries when they do not want them! Let us all elect our members in the way we think best for our people and in keeping with the traditions of our countries. The only uniformity necessary — and I repeat this, Mr President — is the one we already have, and that is that we elect our Members in a free, democratic manner.

President. — I call Mr Gerokostopoulos.

Mr Gerokostopoulos. — (*GR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I consider the motion for a resolution before us to be of the utmost political importance, which I should like to stress by taking a brief look back into the past. The Act signed on 20 September 1976 and the elections in June 1979, by which the Members of the European Parliament were elected by direct universal suffrage, marked an important stage in the development of the institution provided for by the Treaties, namely the Assembly of the representatives of the Member States of the Community. These two events constituted, in my opinion, the first steps in the transition from an economic community of a rather technocratic kind and somewhat alien to popular feeling to a genuine political union of European peoples. Furthermore this was also the aim of those who provided the inspiration for European Union, which is formulated in the preamble to the Treaty of Rome.

The elections in June 1979 were rightly hailed as an event of the utmost importance which opened up the way for a real increase in the standing influence and powers of Parliament. It is only with this political and moral reinforcement that this House will be able to make a considerable contribution to the institutional balance and effectively influence the course of Community affairs, on the fundamental condition, however, that it always remains the genuine interpreter and torchbearer of the European spirit of integration.

The election of the Members of the European Parliament by universal suffrage was the first phase. The

necessary next step is already being undertaken through the proposed draft Act on the adoption of a uniform electoral system in all the Member States, and the object of this step is the integration of the work of reinforcing our Parliament's standing.

Furthermore, this action is provided for under Article 138 of the Treaty of Rome and the relevant articles of the other treaties, as well as under Article 7(1) of the Act of September 1976, and I must admit that I fail to grasp how this House could possibly refuse to fulfil this obligation, which has been expressly conferred upon it.

Mr President, the time left to me does not allow me to go into any more detail, and so I shall confine myself to stating that I basically agree with and shall therefore vote for a resolution and the draft Act, the product of painstaking work by the Political Affairs Committee and its rapporteur, Mr Seitlinger, even if I have some reservations on certain provisions or omissions. My colleagues and I have attempted to remedy one of these omissions by our Amendment No 36, which seeks to abolish the dual mandate. The following views and facts led us to draw up this amendment.

Firstly, the reasons for which the dual mandate was introduced in 1976 cannot be considered as permanent today.

Secondly, experience has shown that the institution of the dual mandate has many serious disadvantages.

Thirdly, the Members who are subject to this system, ladies and gentlemen, have to bear an enormous burden of work, which prevents them from carrying out their duties responsibly.

Fourthly, it encourages the use of anti-parliamentary methods, and here I would point out that the 'tourniquet' method has given rise to much debate in this House.

Fifthly, the existence of the dual mandate in no way helps to facilitate the relations between the European Parliament and the parliaments of the Member States.

Furthermore, this was and is natural if it is taken into account that the Members who have the dual mandate are a small minority, approximately 18%, of all the 434 seats in this House.

We can achieve the desired and essential link, Mr President, by laying down the institutional rules and applying the methods and systems which Parliament adopted by its vote of 9 July 1981, when the excellent proposal by the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee, Mr Diligent, was adopted.

President. — I call Dame Shelagh Roberts.

Dame Shelagh Roberts. — Mr President, I recognize the obligation on this Parliament to move towards a uniform electoral procedure, whatever that may mean. But although I have sat through practically the whole of this debate. I have not heard any speaker refer to the fact that it should take place in the context of direct elections to a *directly*-elected parliament.

It is my view that a directly-elected parliament must be a parliament which is elected by the people of the Community and is accountable to the people of the Community. Now I see very little difference between the system proposed in the Seitlinger report and the old system of a nominated parliament. I mean, one could achieve the Seitlinger situation by having a mixture of some Members nominated from their national parliaments, topped up by some Members nominated by their party machines in proportion to the results in their national elections. I do not think that that would be democratic, I don't think it could claim to be a directly-elected parliament, but it would at least have the merit that it would save the public expense of a separate election.

What we have here in these proposals is a system under which the Members of this Parliament would be voted by the people of the Community, but their election would be determined by their place in the party machine and they would be accountable, therefore, to the party machine and not to the people of the Community. We have seen abuses in this Parliament of that system. We have seen how the party machine has demanded the resignation of Members of this Parliament so that they can be replaced. We have seen Members arrive in this Parliament who did not even contest the 1979 elections. Observers at the time of the 1979 elections will know that there were some would-be aspirants to membership of this Parliament whose names were removed from their parties' lists because they showed just a little bit too independent a frame of mind. We saw other instances of very well-known names going on the list to attract votes; but they were people who had no intention of taking their seats in this Parliament. I suggest, Mr President, that what is being offered in this report is just a conspiracy to deprive the electorate of their right to choose the Member to present them and to speak for them in this Parliament.

Whilst I share the criticisms of my group on the Seitlinger proposals, I have to say now that I do not support the majority view in my group which is set out in the amendments for an additional member system. I do not see, in the context of direct elections, how you can have two categories of Members in this Parliament: one composed of directly elected and the other of these who have been demonstrably not directly elected but rejected by the electorate, and that is not, to my way of thinking, direct elections.

I would say this, quite frankly, although it may seem a little immodest, that there is just the bare possibility

that in my constituency some of those who voted Liberal, having failed to get their man in, might prefer to be represented in this Parliament by me than by a Scotsman from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It is just possible that I would be more in touch with and more receptive to their point of view.

In our country we like the system of constituencies and representing the whole of your constituency after you have been elected. I don't share Mr Haagerup's views that our system is the way to make one remote from this Parliament and the Community. On the contrary, I think that the system that he supports would result in this Parliament becoming very remote. It would have Members with accountability only to their party machines. I consider that to be a sham and a farce, and I shall vote both against my own group's amendments and the report.

President. — I call Mr Plaskovitis.

Mr Plaskovitis. — (GR) The setting up of a common electoral system for the election of the Members of the European Parliament in all the Member States is definitely of particular importance both for Parliament itself and for the political forces which constitute it and are expressed within it.

Both the special conditions of political and social life and the various nations' long experience of the way in which their representatives are elected to the national parliaments are further factors which must be taken into consideration. We are therefore fully aware of the problems which the author of the report before us and the Political Affairs Committee, which worked on it, had to face. But we are bound to point out that greater flexibility should have been permitted for the adoption of special regulations by the national legislation of each of the Member States, and also that there are a few unclear points and omissions in the provisions of the resolution.

The Greek Socialist Members agree with two basic points in the resolution before us, namely the adoption of a proportional electoral system which makes it possible to ensure the democratic representation of all the political forces in the European Parliament, and we also agree with the proposed drawing up of an electoral list of the candidates from all the political groupings in each country on the basis of a single party list. On the other hand, we do not disagree that at the same time it should be permitted for any Member State to draw up an electoral list on the basis of the voters' preference if it should want such a system and if it can introduce it under its national legislation.

We have a serious reservation on the commitments imposed by Article 2(2) of the draft, whereby each country is to be divided into special constituencies

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with between 3 and 15 representatives. We consider that for small countries in particular, such as Greece, or more generally for countries in which there are no specific historical, ethnological or social reasons for differentiating the political expression of one region from another, it will have to be permitted for the whole country to form a single constituency as long, of course, as the number of representatives who are elected does not exceed 25. In this spirit we have tabled an amendment to this effect and we feel that there is no reason why it should not be accepted so that it is left up to the internal legislation of each country to solve this problem, as is proposed, and we feel this is a democratic and constructive solution. A second point, Mr President, to which we should like to refer is the right of nationals of a country who exercise their voting rights in another Member State of the Community to be able to vote on the basis of the list of candidates of the country of residence. We attach particular importance to this, since it concerns quite a few thousand Greek migrants in the EEC countries, and we would ask the House to adopt the relevant amendment which we have tabled to Article 6. We should also like some clarification as to the meaning of Article 3, which in our view is totally unclear since, while the first paragraph states that the seats shall be allocated according to the votes obtained by each grouping at national level, the second paragraph confuses the issue by referring to the division of seats on the basis of the number of votes secured in the constituencies. In our view, this will give rise to doubts and considerable difficulties in the implementation of the system by the national legislations of the Member States.

With these reservations, Mr President, and in the hope that Parliament will adopt amendments which we have tabled and which we consider essential, the Greek Members of PASOK will vote for the motion for a resolution before us.

President. — I call Mr Dalsass.

Mr Dalsass. — (*DE*) Mr President, the subject of this debate is one of the most important the European Parliament has so far been called on to deal with. We have not only a right, but also a specifically formulated duty, to work out a uniform electoral procedure for use in the direct elections to the European Parliament in 1984. The formulation of this procedure is a matter of outstanding political importance.

Let me say right away that I welcome this proposal and will be giving it my support, provided no major amendments are made to it in the course of the vote. The aim of this new electoral procedure is to guarantee a more even and fairer distribution of seats among the various political groupings, in contrast to what happened at the last election, when certain strong political groupings were excluded from the

European Parliament purely as a result of the system in use at that time.

Another aim is to establish more uniformity and equality in the various Member States as regards the right to vote and the right to stand for election. Of course, it would have been a good thing if the political groupings represented in this House had been able to find more common ground, but the very introduction of these principles is in itself a step forward along the road to a better and more democratic distribution of seats in the European Parliament.

Further improvements can and must be made at some later time. As a representative of a linguistic minority, I can only welcome what Article 4 has to say about the representation of such minorities in future European Parliaments. That is truly an expression of a democratic, and indeed, a European attitude.

For as long as this subject has been discussed in the various committees, I have always strived to have such a provision incorporated in the draft legislation. Of course, what we have here is a possibility — something which is left to the discretion of the Member States; it is not a guarantee.

Unfortunately a massive attack was launched on precisely this provision in committee by the Italian Communists in an attempt to get it thrown out. I am pleased to say that the attack failed thanks to the wisdom of the other members of the committee. The Italian Communists' behaviour was totally incomprehensible, not to say anti-minority. It was all the more incomprehensible given that one Member of that party comes from my own country, where we are confronted with minority problems day in, day out. The Italian Communists have now tabled an amendment in plenary session, again with aim of getting this provision thrown out. It really looks as though they had conspired against minorities — not altogether surprising in view of the treatment meted out to minorities in Eastern Europe.

However, I have confidence in this House's democratic values and I look forward with confidence to the forthcoming vote. It would meet with general bewilderment if there were to be no possibility — and let me repeat that it is a possibility, and not a certainty — for minorities to be represented in a future European Parliament. I would therefore address an appeal to all right-thinking democrats to ensure that a genuinely European decision is taken on this issue.

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — Mr President, there may be one or two Members present who, like me, remember the debate in the previous Parliament on the Patijn report — that was the report on which was based the first direct election which created this Parliament and which brought us all here. I have to say, Mr President, that this debate makes a very sorry contrast, and the reason is clear. It reflects the suspect way in which these proposals were made, which Mr Fergusson outlined, and in particular the unwillingness to compromise and reach a system acceptable to all sides of the House.

This report claims that the system it outlines is uniform and proportional. In fact it is neither. For example, in the explanatory statement you will find a number of basic principles, and in defence of proportionality it states that the system should 'ensure that equal weight attaches to each vote'. Now this is sheer hypocrisy. No matter what voting system you bring in, it remains a fact that, to take an example, the vote of a Liberal in Luxembourg is worth 13.5 times as much as that of a member of the CDU in Germany. Or nearer home, the vote of someone voting for Fianna Fáil in Ireland is worth 3.5 times as much as that of a Conservative voting in the UK. So the idea that this system is proportional and produces fairness is a gross distortion and is untrue. There has in fact been a deplorable lack of courage on the part of the Political Affairs Committee in devising a truly Community system. Now I, like my group, have always favoured the additional member system as being the only one likely to command the support of all member governments. This was rejected in the Political Affairs Committee, and why? Because essentially there were too few seats allocated to each Member State to avoid the problems like overhang. Now Mr Bocklet said this was insurmountable. I do not agree. What should have been done is that the additional member system should have been operated at Community level.

I have amendments which seek to do just this. The House will be divided two-thirds, one-third. Two thirds will be elected in single member seats in the Member States and one-third would be used at Community level to top up so that the final result was proportional. Now this system is truly *communautaire* and Mr Gendebien should applaud it. It will get away from the national quota system which ensures that whatever we do, the system is not uniform; and it will have the effect of stimulating the creation of true European parties.

Now, Mr President, Mr Seitlinger said that he had spent two years on this report. Unfortunately there is nothing that says that the time spent on a report correlates with the quality of the end product. I say that Mr Seitlinger's report should be withdrawn and that the Political Affairs Committee should be told to go away and do better. That would be the true Community solution.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Fischbach.

Mr Fischbach. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, there is no more pressing need in our quest for the true, democratic legitimization of the European Parliament than ensuring that every political tendency working for or even against the cause of European integration should be properly represented.

The proposal before us for the next direct elections of a proportional system with an additional element of individual representation proposed by our honourable friend Mr Seitlinger, on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, can quite properly claim the distinction of being the best possible solution to the problem as it was posed.

The same cannot, however, be said for Article 5, which relates to voting rights, particularly to Article 5(2) under which Member States must give the right to vote to nationals of other Community Member States who have resided in their country for five years or more.

In the present state of European integration it is difficult to defend such a proposal, be it objectively or, if I may so speak, subjectively as from the point of view of the particular Member State to which I belong.

It is not the case that in every Member State the rights of the individual particularly the right to vote, have as their constitutional corollary those civic duties which fall to citizens of that country, not to mention his duty to take sole responsibility for his choice as an elector? I very much doubt that such a guarantee could apply in the case of electors who are nationals of other Member States, particularly in the case of migrant workers, the compulsory five years' residence period being totally inadequate as a measure of a migrant's aptitude to reside in the host country for the rest of his life or, at least, for a good part of his working life.

To that argument developed from a too broadly-based residence requirement and which in the last analysis can be reduced to an unwillingness to integrate on the part of the emigrant elector, I would add a second, political argument against the provisions of Article 5(2) which is no less compelling. That argument is based on the number of members to be elected to this Parliament by each Member State under the Act of 20 September 1976. If we accept paragraph 2 as it has been submitted to us — submitted, we must remember, by a very small majority on the Political Affairs Committee — in the case of a Member State which has a high rate of emigration towards another Member State, Parliament will be giving that country the means to intervene to a greater or lesser extent in the election of Members of the European Parliament without there being any change in the number of Members representing that country.

Fischbach

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, under those circumstances the effects of Article 5(2) on my country would be unacceptable. Migrant workers, principally from other countries which are already or are about to become Community Member States represent one third of the working population of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, which means in practice that, if paragraph 2 is adopted, non-residents, who are not nationals of Luxembourg will have a third of the influence in the choice of Luxembourg's Members of this House.

You will understand, ladies and gentlemen, that under these circumstances if Article 5(2) is adopted the proposals will have no chance of being accepted by my Government or ratified by the Luxembourg Parliament.

With that in mind, and irrespective of all subjective arguments and criteria, I think you will agree, ladies and gentlemen, that it would be a mistake not to replace the present wording of Article 5(2) with that of the amendment tabled on behalf of our Group by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti.

President. — I call Mr Ryan.

Mr Ryan. — Mr President, democracy is being eroded in Europe through carelessness and misunderstanding. Falsely fearing that a strong European Parliament would diminish the importance of national parliaments, Member States are reluctant to confer effective powers on this Parliament. But this stupid stance overlooks the fact that a diminution of national democratic control has taken place already by the accession of each State to the Treaty of Rome. However, that lost democratic control at national level has not made for a democratically elected European Parliament but rather for a surrender of sovereignty to appointed bureaucrats and self-centred ministers who are accountable to nobody.

This situation must be changed, and I submit that a prior condition to the change is that we should adopt a common voting system for this Parliament. Democracy will not survive in Europe unless it is allowed to flourish in this Parliament. If the European Parliament is to be something more than a charade, there must be a universally accepted common system of election without any modifications to pander to national prejudices.

The draft electoral procedure upon which we are voting today is a compromise, indeed, I would say a shabby compromise, for it visualizes leaving to Member States power to vary the voting system in at least four important ways, a power the exercise of which could falsify results and produce undemocratic majorities in the Parliament. I would myself prefer the Irish system of proportional representation in which

the voter remains in control to the end rather than the suggested list system in which the party machine controls the voter. But I am disposed to go along with the European proposal with a view to getting a common binding system which will command universal respect.

Particularly unacceptable is the proposal that citizens residing in a Member State other than the one of their birth will not be permitted to vote there unless they are residing there for at least five years. Some Member States have moved heaven and earth to get European institutions on their soil. The European Parliament, for instance, is obliged by reason of the avarice and pride of three Member States to be a travelling circus in three working places, and the same countries are perturbed in case their domestic political coziness should be upset by the votes of European citizens from other Member States who are obliged to work in European institutions away from their country of origin. Countries which enjoy the financial and prestige benefit of having the European Parliament, Commission, Council, Court and other Community institutions within their borders should be the last to deny full voting rights at their places of residence to Europeans who serve European institutions.

So far as Ireland is concerned, the requirement that voting takes place on a Sunday will be a novel one. I sincerely hope that voting on the Sabbath will not impair the efficacy of the prayers of the faithful for the divine assistance which Europe, and European parliamentarians in particular, badly need.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Bourdias.

Mr Bourdias. — (GR) Mr President, I am among those who voted in the Political Affairs Committee for the draft proposal for a uniform electoral law for the Community, although it is not uniform, as many Members have stressed, because of the dissenting position of the United Kingdom. However, since it has many positive points, I shall vote for it, as will all the Members from the Greek New Democracy Party.

My reason for speaking in this debate is to defend a class of Greek citizens who, although entered in the electoral registers and permanently resident in Greece, never actually vote. I mean Greek sailors. For years, Mr President, since I was first elected a Member of Parliament in 1946, I have heard that the problem of the vote for sailors in Greece would be solved. Every party and every government promises to do so without anything coming of it. In the meantime two constitutions have been adopted, the 1952 Constitution and the 1975 Constitution, and many electoral laws have been passed, there have been debates and articles have been written during pre-election periods, and the

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result is that they are still without the vote. So we must think about these thousands of citizens who on the seas and oceans offer a great deal to our country and who must not be deprived of their voting rights. And so I asked to speak in order to move an amendment to Article 2(5), which I feel will provide a solution and which I and other Greek Members have tabled with a view to making it compulsory for the countries to introduce legislation — since it is against the law not to do so — so that sailors who are at sea on the day of the election are able to vote. That is the reason, and I trust that my amendment will be adopted by the House.

President. — I call Mr Verroken.

Mr Verroken. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, despite the fact that I think I am the last speaker in this debate, I should like none the less to congratulate Mr Seitlinger on his report. Having said that, though, I feel obliged to add a word of regret that we have, to my mind, paid insufficient heed to the criticism raised by the Members from the United Kingdom. I share their view that you can take a list system too far and finish up with Members of the European Parliament who have been nominated by the party bosses rather than elected by the voters.

I should also like to make the point that we have been searching for a uniform electoral procedure for 30 years now. The Act of 1976 took us a small step further, because the fact is that we have now had a directly-elected European Parliament since 1979. We are now attempting to take another small step further, which can — taking into consideration all the exemptions and exceptions — be summed up by saying that we are now being asked to organize the elections on the basis of constituencies. That will be the only new element throughout Europe, because the proportional representation system is in use everywhere in Europe apart from in the United Kingdom. So in anticipation of the fact that the United Kingdom will not agree to what we have decided today, what we are proposing is that nothing new should be attempted on this issue.

As far as my own country is concerned — and I suspect that I shall be the only person here in this House to say anything positive about Article 4(2) — I would ask Parliament to bear in mind that, if the said article did not exist, Belgium would be forced to veto the proposed legislation. Let us not overlook the fact that the seats in the European Parliament have been allocated not by reference to populations, but according to block arrangement — for instance, 81 for France, 81 for Italy and 81 for the United Kingdom; nor let us forget that these figures are not open to modification. At the moment, no one is proposing an arrangement transcending national frontiers. However, we have a similar kind of problem in Belgium, where there are in fact two distinct commu-

nities. The Flemish community, the one to which I belong, comprises 60% of the total population, and we do not wish to raise any suspicion that we are trying, by way of a national proportional representation system, to put pressure on the other community. Our electoral and constitutional legislation guarantees the other community an equal number of representatives. That explains why all the parties regard it as an unrealistic idea for the number of seats available to be spread generally over the national territory. As a result, Article 4(2) is really the key issue from our point of view, without which we could not give the proposal our support.

Finally, I should like to point out — and I do not think I am alone in saying this — that Article 5 is an improvised and schizophrenic one. If we really want to do something to help the people who have lived for a certain length of time in a different country, and if we want to give them the right to vote, we cannot understand why they should at the same time be denied the right to stand for election. What is the point in making a distinction between voting and standing for election? We entirely agree that all Europeans should be given the right to vote no matter where they live; but what Article 5 has to say is that the Member States should ensure that their citizens who have been resident for less than five years in a different country have the right to vote even outside their native country. In other words, an election is to be organized for these people, and not for the others. What that boils down to is that we shall have two categories of people — two categories of Greeks abroad, two categories of Italians abroad, and so on. To our way of thinking, this article is just not on. We also feel that, as regards the right to stand for election, account must be taken of the block distribution of seats: 81 Italians, 81 Frenchmen, 81 Members from the United Kingdom and 24 from my own country. Belgium has ceded its right to one seat to Denmark so that Greenland will have a seat of its own, but the new system places Belgium in the impossible position of granting separate representation to the same number of German-speakers in Belgium as there are people in Greenland.

Despite all these problems, which will have to be solved sooner or later, I should like to conclude, Mr President, by expressing the hope that we shall take a step in the right direction today, and that the offspring of today's decision will not turn out to be stillborn.

President. — I call Mr Møller.

Mr Møller. — (DA) Mr President, I understand from this debate that the Legal Affairs Committee has not had an opportunity to give its opinion on substantive changes made since the Legal Committee discussed the matter. We have thus today been debating a basic document on which only the Political Affairs Committee has reported. But we have not heard the

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Legal Affairs Committee's views on the final report from the Political Affairs Committee. I therefore propose that, in accordance with Article 85, the Legal Affairs Committee be given an opportunity to express an opinion on the matter before we come to a final decision.

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, Article 85 provides that any Member may at any time propose that a matter be referred back to committee. I shall therefore call one speaker in favour and one against, and finally the rapporteur.

I call Mr Bocklet.

Mr Bocklet. — *(DE)* Mr President, I am surprised that anyone should table such a motion at the end of this debate, after all opinions have been heard, all arguments aired, and even the representative of the Legal Affairs Committee has given his opinion.

I might add that the representative of the Legal Affairs Committee in the working group which drew up this draft, was himself present — Not all the time, it is true, but at least from time to time — and therefore had the opportunity of expressing his opinion at any time.

I therefore believe that there is absolutely no reason to postpone taking a decision on the electoral system, and I would ask you not to approve the motion.

President. — I call the Legal Affairs Committee.

Mr D'Angelosante, draftsman of an opinion. — *(IT)* I think I should put the record straight, Mr President, on a point of fact in what Mr Møller was saying: the situation was not exactly as he described it. The Legal Affairs Committee followed very closely the workings of the Political Affairs Committee and its sub-committee which drew up the report we have before us. In my capacity as draftsman of an opinion on behalf the Legal Affairs Committee, I received a written invitation to every meeting, and I attended practically every one of them. I can also tell Mr Møller that our committee returned to the problem as recently as a fortnight ago, on the occasion of the last Legal Affairs Committee meeting in Brussels, when the question of the follow-up to the draft uniform procedure — if it is approved — was raised. Although no vote was taken — on the proposal of our chairman, Mrs Veil — the general lines I have expressed here today were approved, namely that the proposals submitted to us did not constitute a uniform procedure. All of which means that we have considered every aspect of the proposals submitted for our consid-

eration, and which we have been examining this morning.

I reject outright Mr Møller's claim that my speech made in this chamber as the representative of the Legal Affairs Committee is worthless. I was speaking on behalf of the committee, and if he is in disagreement with me, that is his own affair. For all that, the Legal Affairs Committee has done its duty.

President. — I call Mr Megahy.

Mr Megahy. — Mr President, I was very impressed by the arguments advanced by Mr Møller, and as a member of the Committee on Legal Affairs I think we should fully support his position.

(Applause)

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Seitlinger, rapporteur. — Mr President, I am grateful to Mr D'Angelosante, who has put the record straight so clearly. We have, of course, been working in close cooperation with the Legal Affairs Committee for several months. All I need add is that decisions were reached on the basic options in the meeting of the Political Affairs Committee in London on 2 December 1981, and that the subsequent meetings have been concerned only with the legal form, the dressing, of the text.

What that means is that for the last three months the members the Political Affairs Committee have been fully aware of our work, and so have those of the Legal Affairs Committee. I cannot therefore see any reason for referring the question back to the Legal Affairs Committee again. I oppose the referral.

(Parliament rejected the request)

President. — I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — Could we have that vote checked, Mr President? It was very close. An electronic vote, please.

President. — Ladies and gentlemen, I think it would be better if we avoided any discussion. We shall use the voting cards.

(Parliament again rejected the request)

The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

3. Multifibre Arrangement

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two Oral Questions to the Council:

- Oral Question with debate (Doc. 1-1038/81) by Mr Welsh on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations:

Subject: Renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement

Having regard to the Parliament's report and resolution on the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement;¹ having regard to the Parliament's emergency resolution of November 1981 on the same subject;² noting that the Council has informed Parliament of the current state of negotiations in accordance with the Luns-Westerterp procedure:

1. Does the Council consider that in general terms Parliament's guidelines established by the above-mentioned resolutions have been fulfilled as a result of the current round of negotiations?
2. Does the Council believe that the EEC textile and clothing industries would enjoy a greater degree of protection under the terms of Article XIX of GATT than under the proposed protocol of extension to the MFA?
3. How does the Council assess the effect of a denouncement of the MFA on the Community's overall trade policy and relations with developed and developing partners?
4. In the light of the above does the Council believe that the results of the 11 February meeting accurately reflect the Community's priorities?

- Oral Question with debate (Doc. 1-637/81) by Mr Cousté on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats:

Subject: Difficulties in the textile industry and renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement

Over the 7 years in which the Multifibre Arrangement has been in force, the European textile and clothing industries have shed more than 700 000 jobs.

With a view to ending the heavy sacrifices which these industries have made for the restructuring of world trade — a development which has been accepted somewhat passively by the European authorities — can the Council state whether, during discussions on the negotiating mandate for the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement, the following points were considered and, if so, with what result:

- the creation of the climate of confidence necessary to allow European textile firms to continue with their modernization programmes,

- controls on the overall level of imports,
- percentage quotas to adjust the flow of imports to the Community market's absorption capacity,
- negotiation of a gradual reduction in imports from the Third World,
- higher customs duties on certain sensitive products,
- financing the restructuring of the textile industries by means of a temporary tax — Community own resources — on all imported textile products,
- creation of a trigger price mechanism based on the American procedure for steel products,
- a labelling requirement for all imported products?

I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh. — I thank you, Mr President, for your consideration and also those honourable colleagues who are actually listening to me.

The oral question for debate which I have the honour to present on behalf of the Committee on External Economic Relations is an important one on two grounds. It is important first of all in practical terms, because this is an issue that is current and it is an issue on which Parliament should, and must, participate in a dialogue with the Council. It is important on constitutional grounds because, by a unique set of circumstances, we in Parliament have the opportunity to deliver an opinion on an act of the Council in concluding an international treaty, and in doing so we are asserting our rights to hold the Council democratically responsible for an exercise of power for which it is responsible to no Assembly other than this. For this reason alone, Mr President, this is an important moment in the Parliament's history. The motion to wind up the debate, which I shall move at the end of my remarks, will be an important and significant precedent, and I am sure that the President-in-Office of the Council will understand what I mean.

As regards the practicalities, the Council, on 25 February, signed a protocol of extension to the Multifibre Arrangement, which permits bilateral negotiations to begin with the Community's various partner countries. This decision by the Council, which I welcome, was unfortunately delayed, because the Council itself was unable to agree on the terms of its acceptance of the protocol. At a Luns-Westerterp procedure held in this Parliament during the last part-session, the President-in-Office of the Council was closely questioned by members of the competent committees. It became clear that there were two issues stopping the Council from reaching an agreement. One was the globalization of three separate regimes, and the other was the issue of burden-sharing among

¹ OJ C 101 of 4 May 1981, p. 29.

² OJ C 327 of 14 December 1981, p. 62.

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the various Member States of the low-cost imports permitted by the Arrangement. On both these issues, Mr Davignon, speaking for the Commission, gave your representatives two categorical assurances. The first one was that under no circumstances would the Commission agree to a mixing of global ceilings from regimes stemming from three independent legal bases. The second was that there would be no derogation from this principle in the form of special arrangements made for individual Member States to take more imports from one category of suppliers than from another. Members of the committees who were present will no doubt bear out what I say.

Our question to the Council is therefore this. What took place at the meeting on 25 February? How was agreement on the protocol of extension reached? Were the two assurances given to the Parliament by the Commission honoured? And can the Council assure us that in every sense those two principles — separate globalization and universal burden-sharing — are met by its memorandum agreement?

Our next question concerns the future. The Parliament has frequently expressed the view that continuation of the Multifibre Arrangement must be contingent on acceptable bilateral agreements. Is it the case, however, that the Council has an alternative strategy to be employed if those bilateral agreements are not satisfactory? Does the Council consider that resort to Article 19 of GATT would provide an adequate degree of protection for the Community's textile industry and, if it does so consider, what views does it have on the compensation that would have to be offered to other supplying countries if we resorted to Article 19? If it has not got an answer to these questions, Mr President, the Council owes it to us now to explain, first of all, what it regards as satisfactory bilateral agreements in the terms of its own memorandum and, secondly, what its alternative strategy is in the event of its finding itself in a position of denouncing the Multifibre Arrangement as a whole.

Those are the two questions we put to the Council today. They are a continuation of the dialogue that we have been conducting ever since November of last year, and we also look forward to the President-in-Office explaining to us how he feels the Council has responded to the guidelines issued by Parliament in its several resolutions of March 1980 and November 1980. I hope, Mr President, if time permits, you will allow me the right to reply at the end of this debate after the Council has given its view.

President. — I call the Council.

Mr De Keersmaecker, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to give a joint reply to Mr Welsh's and Mr Cousté's questions. Of course, it is unfortunate that Mr Cousté could not

speak immediately, but I presume he will be doing so later. First of all, I should like to recall that in July 1981 the Council laid down basic guidelines for the multilateral multifibre negotiations. These were intended as negotiating principles for the European Community and were aimed firstly at boosting the Community textile and clothing industries by bringing about changes in the market situation, thus enabling them to regain their competitiveness. Secondly, we had to ensure that Community producers could continue their efforts to adapt by means of import controls on more sensitive products. Finally, we had to take account of consumption trends in the textile sector of the Community itself in assessing how far the Community market ought to be accessible to imports from countries offering products at low prices.

Since 1981 the Council has laid down more detailed guidelines as a consistent and important extension of the initial ones, so enabling the Community to take an active part in the decisive final phase of the multifibre negotiations. The Council also made participation in the new Multifibre Arrangement conditional on the conclusion of satisfactory bilateral agreements to replace those expiring on 1 January 1983 and to enable the Community to achieve its economic objectives in the textile sector. The outcome of the multifibre negotiations has provided the Community with the basis it hoped for. I shall now mention just a few of the main points in the negotiating guidelines which the new Multifibre Arrangement may well resolve.

First of all, the Community succeeded in having certain provisions adopted which obviate the danger of a sudden sharp increase in imports of very sensitive products where quotas are not fully used, which is fairly often the case. The Community then succeeded in providing for a different arrangement with the three 'dominant' exporting countries, Hong Kong, South Korea and Macao. Taiwan, the fourth main exporting country, is covered by a separate arrangement and does not come into consideration in this context.

In real terms, this means that the Community can hold bilateral negotiations with these three countries to reduce a number of their import quotas, with a possible degree of compensation in the outward processing sector. Moreover the new arrangement stipulates that, under certain circumstances growth rates of less than 6% may be applied to imports. The outcome of the Geneva negotiations therefore fulfils the Community's main objectives. However, as you will be aware, the Multifibre Arrangement only constitutes a general framework, and the Community will ultimately have to try to achieve its economic objectives in the textile sector by bilateral agreements. This is why the Council's guidelines made acceptance of the Arrangement conditional on concluding these bilateral agreements.

On this last point, I can now tell you that on 25 February the Council reached a number of decision on

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global ceilings for sensitive products in Group I. These decisions will be a crucial element in future bilateral negotiations and are intended to restrict the Community's total imports from all countries supplying low-price goods. In view of the outcome of the Geneva negotiations and the decisions on global ceilings, the Council has decided to accept the protocol of extension of the Multifibre Arrangement, but to denounce it if no satisfactory bilateral agreements have been concluded by the end of the year. The Council has thus established a definite link between the Multifibre Arrangement and the bilateral agreements. With regard to the Council's decision about denouncing the protocol, I must point out that we cannot at present predict our partners' reaction should we denounce the Multifibre Arrangement. The Community is assuming, however, that it will be able to conclude satisfactory bilateral agreements in the course of the year.

A series of bilateral agreements based on the Multifibre Arrangement provides a better and more lasting framework both for the Community and for the third countries, which would be willing and able to establish firm export quotas in the negotiations.

Should no new bilateral agreements be satisfactorily concluded, the Community's trade relations with third countries in the textile sector will come under GATT regulations. However, we can only discuss any difficulties relating to this aspect if the problem of the failure to conclude the expected bilateral agreements actually arises.

President. — I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh. — On a point of order under Rule 42, Mr President. Would the Council answer No 3 and No 4 of my questions? The President-in-Office has not answered either of those questions, nor has he referred to them in his statement. He will find them on the paper in front of him.

No 3 reads: How does the Council assess the effect of a denouncement of the MFA on the Community's overall trade policy and relations with developed and developing partners?

No 4 reads: In the light of the above, does the Council believe that the results of the 11 February meeting accurately reflect the Community's priorities?

Neither of those questions, Mr President, has been answered.

President. — Mr President-in-Office, perhaps you would like time to consider your replies to these two detailed questions?

Mr De Keersmaecker, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Mr President, I thought I had answered the questions as they stood. But the speaker's own comments on these questions require further consideration, and as I am to make other replies at the end of the debate, I shall deal with them at the same time.

President. — Mr Welsh, is that a fair answer?

Mr Welsh. — That is acceptable, Mr President. But I hope you will note that the Council had not in fact read the question.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Seal. — Mr President, I would entirely endorse the remarks of Mr Welsh — a rare occasion in this House, if I may say — in that the Council has not at all answered the questions that have been put down for it, and I think that in itself is deplorable. I hope the Council takes note of this and makes a better attempt to provide some satisfactory answers at the end of this debate.

In spite of Mr Welsh's earlier remarks, I feel that this debate is one month too late. Last part-session would have meant that this Parliament might have influenced — I say might — the Council of Ministers before this protocol of extension was in fact finally signed. In spite of my views on the Community and the European Parliament, if we are going to be consulted, either by the Commission or the Council, then we must ensure that we have a right to reply in sufficient time to influence the final decision of either the Council or the Commission.

Whatever the Council may say, I do not accept that anything has been achieved so far. As far as I am concerned, the extension of the Multifibre Arrangement does nothing at all for the British wool textile industry, which is centred in my constituency in Bradford. It does nothing at all for the whole of the British textile industry, and it does nothing at all for the Community textile industry. The Community textile industry, if these quotas and ceilings are adhered to, will continue to decline as a major manufacturing sector and employer. The Community, in my opinion, has not succeeded. In spite of what the Council representative says, once again they have demonstrated their inability to act — and I am assuming that they want to act — for the European textile industry. Indeed, they have left the important negotiations to bilateral agreements which have yet to be negotiated, and at the same time they have made these negotiations all the more difficult because of the ridiculous global ceilings that they have already set.

Seal

Now Mr Welsh asked the Commission whether they had an alternative strategy if the bilateral agreements were not satisfactorily concluded by the end of the year. We have heard from the Council that if they are not, they threaten to withdraw altogether from the MFA. Now to me this is a toothless threat. It has backfired because, in my opinion, we need the MFA more than the countries which trade with us. Towards the end of the year we are going to be forced to take soft options in order to prevent our being forced to withdraw from the MFA.

This aside, in my opinion, in the opinion of the Socialist Group and in the opinion of the textile industry and the trade unions, this whole protocol is far too vague. Once again, it is a typical Community attempt at compromise; and whilst the Council and the Commission and the Community compromise, thousands and thousands of textile workers are continuing to lose their jobs.

The base levels of this protocol are, in our opinion, absolutely incorrect. It is obvious to anyone who thinks about it that they should be based on actual import figures; but instead they are based upon quotas. So we have new quotas based upon old quotas, and they have no relation to the actual quantities which are being imported into the EEC. How can the Council or the Commission guarantee that we stick to an overall growth rate of around one percent — a growth rate that has been agreed by this Parliament — when they do not know the quantities that are actually being imported at this time into the EEC? Indeed, for certain products I can tell them that there will be an increase of not one percent but five to six hundred percent, and this is going to cost us at least another 30 000 jobs in the textile industry in the United Kingdom alone.

There is also a problem, in spite of what the Council says, in the products categorized as sensitive. They have only concluded the A products, and in fact the composition of the rest of the sensitive product groups has not yet been finalized.

In addition, we have no details of the proposed anti-surge mechanism. The Council and the Commission must see that the anti-surge mechanism is toughened up — and not only that it is toughened up, but that it operates on the basis of the known trade levels of 1980 and not on the 1982 quota levels.

Neither are there any details of any recession clause, which it was suggested that they look at. There is, however, a reference to 'equitable and qualified compensation to the exporting participants'. This reference, unfortunately, makes the implementation of a recession clause very limited indeed.

The ratification of this protocol does no more than open up a Pandora's box because of the complex problems which are related to the bilateral agreements yet

to be negotiated. The Commission and the Council are going to have to negotiate bilateral agreements, but this must be done according to a strict timetable. The bilateral agreements with dominant suppliers must be concluded first, and we must also ensure that the growth rates for preferential countries are sufficient to ensure a smooth growth of textile exports for these countries.

Mr President, I conclude, on behalf of the Socialist Group, by saying that, given the vague wording of the provisions of this Protocol, it will require a tough approach by the Commission and the Council to negotiate levels acceptable to the Community's textile industry. This is a quality, unfortunately, that has not been demonstrated by these bodies in past negotiations.

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

Mr Chanterie. — (NL) Mr President, it is of course impossible for me to give thorough consideration to all the problems of the Multifibre Arrangement in the few minutes which have been allocated to me, and so I shall make just a few remarks and add a supplementary question.

On behalf of the EPP Group, I think I can safely say that the European Community has succeeded in achieving its main objectives in the Geneva negotiations on the new Multifibre Arrangement, in spite of the fact that the Community is in a rather difficult position. The fact is that the Community takes 40% of the developing countries' textile exports. Whether or not the new Multifibre Arrangement for 1982-86 will actually be signed and implemented depends on the Community's bilateral negotiations during the coming months with 28 developing countries and 7 Mediterranean countries. I think we should quite rightly now be considering the implications for our textile industry of the possible failure of these negotiations and the withdrawal of the Community from the Multifibre Arrangement. As the Member for a Flemish textile region, I should like to stress the great sacrifices our textile industry has made in past years, particularly in terms of employment.

Tremendous efforts are also being made, however, to modernize, increase productivity and maintain competitiveness, and small and medium-sized enterprises have been particularly successful here. So it is now, and I cannot stress this point too strongly, a matter of taking the necessary steps to guarantee the future of our textile industry by enabling it to develop further and to offer secure employment.

Textile and clothing industries in the Third World are by and large set up by multinational concerns which have been encouraged to move there by the advan-

Chanteric

tages they gain from the working conditions. Low-wage countries, they are called, and with good reason. It is certainly not the large numbers of workers, but mainly the multinationals themselves, which benefit from the increasing exports from these countries. Therefore, Mr President, I should like to ask what the outcome has been of any steps which may have been taken to have a so-called 'social clause' included in the Multifibre Arrangement when it was drawn up, i.e. a stipulation that the benefits of the Multifibre Arrangement should only be extended to countries exporting to the Community if they undertake to abide by the minimum standards for conditions of work laid down by the International Labour Organization. A clause to this effect, Mr President would lead primarily to a real improvement in the situation of textile workers in the Third World, and also to less distortion in international competition.

(The sitting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)¹

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

4. *Welcome*

President. — I welcome in the official gallery a delegation from the Finance Committee of the *Bundestag*, led by Mrs Matthäus-Maier. I am delighted at this first step in bringing together the European Parliament and the national parliaments by way of their specialized committees.

(Applause)

5. *Topical and urgent debate (objections)*

President. — Pursuant to Rule 48 (2), second subparagraph, of the Rules of Procedure, I have received the following objections, tabled and justified in writing, to the list of subjects for the topical and urgent debate tomorrow, 11 March 1982.

(The President read out the list of objections)²

The vote on these objections will take place without debate.

(...)

(Parliament rejected the motions by Mr Forth and Mr Glinne and adopted the motions by Mr Herman and Mr Christopher Jackson)

I call Ms Clwyd.

Ms Clwyd. — Mr President, on a point of order. You took an electronic vote on that last urgency resolution. I thought that the vote on South Africa was very close indeed and that we should have had an electronic vote on that too. Can your tellers confirm what that vote was without the electronic vote?

President. — Ms Clwyd, I think that the occupant of the Chair, assisted by his staff, has a fair judgment whether a vote is clear or not, and the vote on South Africa was absolutely clear. There is no doubt about it. Otherwise I would have proceeded to an electronic vote. So I think that your remark, apart from the fact that it has come too late, is superfluous.

I call Mr Seal.

Mr Seal. — In spite of that, Mr President, it would be nice if at least we had figures occasionally, and one way of getting figures easily is to use this very expensive equipment that we have had installed and use the electronic vote instead of relying on an arbitrary decision by some of the people at the front.

President. — Mr Seal, if your group had asked for a roll-call vote I would have proceeded to an electronic vote, but that did not happen. So what you should do is instruct your group chairman next time to that effect.

6. *Votes¹*

President. — The next item is the vote on the *Seitlinger report (Doc. 1-988/81): Uniform electoral procedure for the election of Members of the European Parliament.*

(...)

Article 2, paragraph 2 — Amendments Nos 13, 81, 57, 6, 12, 69 and 85

Mr Seitlinger, rapporteur. — (FR) Mindful of the committee's repeated decisions, I am against.

(...)

¹ *Request for an early vote: see Minutes.*

² *List of objections: see Minutes.*

¹ The report of proceedings gives only those parts of the vote which gave rise to speeches. For a detailed account of the voting, see Minutes.

Article 3 — Amendment No 47

Mr Seitlinger, rapporteur. — (FR) As this amendment was not considered by the committee, I shall leave it up to the House to decide.

(...)

*Article 5**After the adoption of Amendment No 49*

Mr Bocklet. — (DE) I would point out that an amendment has been tabled to Article 5 (2), originally introduced, but no longer supported, by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, but supported by others who also signed the motion, namely Mr Estgen and myself. The vote has not invalidated the last sentence of the amendment and I therefore request that the last sentence of Amendment No 31 be put to the vote.

President. — Mr Bocklet, I do not think that would be possible, for I cannot put part of an amendment to the vote. Once the text of paragraphs 2 to 4 has been replaced, I cannot accept part of an amendment as a new amendment.

Mr Bocklet. — (DE) I would agree if it were a matter of different content and wording. The first sentence of the proposed amendment, which Mr Estgen and I are now supporting, is identical with the second sentence of Mr Fergusson's proposal; only the third sentence is different. I therefore ask for the matter to be put to the vote.

President. — But the problem is that I would then require the prior authorization of this House to put only a part of Amendment No 31 to the vote. The sentence which you are supporting is an integral part of Amendment No 31. I cannot simply decide to extract it — that is just not possible.

I call Mr Antoniozzi.

Mr Antoniozzi. — (IT) Mr President, Amendment No 31 also bears my signature, which I withdraw because the wording of the amendment does not correspond to the text I had in mind.

President. — I call Mr von der Vring.

Mr von der Vring. — (DE) Mr President, I urge you not to accede to this request, which if granted would set a precedent for endless complications. Separate amendments may be introduced, if required, but each

amendment put forward forms a whole and cannot be broken up.

President. — I call Lord Douro.

Lord Douro. — Mr President, I would urge you to abide by your original ruling. There is much precedent in this House that when an amendment seeking to replace a whole paragraph is carried, all other amendments fall. That is clearly the case here, and I would urge you to stick to your original ruling.

President. — That is why I propose to do what I proposed, but it was disputed. I think that we should stick to my original proposals because otherwise we would have a lot of complications.

I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (IT) Mr President, I should like to draw your attention to the fact that, in spite of its title, the amendment which we have just approved, or rather which the majority of us have just approved — Amendment No 49 — in effect amends only paragraph 1 of Article 5. You should now bear in mind that this amendment implicitly overrides paragraphs 2, 3 and 4. This does not seem right to me, inasmuch as Articles 2, 3 and 4 introduce legislation which is completely new as regards Article 1 and completely innovatory as regards existing Community law.

Paragraph 1 lays down the manner in which a Member State permits its own citizens to vote in whichever part of the world they may be, whereas the other paragraphs deal with the obligation for Member States to grant voting rights, whether active or passive, to citizens of other Community countries residing in the Member States concerned by the legislation.

I do not believe, Mr President, that it is the purpose of the Regulation that Article 5 should have this 'overriding' effect, which you attribute to the majority vote on Amendment No 49. I therefore think that you should have the amendments to paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this article voted on again.

President. — I call Mr Bocklet.

Mr Bocklet. — (DE) Mr President, I should like to make your task easier and withdraw the amendment, since it is not really essential.

President. — Mr Bocklet, I must remember to send you some flowers.

I call Mr Schieler.

Mr Schieler. — (*DE*) You just mentioned that Amendment No 56 would be null and void once Amendment No 49 was adopted. I should like to check again whether the second sentence of Amendment No 56, which deals with quite another matter, has been settled by the adoption of Amendment No 49.

President. — And so we come back to square one: when a proposal for an amendment is adopted, the whole text is replaced and all other proposals are invalid.

(...)

Mr Plaskovitis. — (*GR*) My amendment No 83 has been so badly translated — at least to go by the French version — that the meaning of the amendment is totally distorted.

Paragraph 2 of this amendment reads as follows:

The citizens of a Member State who exercise their right to vote in another Member State of the Community may vote on the basis of the list of candidates of their native country.

If the interpreters are giving the correct translation, I think you yourself will appreciate just how wrong the French translation in the text I have in front of me is.

That is what I wanted to draw to the Members' attention.

President. — Your Greek text is thus authoritative. It has been translated into the other languages, so that no one can be in any doubt as to its meaning.

I call Lady Elles.

Lady Elles. — Mr President, the same applies in English, but I would like if I may, through you, to ask Mr Plaskovitis to make it clear, for the purposes of clear translation into English, that in his paragraph 2 the right of a citizen to vote is an alternate right and not a joint right, i.e. he can vote in the State where he is residing and on the basis of the list of his native country.

President. — May I solve your problem by asking Mr Plaskovitis to read very slowly paragraph 2 of his amendment in Greek, so that it can be translated by our interpreters now into the different languages.

Mr Plaskovitis. — (*GR*) I will repeat the text, Mr President.

Paragraph 2 of Article 6: 'The citizens of a Member State who exercise their right to vote in another

Member State of the Community may vote on the basis of the list of candidates of their country of origin.'

That is the text. For Lady Elles' benefit, I would explain that this means that each citizen of a Member State who is resident either temporarily or permanently in another Member State has the right to vote for the candidates in his own country on the basis of the list of candidates in his own country.

That is the meaning of the amendment.

President. — I call Mr Luster.

Mr Luster. — (*DE*) I should like to raise a point of order in accordance with Rules 82 and 83 of the Rules of Procedure, not on this particular point but on the general application of the Rules of Procedure.

You mentioned during our discussions that you put the broader text to the vote since it bore the heading 'Article so-and-so is to be replaced by the following new text'.

I would ask you to reflect, Mr President, whether the heading: 'the text is to be replaced by the following new text' does in fact substantially affect the subsequent text, or whether the heading merely makes it appear to be a complete amendment.

It is still possible for another text with a less grandiose title to produce amendments in the truer sense of the word.

I am making this point not in connection with any special case, but in order to avoid misunderstandings in future votes.

President. — Mr Luster, I understand your points, but feel that they do not solve the problem.

I call Mr D'Angelosante.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (*IT*) Mr President, perhaps I am a bit late in speaking but, considering your decision on the Fergusson amendment and mindful of what Mr Luster said — it was probably about the same thing even if he did not say so — I should like to point out that Rule 54(1)(b) has already been interpreted by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions. The committee's interpretation was that an amendment is inadmissible if, while seeming to amend a text, it actually deletes it entirely. In this instance the amendment by Mr Fergusson and others does not seek to delete the whole text but a large part of it, even though this is not stated.

D'Angelosante

Mr President, let me draw your attention to the interpretation which is given in italics after Rule 54, especially the second note. I myself was involved in discussing the interpretation of Rule 54(1)(b), and I should like to point out that your interpretation is inadmissible. You may well say that I am bringing up this issue of admissibility at rather late a stage — and I would grant you that — but in this instance the interpretation which you gave before could, with your permission, be revised or at least reconsidered. We could therefore have another discussion and another vote on the amendments to Article 5, paragraph 2, and up to the end of the article.

President. — Mr D'Angelosante, I do not feel I can agree with what you have said. In the first place the Bocklet amendment has been withdrawn. I have established that fact. Secondly, it cannot be said that the Fergusson amendment came into the category you have just referred to, that of an amendment tantamount to a motion for rejection. You yourself said it was a partial rejection, which thus replaced the text. I think you are going a bit far with your interpretation of the Rules of Procedure.

(...)

Article 6 — Amendments Nos 17, 50, 51 and 32.

Mr Seitlinger, rapporteur. — (FR) As rapporteur, I am against Amendments Nos 17, 51 and 32. As for Amendment No 50 by Mr Fergusson, it was not considered by the committee. I leave it up to the House to decide.¹

(...)

Article 8 — Amendments Nos 37 and 35

Mr Gerokostopoulos. — (GR) Mr President, I should like you to consider Amendment No 37 withdrawn as it serves no further purpose now that No 36 has been rejected.

(...)

President. — Explanations of vote may now be given.

Mr Schieler. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the vast majority of the Socialist Group has approved this act and will also vote in favour of the motion, although the result produced by these votes will contain a flaw. It has been decided in plenary session that EEC citizens who have made their home for over five years in another country are to acquire the right to stand for election in that country; unfortunately, however, it has not decided to grant the right to vote under the same circumstances. In spite of this flaw, we shall vote for the act.

Sir Henry Plumb. — Mr President, I fear we cannot, as a group, support this report. The proper result of our efforts and Parliament's efforts on this report should have been the approval of a proposal which could have had a chance of being adopted by the Council. This is not the situation in which we find ourselves. Many of the speakers — if one listened to them in the debate this morning — seem to assume that this group expected all the Member States to employ the electoral system used within the United Kingdom. That, Mr President, is simply not the case. My group accepts the principle of a uniform electoral system. It accepts the need for compromise towards this end and it has accepted the need to introduce proportionality into the constituency system to which we are accustomed. This was not easy, and not all our Members felt able to move as far as that. Nevertheless, as a group we feel that if there has been a failure to compromise it has not been for want of flexibility on the part of my group.

(Applause)

We remain, Mr President, willing to work with our colleagues to try to find a system acceptable to all nationalities. In our view the report as amended has nothing to commend it. The proposals contained within it are not uniform, they are not comprehensive and they are neither balanced nor fair. These proposals provide let-outs for some and not for others. Above all they run the risk of throwing away Parliament's only legal right of initiative. I urge the House therefore Mr President, not to support the report in its entirety.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) Wise old Emperor Franz-Joseph, as head of an empire populated by different peoples, once said: 'I shall know that I have governed well when all my peoples are equally dissatisfied.' There could scarcely be a better description of a reasonable compromise, since we cannot speak of true equilibrium when one side is much too happy and the other much too sad.

I have always made it clear that I supported the vote for a candidate as practiced in France since General De Gaulle's time and in England. I believe that it gives the voters real influence and acts as a check on the

¹ The rapporteur was also:
— for Amendments Nos 2, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35 and 36;
— against Amendments Nos 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 91, 93, 94 and 95.

Habsburg

kind of feudalism which comes from professional party politicians and their organization. The results of voting for candidates is as a rule also better in terms of quality. But if, in spite of that, I vote for the Seitlinger/Bocklet motion, I do so only because we have the inescapable duty to adopt a common European electoral system and because the text in question provides us with the best common denominator. It is not an ideal solution and will therefore probably have to be altered in the future, but we do at least acknowledge with gratitude the real service which Mr Seitlinger and Mr Bocklet have, with admirable patience, rendered to Europe.

(Applause)

Mr Kyrkos. — *(GR)* Mr President, the Communist Party of Greece (Interior) supports the principle of the proposed Act, but I am sorry that the House has rejected the amendments which stipulated clearly that small countries such as Greece should form one electoral region, as well as other amendments proposing that there should be no lower limit for the election of a Member. Both these principles formed the basis of the Greek electoral law, which met with universal approval — and that is something very rare in Greece, as those who follow events there will know — and the wonderful results this would have produced would have enabled us to point to this Parliament as a fine example.

The rejection of these amendments and the flexibility which leaves the door open for the majority system to slip in, thereby destroying the unity of the proposed Act, leave me no choice but to vote against.

Mrs Veil. — *(FR)* Mr President, the vote that is going to take place is undoubtedly one of the most important in this legislature, since it is a vote on a mandate which has been explicitly entrusted to us by the Treaties. I shall not be voting for the motion for a resolution. The fact is that our mandate was precise: we had to submit a uniform text. It was up to us to decide on either a genuinely uniform text or a set of general principles which most people could agree on. We have not done this. In fact, what is proposed is an extremely complicated text which is actually not at all uniform since most of the paragraphs in Article 2 begin with the words *The Member States shall lay down . . .*

And another thing: we were unable to agree on one vital point, a uniform age regarding eligibility, and this is something which involves young people a lot. These are the reasons why I shall not be voting in favour of the text.

Mr Romualdi. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, given the fact that this motion for a resolution does not lay down electoral procedures which are

in any way uniform, and also the particular fact that, on the basis of the unamended Article 4, the Member States retain the opportunity to make a mockery of any of the guiding principles in this document, we shall be abstaining in the vote on it. We have taken this decision even though we recognize the effort put in by the rapporteur and the committee. We hope that the Council will pay more attention to the ideas rather than the actual content of this document and allow the Member States to draft in a more uniform fashion the individual national laws which will govern the election of the second European Parliament.

Mr Balfé. — Mr President, I and a number of my colleagues will be voting against this resolution, and if I could quote the words of our own leader, Ernest Glinne, before he was got at: 'Given the diversity of the existing electoral systems within the Community, the Socialist Group is of the opinion that it would be unwise to try and adopt a uniform electoral system for the second elections by direct universal suffrage. We therefore propose that efforts to introduce a direct electoral system for 1984 be abandoned, especially as there is reason to doubt whether such a system, even if it were adopted by the Parliament, would be approved by the Council of Ministers and ratified by the national parliaments'. Those words were in Document PE 73.743/Annex, submitted by the Socialist Group. In this debate we have seen that people are prepared to completely ignore the traditions of the Member States. It has always been the contention of my party that people are sent here on the basis of the electoral systems within their countries. When this Community manages to sort out a few of the other fundamental abuses of human rights we might be prepared to start looking at harmonizing the electoral systems of the Community; but not until then.

Mr Møller. — *(DA)* Mr President, I naturally deeply regret that it was not possible to reach a compromise in the Political Affairs Committee, so that the British Members could also have voted for the motion. It was important to reach such a compromise, and I think that the British went as far as they could to associate themselves with the additional member system to obtain a compromise based on the principle of proportional representation. But if I am asked to vote either for or against the motion, I shall have to vote for it, since I represent a country and an electorate which is in favour of proportional representation — and a very highly developed form of proportional representation at that. I should also like to make it known that I shall vote for the Seitlinger Report, although I regret that the compromise which would have made all plain sailing at the Council decision stage was not reached.

Mr Enright. — Mr President, it isn't very often that I proclaim a unity of belief with both Arthur Scargill and Austin Mitchell, but we in fact are one in believing

Enright

that the British electoral system should be reformed, and I am very firmly in favour of that.

Having said that, I am extraordinarily unhappy at the way this ragbag of proposals has been put together. If we are not to make ourselves a laughing-stock with the Council, I think we would be very silly to put these proposals forward. I shall therefore most reluctantly vote against the resolution. Because if there is one thing that is worse than a single member constituency, it is a capital dominated electoral system, be it London, Paris, Athens or wherever. I cannot vote for a system which would move in that direction as opposed to the single transferable vote system which was put forward.

I am very unhappy indeed for another reason, and that is that, if I am successful in opposing this, we will lose Article 5 which gives to those who live abroad what should be their just and inalienable right to vote particularly in European elections.

I think it is a scandal that they do not all have the vote at this moment, and I think that we should bring forward a separate proposal upon this matter.

Mr C. Jackson. — Mr President, I am firmly in favour of proportional representation for European elections, but this report takes no account of the strong feeling of principle in my country that it is fundamental to maximize the links between Members and their constituencies and that this is best done in single member constituencies. A modification of the German system would have provided a single member proportional system compatible with our European requirements. Yet this was rejected, as also was Amendment No 55 in which, as a last minute effort at compromise, I proposed widening the choice from the Seitlinger proposals to include the additional member system. Such a lack of sensitivity in the result makes it impossible for me to vote for this report, which in my view would have been better returned to committee and reconsidered and which now stands virtually no chance of adoption by the Council.

Mr Chambeiron. — (*FR*) This morning my colleague, Mr Piquet, outlined what the French Members of the Communist and Allies Group think about the draft uniform electoral procedure decided on by the Political Affairs Committee. He said we were glad that the draft was based on the idea of proportional representation, which to our mind is the most democratic means of ensuring that this Assembly reflects the pluralist nature of our countries, but at the same time we cannot accept the conditions for combining lists, as we have unhappy memories of this practice in France because of the outrageous abuses which resulted from the system in the past.

In our opinion, if we really want to move towards an electoral system that will indicate a step forward for

the Ten — and in this respect the new government which has been in power in France for nearly a year now has shown its desire to work towards a more democratic system of representation — we can do this only if we accept the fact that we cannot twist out of shape the actual state of affairs which stems from the diversity and the special features of our respective countries.

We said that our vote would depend on what happened to the amendments we tabled. I know there were not many but they do represent a matter of absolute principle for us. Our amendments were rejected, and other amendments were inserted which make this new electoral procedure rather inconsistent because someone could be elected without being able to vote. The retention of the combined lists and this other inconsistency mean that we shall be abstaining when it comes to voting on the text.

Mr D'Angelosante. — (*IT*) Mr President, the Italian Members of the Communist and Allies Group have already voted against the proposed act and we shall also be voting against the motion for a resolution. Our position was outlined and clearly explained this morning during Mr De Pasquale's speech. The fact is that it was obvious to everyone that this was a compromise which I shall term, if I may, one of the most shameful imaginable. In fact, if you ask me, this is not a compromise but an almost perfect electoral law, which however contains an article which says that each State may adopt different measures if it wants, and in other words it can do just what it likes. A section of the Conservative group accepts this as a compromise and this clearly suggests that if this document goes through — which must not happen because otherwise Parliament is going to be a laughing-stock — and if it then gets through the Council of Ministers and the national parliaments, the result will be that each State can make up its own electoral law and everything will be back at square one.

Mr President, I must confess there was some doubt about this interpretation, but when Mr Seitlinger suggested our amendment be rejected — the one about excluding proportional representation from the possibility of derogation — and when the House in fact rejected it, in the same way that it rejected Mr Bangemann's amendment specifying what the derogation referred to, it became clear that this was the worst possible compromise, and if any part of it is positive it is the second part. The House has voted in an unacceptable way. It has kept the voters in their passive role and failed to give them an active role, and it makes me think of that poor queen who offered cake to her starving people. It is no laughing matter because you, Mr President, ought to have prevented it!

Mr Megahy. — Mr President, a common electoral system should in some way reflect the state of political

Megahy

development in the Community. I shall be voting against these proposals because I feel that the present state of political development in the EEC is opposed to a system which tries to impose some uniformity on and interfere with the rights of nation States to determine their own electoral systems. The proponents of proportionality do not have enough confidence in the European ideal to see that this would apply to all the Member States. It is absurd that many of the smaller Member States are totally overrepresented in this Parliament. Now, I support the rights of the small nation States, but they can't have their cake and eat it. If they want proportionality, if they want this House to reflect the state of development of European integration, then they should be prepared to surrender those privileges in return for a proportional system. To judge by the voting that took place earlier, anyone who thinks that 261 Members in favour out of the 430 here — with 76 voting against and 27 abstentions — represent a tidal wave of enthusiasm is kidding himself. It will be thrown out by the Council of Ministers anyway.

Mr Forth. — Mr President, Members will not be surprised to know that I don't share the unhealthy obsession with proportionality that has been shown by many colleagues this afternoon. I believe that any political or governmental system should, ideally, demonstrate good and stable government, which does not seem to be the case in those systems on the continent of Europe which use proportional representation. I also believe that governments should show fair representation. I don't believe that lists provide this, nor do systems which allow for casual resignations. Neither do I believe that a system which allows the replacement of someone who has resigned by someone else for whom a vote has never been cast shows fairness. I do not agree that we need slavishly to try to mirror arithmetically the votes cast within a legislature. That is not a principal requirement of government or political systems.

When the Community and one of its institutions fails to recognize the real and legitimate differences in culture and history amongst its Member States, it is treading on very dangerous ground, which is why I fear what we are trying to do this afternoon. For these reasons, I shall be voting against the report.

Mr R. Jackson. — Mr President, this is an historic occasion — although looking around the Chamber and listening to the way in which people are talking in the aisles, one would not believe it. Today is the unique occasion on which the directly-elected Parliament can exercise a right to initiate legislation, and we have made a mess of it. Why do I say that? My statement is a personal one which I feel obliged to make because, during the European election campaign, on every platform on which I spoke I said that I was in favour of a proportional system for European elec-

tions. But I am going to vote today against Parliament's proposals for a uniform electoral system, and I notice that nearly all the 81 British Members will do so, quite apart from any others who might vote against it.

I could have voted for proportional representation — and so could many of my Conservative colleagues — if we had been given an acceptable option, i.e. the additional-member system, containing a constituency element. But Parliament has voted for a uniform system which is unacceptable to most Members — to an overwhelming majority of Members — from one Member State. This is not wise legislation, particularly since this is a constitutional matter. Even in a unitary State, and particularly in a federal State, constitutional legislation can be said to require what the Americans call a 'concurrent majority' in which all concerned can agree. And this has not been obtained in this case — which is why I say that this is unwise legislation. We in this Parliament cannot impose a system on the Community, but what we can hope to do is to influence and to persuade, through the Council. Unfortunately, we have refused to take that opportunity on this occasion.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Mr President, in the course of this morning's debate, my colleague Mr Efremidis gave the views of the Communist Party of Greece on the uniform electoral system. We believe that this motion for a resolution is totally at variance with the principles of the sovereignty of the people and national independence, with the defence of which the Greek people has entrusted us. Despite some isolated, more or less positive elements in the report compared with the electoral laws in the Member States, it is unacceptable for the number of constituencies in Greece or the voting system in Greece to be laid down in Strasbourg or Brussels.

Our opposition was confirmed during the voting on the amendments when Parliament rejected nearly all the amendments aimed at protecting the peculiarities and responsibilities of each country.

In our view, the Seitlinger report is linked to the moves to strengthen the powers of the European Parliament at the expense of the national parliaments and with the attempts to abolish the unanimity rule in the Council.

This is yet another reason why we shall be voting against the proposals.

Mr Price. — Mr President, I want to see a uniform electoral system based on proportional representation as soon as possible. I think that members of other political groups may have underestimated the difficulties experienced by some members of the European Democratic Group in accepting a system of propor-

Price

tional representation. As a result, Parliament has not accepted the continuance of that other familiar element in the British system, the single member constituency. That will make it more difficult to obtain the unanimous agreement to a uniform system which most of us want. Nevertheless, I have voted for the draft act and I favour this resolution because I believe that the regional list system could be a good system for Europe as a whole. I believe that the British people will also find the system easily understandable, if they accept it, and that it could provide them with an effective system of representation. In particular, the draft act permits constituencies of only three or four members which is very similar to our existing system of local government. I hope that the United Kingdom will be prepared to make this further move in the interests of Europe as a whole which, of course, includes the British people.

Mr Prag. — Mr President, this vote will be a sad moment for me. For many years I have been in favour of proportional representation, provided it could be combined with a direct form of popular representation, such as we have in Great Britain. The additional member system used in the *Bundestag* in Germany, which was the system advocated in the first version of the Seitlinger report which came before the Political Affairs Committee, used that combination. Since I was elected, I have come more and more to appreciate the direct link with the constituency provided by our British system. Colleagues from this Parliament who have visited our constituencies and seen how we represent those constituencies directly have recognized the value of that link. There is nothing more salutary for democracy than to be subjected directly to the views and criticism of one's constituents, the voters of an area, and to be responsible for that area in this Parliament. There is no way of keeping the representatives of the people accessible to their voters, who daily exercise their right to make their views known to their representatives, if there are between 1.5 and 2 million voters, the minimum number of voters we are facing. If there are 7 or 8 million voters, there is no conceivable way in which that link can be maintained.

Whatever Mr Price may have said about our knowing the system in our local government, we have a few thousand electors so there is really no comparison. I remain, as I have been for many years, a firm and committed supporter of proportional representation, but I cannot and shall not vote for this unfortunate report and the messy system it advocates.

Mr Newton Dunn. — Mr President, I do not share the pessimism of my colleagues at all. I shall vote for the report and not in accord with my group.

(Applause)

The system that we have in this report is not ideal. The ideal system, which I proposed, was the single trans-

ferable vote, but due to the inequities and our curious allocation of speaking time, this system was never actually discussed in the debate. I got as far as being the next speaker on the television screen, but was then cut off. There does seem to be something wrong with the system. Nevertheless, I recognize that there is a Treaty obligation on every country to change its system. I have for long been in favour of proportional representation. I am willing to bow to the majority wisdom in Parliament. The most important point is that we have spent over two years on this report and I greatly doubt whether taking it back to committee would produce any greater consensus next time. I do not want to see the Parliament follow the Council into paralysis and inability to make any decisions. The Parliament must get things moving. We alone can make European unity come nearer and we must pass this report and get it out to the Council. For that reason I shall vote in favour.

Mr Balfe. — Mr President, always desirous of helping to save your time, I have counted the number of people in the Chamber and ascertained that there is a quorum, so I withdraw the point of order I put to you.

Written explanations of votes

Mr Bonde. — (DA) The People's Movement considers that the formulation of Danish electoral laws is a national matter which does not concern other powers, and we cannot therefore support the Seitlinger report.

Mrs Boserup. — (DA) The Socialist People's Party has no desire to force on voters in other countries special electoral rules which are foreign to the individual countries' democratic traditions. We do not want to be party to an action which may lead to dissension and discord between countries. The electoral rules are changed if a majority of a country's citizens favour the changes, and not because this self-important assembly comes up with a proposal. The Socialist People's Party is working to further democratic rights, but we cannot regard this proposal as furthering such rights — quite the reverse, since it is a proposal to force citizens in some EEC countries to accept an electoral system with which they are not familiar and which they have not asked for.

I shall therefore vote against the motion.

(Parliament approved the proposed act and adopted the resolution)

7. Multifibre Arrangement (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the joint debate on the two oral questions on the Multifibre Arrangement.

If there are no objections, I declare the list of speakers closed.

I call Mr Cousté.

Mr Cousté. — (FR) Mr President, on behalf of my group I tabled a motion for a resolution not only on the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement but also on the strengthening of the Community policy on trade in textiles and clothing. Indeed, our group has continually stressed — by written and oral questions by all our members, and particularly by René Paulhan and by Mr Deleau who spoke on 19 November — as Mr Xavier Deniau had also stressed, the importance which we attach to the problems of the textile industry, i.e. the problems of employment in regions where there are no opportunities for other industries, in view of the general crisis we are going through. However, as you know, on 25 February the Council of Ministers on textiles indicated that the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement represented a balance which was beneficial both to the Community textile industry and to the Third World countries which trade with the Community. Finally, we should add that one of our basic reservations is that the situation cannot be properly assessed until bilateral agreements have been concluded.

In truth, Mr President, we are in a paradoxical situation. Indeed, the textile trading policy of the Community has not succeeded in avoiding that paradox which has characterized it since the first Multifibre Arrangement — namely that the Community's measures are regarded as protectionist by the developing countries represented in Geneva, whereas in fact, with penetration rates for textile and clothing products rising from 21% in 1973 to 44% in 1980, the Community is the most open market in the world. The figures for the United States or for Japan, which is even more protectionist, are nowhere near this level. This means that, with Community production falling steadily, consumption stagnating and exports rising very slowly because of the general crisis, the share of consumption represented by imports from outside the Community is growing all the time.

In other words, in the last few years, despite all the trading policy instruments available to the Community but which it does not always use to the full, the pressure of low-price imports has not been contained. In this respect, the Council decisions of 25 February, which will enable the Commission to begin renegotiation of the bilateral agreements, do not reassure us at all as to the possibility of improving the implementation of the Community textile trading policy.

Firstly, because the overall internal ceilings have not really been defined as maximum annual quantities for the import into the Community of the eight most sensitive products — cotton yarn, cotton fabrics, synthetic fabrics, T-shirts, sweaters, trousers, blouses and shirts. And the quantities included under outward processing traffic, representing targets which can be adapted by the Council in the course of the year, add to the difficulty.

Next, because the antisurge mechanism — *antigonflement* in French — is defined in a very ambiguous way which makes it difficult to apply. Indeed, the Council has defined what should only be a quantitative management mechanism, making it possible to avoid a sudden and considerable increase in imports based on the annual unused portions of quotas — and to what is this mechanism linked in its application? To the discovery of dumping practices or export subsidies on the part of the supplier country, and this raises a completely different problem — not one of management but one of commercial law. It would obviously have been preferable to establish 1983 quotas on the basis of actual imports in the past year, i.e. actual trade flows, so as to avoid giving the supplier countries opportunities for export of such large quantities that in order to achieve them they overdevelop their production capacity. This has been the case hitherto, since all the quotas in force were calculated on the basis of 1976 — a boom year very favourable to exporting countries — and coupled with a pre-established theoretical annual growth rate for subsequent years, which is always set too high in a period of economic crisis.

I would like to deal rapidly with six special problems. The first is the exceeding of quotas in 1980. The official figures available for the first nine months of 1981 already show many cases in which 1981 import quotas were exceeded regionally — i.e. in several Member States of our Community — particularly for the eight most sensitive categories of products which I have just mentioned. Moreover, the 'ex container' measures in 1981 deserve to be stressed. Indeed, the Commission introduced under this heading 89 new regional quantitative restrictions and 12 Community quantitative restrictions, which is very little in view of the fact that more than 1 000 cases in which the 'ex container' level was exceeded were reported under Article 11 of the standard bilateral agreement. Thirdly, and finally, the 1980 figures for the textile/clothing trade balance of the Community show that in very many cases the deficit in the Community's textile trade cannot be invoked to support our trade in industrial products with a high added value, since the latter are themselves in deficit.

Let me give you a few figures, Madam President, which are very impressive. The deficit with South Korea is more than 600 million ECU (1980 deficit), whereas the deficit for all products — i.e. including industrial products — exceeds 1 000 million. With China, the textile deficit is 457 million ECU and the overall deficit is 231 million. With Taiwan, the textile deficit is 369 million and the overall deficit for industrial products is over 1 290 million. With Brazil, the textile deficit is 273 million ECU and the overall deficit for industrial products 1 728 million. Finally, with Thailand there is a textile deficit of 152 million and an overall deficit for industrial products of 586 million.

Coûté

These figures have never been published or announced, and they deserve the attention not only of our colleagues but obviously of all textile workers.

Then there is the influence of reciprocity and the prohibitive customs duties imposed by certain third countries on Community textile exports entering their markets. I do not want to list all of these very high duties, but for clothing we have 100% for Taiwan and 105% for Brazil. And these are the official rates, so the real rates are higher. On men's and youths' wear, Venezuela levies a duty of 144%; on outer garments, Mexico has one of 35%. Venezuela has a duty of 100% on synthetic textile fibre yarns, Taiwan imposes one of 107% on wool and fine hair fabrics, and Korea imposes one of 60% on the same items. These are things of which people are unaware, which are impressive and which give a completely different picture of the reality of textile trade between the Community and the rest of the world.

Moreover, the price clause for the agreements with the State-trading countries cannot be enforced. There is a famous example — that of imports of dresses from Romania in 1980 at a price — listen carefully, for there is no mistake, these are present-day francs — of 100 francs on the French market, brought in and delivered to the customers.

My last point concerns fraud as to origin, which is absolutely staggering. A certificate of origin is required for the import into the Community of sensitive and very sensitive textile products, i.e. groups 2 and 1 respectively, originating from countries with bilateral agreements. Now, it may happen that businessmen in a third country supplying goods at low-cost price, which has reached its quota for a particular product, come to an agreement with businessmen in another low-price supplier country, through which they send the goods intended for the Community. These products then fraudulently receive, in the intermediate country which has not reached its quota, a certificate stating that they originated in that country. Frauds of this kind take place on a considerable scale, particularly in South East Asian countries where there is virtually multilateral management of the textile quotas, although they are allocated to countries individually.

I would like to ask both the Commission and the Council — and I welcome Mr Haferkamp — whether the Commission knows about these fraudulent flows in time. In order to detect and remedy them, has it established effective cooperation with its delegations and the authorities in the countries concerned? Or does it discover these frauds accidentally, owing to the lack of organization and adequate means — i.e. when we Members of Parliament learn of redundancies in a German, British or French firm and suddenly discover what I could describe as the key to the mystery?

That is why we are very critical and take the view that the outcome of this negotiation remains, in the final analysis, characterized by a certain ambiguity as to the principles of the common commercial policy in the textile and clothing sector. That is also why we have tabled a motion for a resolution in which we deplore the attitude of the Commission and the Council, although I know that the Commission, for its part, has really done everything it could, at the instigation of Mr Haferkamp, whom I am happy to see here, and Mr Davignon. We therefore remain very concerned. Why? Because we do not know when the flood of imported textile products will stop, and because we want to keep a textile industry which meets the needs of Europeans and also exports its products. In a word, do we want to maintain in Community Europe not merely a textile industry, but also workers rather than unemployed? In a nutshell, have we a policy of foresight, and I might also say of industrial, human and social success? That is the question we must ultimately ask in the wake of the decisions of 25 February.

IN THE CHAIR: LADY ELLES*Vice-President*

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Madam President, the problem of the crisis in the textile industry is undoubtedly a very serious matter for the Community since, as Mr Coûté's question also mentions, 700 000 workers in this sector have lost their jobs in the last seven years. There is, however, one thing we do not understand: the European Parliament is today calling for the protection of large West European firms against imports into the Community, some of which come from developing countries for which the textile industry is one of the main props of the national economy. How then can the Community ignore the right of a Member State such as Greece to protect its own production from the negative results of accession? The Council certainly took the Greek case into consideration last week, but as usual this amounted to nothing more than a pious hope.

The textile industry is one of the traditional and most dynamic industrial sectors in Greece. Greece is the only Member State in the Community which produces cotton in substantial quantities. But from 1979 onwards, particularly in view of the forthcoming accession to the EEC, the Greek textile industry entered a serious crisis. On 1 January 1981 all the protective measures which had been enacted to strengthen the domestic industry were abolished. From 1983

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onwards firms from all over the Community will also be able to participate in competitions for public supply contracts, and this will create new and considerable obstacles to the sale of Greek textile products even on the Greek domestic market. Over a period of two years, according to the Greek Textile Workers' Federation, 5 000 workers in this sector were made redundant. Group dismissals are a daily occurrence. The ratio of Greek imports to exports rose from 1:2 in 1980 to 2:3 in 1981, the first year after accession.

The French Government, in violation even of Community law, imposes quotas on Greek exports, and once more we call for the removal of this discrimination. Madam President, the number one problem for Greek textile workers is to guarantee the right to work, and this depends on the implementation of a national policy for the modernization of this industrial sector. The commitments entered into as a result of accession to the EEC constitute a serious obstacle to the achievement of this aim. The Greek Communist Party does not have the right to pass over this matter in silence for the sake of a vindication of Community protectionist measures — some of which may be directed towards a positive end, but which are of doubtful practical significance in the case of Greece.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Tove Nielsen. — (DA) Madam President, the answer we received today from the Council is not satisfactory, and I think that in fact the President-in-Office must himself know how unsatisfactory it is. For he knows with what earnestness we have time after time discussed the problems facing the clothing and textile industry. He knows full well that Parliament is very concerned to see that the European textile and clothing industry is able to make the necessary adjustments in this continuing period of transition.

We solemnly discuss the many unemployed we have and wonder what we can do to find jobs for them. The number of unemployed is increasing every day and we must recognize that very many jobs have been lost in precisely this field in recent years. We cannot stand by and tacitly condone that.

We are not talking here about protectionism. We are working towards free trade, but in the present economic crisis we are obliged to make sure that our own industry is able to make the adjustments, to have time to adjust, to safeguard jobs and to create jobs. But I should also like to add here that we do not want to maintain jobs artificially in sectors where we know there is no future.

There are also certain countries, like Denmark, which have shown the will to undertake the necessary structural changes. This is what we need in order to create competitive business but in order to be competitive

they must also have some assurance that conditions are not going to change completely. Thus we in the Liberal Group are concerned that the many talks held to date on a new Multifibre Arrangement managed only to settle the general points — i.e. we did not manage to synchronize the general and bilateral agreements. It seems to me that the problems were simply postponed and that we must now wait for the bilateral agreements before we know whether we really have got a Multifibre Arrangement. I do not find it at all satisfactory to hear the President-in-Office today saying that, if we do not get Multifibre Arrangement No 3, we can manage with the GATT rules.

We cannot now do without a Multifibre Arrangement and the President-in-Office should therefore ensure that there is solidarity and unity in the Council. For when all is said and done that is why we have not got further than we have.

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

Mr Deleau. — (FR) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, since the Multifibre Arrangement has been extended, the question which concerns us most today is whether the measures taken recently will enable the Community in the next four or five years to control the volume of its low-price textile imports, i.e. to stabilize the annual growth rate of imports according to trends in consumption, so as to reduce their degree of penetration of the Community market. That is in our view the key question we are faced with today. The answer to this question, we believe, is not to be found in the legal texts of the GATT or of the Council.

Firstly, because the Multifibre Arrangement simply defines a framework of rights which allow the Community to make use, when dealing with the textile trade, of certain mechanisms approved by the GATT should its market be disrupted, without breaking international law.

Next, because the Council decision of 25 February 1982 merely sets out an overall compromise solution on the principles of textile policy — basically the definition of the overall internal ceilings, the distribution of the ceilings within the Member States, the regulation of outward processing traffic and the reduction of the quotas for the so-called 'dominant' supplier countries.

The reply to the question 'What are the chances of success of the third Arrangement?' depends above all on the Community's capacity and will to secure recognition by its partners, in the renegotiation of the bilateral textile agreements, of the means and instruments available to it, and to utilize them in the management of these agreements. As in 1974, when the first MFA

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was signed, and as in 1978, when the second Arrangement was agreed upon, the conditions for a viable textile trading policy exist, and the means of putting it into effect also exist. But hitherto it has been the political will to save the textile industry at all its production stages which in my view has been lacking. This explains the complete failure of the first MFA and the semi-failure of the second MFA. We believe that the success of the pluriannual measures to monitor and stabilize import flows of cost-price textile products into the Community depends on a necessary strengthening of the mechanisms of textile policy and their application.

This means, in essence, that we should be very careful to ensure that the overall internal ceilings and the quotas established are not exceeded. It also means that, for the products not subject to quantitative restrictions, we should take measures relating to withdrawals from the Community basket and effective regional measures. Finally, it means detecting frauds and diversions of quotas and taking swift action to rectify them.

Those, very briefly, are the requirements which we think the Community textile trading policy should meet if it really wishes to give the textile industry the temporary respite which it needs, according to the spirit and the letter of the Multifibre Arrangement, to read just to the new market conditions. Finally, we would also stress the necessarily temporary and inadequate nature of any protection system if it is not backed up by a common textile industry strategy, which we fervently hope to see and which, through a deep and lasting readaptation of the industry, may provide a solution to the Community's textile crisis.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Petronio. — (IT) Madam President, the European textile industry today finds itself in very worrying circumstances. These circumstances include the growing role of the developing countries in world textile industrialization, the consolidation of the textile multinationals, financed by prosperous countries, the textile offensive of the East European countries, and finally, as if all that were not enough, the renewed Chinese activity in their sector.

The result of all this, as Mr Cousté points out in his oral question, is that nearly 800 000 jobs have been lost in the Community textile industry over the last ten years. The prospect for the next ten years is that about 120 000 jobs will be at risk every year. This opportunity for a debate on the Multifibre Arrangement is therefore timely and meets an urgent need.

It may therefore be said that the growing pressure of imports clearly shows that Europe is today facing a competitive challenge such as it has never known

before. However, we are dealing with an anomalous 'competitiveness', since the greater competitiveness of the other countries is due to open or hidden export subsidies, to undoubted forms of dumping and to unfair methods of calculating costs. It is also the result of very low labour, finance and raw materials costs.

We are therefore caught in a vice, where we are being crushed by rich countries such as the United States and economically backward countries such as Turkey, and yet we allow them the concession of zero duty rates for too many products.

Hence the need for thorough regulation of international trade, and hence also the need for national and European public authorities to guarantee to our textile industry the best possible factors of production in terms of cost. Indeed, in the textile trade we do not have reciprocity of treatment from all the countries with which we deal — whether industrialized or developing — so that we are forced to note that the position of the EEC *vis-à-vis* third countries has been seriously weakened. In fact, the penetration rate for textiles has risen from 30 to 43% in five years, but this has not been offset by exports, as we said in the previous debate.

In these circumstances, while awaiting real freedom of trade and real reciprocity of treatment, there is no doubt that the Multifibre Arrangement must continue to play its regulatory role, if only acting as a buffer. Any proposal for a radical denunciation of the Multifibre Arrangement therefore seems to us very dangerous. Nor do we even think that Article 19 of the GATT is able to provide the textile industry with greater protection than does the Multifibre Arrangement. That Arrangement, by derogation from the GATT, rightly acknowledges the need for a gradual development of textile imports to prevent market disruption.

In short, there are two aims — on the one hand, to avoid pushing the developing countries towards a dangerous concentration of their industrialization on the textile sector alone, and on the other to prevent a further worsening of the balance of payments deficit and of unemployment in the EEC. The recent renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement provides a basis for achieving these two aims, but we agree with Mr Cousté on the need to insist that an overall, not-to-be exceeded maximum be set and monitored for each of the sensitive products; these maxima must then be increased annually only on the basis of any increase in consumption, so as to stabilize penetration rates, or decreased if there is a negative growth rate; and finally, we must regulate outward processing traffic.

In our view these measures would make it possible to create the climate of confidence needed by European textile companies to enable them to continue their admirable efforts at modernization, innovation and restructuring.

President. — I call Mr Moreau.

Mr Moreau. — (*FR*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, our colleagues' two oral questions give us the opportunity to debate once again the difficult problem of the situation of the textile and clothing industry in the Community countries.

Indeed, beyond the Multifibre Arrangement, we are concerned with the situation of this industry in our countries. We know all the figures, and some of the speakers have mentioned them. I shall therefore allow myself to dwell on certain aspects of the problem.

Firstly, the loss of jobs in these industries is continuing, causing innumerable and damaging difficulties in various regions of the Community. Indeed, it is something which affects not merely one sector, but whole regions. Imports continue to rise faster than internal consumption in the Community, and such a situation cannot be allowed to continue. The permeability of the market to products from some countries with low labour costs has not been reduced, and there is also the policy of the United States and their aggressiveness in various sectors. Finally, I think we must never overlook the strategy developed in this field by the transnational undertakings.

In such a debate as this, one is always tempted to adopt simplistic formulae and advocate a kind of return to protectionism. We all know that such a solution is impracticable and in any case inadequate to deal with the problem. In fact, the textile and clothing question and the question of the MFA shed light on the problems to which the Community categorically must react by making reforms and firm and consistent responses if it wants to continue to exist and control our external trade. Renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement is one more element in the process of developing an external trade policy for the Community, based on the realities of today's world, which must lead us to establish increasingly differentiated relationships with the countries and economic groupings of the world.

At the centre of these considerations, as I said earlier, remains in my view the question of our relations with the United States. It is not a question of turning them into a scape goat designed to hide our weaknesses and our inability to draw up a suitable trading strategy. But it is important that we should tackle more rapidly and in depth the policy which the Community intends to adopt towards this country and its firms.

There is a second important point, which must, I think, be approached in a realistic manner. It relates to the activities and strategy of transnational firms. As long as we allow things to go on in this field as they are doing at present, the difficulties of the textile and clothing industry will increase in our countries.

Relations with the developing countries are also an essential factor. Every time we approach this question, we hesitate between two approaches: to impose strict quotas or to open our market without discrimination. In fact, we are faced with varied conditions, and in my view we should, while remaining faithful to our basic policy on these relations in the context of the Lomé Convention, develop policies directly related to the real capacity of the various developing countries.

The renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement, in its present form, pending the bilateral agreements, allows the Community to correct the present trend somewhat, albeit imperfectly. But I regret that today's debate could not have been held earlier, for it would have enabled us as a Parliament to have greater influence on the discussions and policies of the Commission.

In present circumstances and in the limited framework laid down, we agree with various options selected. They include the following: stabilization of import possibilities for sensitive products from low-cost countries; the anti-surge mechanism which makes it possible to forestall any sudden and damaging increase in the import of sensitive products, a growth of imports compatible with the growth in consumption; and finally, a division of the opportunities for outward processing traffic similar to the distribution of direct imports. We also agree with linking definitive adherence to the Multifibre Arrangement to the results of bilateral negotiations, and we know that the results are not foreseeable and that in the end the Multifibre Arrangement may not be signed. But this agreement — in our view, and I would like to conclude with this — can show its true worth only to the extent that the Community — the Commission and the Council — shows itself capable of effectively defending the textile industry and promoting it by developing a strategy based on the growth of this sector, thus making it possible to protect both the jobs and regions and enabling the Community to maintain its position in this field.

President. — I call Mr Frischmann.

Mr Frischmann. — (*FR*) Madam President, everyone in this Parliament knows that it was after long and difficult negotiations that agreement was reached among the Ten in Brussels in December 1981 on the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement. How could it have been otherwise, given the serious crisis affecting the textile industry in the Community?

In France alone, in the six years from 1974 to 1980 this industry lost 160 000 jobs. Hundreds of efficient factories were closed down, and whole regions turned into depressed areas. Our trade balance exchanged its surplus for a deficit, and this deficit is increasing from year to year. In the same period, imports more than

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tripled, so that now one textile product out of two consumed in our country comes from abroad.

This situation was by no means inevitable. It is essentially due to the policy of austerity pursued by previous governments, to the redeployment of the large capitalist groupings, and particularly to the agreements among European monopoly interests. For it does not make sense to blame it on labour costs, when we know that female workers in the textile and clothing industry are among the worst paid and the most ruthlessly exploited. It is the austerity imposed on ordinary families by the fall in purchasing power which has narrowed outlets and led to an increase in more commonplace articles at the expense of quality. It is also interesting to note in this context, and with regard to imports into France, that, even if 70% of these imports come from EEC countries, it is the monopolies which channel the products from Asian or Maghreb countries in order to resell them on the European market. There is no shortage of examples of such groups grabbing State aid in order to redeploy themselves abroad or reinvest in more profitable lines. Some have acquired notoriety, such as Willot Brothers, recently convicted in France.

It is not by chance that, following the signature in 1978 of an agreement among the main producers of synthetic yarns — an agreement involving a 20% reduction in production capacity — Rhône-Poulenc has quite simply stopped manufacture of synthetic yarns in France and now produces acetate in the Federal Republic of Germany with the machines from the factory in Péage de Roussillon which it closed down. But a majority of French people decided on 10 May 1981 to put an end to this policy of national self-destruction, austerity and abandonment — a source of poverty and unemployment. That is why we think that the French Minister for Industry was right to adopt a firm attitude towards our partners in the negotiations. We support the measures taken by our government to stem the loss of jobs, which is taking place at the frightening rate of 1 000 per month.

Yes, there is an urgent need to reverse the trend in this sector which is so vital for our economy, and to that end it is essential to protect the national markets against excessive imports and frauds, and to protect the Community market itself. In saying that we are taking into account not only the interests of France and of the workers in this industry, but also those of the other countries of the European Community and of the developing countries. Some of them, particularly the ACP countries, have an adverse textile trade balance with the Community. We therefore propose that trade with those countries be boosted.

In conclusion, I would say that we think it most important that the future MFA, and particularly the bilateral agreements, should not frustrate France's attempt to reconquer its own internal market. This attempt depends above all on the restimulation of

popular consumption, the modernization of our textile industry and the growth of technological innovation in the field of textile machinery, but also on the control of imports and the fight against fraud. We should remember that a return to the 1978 level of imports would enable France to restore 22 000 jobs. We should also remember that to improve productivity in this industry would involve improving working conditions, eliminating the exhausting tempo of work which still prevails, and lowering the retirement age.

That, it seems to me, is a challenge which the Community should make it its business to meet!

President. — I call Mr Pesmazoglou.

Mr Pesmazoglou. — (GR) Mr President, the questions put by Mr Welsh and Mr Cousté were very useful in that they present an opportunity for a *rapprochement* between the Parliament and the Council of Ministers on a very difficult issue, in respect of which the tasks which the Commission has been asked to carry out are really complicated; thus I am glad to see Mr Haferkamp here, who has also to be kept informed of the *rapprochement* on the principles and guidelines for these difficult negotiations. I think it is essential to continue the negotiations and the arrangements on multifibre products, because resorting to the GATT procedures would be much more inflexible and would create particularly serious problems for the countries which export to the Community. However, I would like to stress that the guidelines for these negotiations should also take into account the need to strengthen Community preference amongst the Ten, while at the same time encouraging and strengthening the integration of the textile industry. This means that it is contradictory to create exemptions and preferences for products manufactured in non-Community countries under the inward processing arrangements, as well as for cotton-producing countries, while a cotton-producing country exists within the European Community which has a particular interest in these products. The other point I would like to make is that, of the proposals and questions put by Mr Cousté, two are of particular importance. One concerns the approval of a labelling requirement for textile products with a view to checking their provenance, and the other, which is more difficult, concerns study of the extent to which the creation of a trigger price mechanism could constitute an additional element of protection in the context of the Multifibre Arrangement. Mr President, I will conclude by observing that there is also a more general problem which must be tackled. It concerns the fact that the Ten at present import 39% of all textiles, while the corresponding import figures for America and Japan are 23% and 15% respectively. The Community thus accounts for a much greater proportion of imports from countries covered by the Multifibre Arrangement. This also applies to finished

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clothes. I should add that Community per capita expenditure on textile imports is USD 4.5, the corresponding figures for America and Japan being USD 1.2 and 3.4 respectively. The Community has suffered severe damage. The workforce has contracted by 22.5% as opposed to only 10% in the United States of America. There are thus grounds for encouraging America to import more products from the developing countries. Besides, we must tackle competition from the United States of America as well. However, this would involve a more general restructuring of the textile and clothing industries, a matter which of course falls outside the terms of the Multi-fibre Arrangement, although it highlights the complex and important character of these negotiations.

Mr De Keersmaeker, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) Madam President, I should first like to thank those Members who have participated in the debate and who have asked for further information on a matter of some considerable importance.

Mr Welsh has urgently requested that certain aspects of his question be considered. He claimed that I made no answer whatsoever to either his third question or his fourth. The fourth is not particularly relevant at this point, but I did indeed give a brief answer to question three. However, since it concerns a very important aspect, and as speeches by numerous other people would seem to indicate interest in this, I should like to deal with the matter in greater detail. The point in question concerns the success of the bilateral negotiations, and whether people are right to be doubtful and sceptical. This would seem to be a rather extreme attitude, since our partners have indicated that they appreciate the difficult situation in which the European Community finds itself.

After all, the dominant countries have agreed to reduce their quotas, and the other negotiators in Geneva were prepared to recognize that an overall growth rate of 6% was no longer acceptable to the European Community. The Commission's mandate was to find a settlement. What would be the implications if these bilateral negotiations were to fail?

As you also know, the Community is to withdraw from MFA 3 if no bilateral agreements are reached. This decision has been taken, and it is perfectly clear that trade cannot be liberalized under those circumstances. However, the Council has naturally not discussed the situation which would then arise since it is as yet merely hypothetical. From the point of view of international law, we should fall back on the GATT regulations, and particularly Article 19. Mr Petronio was quick to add that this would lead to a very serious situation, but I doubt this, unless it inevitably resulted in compensatory payments and a state of non-discrimination which would get us into difficulties with the

United States. We must also bear in mind that as failure to conclude agreements with the European Community would primarily mean losing a certain proportion of the market, this would hardly be in our partners' interest. Secondly, we could anticipate fierce competition between them, which would be to no one's advantage.

Mr Welsh also asked whether the outcome of the talks held on 11 February — I must point out that they in fact took place on 25 February — is in line with the Community's priorities of maintaining or protecting the future prospects of the textile industry and its position with regard to the developing countries. It will escape no one's notice that there are conflicting interests even on this level.

Many others, including Mrs Nielsen, have claimed that the results arrived at by the Council are unsatisfactory. She has also claimed that my reply is unsatisfactory. My reply is merely an explanation of the Council's decisions. It is up to the Council to find a compromise between these rather conflicting elements.

I must point out that it is as yet dangerous to impugn anyone's motives on this matter. If the bilateral agreements are not achieved, then nothing covered by MFA3 will be implemented; if, however, they are achieved, the real result remains to be seen. So let us leave the responsibility of taking this decision to the Council.

Questions have been put up by many other Members, Madam President, and I was interested to hear the criticisms made by my colleague, Mr Chanterie, when he discussed the problems we are facing in our country. The difficulties facing our textile industry cannot be resolved by means of the further problems involved in trade agreements. Structural changes are needed in the industry itself. We have formulated a textile plan which must be incorporated into the framework of the provisions being drawn up by the European Community on this subject. The question has been asked why the provisions do not contain a social clause referring to the standards laid down by the International Labour Organization. There is a general reference to the 'economic and social development' of the developing countries, and although no specific standards are mentioned, the meaning behind the words is clear.

Madam President, I hope that this has answered the most important questions. We must all continue to keep in touch with these problems, and for the moment wait and see what results the bilateral agreements actually produce.

President. — The debate will continue as the first item on the agenda tomorrow afternoon.

8. Question Time

President. — The next item is the second part of Question Time.

We begin with the questions to the Council.

As the authors are not present, Questions Nos 57 and 58 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 59, by Mr Lalor (H-678/81):

To what extent would the Council accept the view that the guidelines established by the report of the 'Three Wise Men' have proved to be a totally inadequate response to the need for improved transparency, coherence and efficiency of the Community institutions?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) The Council disagrees entirely with the view referred to by the honourable Member concerning the report of the Three Wise Men. At its meeting on 1 and 2 December 1980, the European Council reached certain conclusions on the report on the European institutions which the Committee of Three Wise Men had submitted to it. The Council has ensured that those conclusions which concern the Council have been implemented.

Mr Lalor. — I am afraid that I cannot quite accept what the President-in-Office says by way of explanation and I would like to ask for more information. If the citizens of the European Community are to have a sense of identity with EEC decision-making, what procedure does the Council intend to implement to ensure that when the Council fixes, say, the farm prices, the farmers of Europe will be able to ascertain whether the decision has been taken on the basis of their genuinely legitimate demands, or on some vague technocratic compromise on the UK budgetary problem?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I can only answer that the members of the Council are ministers, i.e. politicians and that they must react in accordance with the reactions they observe in a particular section of the population.

President. — Question No 60, by Mr Bucchini who has been replaced by Mr Frischmann (H-691/81):

At present, Corsican fishermen have exclusive access to the six-mile zone off the two Corsican departments. With a view to protecting the interests of the fishermen and the Corsican economy, will the Council maintain their exclusive access to this zone and prohibit access to vessels from the other Member States?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) The Council has not yet taken a decision on the conditions of access to fishing zones which are to replace those laid down in Articles 100 and 101 of the Act of Accession from 1 January 1983.

However, it has before it a Commission proposal to the effect that all the Member States should be authorized to reserve fishing rights within 12 miles of their coast for vessels which have traditionally fished that area, on the understanding that other vessels will be allowed to continue their activities in such a way as to avoid any backward step from the existing situation.

The Council will resume examination of the question of access to fishing zones and the other questions outstanding in connection with the common fisheries policy as soon as possible.

Mrs Ewing. — Could I ask the President-in-Office of the Council to explain what he means by vessels which have traditionally fished, since the crux of the interpretation of this phrase must be the period over which they have fished before it could be called traditional? May I take it that we are not talking about some desultory period here? Would the President-in-Office like to put a figure on this?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) Obviously I have inherited the fisheries problem and I will do my best to find a solution to it. As regard your supplementary question, I can only say that the Council is currently looking into this problem.

President. — Since they deal with the same subject, I call Question No 61, by Mr Radoux (H-706/81):

Under several presidencies of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the European Communities, I have asked whether efforts would be made to respect the Treaty. These were written or oral questions. I only received dilatory replies or promises which produced no results. I would be grateful if the Presidency would indicate its views on this matter.

and Question No 76, by Mr Hutton (H-805/81):

In view of the Council's decisions on a study of possible trade measures against the USSR and on an analysis of such measures taken by the US Government, taken on 26 January 1982 by qualified majority pursuant to Article 113 of the EEC Treaty, will the President-in-Office explain his policy in regard to voting in Council according to the stipulations of the Treaties; and will he undertake to seek decisions in Council on every possible occasion by majority voting?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (FR) The Presidency-in-Office of the Council, like previous Presidencies, intends to act in accordance with the Treaties. However, it should be noted that

¹ See Annex.

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the provisions of the Treaties which provide that a decision can be taken by a simple or qualified majority do not preclude members of the Council from continuing their efforts to align their viewpoints before the Council takes a decision.

Mr Radoux. — (*FR*) I should like to ask the President of the Council as the person who drew up the report on European Union presented 1976 whether he intends, before 30 June and in the light of the various resolutions adopted by Parliament in July 1981, to see to it that measures are taken which are likely to promote the smoother running of the Community institutions and, in this spirit, that the Member States as a whole benefit from bilateral ministerial meetings, an increase in which can only be interpreted as a contribution towards increased efficiency of the Community institutions.

Mr Tindemans. — (*FR*) I can assure the honourable Member that I will do what I can to ensure that the Treaty, as we adopted it, is applied wherever possible. With an eye to finding solutions to the problems raised, I think all contacts are useful from the point of view of arriving at a satisfactory agreement.

Mr Patterson. — When the President-in-Office was one of our colleagues, I heard him being a great deal more forthright on this issue than he has been now. Could I ask him to develop his views on this matter? Would he, for example, accept the suggestion that the Council should systematically indicate at the beginning of its meetings — or it should be indicated — which items are susceptible to majority voting and which are not, so that at least some progress could be made? He himself knows the answers, because he wrote many of them.

Mr Tindemans. — (*FR*) When the Council meets, I always quote the Article of the Treaty applicable to the question under discussion. Consequently, I always indicate whether it is to be decided unanimously, by a qualified majority or by a simple majority.

I would add, for Mr Radoux's benefit, that bilateral contacts do take place but, as I have just explained, all contacts may be useful from the point of view of reaching agreement within the Council.

Mr Efreimidis. — (*GR*) The President-in-Office has given us to understand in his replies that efforts are being made to do away with the unanimity principle, which finds its basis in the fundamental provisions of the Treaty.

May I ask whether this means that there will be total disregard for what was achieved by the 1966 Luxembourg agreement, which initiated the practical applica-

tion of the principle of unanimity, at least on matters basically affecting the essential interests of the countries involved. I should like to have this clarification, since it is a matter of extreme importance, and I should like the reply to be as clear-cut as possible.

Mr Tindemans. — (*FR*) As I have already said, I will do whatever I can to see to it that the Treaties, as adopted by our respective parliaments, are applied. However, I must obviously also take account of the difficulties facing the various Member States and of any agreements which might have been concluded with a view to permitting normal activities.

President. — Question No 62, by Mrs Castle (H-718/81):

Will the Council in deciding the location of the Community Trade Mark Office give overriding priority to the needs of regional policy?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (*NL*) The Commission of the European Communities, in submitting the proposal for a Council Regulation which provides for the setting-up of a Community Trade Mark Office, expressly reserved the right to make a proposal as to the location of the Office at a later date. In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that the European Parliament has not yet given its opinion on the proposal for a Regulation, it is not possible to state at present on which criteria the Council will base its decision on the location of the Office.

Mrs Castle. — I hope that answer means that the door is still open for regional policy to be enforced in this field. Is the President-in-Office aware that I am strongly in favour of this Community Trade Mark Office coming to Britain? But would he not agree that, in view of the Council's declared belief in a policy of encouraging development in our hard-hit regions, it would be quite wrong to put this in the capital city when a regional centre is available on an equally satisfactory basis? Is he aware, for instance, of the special claims of Manchester — a great centre of industry and commerce, an international gateway of communications with long expertise in the trade-mark field over textiles, with a lot of hotel and office accommodation much cheaper than London and also with a high unemployment problem? So will he please fight in the Council of Ministers for giving priority to regional policy when deciding this office location?

Mr Tindemans. — (*NL*) It goes without saying that the Council will take account of the opinion issued by the European Parliament on this question.

Mr Welsh. — May I press the President-in-Office a little further? Would he confirm that there is no bar to a Member State submitting the names of more than one city to the Council for consideration for this important office and that the Council will take an independent and objective decision on the merits of the case submitted for the city of Manchester?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I shall endeavour to see to it that the Council comes to as objective and fair a decision as possible. Obviously, I repeat, we will take account of the opinion issued by the European Parliament.

President. — Question No 63 will not be called because of Items 6 and 7 on the agenda.

Question No 64, by Mr Wurtz, who has been replaced by Mr Chambeiron (H-727/81):

In view of the serious violation of human rights in Turkey which contradict the assurance given by the representatives of the junta of their desire for a return to democracy, does the Council not think that the time has come to denounce the Community's association agreements with Turkey?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (FR) The Council would remind the honourable Member of the statement which the President of the Council made before the European Parliament at its meeting on 21 January 1982.

The Community authorities have not discussed the denunciation of the Community's association agreements with Turkey.

The Ministers of the Ten attach the greatest importance to a rapid return to parliamentary democracy in Turkey and to respect for human rights in that country. In this connection they have instructed the Presidency to visit Turkey, *inter alia*, to apprise the Turkish authorities of their concern at the turn the situation is taking in that country and to express their firm hope that progress will be made as soon as possible towards rapid restoration of democracy and respect for human rights.

Mr Chambeiron. — (FR) I should like to put a supplementary question to the President-in-Office of the Council, since it is obvious that the question was more topical when it was being asked than it is now that it is being answered.

The President-in-Office of the Council has just given us the subject-matter for this supplementary question in that he has told us that he has been instructed by the ten Member States, to visit Turkey and protest against the violations of human rights in that country.

How then does he intend to do this after the statement made by Mr Thorn which has been reported in the press and in which he apparently assured the Turkish generals that financial aid to Turkey would continue, even though this Parliament had adopted a resolution which specifically called for financial sanctions?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The Ministers of the Ten attach the greatest importance to a rapid return to parliamentary democracy in Turkey and to respect for human rights in that country. In this connection they have instructed the Presidency, in the context of political cooperation, to visit Turkey to apprise the Turkish authorities of their concern at the turn the situation is taking in that country.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) Can the President-in-Office of the Council perhaps inform us in this connection of the current situation regarding the 75 million EUA earmarked for the special fund for aid to Turkey — that is to say, are these 75 million EUA still effectively blocked?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I must refer the honourable Member to my statement in this Parliament on 21 January in which I gave details of the measures which have been adopted with respect to Turkey.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) I am obliged to put a supplementary question to the President-in-Office, because in his reply he stated that the Council attaches great importance to the re-establishment of democracy in Turkey. Nobody would disagree with that, and it is something to which we all attach importance. The problem, however — and this is what I should like to raise in my supplementary — is as follows: the President-in-Office gave no justification for this systematic avoidance, this systematic delay in taking those measures which really would help to establish democracy in that country. The result of the Council's repeated postponements is that the situation in Turkey has worsened, with scores of people being condemned to death, with executions and arrests. May I also ask the President-in-Office: do we not have sufficient reason to take measures against that country in the fact that, for eight years now, it has been occupying half the territory of the Republic of Cyprus, which is an independent member country of the United Nations? What are you waiting for, what more do you want, Mr President-in-Office, before you take the final, decisive measures which will rectify this situation? Are you waiting for things to get worse? Do you want that country to be the cause of a conflagration in that part of the world? What is the reason for this generosity — particularly coming from you yourself, when you were so willing to go to Madrid and turn the talks there into an anti-Polish campaign?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I should like to read to you the section of my statement of 21 January dealing with the measures taken by the Community or the Ten with regard to Turkey:

In December the Ten suspended approval of the project for financing electric cables planned as part of the exceptional aid of 75 million ECU decided on in 1980. And in November the Ten decided, for the time being, not to conclude the 4th Financial Protocol negotiated and signed in 1981.

Those are the concrete measures! A few days ago I was able to meet my Turkish partner to whom I gave a clear account of the opinion of the Ten concerning the measures adopted in Turkey. I informed him of the conditions which Turkey must fulfil if it wishes to continue its association with the Community. You will know that on New Year's Day General Evren announced that this year he would organize a referendum and that direct elections would be held next year. In any case, we intervened in the interests of human rights. As far as the arrests of the trade unionists are concerned, we reacted at Community level and called for explanations. The Community will base its attitude on the policy which Turkey pursues.

I would also add in my capacity as Belgian Minister, that, in my answer on behalf of the Ten in the context of political cooperation, I said that the Presidency was instructed to apprise the Turkish authorities of their concern at the turn the situation is taking in that country. This concern is what I have just described, i.e. the return to parliamentary democracy and respect of human rights in that country. In my statement of 21 January I also said that we should defend human rights wherever they are violated or jeopardized, regardless of whether this is in the north, south, east or west.

Mr Spicer. — Could the President-in-Office make it quite clear that in his own mind, as a result of the meetings that he's had with President Evren and other leading Turkish personalities, he is clear that it is the intention of the present Turkish Government to return to democracy as soon as possible, unlike some other regimes that we've seen in the past few years in Europe?

Secondly, he mentioned a *rapid* return to democracy. Would he not agree with me that if that return is too rapid we might well see a reversion to the situation that applied in Turkey before 12 September 1980, which by no manner of means can be called democracy for any person in that poor country as it was then?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I have not yet met General Evren, but I will probably do so on 19 March. Obviously, therefore, I cannot at this stage, give you any information concerning the points we discussed. Secondly, the very topic of our discussion will be the question of if and when the return to democracy and the respect of human right can take place rapidly.

Mr Galland. — (FR) I should like to know whether the Council is in favour of renouncing Community association agreements with a particular country if a problem of violation of human rights arises in that country, and, if so, how many association agreements would be affected.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) Answers which I can give you within the context of political cooperation must be approved by the Ten. This is obvious — you know the rules. I would say to Mr Galland that the Association Agreement between the Community and Turkey, which was signed in 1963, does not contain a renunciation clause.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) I do not know how much satisfaction will be felt by the Turkish democrats who have been condemned to death or who are being tortured, or by the Cypriots who are the victims of the Turkish intervention, from the satisfaction the President-in-Office may get from his meeting with Mr Evren.

I would just like to say that the question is perhaps not what importance the Community attaches to this. Perhaps, Mr President, we should be asking ourselves how much importance the military government in Turkey itself attaches to this rapid return to democracy. All the Greek Members in this House who were once the victims of the junta dictatorship have the unfortunate privilege of knowing how much a dictatorship benefits from such shows of kindness, and on the basis of our experience, Mr President-in-Office, we call upon you not to encourage the procrastination of the military dictatorship by continually giving it a new deadline, while more effective measures are available.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I hope that Parliament has complete confidence in the democratic-mindedness of the Council President. For the rest, I would naturally be glad to answer any questions Parliament might have on my talks in Turkey after I return.

Mr Vandemeulebroucke. — (NL) Whilst sincerely appreciating the President-in-Office's efforts with a view to a restoration of democracy in Turkey, I should nevertheless also like to ask him whether he is prepared to bring up the specific problem of the Kurdish minority in Turkey, as this minority is really the victim of a double repression. Is the President of the Council prepared to bring this matter up explicitly with the Turkish authorities?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) This problem was not mentioned in the terms of the mission with which I have been instructed. I cannot, therefore, comment on it on behalf of the Council. However, the Belgian Minister obviously might bring this matter up in a discussion with the Turkish authorities.

Mr Peters. — (*DE*) Mr President of the Council, you have stated that the Association Agreement with Turkey does not contain a renunciation clause, and you have assiduously avoided the question of a possible revision of the Agreement. Does this mean that the Association will be continued even if Turkish authorities persist in violating human rights, if the Turkish Government announces that it will certainly hold new elections, but will under no circumstances accept the previous party system and if it locks up trade union leaders so that they cannot reasonably continue protecting the interests of union members?

Should we not consider the possibility of revising this Agreement?

Mr Tindemans. — (*NL*) We are not continuing on the basis of this Association Agreement at the moment. Secondly, this Agreement does not contain any provisions concerning how it might possibly be discontinued. And thirdly, the Community bodies have so far not discussed the renouncing of the Association Agreement between the Community and Turkey.

President. — As its author is not present, Question No 65 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 66, by Mr Boyes (H-764/81):

Over 10 million are now unemployed within the Community, more than 3 million within the UK alone, and the numbers are rising. Evidence exists to demonstrate a link between rising unemployment and an increase in incidents of suicide, mental illness and death.

Is the Council aware of this evidence and, if so, what is it doing about it?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (*NL*) The Council considers that unemployment and particularly unemployment among the young, which has now reached intolerable proportions, is the most alarming social problem of the present time and is undoubtedly also at the source of the disorders referred to by the honourable Member.

The Community as a whole and its Member States are committed to the fight against unemployment. The statements before the European Parliament made by myself, as President-in-Office of the Council, on the programme of action for the first half of 1982 bear witness to this commitment which should be assessed within the context of the various policies being carried out at Community level.

Mr Boyes. — I would like to thank Mr Tindemans for that answer, because he says that he agrees with me,

whereas Commissioner Richard yesterday said he did not have sufficient evidence to agree with me.

Secondly, as a consequence of what he says, he is obviously aware that the consequence for the northern region — that is the region in the UK with the highest unemployment — is that large numbers are dying unnecessarily, and my calculation, based on the evidence that Mr Tindemans and I both agree with, is that 3 000 people will die because of the rate of unemployment. Will the Council therefore put pressure on those governments who are keeping unemployment unnecessarily and deliberately high, owing to their blind allegiance to unproven, unscientific monetary theory, which leads to policies giving a greater priority to solving inflation than to creating jobs, and as a consequence, it appears, deliberately murdering the people that I represent?

Mr Tindemans. — (*NL*) The Council is fully aware of the tragic human aspects of unemployment. The Council and its Presidency will therefore leave no stone unturned in its efforts to combat unemployment. I might add that the Belgian Presidency would also like to convoke a 'Jumbo Council' to discuss, among other things, youth unemployment with a view to drawing up concrete proposals in this area. This was already mentioned in the action programme distributed in January.

Mr Welsh. — The President-in-Office will no doubt be aware that the incidence of road accidents is rising very fast. Does he consider that this also is a consequence of unemployment; and if he does not, would he explain how it can be possible that suicides are a consequence of unemployment because they are rising and yet road accidents are not? Would he further join with me in congratulating the British Government, which through its budget yesterday made real progress in solving the problems of the unemployed in Britain in real terms . . .

(*Mixed reactions*)

. . . in conformity with the economic strategy approved by the Community as a whole?

Mr Tindemans. — (*NL*) I think I made myself clear. There is nothing that the Council wishes more than to put an end to unemployment. We are not psychologists, but we perhaps nevertheless understand what makes people tick, and we are convinced that this is a serious human problem. I repeat, during our Presidency, we will do all in our power to ensure that the Community as such combats unemployment.

Mr Eisma. — (*NL*) In the light of the figures just quoted by Mr Boyes, does the President-in-Office of

¹ See Annex.

Eisma

the Council join me in thinking that our policy should be directed more towards preparing people for less or no work? It will be a very difficult matter to bring about a change in today's mentality which is still unrealistically believes in full employment. However, would it not be far more realistic in the view of the President of the Council if the 10 million persons unemployed at present and the many millions who will be unemployed in the future were to regard unemployment as less of a disgrace, and will the Council direct its policy along these lines?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) Unemployment has innumerable negative aspects and I cannot go into the entire problem in detail on behalf of the Council at this time. The Jumbo Council, if it is held, will undoubtedly look into a great many of these aspects and make concrete proposals. I cannot say any more than that today on behalf of the Council.

President. — Question No 67, by Mr Galland (H-420/81):

According to the Commission's fifth economic policy programme, action to overcome the crisis in Europe must give priority to the fight against inflation. One of the primary tasks must therefore be to reduce the budget deficits of the Member States. France, for one, has a fast increasing budget-deficit. Has the Council any plans for encouraging the Member States to arrest the dangerous escalation of these deficits?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (FR) In the Annual Economic Report for 1981/82, adopted on 14 December 1981 and subsequently published in the Official Journal of the European Communities, the Council recognized the major importance of budgetary policy in the current economic and monetary situation and laid down guidelines for the budgetary policies to be followed by the Member States.

As far as the fifth medium-term economic policy programme is concerned, I would remind you that the European Parliament delivered its opinion only last month and that the Council has yet to take a decision on the programme in question.

Mr Galland. — (FR) Does not the President of the Council think that my question is of vital relevance to the future of the Community in that if these budget deficits in certain Member States become excessive and lead to inflationary mechanisms with rates of inflation which vary by a factor of four or even five in the different countries in the Community, would it be possible, with such varying rates of inflation to safeguard a common agricultural policy?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I should like, if I may, to read you an extract from the Annual Economic Report for 1981/82 to which I have just referred.

France is in a particular situation: in 1980 it was the only country to have a negligible budget balance. Since then its deficit has been increasing quite rapidly, but the draft 1982 budget deficit remains below the Community average as a share of GDP. If the balance of payments and inflation were in a similarly relatively favourable condition, this policy would be without serious risks. Since this is not the case, as the realignment has underlined, the government must control very carefully the extent of its budget policy change. Moreover, the realignment now permits exports to take over some of the demand stimulus initially envisaged for the 1982 budget.

I should like to add that while all the Member States must exercise budgetary restraint, they nevertheless have different margins of manoeuvre since, as we all know, there are appreciable differences between the situations in the various countries as regards public finances, as the honourable Member has just pointed out. Those countries with extremely high budgetary deficits should reduce both their estimates and their actual expenditure. Certain countries have already taken this course of action and others should do it this year. As regards the countries whose budgetary deficits are remaining below the Community average, they should be very careful about the changes they intend to make in their budgetary policy.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) I should like to ask the President-in-Office a question on the same subject, but with particular reference to Greece. Greece, too, has a high rate of inflation — the highest in the Community at 25% — and the budget presented the day before yesterday by the Papandreou government contains deficits which are large when compared to those in other countries. The President-in-Office himself read out the part of the report referring to and criticizing the policy of the French Government, and I should like to ask whether the attitude towards the Greek Government is the same and whether this means that the EEC intends to try and force the Greek Government to keep within the margin of manoeuvre laid down by the Council or the Commission for its financial policy?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) Economic policy with respect to Greece is to be discussed by the Council next Monday, when the Council will state its view on the subject.

Mr Marshall. — Would the President-in-Office of the Council not agree that it is significant that France faces the prospect of a rising budget deficit and rising inflation whilst the United Kingdom faces the prospect of declining inflation and a declining budget deficit? Would he not agree that this indicates that monetary restraint is the only hope for the economies of the Community and the only way of curing both inflation and unemployment?

(Applause)

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) When adopting the budgetary guidelines for the Community, the Council took account of Parliament's opinion.

Mr Baillot. — (FR) The President-in-Office of the Council should, I think, re-read the passage here just quoted, since it would appear that the British Member has not understood. As I understand it — and this is why I would like him to read out this passage once again — Mr Tindemans has explained that it would appear, on the contrary, that the budgetary deficit in France was lower than that in other countries if considered as a proportion of the gross national product. I should therefore like Mr Tindemans to read this passage once more so that our British colleague will be able to know what he is talking about.

President. — Mr President-in-Office, you are being asked to explain something that you have already said. If you wish to take the floor, of course, the floor is yours.

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) I could repeat the famous phrase 'I am the servant of this House'. Thus, if Parliament so desires I am prepared to read the text I have just quoted once again. On the other hand, this text will be included in the report of proceedings, which means that all the Members of this Parliament will be able to consult it.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) Might I ask the President of the Council whether he regards a budgetary deficit of 250 000 million Belgian francs in the country he also represents as a reasonable and acceptable margin in this connection?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) This is a question for the Belgian Government. I can only say that details of the Community budgetary policy can be found in various texts. I assume that the Belgian Government will do all it can to avoid coming into conflict with the Commission on this point.

President. — Question No 68, by Miss Quin (H-716/81):

What new initiative is the Council considering to help promote a long-term healthy future for the European shipbuilding industry?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) The Council, which has already adopted the fifth Directive on aid to shipbuilding in April 1981, has not so far received any fresh proposal from the Commission in this sector.

Miss Quin. — This is a rather disappointing reply. In view of the previous more helpful reply which the Council gave to Mr Boyes on the question of unemployment, I wonder if the President-in-Office of the Council would not agree with me that now is the time to put forward more positive proposals for the shipbuilding industry in order to safeguard and promote employment in this sector, and what initiatives does he envisage with regard to encouraging European shipowners to place orders in European shipyards? If he contrasts the situation with Japan he will see that Japanese shipowners have not placed a single order outside Japan for over 20 years.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) As I have just said, there are no new proposals before us and hence it is still the fifth Directive of April 1981 which is currently in force. The members of this Parliament are familiar with the basic philosophy of the Treaty. It is for the Commission to make proposals and the Council to decide on them. If the Council receives a proposal on shipbuilding, it will not fail to devote the necessary attention to it after consulting the European Parliament.

Mr J. D. Taylor. — Is it true that Japan captured 75% of world orders for merchant ships last year? Is it true that shipowners in Japan cannot fly the Japanese flag unless the ship has been built in Japan? What efforts has the Council made through the OECD to protect European shipbuilding interests against protective measures in Japan, and how can I assure 7 000 shipbuilding workers in Ulster, a region with 20% unemployment, that the Council will develop a maritime policy to defend prospects of employment in our Community shipyards? And do I understand from the last reply that the Council will do absolutely nothing and will not even consider the problems of our shipbuilding industry unless first of all they receive a proposal from the Commission?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The fifth Directive of April 1981 is valid until December of this year and thus still applies. Secondly, the Community as such is not a member of the OECD and it is therefore the Member States who might bring up this problem at OECD meetings. Thirdly, the basic philosophy of the Treaty of Rome is, I repeat, that the Commission makes proposals on which the Council decides, as we will do very swiftly if we receive new proposals after, I repeat, consulting Parliament.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) Since we are talking about the shipbuilding industry, I should again like to draw the attention of the President-in-Office to a specific problem concerning the Greek shipbuilding industry. I am referring to the shipyards on the island of Siros

Alavanos

which, after closing down a few years ago, were reopened after an agreement concluded by the previous government on repairs to ships of the Soviet merchant fleet.

In this context it is well known that there has been continuing overt and covert pressure by the United States with a view to freezing this agreement, which has given work to hundreds of people on the island of Siros.

May I ask the President-in-Office, or rather may I call upon him to confirm that the Council is not only not involved in this pressure, but that it also regards trade with the Socialist countries with favour, particularly when it provides the Greek shipbuilding industry — in this case on the island of Siros — with opportunities for development.

I should like to hear the views of the President-in-Office on this matter.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) As far as I know the Council had not yet discussed this question. Secondly, the Council cannot comment on this matter here in Parliament as long as no specific proposal has been made. If it is felt that proposals should be drawn up on this subject, it is the Commission who should be approached.

President. — Question No 69, by Mr Müller-Hermann who has been replaced by Mr Habsburg (H-735/81):

With a view to increasing its efficiency, is the Council considering the possibility of changing the term of the Presidency from six months to one year?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) The question of the length of the Presidency-in-Office of the Council was considered most recently during the discussion of the Report of the Three Wise Men.

During that discussion the Member States' representatives took the view that, for political and practical reasons, it was preferable not to amend Article 2 of the Treaty establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) May I ask the President of the Council what are the practical reasons for continuing the present arrangement whereby the term of the Presidency is only six months in spite of the fact that it has become apparent in both the legislative and executive organs how important a certain degree of permanence is for the exercise of such an office?

Mr Tindemans. — (FR) Those who opposed the idea of increasing the term of the Presidency did so for several practical reasons. One of the main ones was that the Council would not have enough time to deploy its strategies and the risks of discontinuity would be multiplied in that a Presidency of a year would slow down the principle of rotation to an intolerable degree in the enlarged Community. Each Member State would only have its turn in the Presidency every 12 years. This is the main reason why it was not felt advisable to change the situation.

Mr Seligman. — Is there any way in which the larger countries could be given a longer period in the Presidency and the smaller countries a lesser period?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) All the Member States are equal in this respect.

(Applause)

President. — Question No 70, by Mr Welsh (H-741/81):

Does the Council consider the three draft directives concerning product liability, misleading advertising and doorstep selling to be essential for the achievement of the common market?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Council. — (NL) The amended proposals for Council Directives concerning product liability, misleading advertising and doorstep selling are still under examination by the Permanent Representatives Committee and have not yet been discussed by the Council itself.

Mr Welsh. — With the utmost respect to the President-in-Office, that is not the answer to my question. Would he please answer the question that I put and then I will ask him a supplementary.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I think I stated quite clearly that the Council has not yet adopted any position. Consequently, we cannot answer this question on behalf of the Council. The honourable Member also realizes, I am sure, that the problems he has raised are very complex.

Mr Welsh. — In that case, can I take it that the Council does not regard these three draft directives as being essential to the completion of the common market?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I cannot accept this interpretation. The fact that the Council has not yet adopted any position with regard to an extremely difficult

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question, which, incidently, is difficult at national level too, does not mean that it has no great interest in the problem. This matter remains first and foremost the responsibility of the Member States.

Mr Spicer. — Could the President-in-Office not help us a little more on this? To my knowledge the door-step selling directive has been going the rounds for the last five years; it was rejected in the House of Commons and an instruction was given to our minister not to vote in favour of it. The basis of that rejection was that it had nothing whatsoever to do with the aims and objectives of the European Community. Could we not get rid of some of these things and see them out of the way completely rather than waste the time of the Council for years into the future?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) Might I remind you once more that I am speaking on behalf of the Council and until the Council has adopted a position on this question, it is impossible for me to give an answer. I would either be stepping outside the terms of my competency as President of the Council or I would give an answer which was not relevant.

Mrs Van den Heuvel. — (NL) Perhaps I might ask the President-in-Office whether he will state in principle that the consumer policy is in fact one of the essential components of Community policy as this is, I think, a question of consumer protection.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I think I can safely say that the interests of the consumer are one of the Council's main concerns.

President. — We turn now to the questions addressed to the Foreign Ministers.

Question No 85, by Mr Kyrkos (H-721/81):

The United States Minister of National Defence, Mr Weinberger, during his visit to Ankara, and the Head of the State Department, Mr Haig, in an interview with the press in Brussels, praised the military government in Turkey, which has been openly condemned by the European Parliament for abolishing the freedom of the Turkish people.

In view of these statements and in view of the American Government's warm support for murderous regimes, such as those of El Salvador and Guatemala, do the Foreign Ministers consider that the peoples of the Community can have any faith in American declarations concerning the protection of human rights? If so, what position do the Foreign Ministers intend to adopt so as to distinguish Community policy from American hypocrisy?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The United States' human rights policy has not been discussed within the context

of European Political Cooperation. The policy of the Ten continues to be the condemnation of violations of human rights however and wherever such violations take place. There are several areas where the human rights policy of the Ten and of the United States run parallel and where there is close cooperation, both at national level and in international organizations.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) I did not understand a thing, since the Greek interpreting was full of gaps; I unfortunately do not understand the President-in-Office's language, nor does he understand mine.

If it is possible, I should be grateful if he would repeat the answer so that I can understand what the interpreter is saying. It was in fact not translated at all, and I do not want to do him an injustice.

President. — Would the President-in-Office be good enough in these circumstances to repeat rather slowly his reply because of the difficulties of interpretation?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) May I also say that I regret that I cannot speak Greek as I would otherwise be glad to do so. The United States' human rights policy has not been discussed within the context of European Political Cooperation. The policy of the Ten continues to be the condemnation of violations of human rights however and wherever such violations take place. There are several areas where the human rights policy of the Ten and of the United States run parallel and where there is close cooperation, both at national level and in international organizations.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) With the best will in the world, I have to say that the answer is disappointing. Anyone would think that American policy was above all criticism.

At present, human rights have become topic number one — even overtaking the problem of peace — and this aggravation of the situation leads to measures such as the imposition of sanctions, which is causing complex problems at least for Europe, since Europe is not prepared to comply with American policy to this extent.

Has the Council no criticism to make of United States policy on Turkey, on El Salvador, on all the crisis areas? Has the Council no criticism to make of the generous support American policy is giving to Turkey, of the fact that Mr Haig has developed into a defender of the Turkish military rulers, and of the fact that American policy is overstrengthening the military government to the detriment of Greece and is changing the balance in the Aegean? Has it nothing to say about the fact that America is behind the Turkish occupation in Cyprus?

Kyrkos

Anyone would think that Europe — as represented by the Council — has reached the stage where it is a subordinate of American policy and is not allowed to express a view on matters of world-wide importance which are dealt with by American policy.

I think the President-in-Office is too nice to Mr Haig, whereas Mr Haig is not at all nice to his European counterparts. Anyone who has read the international press knows this.

I should therefore, if possible, like to hear your comments.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The questions we are now discussing come under heading of European Political Cooperation. I repeat, the United States' human rights policy has not been discussed in this context.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) The United States' human rights policy may be taboo for political cooperation, but unless I am very much mistaken, human rights policy has in fact been discussed in connection with Turkey. And why, furthermore, why when the Ministers had their nice little get together in political cooperation on 20 February did they refuse to give their support to the Danish and Dutch initiative aimed at bringing Turkey before the Commission for Human Rights?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I repeat, if I am to answer the question at this time it must fall within the scope of European Political Cooperation where unanimity is required if a position is to be adopted. I can only tell you that the Ministers of the Ten attach the greatest importance to a swift return to parliamentary democracy in Turkey and the respect of human rights in that country. In this connection, they have instructed the Presidency to apprise the Turkish authorities of their concern.

Mr Spicer. — I wonder if the President-in-Office would agree with me that we in Europe have so much to be grateful for to our American friends and allies over the last 40 years, and would he and the other Foreign Ministers find time to discuss and question the motives of those people who at this time are seeking to drive a wedge between the European Community and the European countries and our American allies?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) This question has not been considered by the Ten in the context of European Political Cooperation either. However, as Belgian minister, I can inform you that during the most recent visits my Prime Minister and myself paid to the United States, we discussed the problems indicated by the previous speaker with the American authorities.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) Does the Council not agree that it runs totally counter to the interests of the people of Europe — particularly as we wish to live in freedom for many decades with the help of the United States — if certain elements, who have quite different political interests, criticize the Americans here and, furthermore, under pretexts which have nothing whatsoever to do with American policy?

(Applause)

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I repeat, this is a question of political cooperation which, I think, is mainly aimed at arriving at joint positive positions in world politics. We already have a very clearly defined two-way information and consultation procedure concerning matters of common interest, as Parliament is well aware. Proof of this is provided, for example, whenever, at the beginning of a new Presidency, the President-in-Office of the Ten meets his American counterpart. I am talking here about consultation and information between the United States and the Community, or the Ten in the context of political cooperation. I might add that the American Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, during my recent visit to Washington, expressed his satisfaction at this system of two-way information and consultation and the procedure involved.

Mr Boyes. — The President-in-Office must be aware that when a journalist, Mr John Palmer of *The Guardian*, recently asked Secretary of State Haig if there was not a contradiction, and if he was not being hypocritical, in his comments on Poland since at the same time he was offering support for the regime in Turkey, Mr Haig reacted — as the President must be aware because of the television coverage and editorials in newspapers — in a way that could only be described as irrational. Would the President like to comment on the contradictions in Mr Haig's outburst against Mr John Palmer?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) Making attacks on Secretary of State Haig in the European Parliament is not the intended purpose of political cooperation. It is aimed rather at arriving at common European positions.

(Applause)

Mr Vandemeulebroucke. — (NL) The President-in-Office has in fact introduced a somewhat new element by informing us that it is customary for each new Presidency to visit the United States. May I ask, therefore, whether, in addition to the United States, there are other countries which are visited on this basis?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I do not think I said that an incoming President-in-Office always visits the United

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States. I merely said that the exchange of information and consultation between the President-in-Office and the United States is apparently a formula which gives satisfaction on both sides of the Atlantic. Thus I was talking about information and consultation. It is true that the President-in-Office was also invited on this occasion and, as Mr Vandemeulebroucke knows, received invitations from other countries too, such as Japan and several others.

President. — Question No 86, by Mr Gontikas who has been replaced by Mr Bournias (H-793/81):¹

Four hundred thousand Greek Orthodox Christians with a long tradition of Greek Christian culture are being brutally forced to live without God or religion in Albania. The entire priesthood has been dissolved and the churches have been shut or converted into recreation centres. For a number of years the faithful have thus been deprived of church services, communion, baptism and funeral rites and the great Christian feasts have not been celebrated in church. At the same time, thousands are being exiled or imprisoned by the regime because of their religion or because they are Greeks.

What measures do the Foreign Ministers intend to take with a view to safeguarding the individual rights of Greeks who continue to remain in Albania?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (NL) As the honourable Member will be aware, the Ten have repeatedly condemned violation of human rights wherever this has taken place. However, the violations of individual freedoms in Albania have not been discussed by the Ten.

Mr Bournias. — (GR) These measures against the church and against Christians — whose churches have been closed and who are not even allowed to baptize their children or perform their religious rites — are so horrifying that I would ask your colleagues to look into the matter. Since you said in January, and again this evening, that you would defend human rights everywhere and at any time, whether in the north or the south, I should now like to hear you own views. The measures being taken against Greek Christians in Albania are horrifying, despite the fact that, in recent years, the Greek Government has established diplomatic relations with that country in an effort to promote *détente* and coexistence in the Balkans. Despite this, the situation has become worse, and a few days ago there was a large demonstration in Athens at which leading churchmen, scientists, members of parliament and others led thousands of people in condemning these measures. The Community must adopt a stance on this matter.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) It is a well-known fact that the religious leaders of Moslems, Orthodox Christians

and Roman Catholics have been forbidden to practise their religion in Albania. What can be done about it? Albania is not a member of the Council of Europe, nor is it a signatory of the Helsinki Final Act. However, Albania is a member of the United Nations. The procedure of the United Nations is as follows: only when flagrant violations of human rights are reported can a confidential investigation be initiated by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights under Procedure 1503. Reports of this kind have not been made for the very reason that it is impossible to carry out an investigation in that country. This is why it is so difficult to initiate a procedure of this kind at this time.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) I should like to put the following supplementary question to the President-in-Office:

Does he realize that, over the last 30 years, no Greek Government, including the present democratic Socialist government, has raised the subject referred to in Mr Bournias' question?

Secondly, does he not feel that the purpose of this question may well be something other than the permissible right to defend human rights wherever they are being violated. To be specific, the purpose may well be to involve the EEC in the Balkan region, where there is currently a spirit of cooperation with a view to making the Balkan peninsula a nuclear-free zone, thereby contributing to more general disarmament. I would ask the President-in-Office if he is aware of these aspects.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The policy of the Greek Government on this question has not been discussed by the Council and, as you know, the situation in the Member States has not so far been studied by the Council either.

President. — Question No 87, by Mrs Ewing (H-748/81):

Are the Foreign Ministers aware of the drastic drop in the emigration of Jews from the USSR, in 1979 the number leaving being 51 303, in 1980 being 21 471 and in 1981 being 9 447, and that there are 400 000 applications to leave outstanding, and is the Council further aware that Jews studying their religion and the Hebrew language are being subjected to increasing degrees of harassment and will the Foreign Ministers use their good offices with the Soviet authorities on this matter?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (NL) The Ten regard human rights as an essential aspect of international relations, as can be seen from various provisions contained in the Helsinki Final Act among other things. Both at the Madrid Conference and elsewhere the Ten have repeatedly condemned the violations of human rights in the

¹ Former oral question without debate (OQ-78/81), converted into a question for Question Time.

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Soviet Union, including the attitude of the Soviets to Jews in that country. The Ten will continue to press for application of the Final Act of Helsinki in its entirety, including the articles relating to human rights.

Mrs Ewing. — While I thank the President-in-Office for his answer and appreciate all that has been done, could I draw his attention to the fact that in the last five months of 1981 the gates were virtually closed entirely, which is a new and urgent situation, as he will agree, since the 400 000 waiting people represent 400 000 human tragedies? Would he now reiterate his concern to the Soviet Government on this question?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) As a young member of the Belgian Parliament several years ago I was the first to bring up this question. This was at the time when Paul Henri Spaak was our Foreign Minister. This is a question about which I feel a great deal of concern and I can assure you that I will take every opportunity to plead this cause.

Mr Pöttering. — (DE) We were very pleased to hear the answer you gave, Mr Tindemans. We realize the extent of your strong personal commitment to questions of human rights. However, do you not also feel that the Council of Ministers should do more about the question of infringement of human rights in connection with Jews in the Soviet Union, which have attained horrifying proportions — and I say this as a member of the post-war generation of Germans who knows from his own history what suffering has been inflicted on the Jews — and does he not also feel that the Council of Ministers should take a firmer stand *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union in connection with violations of human rights?

(Applause)

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I can assure the European Parliament once more that the Council and its President will do their utmost with a view to achieving acceptable solutions to that very problem. I should like to add, if I may, that it is indeed frequently, but nevertheless not exclusively, the Jewish population which is concerned. It often happens that people of German extraction also apply to emigrate but are refused permission. I might say that there has always been a link between the problem of emigration and the relations between East and West — indeed, it might even be said that emigration figures are a thermometer for East-West relations and it will probably only be possible to find a genuine solution to the problem when these relations have substantially improved.

Mr Marshall. — Can the President-in-Office of the Council, when he talks next to his Russian opposite

numbers, indicate to them that their policy is condemned by everyone in this House from whatever political party and that until they treat the Jewish community in Russia in a tolerable way everyone in the West will regard the Helsinki Agreement as merely a sham?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I shall be only too glad to make the feelings of this Parliament known to the Ten at our Political Cooperation meetings and I can assure you that I will continue, as Belgian Minister, to act in the way the honourable Member has just indicated.

Mr Ephremidis. — (GR) The replies by the President-in-Office oblige me to put a supplementary question with a view to making it easier for him to deal with the situation in future. Firstly, is he aware that, under Soviet legislation, anyone completing his studies in the Soviet Union is obliged to work for at least five years in a region laid down by the authorities? This is the only obligation in return for the free education and training offered to them in that country. Secondly, is he aware that, under the United Nations' 1966 International Convention on the Civil and Political Rights of Man, a Member State which has signed and ratified this convention has the right to prevent any citizen leaving the country if he is employed on State work which requires basic or special discretion? Thirdly, is the President-in-Office aware that the drop in Jewish emigration in the last few years is the result of the situation obtaining in that country and its adventurist policy, which put off emigrants?

President. — Mr Ephremidis, I must ask you another time to put a question and not make a statement.

Would the President-in-Office be good enough to comment on this statement? I can hardly ask him to answer the question, as it was not a question.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) I would refer to the Final Act of Helsinki which deals with this very question. It is, I think, particularly appropriate for me to invoke this Final Act as I myself had the privilege of signing it in 1975 on behalf of my country.

President. — Since they deal with the same subject, I call Question No 88, by Mr Van Minnen (H-778/81):

Did the Foreign Ministers, in their deliberations on joint participation by Community countries and Uruguay in the peace-keeping force in Sinai, take account of the demands made in the Final Act of the 5th European Community — Latin America Interparliamentary Conference, which condemned the regime in Uruguay and called on the Member States of the Community 'to bring every form of direct democratic pressure to bear upon the governments of countries where fundamental freedoms and the most elementary human rights are violated'?

President

Question No 89, by Mrs Van den Heuvel (H-779/81):

Do the Foreign Ministers not share Vice-President Haferkamp's view that 'the observance of the principles of democracy' is 'a determining factor' for bilateral relations between the Community and Latin America (OJ No C 115/81), or do they consider that Community countries like the Netherlands are contributing to the observance of democracy through joint participation with the undemocratic State of Uruguay in a peace-keeping force in Sinai?

Question No 90, by Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul (H-780/81):

Are the Foreign Ministers aware of the damaging effect on Europe's reputation among the democratic countries of Latin America of the joint participation by Community countries and Uruguay in the peace-keeping force in Sinai, and was any thought given to the long-term effects which this participation could have on economic and trade cooperation with democratic countries in Latin America?

Mr Tindemans, President-in-Office of the Foreign Ministers. — (NL) I should like, if I may, to answer these three questions jointly. It was not the European Community which took the initiative of setting up a peace-keeping force in Sinai. The request to take part in the multinational peace-keeping force was issued by the Governments of Egypt, Israel and the United States. The Governments of the four Community Member States which are taking part in this multinational peace-keeping force in Sinai published, on 23 November 1981, identical statements in which it was clearly stated that the sole aim of the peace-keeping force was to maintain peace in Sinai after the Israeli withdrawal and that it had no other function.

The fact that the Republic of Uruguay is participating in the same multinational peace-keeping force as certain Member States of the Community can in no way be interpreted as recognition of the regime in that country by the Ten. The importance which the Ten to the respect of human rights is, I think, well known.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) I should nevertheless like to point out, Mr Tindemans, that however much he twists things around, this is a question of a Community contribution in Sinai and this is how our participation is both presented and interpreted in that area. The question, then, is not what the Ten say about human rights in general, but rather of whether it is not mere hypocrisy to want to apply pressure with a view to bringing about a return to democracy and human rights in Uruguay. Do the Ministers and yourself, Mr Tindemans, realize that this involvement of the Uruguayan regime in Sinai will cause more people to be tortured and murdered in Uruguay itself and that we in the Community will, as it were, have given the Uruguayan regime *carte blanche*? I hope you will give this question some serious thought.

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) There is not a Community contribution in this operation and I should like to stress this most emphatically. I should also like to read, for Mr Van Minnen's benefit, the precise words of the declaration issued by the Federal Republic, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland and Luxembourg together with the four other countries on 23 November 1981. If you will excuse me, I will read from the French version which I have before me:

The Ten consider that the decision of France, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom to participate in the multinational force in Sinai meets the wish frequently expressed by the members of the Community to facilitate any progress in the direction of a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East on the basis of the mutual acceptance of the right to existence and security of all States in the area and the need for the Palestinian people to exercise fully its right to self determination.

I should like to add that, as I have just said, this in no way means that the Ten approve the regime in any particular country.

Mrs Van den Heuvel. — (NL) May I point out to the President-in-Office that the Dutch Government has made its participation in the Sinai peace-keeping force dependent on the agreement of the European partners. Does he not like think, therefore, that, in the light of his concern for human rights which he has so frequently stressed here this evening, he has fallen short in his duties by not including the question of the participation of Uruguay in the discussions of November 1981?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) The request to participate in the peace-keeping force in Sinai was made by the three countries I referred to a few moments ago. The Community as such has nothing to do with this. Thus, the problem has not been dealt with by the Community, nor has it been discussed or approved as such by the Ten in the context of political cooperation.

Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul. — (DE) Might I ask the President-in-Office who actually invited the Uruguayan armed forces to take part and what view he takes of this invitation? What view does the President-in-Office take, furthermore, of the fact that refugees from Uruguay living in the Member States of the European Community have repeatedly turned to both Members of Parliament and the governments and urgently advised them against such participation of individual Member States?

Even if the President-in-Office does not feel he can make a policy statement on this question, would he at least tell us what he personally thinks?

Mr Tindemans. — (NL) As I have already said, it was Egypt, Israel and the United States who issued the invitation to participate in the multinational force in Sinai. In addition to the four European countries which, as we know, are participating, and the United States, the following countries are also involved: Norway, the Fiji Islands, Uruguay, Colombia, Australia and New Zealand. I might also add that while it is difficult enough within the United Nations to find suitable troops who are not involved in the conflict and are acceptable to the parties who are involved, it was even more difficult in the case of the Sinai peace-keeping force to try to involve acceptable Third World countries in the peace-keeping force.

President. — Question Time is closed.¹

I have to inform the House that the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Langes and others on the rescue ship *Cap Anamour* and finding a home for refugees in the countries of the European Community (Doc. 1-1049/81) has obtained 220 signatures and will therefore be forwarded to the institutions named by the authors pursuant to Rule 49(5).²

(The sitting closed at 7.05 p.m.)

¹ See Annex.

² *Motions for resolutions entered in the register (Rule 49 of the Rules of Procedure) — Agenda of the next sitting: see Minutes.*

ANNEX

Questions which could not be answered during Question Time, with written answers

*I. Questions to the Commission**Question No 1, by Mrs Pruvot (H-566/81)*

Subject: Right to set up as an acupuncture specialist in the EEC countries

Can the Commission give details of the training required of persons wishing to set up as acupuncture specialists in the Community Member States and can it tell Parliament whether the directives relating to the mutual recognition of diplomas apply to acupuncture?

Answer

1. According to the Commission's information, in a number of Member States acupuncture as a form of medical treatment may not be practised except by doctors. Legal provisions to this effect apply in Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, although there are certain exceptions in some of these countries.

No Member State offers specialist medical training leading to a formal qualification in acupuncture.

In other Member States acupuncture may also be practised by specialists other than doctors; in most cases no special professional qualification is required. In the Federal Republic of Germany, however, acupuncturists not qualified as doctors are subject to the provisions relating to non-medical practitioners.

2. The Council directives of 16 June 1975¹ concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications in medicine also apply to doctors practising certain activities in the field of acupuncture. However, there is no Council directive concerning the recognition of evidence of formal qualifications for acupuncturists not qualified as doctors.

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Question No 13, by Mr Fernandez (H-739/81)

Subject: Complaints by American steel producers

American imports of steel from the Community reportedly fell by 16% between 1979 and 1981. The Commission maintains that the complaints by American steel producers are unfounded.

Can the Commission give more detailed figures on trade in steel between the United States and the Community and undertake that it will firmly and resolutely defend Europe's steel industry during the negotiations with the American authorities in order to retain important markets and hence safeguard large numbers of jobs in an industry which is so crucial to the economies of all Member States?

Answer

The Commission will continue to dispute the United States' steel industry's claim that steel imports from the Member States have materially damaged their industry. An examination of the figures on absolute quantities and the market share of imports from the Community between 1977 and 1981 shows beyond any doubt that the claim is unjustified.

The anti-dumping duty and countervailing duty actions brought by the American industry relate predominantly to ECSC products.

¹ OJ L 167 of 30. 6. 1975.

In absolute terms, the total imports into the United States of ECSC products from the Community in 1981 followed the trend of the previous years, with the Community's share of the American market showing a steady decline. Deliveries of ECSC products from the Community fell from a total of 6.3 million net tonnes in 1977 and 6.7 million net tonnes in 1978 to 4.4 million net tonnes in 1981.

The only sector in which imports from the EEC were higher than normal in 1981 was steel tubes. This was because of a 35% rise in demand, far outstripping the production capacity of the American industry and in fact obliging the latter to buy extensively from foreign producers in 1981 in order to meet the demand.

In relative terms, none of the EEC Member States increased its share of the American market in ECSC products between 1977 and 1981. On the contrary, during this period the Community lost an important share of the market both to the American industry and to other foreign suppliers. The Community producers' share of American consumption of ECSC products declined from 6.8% in 1977 and 1978 to 5.4% in 1981. The Community's share of total American imports of ECSC products also declined, from 40.2% in 1977 and 1978 to 36.1% in 1981. The American industry also claims that the increase in imports from the EEC Member States during 1981 was damaging. However, as a result of the recession in the United States, deliveries by American steelworks fell by 5.35 million net tonnes between the peak period of the second quarter of 1981 and the fourth quarter of 1981. At the same time, imports from the Community increased by 0.47 million net tonnes. The increase in imports from the EEC during the latter months of 1981 was therefore only a very minor contributory factor to the problems at present facing the American industry.

The Commission will continue to follow the investigations closely to ensure that they are conducted fairly and in accordance with the United States' international obligations. If this is not the case, the Commission will not hesitate to take the appropriate measures (cf. the statement by Vice-President Davignon at the sitting held on 18. 2. 1982).

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Question No 16, by Mrs Feuillet (H-539/81)¹

Subject: Abortions

In paragraph 39 of the resolution on the position of women in the European Community which it adopted in February 1981, the European Parliament called on the Commission:

'to set up a programme to reduce the number of abortions, in particular by:

- early provision of adequate information for young people;
- a broad and suitable range of reliable means of contraception;
- full recognition of the needs of single parents and special provisions for parents of large families;
- appropriate provisions for day nurseries.'

What progress has been made with this programme, which could play a major role in reducing the number of abortions?

Answer

The Commission has broadly taken account, while preparing the new Community action programme on the promotion of equal opportunities for women (1982-85), of the points made in the Resolution of the European Parliament of February 1981 which fall within its scope. It is essentially a question of the aspects concerning the equal treatment for men and women with regard to employment in the broad sense. As far as the problems connected with abortion in particular are concerned, which are not included in the aspects mentioned and which have given rise to violent controversy even in the European Parliament, the Commission has not considered it opportune to include them at the present time among its priorities at a Community level. Nevertheless certain points in paragraph 39 of the above-mentioned Resolution have been retained in the context of certain actions of the Commission action programme.

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-31/81), converted into a question for Question Time.

- The aspects concerning better sharing of family responsibility, including kindergartens which are taken into consideration in the context of actions 7 and 15.
- The improvement of the status of single parents as regards social security which will be taken into account in action 4.

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Question No 17, by Mrs Scrivener (H-463/81)

Subject: Community legislation in the field of chemical products

In accordance with the sixth amendment to the Council directive of 27 June 1967, the procedures for testing and notifying new chemical products should be the same in all Member States of the European Community as from 18 September 1981.

Can the Commission indicate which countries have taken the necessary measures to ensure that the above-mentioned directive is implemented at the appropriate time and to what extent Article 169 of the Treaty of Rome can be invoked against those Member States which do not comply with the EEC directive?

Answer

Three Member States have submitted details of their legislation: Germany, Denmark and France. The Commission is examining these laws (and their related supplementing Orders) to see whether they conform with the sixth amendment to Directive 67/548/EEC.

In three Member States (United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands) work is under way to incorporate this directive into national law. Until the relevant laws have been passed — they are already at an advanced stage of preparation — these Member States will continue to apply the sixth amendment in administrative procedures. Italy is expected to communicate details of its national legislation in the near future.

New legislation is being prepared in Ireland, Greece, Luxembourg and Belgium. National laws are expected to be passed in all these countries in the near future, with the exception of Belgium. The Commission believes that the political will to implement the sixth amendment exists, but in certain Member States there are still technical and legal difficulties to overcome.

The Commission will invoke Article 169 against those Member States which do not yet comply satisfactorily with the provisions of the sixth amendment.

If the directive is applied in some countries but not in others, two important objectives will not be met: firstly, trade in chemical products will be seriously hampered, and secondly, there will be no means of ensuring adequate environmental protection. The Commission therefore calls on the responsible bodies in the aforementioned Member States, and in particular the Belgian Government, to incorporate the sixth amendment to the directive of 27 June 1967 into national law without further delay.

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Question No 26, by Mr van Aerssen (H-803/81)¹

Subject: Prison sentences for prisoners from Community States

Under German legislation, prisoners who are to be deported on completion of their sentence, i.e. against whom an enforceable deportation order has been issued, are not entitled to any relaxation of prison regulations, e.g. open prisons, leave of absence, day passes, etc. As the majority of these

¹ Former oral question without debate (0-90/81), converted into a question for Question Time.

prisoners are unable to communicate, or can only do so with difficulty, when in German prisons, the sentence is reduced to one of mere detention. Rehabilitation or reintegration, which are important objectives in the German penal system, are thereby made impossible. The vital factor, however, is the reintegration of these prisoners into their own society, as they are not permitted to remain in the Federal Republic of Germany.

1. Does the Commission support the idea that a prisoner convicted in another Community State should be allowed to serve his sentence in his native country?
2. If so, does it share the view that serving prisoners should therefore be entitled to the privileges granted in that country, provided they prove themselves eligible for these?
3. Can the Commission provide figures showing the number of prisoners from Community countries serving sentences in countries of which they are not nationals and who are to be deported at the end of the sentence?
4. Would the Commission then agree that the European Community could serve the public interest through a proposal allowing prisoners to serve their sentences in their own country?

Answer

The problems raised by the honourable Member concern prison regimes, an area in which the Community institutions have no competence.

However, I would point out by way of information that the problems faced by prisoners serving sentences in a country other than their native country are at present being examined by a special committee of the Council of Europe. This committee seems to be thinking along the same lines as the honourable Member.

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Question No 28, by Mr Müller-Hermann (H-736/81)

Subject: Intra-Community barriers

What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that the French Government refrains from measures aimed at creating new intra-Community barriers as a means of solving problems on its domestic market?

Answer

The initial press reports and statements from the French Ministry of Industry on the plans for the promotion of various branches of industry and the funds set aside for this purpose led to fears that the planned measures could restrict access to the French market by the other Member States. They seemed intended to counter the natural development towards specialization of industry within the European domestic market.

The Commission therefore immediately contacted the French Government in order to express its doubts about the admissibility of the measures. During the discussions the French Government stated that it had no intention of taking any measures which would violate the principle of the free movement of goods within the Community. The French Government has since communicated to the Commission sectoral plans for the machine tool, textile, leather, toy and furniture industries.

The admissibility of these plans is at present being examined. The Commission has informed the French Government that it will investigate in the usual way all complaints concerning administrative practices, State incentives or business arrangements designed to impede trade with France.

The Commission has also reminded the French Government of the obligation to notify it of aid measures before they are introduced and in the form prescribed by the Treaty, so that their effects may be properly assessed, if necessary after hearing the other Member States.

The Commission is aware of the structural weakness in a number of branches of industry in the Community. As it stated in communications to the Council of 14 and 23 October 1981 on the strengthening of the domestic market and the industrial strategy of the Community, it believes that certain problems connected with the modernization of means of production, the encouragement of innova-

tion and the strengthening of industry's competitive capacity can only be solved by developing a Community strategy. Independent national initiatives and violations of the Treaty would simply lead to in-fighting, the loss of any effectiveness which the measures might have had and a decisive weakening of the industrial potential and competitive capacity of the Community as a whole.

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Question No 29, by Mr De Ferranti (H-753/81)

Subject: Belgian wiring rules

In view of the advantages for consumers of common safety standards for electrical equipment, what will the Commission do about the Belgian Royal Decree of 30 March 1981 establishing wiring rules which are in contradiction with Directive 73/23/EEC ('Low Voltage Directive'), and have any Member States or interested partner requested the application of Article 9 of this Directive or will the Commission itself act, according to the general rules in the Treaty?

Answer

The Commission takes the view that the Belgian wiring rules for electrical equipment to which the honourable Member refers¹ are in contradiction with the 'Low Voltage Directive',² where they lay down certain technical standards for electrical equipment covered by that directive. The Commission has therefore recently decided to institute proceedings against Belgium under Article 169 of the EEC Treaty for failure to fulfil an obligation under the Treaty. The letter giving the Belgian Government the opportunity to submit its observations is at present in preparation.

Apart from Belgium, which normally meets its obligation to provide information, there are other Member States which have so far failed to provide the Commission with systematic information on the prohibitions of the marketing of electrical equipment applying in their territory. In its communication of 15 December 1981³ on the application of the low voltage directive, also forwarded to the European Parliament for information, the Commission reminded the Member States of this obligation to provide information under Article 9 of the directive.

In certain cases the Commission has also been alerted by representatives of the trade, to individual bans or obstacles to the free trade in electrical equipment on safety grounds. It carefully considers each case for compatibility with the relevant Community rules.

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Question No 30, by Mr von Wogau (H-754/81)

Subject: French furniture

Can the Commission confirm that the French Government recently doubled, on a temporary basis, a tax on furniture sold in France with a view to using the excepted revenue of FF 90 million to recapture the domestic market? Is it true, moreover, that the French furniture trade has declared its readiness to cooperate with French manufacturers in replacing one third of current imports with domestic products? Does the Commission consider these measures compatible with Article 92 of the EEC Treaty?

Answer

The French Government informed the Commission of the measures it had taken to assist the furniture industry on 23 February. The Commission is at present examining these measures.

¹ Royal decree of 10 March 1981 making the general regulation of electrical installations compulsory for domestic installations and certain electrical energy transport and distribution lines — *Moniteur Belge* of 29. 4. 1981 (R.G.I.E.).

² Council Directive 73/23/EEC of 19 February 1973 on the harmonization of the laws of Member States relating to electrical equipment designed for use within certain voltage limits, OJ No I 77 of 26. 3. 1973.

³ Doc. SEC(81) 1878 final.

It is true it has been decided to levy a parafiscal charge on the sale of furniture. The revenue will be passed on to the 'Comité de développement des industries françaises de l'ameublement' (Committee for the development of the French furniture industry).

The Commission maintains its opinion, as endorsed by the Court of Justice, that State aids to particular sectors of industry should not be financed by charges levied on products from other Member States.

Initial enquiries indicate that this parafiscal charge will be levied only on furniture manufactured in France.

The French Government has denied reports that it has ordered manufacturers and dealers to cut back on their imports voluntarily in order to limit the penetration of the French market by imports from other Member States. On the basis of the complaints received the Commission has instituted preliminary proceedings against the undertakings and groups of undertakings involved.

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Question No 32, by Dame Shelagh Roberts (H-759/81)

Subject: Oil pollution

Is the Commission aware that between 15 December 1981 and 31 December 1981 a considerable number of dead seabirds were washed up on the south and east coasts of the United Kingdom? All were suffering from oil pollution. This pollution was caused by various types of fuel oil flushed from the tanks of merchant vessels and occurs regularly during the Christmas period each year.

Does the Commission intend to include in its environmental action programme, 1982-86, measures to detect and prevent this pollution, including for example aerial reconnaissance and the introduction of powers to enable all Community port authorities to prosecute ships of any nation accused of pollution on entering their ports?

Answer

The Commission understands that towards the end of 1981 about 700 birds were affected by oil pollution off the coasts of North Yorkshire and East Anglia, and most died. The Commission is aware that accidents of this kind occur regularly during the Christmas period each year; they are probably caused by routine operations in which vessels pump their bilges.

In its draft environmental action programme for the European Communities (1982-86) the Commission points out that if the campaign against oil pollution is to be effective, the policy of prevention must be speeded up, and that in this respect it attaches the greatest importance to the entry into force of the international conventions sponsored by the International Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

As is known, the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution (MARPOL Convention) should come into force in 1983, thanks mainly to the coordinated efforts of the Community institutions, the Member States and the other countries of western Europe.

This convention stringently regulates the discharge of hydrocarbons by vessels. It lays down penalties under the law for infringements within the territorial waters of a State.

In its above-mentioned draft programme the Commission also expresses its desire to encourage the extension of international environmental law.

To this end it will make every effort to have the relevant provisions of the draft Convention on the Law of the Sea accepted. They would empower a littoral State to institute proceedings against vessels infringing the relevant international conventions in that country's exclusive economic zone.

As the honourable Member suggests, the legal remedies available to the Member States must be supplemented by suitable technical capabilities.

Aerial reconnaissance capability is particularly useful.

The Commission would welcome the procurement of aircraft by the Member States under their plans to monitor marine pollution caused by the accidental discharge of oil. The Commission itself is considering whether it can help in the implementation of such plans.

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Question No 33, by Mr Prag (H-784/81)

Subject: Community disaster relief unit

What action has the Commission taken in respect of Parliament's Resolution of 18 December 1980 (paragraph 11) urgently requesting 'the creation on a permanent basis of a Community disaster relief unit to intervene urgently in the event of disasters, at the request of the governments concerned, and including specialized technical units from the armed forces of the member countries'; what discussions have taken place with other international bodies and what have been the results?

Answer

As the Commission has already said in its answer to Written Question No 1913/80, it does not believe that a Community civilian disaster relief unit consisting of specialized technical units from the armed forces of the Member countries is vitally necessary for the saving of human life, at the present state of development of the Community. It therefore has no plans to examine the feasibility of creating such a unit.

On the other hand, in its endeavours in implementation of the principle laid down by the Council of Ministers of Health in November 1978, it is continuing to hold consultations with national experts, in order to reinforce the Member States' medical capabilities in emergencies. Five meetings of experts have already taken place, and a report will shortly be published containing an inventory of the facilities and special equipment available in the Member States for mutual medical support.

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Question No 34, by Mr Hutton (H-785/81)

Subject: Part-time farming

What steps is the Commission taking to establish an up-to-date picture of the extent to which farmers have gainful activities outside their farms?

Answer

On the basis of the farm structures survey of 1975 the Commission can already establish that some 27 % of all farmers in the Community of Nine have another gainful activity outside of agriculture. However, on the basis of this survey, it is not possible to determine the importance of this other activity. It is hoped that the relevant information on this regard will be forthcoming once the results of a similar survey undertaken in 1979/80 are available.

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Question No 35, by Mr Dalziel (H-786/81)

Subject: Nursery education

Is the Commission aware of the great importance of and need for the provision of adequate nursery education and what is the Commission doing to encourage or support the wider availability of nursery education facilities in the Member States?

Answer

In the framework of the Community's activity in the educational field based on the Resolution of the Council and Ministers of Education of 9 February 1976,¹ the Commission undertook with the aid of an expert a study of the principal issues concerning preschool education in Member States of the Community. This study formed the basis of a seminar on this theme which was organized at Sèvres in May 1979 in cooperation with the French Ministry of Education. The study report together with the other principal papers of the seminar have been published by the Commission in six languages.²

Bearing in mind however both the apparent legal limitations to Community activity in this area and the considerable amount of the work already undertaken by the Council of Europe and OECD, the Education Committee in 1980 took the view that the Community should not undertake a programme of work intended to comprehend all the key issues in the field of preschool education, but should concentrate its efforts on two priority themes, that is the special needs of young disabled children and of young migrants. In the light of this approach the Commission presented papers on these two themes to the Twelfth Session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education meeting in Lisbon in June 1981, the principal theme of which was preschool and early primary education.

As far as young migrant children are concerned, the Commission prepared a paper on the special problems of these children which is still under discussion in the Education Committee. This paper has also been submitted to the Advisory Committee on Free Movement of Workers.³

As far as concerns young disabled children, the Commission intends to include prevention as one of the priority themes for intensive treatment in the course of its work programme to promote the social integration of disabled people over the next five years. This activity will enable the Commission to report and present policy guidelines on all problems affecting the early childhood of disabled children, including the educational contribution to a coordinated set of services delivered at the local level.

These initiatives bear witness to the Commission's recognition of the intrinsic importance of pre-school (nursery) education, while also recognizing the need to work within a framework of Community competence.

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Question No 36, by Mrs von Alemann (H-789/81)

Subject: January report of the German Bundesbank

In its monthly report for January 1982, the German Bundesbank states that in 1981 the European Community cost each person in employment in the FRG DM 540.

The impression received from telephone inquiries to various Commission departments was that the Commission had issued no comment on this matter and had no intention of doing so.

Would the Commission state its views on this report and, if appropriate, strongly refute the assertions made?

Answer

1. The Commission does not normally take a position on the contents of external publications.
2. The figure quoted by the honourable Member seems to be derived from the total own resources paid by the Federal German Republic in 1981 to the Community budget divided by the number of persons in employment.

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¹ OJ No C 38/5 of 19. 2. 76, see especially para IV 21.

² Commission's Education Studies Series No 12: *Preschool education in the European Community*.

³ Note to the Education Committee (XII/888/80).

Question No 37, by Mr Vandemeulebroucke (H-796/81)

Subject: Contradictory Commission decisions relating to the Belgian steel concern, Sidmar

Sidmar was the first Community steel firm to install new continuous annealing plant. The resultant increase in capacity was expressly provided for in the Hanzinelle steel agreements between the Belgian Government and the European Commission signed by Mr Davignon for the Commission on 8 February 1981. The agreements contain no provision for a reduction in capacity. However, notwithstanding the Hanzinelle agreements, the Commission decided in early February 1982 to limit Belgian State aid to Sidmar and to authorize such aid only on condition that the Ghent steel firm closed down a 520 000 ton continuous annealing plant.

Why has the Commission unilaterally broken the express agreements of 8 February 1981 and why, in the space of 11 months, has it taken two totally contradictory decisions which seriously endanger the economic viability and competitiveness of this Flemish concern?

Answer

The Hanzinelle agreements mentioned by the Honourable Member were signed before the introduction of the Community rules for aid to the steel industry.¹

These rules require that any undertaking receiving public aid must be able to justify this aid, in particular by reducing production capacity.

In this context, it is worth noting that there was no mention of public aid in the Hanzinelle agreements.

In invoking, in 1980, Article 93 (2) in respect of planned aids in support of various Belgian steel programmes, the Commission had already stressed the need for the Belgian steel industry to reduce production capacity in order to justify the aids in question.

Subsequently, the new aids code has made authorization of any aid to the steel industry conditional upon the reduction of capacity, either by the undertaking in question or by a group of undertakings. In addition, the intensity of aid must be compatible with the extent of the restructuring effort.

The Commission felt it was possible to authorize certain aids for the Sidmar continuous annealing plant in the light of the net reduction in annealing capacity proposed by the Belgian Government. However, these aids were limited to what was justified by the restructuring effort.

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Question No 38, by Mr Eyraud (H-799/81)

Subject: Milk refunds

In view of the contract concluded between the USSR and New Zealand for the supply of 30 000 tonnes of butter and 20 000 tonnes of whole milk powder each year for four years, which will in fact allow the US to dispose of its milk stocks, why has the Commission proposed reducing appropriations for milk refunds when it knew that the sale of the US stocks would lower prices?

Answer

The concern expressed by the Honourable Member, Mr Eyraud, about the contract concluded between the USSR and New Zealand for butter and whole milk powder and its effects on world market prices may be allayed by the following information:

- since the conclusion of the contract between New Zealand and the USA on 5 August 1981, more than half of the contracted amount of butter has been delivered to the New Zealand Dairy Board, yet there has been no reduction in the world market selling prices of butter, butteroil and other dairy products;

¹ Decision 257/80/ECSC, OJ L 29/5 of 6 2. 1980; Decision 2320/81/ECSC, OJ L 228 of 13. 8. 1981.

- the appropriations actually used for refunds in 1981 amount to a provisional figure of 1 728 m ECU. For 1982 the Commission had requested an appropriation of 2 219 m ECU, a 28% increase on the amount actually spent in 1981. This amount has been reduced by Parliament to 2 208 m ECU (including a reserve of 110 m ECU in Chapter 100).

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Question No 40, by Mr Alavanos (H-801/89)

Subject: Beet cultivation and sugar production in Greece

Prior to Greece's accession to the EEC, beet-growing was one of the most dynamic sectors of Greek agriculture and beet was one of the most successful earners of foreign currency.

In view of the fact that the beet producers' associations at their meeting in Veroia made a reasonable request for the expansion and modernization of beet-growing and for the establishment of a sixth Greek sugar refinery, and since there have been interesting proposals this year concerning Yugoslavian and Bulgarian imports from Greece — which will be impossible to implement owing to the present EEC restrictions on Greek beet production and trade barriers with the Socialist countries — why is the Commission insisting on these restrictions on beet-growing?

Answer

Greece succeeded during accession negotiations in obtaining a sugar production quota of 319 000 tonnes, and this was well in excess of the previous five years average production of 280 000 t. It is this and not the Commission which limits production benefiting from Community guarantees.

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Question No 41, by Mr Collins (H-807/81)

Subject: Lead in petrol

When will the Commission bring forward proposals to eliminate lead from petrol completely and what barriers does it see standing in the way of Member States who want to achieve this ban now?

Answer

The Community is taking action in several fields to limit environmental pollution by lead.

In respect of petrol, please refer to the *Directive on the lead content of petrol* (78/611/EEC), OJ L 197 of 22. 7. 1978, drawn up in response to the German legislation on lead in petrol.

Under this directive:

- From 1 January 1981 the maximum permitted lead content of petrol placed upon the Community internal market is 0.40 g Pb/l. Nevertheless, a Member State may require, in respect of petrol placed upon its market, that the maximum permitted lead content be less than 0.40 g/l. However, it shall not establish limits lower than 0.15 g/l.

Some Member States have availed themselves of this opportunity, namely, Germany, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Other action by the Community with regard to lead pollution includes:

- a directive on biological screening of population for lead,
- a directive on the quality of water for human consumption (15 July 1980),
- a proposal for a directive on air quality standards for lead,
- and two other proposals for directives, one on the protection of workers against harmful exposure to metallic lead and its ionic compounds of work, and one on upper limits for lead and cadmium in ceramic products.

In general terms, the Community can therefore be said to be meeting its responsibility to combat lead pollution. The Commission therefore believes that further action to reduce the lead content of petrol requires careful consideration. A comprehensive investigation is under way into the public health, energy, industrial and environmental aspects of a reduction in motor vehicle exhausts. A group of experts from the Member States, industry, and the Commission is examining the matter from all these aspects with the aim of putting forward a series of proposals on medium and long-term targets by 30 June 1983.

If a Member State nevertheless wishes to require a petrol placed upon its national market to be lead-free, it will have to request the Commission to amend the Directive accordingly. The Commission would then initiate discussions with the other Member States on this request. However, no Member State has yet made a request of this nature.

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Question No 42, by Mr Fergusson (H-810/81)

Subject: Commission issuing information about resolutions adopted by Parliament

What steps does the Commission take, as a matter of course, to ensure that Commission offices in countries outside the Community are fully and promptly informed of the resolutions directly concerning those countries adopted by the European Parliament?

Answer

In general, where debates of the European Parliament which have been placed on the agenda in advance are involved, the Community's offices are directly informed by the spokesman. This information also includes the resolutions adopted and votes taken during these sittings. This service is carried out by telex, several telex messages being sent each day when Parliament is sitting.

With regard to urgent debates which are not placed on the agenda in advance, where it is more difficult to transmit information, the Commission has set up a warning system so that offices for which a particular resolution is of special interest may be informed as speedily as possible by their desk officer.

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Question No 45, by Mr Christopher Jackson (H-917/81)

Subject: Quality of bathing water directive

This directive lays down standards of water pollution to be observed by 1985 in respect of beaches used by a certain number of people.

Can Member States of their own accord grant, in respect of a certain beach, a derogation from the 'quality of bathing water' provisions laid down in this directive; and what powers does the Commission have to ensure compliance with the standards laid down?

Answer

Member States must designate bathing areas in accordance with the definition contained in Article 1 of Directive 76/160/EEC.

Article 4(3) states that in exceptional circumstances Member States may grant derogations in respect of the ten-year time limit laid down in Article 4(1). The Commission must be notified of the justifications for such derogations not later than six years following the notification of the directive. The derogations must be based on plans for the management of water in the area concerned. The justifications will be examined by the Commission and the latter will, where necessary, make appropriate proposals to the Council.

Derogations from the directive are permissible in the case of certain parameters, if there are exceptional weather or geographical conditions and if the bathing water undergoes natural enrichment in certain substances above the fixed limits. If a Member State grants such a derogation it must immediately notify the Commission of this, stating the reasons for and periods anticipated. In no case do such derogations release a Member State from the requirements essential for public health protection.

Apart from the derogations laid down in the directive, the Member States may not grant any derogation from its provisions on their own initiative.

As far as compliance with the standards laid down is concerned, the Commission will exercise the powers provided for in Article 169 of the EEC Treaty.

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Question No 46, by Mr Habsburg (H-821/81)

Subject: Abolition of identity checks at the internal borders of the European Community

In a resolution adopted almost unanimously, the European Parliament called on the Commission to submit a report on the projected abolition of identity checks at the internal borders of the European Community. What progress has been made in drawing up this report, and when will it be submitted to the European Parliament?

Answer

The abolition of identity checks at the internal borders of the Community is the central feature of a passport union of all Member States, as agreed on by the Heads of State and Government at the 1974 Paris Summit. Following this summit the Commission submitted to the Council on 3 July 1975 a report setting out in more detail the problems involved in creating a passport union and dealing in particular with the question of the abolition of identity checks. This report appeared under the title 'Towards European citizenship' as Supplement No 7 to the 1975 Bulletin of the European Communities.

After extremely difficult and protracted negotiations the first stage on the road towards a passport union was successfully completed on 29 June 1981 with the decision by the Member States to introduce a uniform European Community passport.

The next phase involves the introduction of practical measures to abolish identity checks at the internal borders of the Community and to approximate the visa policies applied by the Member States to third countries. In this connection the Commission submitted initial proposals to the Council last autumn and has begun consultations with the Member States. At the same time as it is working on proposals for the abolition of frontier formalities in transfrontier intra-Community trade, the Commission is also preparing a draft Council resolution on the simplification of identity checks at the internal frontiers of the Community. This resolution will serve as a basis for further measures towards the creation of a genuine passport union.

It is therefore clear that the Commission has campaigned unceasingly and vigorously for practical measures to simplify intra-Community travel as part of the idea of European citizenship.

Since, as stated, the Commission intends to propose further measures, and since it intends to do so before the 1982 summer recess, it does not consider it necessary at present to submit an additional report on the problem of identity checks.

However, the Commission unanimously shares Parliament's opinion that it is time the free movement of citizens was achieved and the list of measures first drawn up by the Commission in 1975 implemented. It would therefore welcome a detailed discussion of these problems by Parliament as soon as the draft resolution on the abolition of identity checks is available. This could help our approaches to the Council considerably.

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Question No 47, by Mr Van Miert (H-827/81)

Subject: Additional regional aid for the Westhoek region

In the light of the detailed information contained in the Flemish regional authorities' counterproposals concerning Belgian development regions, will the Commission state whether or not it considers that the social and economic conditions obtaining in the sub-region of Westhoek are such as to warrant a six-month extension (until 30 June 1982) of additional regional aid for that area and whether it is endeavouring to reduce or increase regional disparities?

Answer

Under the terms of the procedure provided for in Article 93 (2) of the EEC Treaty, initiated on 16 December 1981 with regard to a project for extending the additional regional aid in the Westhoek and Ardennen-Condroz-Gaume regions, the Belgian Government has been urged, in a letter dated 24 December 1981 (reference SG (81) D/17092), to make its views known. These have so far not been received by the Commission.

In fact, the Commission had already initiated the procedure provided for in Article 93 (2) of the EEC Treaty on 11 November 1981 with regard to the intention to redefine the Belgian development areas and with regard to various aid measures of a regional nature set out in the Act of 30 December 1970. The Belgian Government was urged in a letter dated 19 November 1981 (reference SG (81) D/15004), to make its views known, and these were presented in definitive form in a letter dated 22 February 1982. The information provided in this letter, and to which the honourable Member has referred, is not sufficient to enable the Commission to decide whether an extension of the additional regional aid of a short-term economic nature in the Westhoek region is justified.

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Question No 48, by Mrs Buchan (H-830/81)

Subject: El Salvador

A resolution passed by the Parliament on 17. 9. 1981 and forwarded to the Commission stated that it 'supports all efforts to facilitate negotiations between the Junta and the Government on the one hand and the opposition FDR on the other'. Would the Commission please give details of any action it has taken to facilitate such negotiations?

Answer

The Commission is also in favour of a political solution by means of negotiations between all democratic groups in the country, with the aim of achieving a democratic and pluralist form of government. As far as practical action is concerned, the Commission has hitherto concentrated on proposing or adopting humanitarian measures for the relief of the destitute population; these measures are put into effect by non-governmental organizations. A statement summarizing these measures was submitted to the European Parliament on 26 February 1982.

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Question No 49, by Mr Caborn (H-833/81)

Subject: Elections in El Salvador

On Sunday 28 March, 'elections' are to be held in El Salvador, 'elections' from which the majority of the people and their representative political organizations will be excluded. In view of the fact that these 'elections' are not democratic and will not solve the divisions within the country or legitimize the government, will the Commission state what steps it is taking to bring pressure to bear on the United States of America to realize the futility of these planned elections?

Answer

The Commission very much regrets that the impending elections in El Salvador will be held without the participation of important groups of the population and will be marked by continuing violence. The Commission does not however take the view that an approach to the United States is likely to remedy this unfortunate situation.

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Question No 51, by Mr Pearce (H-835/81)

Subject: Aid to Namibian refugees

Will the Commission indicate what assurances it has received, and from whom, that aid announced at the beginning of February to Namibian refugees will be used for peaceful and humanitarian purposes, and not directed to military purposes; and what steps it will take in the future to see that these assurances are honoured?

Answer

As far as the emergency aid and food aid decided recently is concerned, great care was taken to ensure that the products provided would reach only the civilian refugee population in the north of Angola.

In this respect the consortium of European NGO'S implementing this aid ensured very close control of distribution by arranging for a representative to be installed in Angola to supervise the distribution of the Community's aid up to and including receipt by individual refugees in the camps.

As one of the terms of the agreement governing the allocation of this aid, the consortium will provide regular reports up to final distribution of the products supplied, plus a final report including an independent audit of the operation at camp level. Such reports will provide the means to see that all assurances given are honoured.

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Question No 56, by Mrs Lizin (H-844/81)

Subject: Chooz nuclear power station

On 3 February 1982 the Commission of the European Communities revised its recommendation concerning the application of Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty. The new procedure now in force provides for two preliminary information and safety analysis stages for the construction of nuclear reactors.

1. A list of general data concerning the site, installation, waste and its radiological effect, a list of accidents examined in the preliminary safety report and an evaluation of the radiological effects of specific accidents must be provided before building permission is granted.
2. A highly detailed and much more comprehensive list of general information is to be submitted, if possible one year before any waste is produced.

The Commission is now in a position to seek information from the Member States during the preliminary stage, i.e. before building permission is granted for any nuclear reactor. Does it intend to apply this stricter new procedure:

- in the case of Belgium, with regard to the proposed sites on the lower Meuse,
- in the case of France, with regard to the Chooz project?

Answer

The Commission will ask the Member States to implement the new recommendation on the application of Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty as quickly as possible after its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

The recommendation provides for the following two information stages in respect of both nuclear power stations and reprocessing plants:

1. The communication of provisional 'general data' (including a provisional evaluation of the radiological effects of specific accidents), which is required before building permission by the national authorities is granted.
2. The communication of highly detailed 'general data', if possible one year, but at least six months, before the commissioning of the plant.

Since this recommendation is addressed to all Member States, it naturally also applies to Belgian and French projects on the banks of the Meuse.

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II. Questions to the Council

Question No 57, by Miss De Valera (H-676/81)

Subject: EEC research aid into the cause of cot deaths

Under the heading 'health problems' in the proposals recently forwarded to the Council by the Commission on a second programme of medical research on which a Council decision is due, will the Council state if it would agree to aid vital research in Ireland and indeed the Community into the cause of 'cot deaths' which presently claim three lives a week?

Answer

The new proposal for a research programme in the field of medicine and public health includes a section entitled 'Pre-, peri- and postnatal care' covering research activities in the area mentioned by the honourable Member. If the programme is adopted by the Council following the opinion which the European Parliament has been invited to deliver, its implementation as a concerted action project will be the Commission's responsibility.

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Question No 58, by Mr Davern (H-677/81)

Subject: Special aid measures for young farmers¹

Will the Council give due reasons as to why the proposal for a Council Directive dating back to 1974 on a special aid measure for young farmers who have been farming for less than five years and are implementing a development plan has not yet been introduced?

Answer

The measure to which the honourable Member refers was adopted by the Council on 30 June 1981 in the context of the amendments made to Directive 72/159/EEC.

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¹ COM 74/2001 — final.

Question No 65, by Mrs Lizin (H-763/81)

Subject: Chooz nuclear power station

Is it true that in talks with the French Government the President of the Council, Mr Tindemans, and the President of the Council of Energy Ministers, Mr Knoops, discussed the construction of French nuclear power stations at Chooz, an area practically completely surrounded by Belgium, without any reference at all to the need to complete the European consultation procedure for such installations near frontiers?

Answer

It is not for the Council to answer questions about talks on bilateral problems between the Governments of the Member States.

I would add, however, that at its meeting on 27 October 1981 the Council of Energy Ministers agreed to continue at its next meeting its examination of the proposal for a regulation concerning the introduction of a Community consultation procedure in respect of power stations likely to affect the territory of another Member State. The Presidency will do all it can to see that the discussions are completed as soon as possible.

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Question No 73, by Mrs von Alemann (H-790/81)

Subject: Objectives of the Belgian Presidency concerning transport policy

Does the Council believe that, as Mr Tindemans explained in his programme of action for the first six months of 1982, the implementation of the Council Resolution of 26 March 1981 will be sufficient to achieve the goal of establishing a common transport policy?

Answer

I would firstly like to remind you that, when examining the Commission communication on the development of the common transport policy on 15 October 1975, the Council stated that the best approach in connection with this policy would be to take a series of practical measures rather than to follow an overall conception which was already completely predetermined.

Following this approach, in June 1977, after a general discussion on the common transport policy, the Council asked the Commission to draw up a work programme for 1978 onwards, containing a list of priority measures for the various fields of transport policy.

On 20 December 1977 the Council took note of a Commission communication on priorities for the Council's programme of activities until the end of 1980.

Taking advantage of the experience gained in implementing this programme, on 16 March 1981 the Council adopted the resolution to which the honourable Member refers, incorporating a priority programme for its work from 1981 to 1983.

The Belgian Presidency's programme of action shows that it has chosen certain matters from the priority programme without, however, excluding others, such as the proposal for a directive on the weights and dimensions of industrial vehicles.

The Presidency's programme does not seek — as the honourable Member considers — to complete work on establishing a common transport policy. It is, however, an effort to reactivate that policy.

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Question No 75, by Mr Seligman (H-798/81)

Subject: Soviet gas supplies to Member States

Has the Community's dependence on Soviet gas supplies, as a proportion of total gas supplies to the Community, reached a politically unacceptable level?

Answer

At its meeting on 16 March the Council will examine a Commission communication on measures to strengthen the security of the Community's natural gas supplies.

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Question No 80, by Miss Brookes (H-814/81)

Subject: Revitalization of rural areas

What measures does the Council propose to take to halt depopulation and revitalize rural areas such as the north of Wales, and will it urgently consider the introduction of all necessary aids, particularly for the construction of small factories and other generators of employment in rural areas, and for young farmers?

Answer

The Council has adopted several measures designed to curb depopulation in certain regions, encourage young farmers and make rural areas, including those to which the honourable Member refers, more viable.

In the field of agricultural structures policy, Directive 75/268/EEC on mountain and hill farming and farming in certain less-favoured areas and Directive 72/159/EEC on the modernization of farms may be mentioned. The latter Directive was amended by the Council in June 1981 in order to relax the conditions of access to development plans with the object in particular of encouraging investment in rural areas threatened by depopulation. It also lays down new provisions and special aids for young farmers who have not reached the age of 40 years.

The Regulation establishing a European Regional Fund provides for aid for direct investment in economically sound industrial craft and service activities benefiting from State regional aid schemes.

The Council bodies are currently examining a Commission proposal for the review of the European Regional Fund. The draft Regulation contains provisions on the exploitation of the local development potential of the regions.

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Question No 82, by Mr Habsburg (H-822/81)

Subject: Dumping by the Soviet Union

On the markets for gold, diamonds and, in particular, wood, all the signs indicate that these commodities are being supplied by the USSR on terms which could be described as dumping. Information available suggests that a similar danger exists in other areas, where such dumping is likely further to aggravate the world economic crisis and the resulting unemployment.

Does the Council take the view that the danger of dumping by the USSR is a real one, and is it prepared to initiate measures to ensure that the danger is met sufficiently early?

Answer

Under Community rules it is up to Community undertakings or producer associations which consider themselves harmed or threatened by 'dumping' or subsidies granted by a third country to make a complaint to the Commission or to a Member State which will pass it on to the Commission. The Commission then decides, according to criteria and procedures laid down in the basic anti-dumping Regulation, whether or not to introduce a provisional anti-dumping duty. The Council enters the picture only at a later stage when a decision has to be taken, on the basis of a Commission proposal, to extend the provisional anti-dumping duty or to make it definitive.

The Council takes the view that these rules and their application offer adequate protection against the potential dumping risks posed by exports from the USSR or from any other third country.

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Question No 83, by Mr Van Miert (H-826/81)

Subject: Presidency of the Council

Can the Council state which Member State presided over the Council of Ministers of Finance on 21 February 1982 and on the strength of what provision in Community law?

Answer

The meeting of the Ministers of Finance on 21 February 1982 was not a Council meeting, but a consultation meeting as provided for in Article 7 of the Council Decision of 18 February 1974 on the attainment of a high degree of convergence of the economic policies of the Member States of the European Economic Community.

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Question No 84, by Mr Marck (H-829/81)

Subject: Failure to adjust the green rate of the Belgian franc

Why did the Council not adjust the green rate of the Belgian franc as requested by the Belgian Government when it devalued the franc? Are there precedents for the Council's attitude, for instance in the case of the devaluations carried out in the past by the French Government? What can be done to rectify this discrimination against Belgian agriculture and horticulture?

Answer

At the meeting of the Ministers of Finance and the governors of the central banks of the Member States of the European Community on 21 February 1982, at which the decision was taken to adjust the central rate within the European Monetary System, it was also agreed that, notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, the Member States which belonged to the EMS on whose behalf monetary compensatory amounts would be introduced or amended as a result of these realignments would not request any amendment (and the Commission would make no such proposals) of the current compensatory amounts before completion of the current agricultural price review, bearing in mind that the negotiations on this issue should normally be completed by 1 April.

Regarding the point made about precedents to the contrary, it is indeed true that, when the central rate of the French franc was adjusted on 5 October 1981, and in response to a request received from the French Government and after approval of an appropriate regulation by the Council, the green rate of the French franc was devalued shortly afterwards, with the result that the negative monetary compensatory amounts which would normally have ensued were eliminated. However, it should be borne in mind that the period in which the annual negotiations on agricultural prices and related measures take place, and in the course of which certain changes in the existing monetary compensatory amounts are usually made, was still quite far distant at the time.

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III. Questions to the Foreign Ministers

Question No 91, by Lord Bethell (H-787/81)

Subject: Letters by European Parliament Members on matters of political cooperation

Is the President-in-Office aware that letters written to him by European Parliament Members on matters of political cooperation are not receiving replies and will he instruct his staff to make sure that such letters do receive replies, if necessary after consultation between the 10 Foreign Ministers?

Answer

The President answers letters containing questions from Members of the European Parliament addressed to him under the European political cooperation procedure as rapidly and as fully as possible. However, it inevitably takes time to gather the opinions of all 10 Member States, and consequently it sometimes takes longer than one would wish to reply to a specific question.

As far as I can judge, questions which do not require a reply before the European Parliament are generally answered quite quickly.

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Question No 92, by Mr Schmid (H-792/81)

Subject: Exchange of views held by the President of the Council from 16 to 21 February in the USA

What was the outcome of the exchange of views on the Middle East problem and the development of the new medium-range missiles in Europe?

Answer

During his talks in Washington, the President-in-Office had an exchange of views with the American administration on current problems. On the question of the Middle East, he reiterated the well-known views of the Ten.

As regards the deployment of the new medium-range missiles in Europe, I should like to point out to the honourable Member that defence problems are not discussed in the context of European political cooperation and that this question was therefore not discussed by the Community and the United States.

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Question No 96, by Mr Habsburg (H-823/81)

Subject: Zimbabwe

In view of the dangerous situation that has developed in Zimbabwe, a country for which we are responsible by virtue not only of the Lancaster House Agreement but also of the Lomé Convention, do the Foreign Ministers agree that President Mugabe has violated both the letter and the spirit of the Agreement by the action he has taken against Joshua Nkomo and his party, the arrest of opposition members of parliament, and the torture of Mr Stuttaford, also a member of parliament? Are the Foreign Ministers prepared to make representations to the Government of Zimbabwe concerning this matter, making it clear that failure by the latter to respect its commitments will leave the Community with no alternative but to review existing agreements?

Answer

Neither the Lancaster House Agreement nor the Lomé Convention give the governments of the Ten any special responsibility *vis-à-vis* the independent state of Zimbabwe.

The Ten have so far not discussed recent events in Zimbabwe.

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Question No 98, by Mr Van Miert (H-825/81)

Subject: El Salvador

Can the President-in-Office of the Conference of Foreign Ministers state exactly what position he adopted on the subject of El Salvador in his talks in Washington with the United States President and Secretary of State, and on whose behalf?

Answer

As regards the discussions which the President-in-Office of the Ten had in Washington, he was, as far as El Salvador is concerned, not mandated to speak or adopt a position on behalf of the other Member States of the European Community.

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Question No 99, by Mr Caborn (H-832/81)

Subject: Elections in El Salvador

In view of the fact that El Salvador is under a state of martial law, that there is no electoral roll in El Salvador, that there is no up-to-date census and that only the most right wing political organizations will take part in the forthcoming elections, will the Foreign Ministers (a) refuse to recognize the legitimacy of these elections, (b) bring pressure to bear on the United States of America to realize the futility of these elections and (c) bring pressure to bear on the UK Government so that they do not send observers to the elections, thus giving them a legitimate status?

Answer

The exchanges of views and information between the 10 Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation on the conditions in which the elections on 28 March in El Salvador are to be held are continuing. The partners are not yet in a position to draw a unanimous conclusion on this matter.

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SITTING OF THURSDAY, 11 MARCH 1982

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

(The sitting was opened at 10 a.m.)

1. Approval of minutes

President. — The minutes of proceedings of yesterday's sitting have been distributed. Are there any comments?

I call Mr Patterson.

Mr Patterson. — It is a very small point, but we might as well get it right. On page 7 of the English version of the minutes, there is an Amendment No 46 which appears to be by Mr Patterson and Lord Douro. This is not the case. It was tabled by Mr Fergusson and Lord Douro. Let us just get it right for the sake of the printed version.

President. — I see from my French text that Amendment No 46 is tabled by Mr Fergusson and Lord

Douro, and so it is only an error in the English text. It will be rectified.

(Parliament adopted the minutes of proceedings)¹

2. Agenda

President. — Several Members have asked me to put to the House their request for the agenda of today's sitting to be modified so that the Maij-Weggen report on Community trade in seal products can be considered this afternoon. This is a tricky matter. If we bring forward the Maij-Weggen report, this means that at least one of the two reports by the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport will have to be put back to the evening sitting. In the circumstances, and in order to satisfy all the requests I have received, I think it would be a good idea if the House decided whether this afternoon's order of business should be as follows:

3 p.m.:

— continuation of the joint debate on the oral questions on the Multifibre Arrangement

¹ Documents received — Withdrawal of a motion for a resolution: see minutes.

President

- *Maij-Weggen report on Community trade in seal products*
- *Gaiotti de Biase report on a Community education programme*
- *remainder unchanged.*

I call Mr Forth.

Mr Forth. — Well, before I speak against, Mr President, I would like you to tell me under which rule this has been done, because I will remind you of Rule 56 which says: Once adopted, the agenda shall not be amended, except in application of Rules 57 and 84 to 88. I would like to know on what basis the agenda is being changed at this stage.

President. — Mr Forth, it can be done, as you will see if you read carefully Rule 56(2). This rule states:

Once adopted, the agenda shall not be amended, except in application of Rules 57 and 84 to 88 or on a proposal from the President.

This is the basis. I would not like a debate on the order in which items are taken. I have one speaker for and one speaker against.

I call Mr Johnson.

Mr Johnson. — Mr President, I think you have shown extraordinary wisdom and imagination, if I may say so, in responding to the wide feeling of the public and placing this debate at a time when people who have come a long way — including, I hope, our friends from Canada — are able to be here. I certainly believe it is exactly the right thing to do, and indeed you hinted on Monday, when you made a statement, that you would do your best and I am grateful to you for trying. I very much hope the House will approve this suggested change and, of course, I am very grateful to Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and Mr Beumer for agreeing to make that change in the order of the agenda, which I think shows a great deal of statesmanship on their side too.

President. — I call Mr Kirk.

Mr Kirk. — (DA) Mr President, I should like to point out to Parliament that this question was brought up last Monday when we were debating the agenda. The proposal that the report on seal hunting should be brought forward was rejected on that occasion and I therefore feel that it is unreasonable that this question should be brought up again today. It cannot surely be felt that certain reports should have greater priority in the Parliament than others because of public opinion. The other reports are also the work of serious people

and I therefore urge Parliament to reject the proposal put forward by the President.

President. — I am in the hands of the Assembly. I am opening the possibility of changing the agenda; I am not changing it. It is up to you to change it or not. That is one thing. Furthermore, I have to tell you that I said on Monday that I would prefer to try and deal with the report on seals at a reasonable time on Thursday. In other words, I tried on Monday to ensure that the debate on the report on seals should be concluded before 6 p.m. this afternoon. However, an unusual course of events meant that I was not able to do this and the result is that we now in fact find ourselves in the situation which I hoped last Monday to avoid. I therefore think I should leave the choice to the Assembly.

I propose that, in principle, the debate on seals should be held this afternoon.

(Parliament adopted the proposal and the agenda was amended accordingly)

I call Mr Sherlock to speak on a point of order.

Mr Sherlock. — As this group's spokesman on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, I trust, Mr President, in view of your action, that the House and you will show equal sympathy where we have the lives of human beings and their health at stake . . .

(Applause)

. . . and not relegate those matters, which could, perhaps, be almost as important as seal pups, to five minutes to twelve on a Thursday night, where, for example, Mrs Scrivener's report . . .

President. — I think this is not a point of order.

Mr Sherlock. — It is a point of order. . . . Where Mrs Scrivener's report was pushed out at the end of the day's business.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Balfe.

Mr Balfe. — Mr President, I received a message of congratulation this morning on voting yesterday in favour of Amendment No 40. I wish to record that I actually voted against it, and I wonder whether that could be made clear in the record of the sitting. I know very well I voted against it because it was the single transferable vote, with which I have some sympathy, but in the end decided not to support.

3. Membership of Parliament

President. — Mr Fanton has informed me in writing of his resignation. In accordance with Article 12(2), subparagraph 2, of the Act concerning the election of the representatives of the Assembly by direct universal suffrage, the House is required to establish a vacancy and to inform the Member State concerned.

I call Mr Fergusson.

Mr Fergusson. — Mr President, I am very glad that the Legal Affairs Committee was able to produce its helpful interim report on this matter so fast — in time, indeed, for this particular resignation. Under the circumstances I think it is up to me now to register my objection to the continuation of the systematic abuse of our present, diverse electoral arrangements through the tourniquet. Yesterday's resolution on these matters went no way to rectify it. The Fanton affair — known last month as the Clément affair, and to be known in April, we have his own word for it, as the Cousté affair — continues to bring this institution into disrepute. I object to the establishment of a new vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Fanton, on the grounds that he was subject to improper pressure or, alternatively, that his resignation is in conflict with our Rules.

Now there is nothing personal, may I say, Mr President, about this, least of all against the Gaullist Members, whose good humour and good sense are a byword in this institution. We need their talents. We value the friendship and understanding we have cultivated with them — yes, and with other Members of this House whom we have lost through the ease with which the turnover is in fact possible. Where, we ask, are the names we thought we once knew . . .

President. — Mr Fergusson, could you put that in writing, because that is what you have to do by virtue of the decision of the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions?

Mr Fergusson. — In writing, Mr President?

President. — Yes, I shall read you the text: If you contest — and that is what you are doing — a resignation of a Member on the basis of what was decided by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Petitions, the President has to adjourn the decision.

You have so contested. Therefore I have to adjourn the decision. You must then set out in writing the reasons behind your contestation and we shall vote on it tomorrow. Since you have contested the resignation I cannot accept it. I have to postpone the matter. I have to receive your contestation in writing. Tomorrow we shall take a decision.

Mr Fergusson. — I see, Mr President. Am I right in saying that the objection must be raised in person like this, not in writing?

President. — Yes.

Mr Fergusson. — But the justification must be put in writing?

President. — Yes, that's right.

Mr Fergusson. — I shall do so.

President. — I call de Courcy Ling.

Mr de Courcy Ling. — Mr President, may I make a separate but related point? Many of us in this House are concerned, not with the question of an individual resignation but with the pressure which is put on Members leading up to resignation which may be a violation of the 1976 Act. Mr President, I believe that you and the House will be relieved to hear that we can expect from Mr Chirac in the near future a public declaration on this matter. He gave us private notice of his intention of making a public statement when he visited London recently.

4. Monetary policy

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

- statement by Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1107/81), tabled by Mr Fanti and others on behalf of the Communist and Allies Group, on the level of interest rates in the Community;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1104/81) by Mr Bonaccini and others on the adjustment of the central rates of the European monetary system.

I call the Commission.

Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, I am glad of this opportunity to address Parliament after the recent monetary realignment and before the Council of Ministers of Economic Affairs and Finance resumes discussion on Monday of the development of the European Monetary System and its prospects. I am also pleased that the two motions for resolutions take a fresh look at a group of themes which, I think, constitute the basis of the action we must take.

Ortoli

The debate — as we have noted on a number of occasions — is of major importance for all of us, since it concerns not only the development of European economic integration but also the establishment of a stable monetary framework to form a sound basis for our response to the economic crisis, and finally the opportunity we have to take advantage of our collective strength to defend our position and interests *vis-à-vis* our major partners in international monetary affairs.

I am all the more pleased, as I said, since the forthcoming Council of Finance Ministers will resume discussion of this subject with a view to the European Council, and since I hope that account will be taken of the ideas which I am about to present to you on behalf of the Commission — ideas which arise from the series of debates we have had both here and in the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs.

But before taking up the substantive questions relating to the development of the European Monetary System and our international monetary relations, I would like to mention the recent monetary realignment, which incidentally provided the basis for the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Bonaccini and others.

Firstly, I would like to remind you that the realignment, the adjustments to the central rates, to the exchange rates, are an integral part of the European Monetary System. They are not the only means of action in this system, they are not the only way of lessening tensions or defusing difficult situations, but they are an integral part of the system.

There are other mechanisms which we must continue to use in order to ensure the development of internal policies in such a way as to avoid excessive tensions, and there are other techniques, one of which was mentioned by Mr Bonaccini — that of interventions within the margins — which, like that of interventions at the limits of the currency band, can be used to forestall such difficulties.

But bearing in mind the present stage of convergence it is inevitable that at some times these parities — fixed but adjustable — need to be adjusted and this must be done when the basic conditions require it.

In the particular case of the most recent realignment, and particularly with regard to Belgium, the intervention procedures, including the intramarginal intervention procedures, would almost certainly have been insufficient to solve the problem.

It is no secret that the Belgian economic situation is difficult, and that the country has a very sizeable budget deficit — significantly higher than 10% of the gross domestic product, i.e. very much higher than the Community average; it should also be borne in mind that the balance of payments deficit is higher than 6%, whereas the Community average is lower than 2% in

terms of gross domestic product. It is therefore a difficult situation, and the last figure I mentioned, for a country whose external trade — in goods and services — represents 50% of the gross domestic product, is enough to justify raising the question of readjustment.

I would like to add that the special political circumstances and the fact that Belgium was in the run-up to an election made it impossible for the Belgian Government to take part in the October monetary realignment. In other words, for entirely understandable reasons there was no downward adjustment of the Belgian franc.

We are therefore dealing with an adjustment which was in part a deferred adjustment, but Mr Bonaccini asks me what lessons can be drawn from this experience. I would like to go over them again, although we have spoken of them on a number of occasions.

Of course, adjustment is an inevitable practice, but we must keep an eye on two factors which I think essential for the success of our system. We say that we want to create a zone of monetary stability. That means that we must both avoid excessive recourse to realignments and, basically, avoid establishing *de facto* — while claiming to be involved in a mechanism to ensure stability — so-called sliding or stepped parities. We must therefore avoid readiness to make small adjustments for whatever reason. This is the very opposite of the spirit of the monetary system we have set up, but while avoiding sliding parities we must also avoid what I would call a historic leap — i.e. tensions becoming so strong and accumulating in such conditions in an economy which does not make monetary adjustments that at a given moment we would have to change the central rates by a very significant percentage — something which would not entirely accord with the spirit of our system, which seeks, on the contrary, as flexible a modulation as possible of the operating conditions for exchange rates. I therefore think that the first lesson to be drawn is that we must avoid any laxity and avoid accumulation of tensions to the point where we end up with sliding parities or with what I have called a historic leap — a great leap.

My second observation is this: we assumed that, at the time of realignment, accompanying measures would be taken — essentially internal adjustment measures consistent with the new exchange rate. Indeed, when a country carries out a realignment because of a situation which is perceived as no longer corresponding with economic reality, it is to restore a competition situation intended to stop imports resulting from the simple fact that the exchange rate was unrealistic, or, on the other hand, to prevent technically possible exports not taking place because the exchange rate no longer really reflects the competitiveness of the economy.

This clearly means that measures taken within the country must have the aim of maintaining this level of

Ortoli

competitiveness and avoiding the erosion of the benefits of devaluation. This is the second lesson to be drawn.

The third lesson to be drawn is that, because of our interdependence, about 10% of our gross domestic product is accounted for by trade among the Member States of the Community — a much higher percentage in the case of Belgium. In addition, because of our joint monetary commitment we must ensure that devaluations or revaluations, when they take place, take account not only of the aspirations of a country and its ideas about how best to handle the operation, but also of common interests. Personally, I am therefore pleased that we had a long discussion at the last Council of Ministers of Economic Affairs and Finance. This meant that we were capable of seeking together a point of balance which would allow us to express as well as possible the interests of the countries which have devalued — Belgium, Luxembourg and Denmark — and those of other countries with similar problems who would obviously wish the exchange rates thus established to accord with the common interest. For my part, I think this is one of the main contributions of the system, in a troubled world where we do not succeed in solving exchange rate problems satisfactorily. With our system, we can still try to find the real points of balance corresponding to a particular economic situation.

The last lesson to be drawn is this: we had to draw the appropriate conclusions from the fact that this realignment took place at the very time when we were preparing to discuss farm prices, and of course we had to prevent — and this explains the position taken on monetary compensatory amounts and the fact that they were not adjusted — this affecting in an unexpected, difficult and dangerous way agricultural negotiations which were already, traditionally, difficult enough.

As I said, I do not think that, given the position of the Belgian franc, a better use of intervention within the margins would have been the right solution. But, as Mr Bonaccini and others stress, and as Mr Fanti, Mr Piquet and others stress in their motion for a resolution, there is a more important problem, on which I shall briefly dwell to inform you of the position I shall take up on behalf of the Commission at the Council of Ministers.

First of all — and I do not stress this point, which is of a rather technical nature — the idea that the system has essentially worked very well. Of course, we know that the divergence of policies has made things more difficult, but the system itself has operated very well and has shown that these methods were in general satisfactory.

That does not mean that improvements cannot be made, and I think the time has come to discuss them, and particularly the function of the development of

the ECU within the system; we can make better use of the procedures for intervention within the margins, and in this context I can tell Mr Bonaccini and his colleagues that this is the viewpoint I myself shall defend. There is some room for improvement of the system in this respect, but let us not exaggerate this first element at all. I think that the strengthening of the mechanism is an important factor and that, while we have improvements to make, we must not disregard the fact that the system has worked well.

The second point — a more forward-looking one, if I may say so — which I noted in Mr Bonaccini's motion, and with which, as you know, I entirely agree, is the idea of encouraging the use of the ECU as a financial instrument. We can thus see emerging a European monetary image which is more public than the mere interplay of mutual interventions or, to be more precise, mutual commitments between central banks through the mechanisms which they use for intervention.

I think that is one of the points on which we should set ourselves three aims: firstly, we must in a way confirm the status of the ECU; next, we must remove the legal obstacles to its use — this is one of the questions which the Commission raises and which I shall go into on Monday; finally, we must acknowledge that our common aim is that the ECU should gradually, in line with the market and without undue pretensions, become a reality on our European markets first of all — and this will perhaps create a problem of movement of capital on external markets at a certain stage. I therefore stress the idea of promoting the ECU, and the rôle of the ECU, no longer merely among central banks but externally, in the financial world. This is a point which I shall uphold very vigorously on Monday.

The third point concerns the consolidation of convergence. I cannot deal with this point in a few minutes, but I believe that the practice of convergences, even more than the regulation of convergence, must be intensified, particularly in terms of coordination of internal monetary policies. In monetary policy we already have one very important practice: we coordinate the aim of exchange rates very thoroughly through the European Monetary System; our figure of 2.25 already constitutes practical coordination of monetary policy according to one of the aims, namely the exchange rate.

I think that in the other two fields related to the volume of currency issued — the quantitative aspect, the targets, the monetary aggregates and the coordination of interest rate policies — there is scope for further action, and for my part I shall defend, as do the two motions for resolutions which I have looked at, the idea that organizing does not necessarily mean decreeing and regulating, but that organization must be consolidated. What is more, this goes beyond the monetary field.

Ortoli

I think the words 'economic policies' were used in Mr Bonaccini's motion for a resolution, and I wish to take them up. This means that when each of our States defines its economic policy, we must be able to discuss whether it is consistent with the optimum common growth objective and with the optimum common balance objective, and that in the course of the year we shall have to hold more responsible discussions on the effective implementation of the policies, on the way in which they contribute to the common aims, on any disparities which may arise, on their justification, and on the real situation, instead of holding an economic debate only once a year in such an interdependent Community as ours. It must be a continuing debate and must therefore be much better organized.

The last point with which I shall deal — mentioned both by Mr Bonaccini and by Messrs Fanti and Piquet — concerns the relationship with external currencies. On this point I can be fairly brief, for we have discussed it here quite often. I am myself convinced that the rôle of interest rates is clearly very important, if not decisive, in economic developments, primarily because it affects one of our main objectives — the boosting of investment — next because it affects the availability of funds, to the extent that, for example, very high short-term interest rates can lead to a switching of 'real' savings commitments — if I may so phrase it — towards very short-term investments, and thirdly, in a more general way, because the volatility of interest rates is a problem which the whole economy has to cope with in a period of anxiety such as that we are going through.

I think it would be unreasonable not to realize that the problem is not only international, but clearly also a national one in each of our countries. The level of inflation is one of the explanations for high interest rates. What I might call budgetary demand, drawing on the available savings stock, is also an explanation of the tensions over interest rates, but like you I believe that a broader regularization of interest rate mechanisms, particularly those affecting the dominant monetary power — the USA — is a very important factor.

For my part I hope that we may say clearly and calmly that these matters concern us also and that we therefore wish the dialogue — what I would call an 'organized' dialogue — really to take into account this set of problems, with regard to both exchange rates and interest rates.

That, then, is the Commission's position, and I trust that I have explained it within the allotted time.

I would like to conclude by saying that, while I have necessarily been very brief here, I shall explain this position in the same way and in greater detail on Monday at the Council of Ministers of Economic Affairs and Finance, and that I am pleased that this debate has taken place, for I hope that after the votes on the two motions for resolutions I shall be able to

appear before the Council and say that the Commission's obvious concern is shared by Parliament, and that the many debates — albeit sometimes very short — which have taken place on monetary questions show not only a concern for stability but also a desire to achieve an interest rate situation more in keeping with the prospects for economic growth, a desire that we should benefit to the full from the venture we have undertaken with the ECU, particularly through its rôle in the money markets, and finally the need for convergence, which has been mentioned here many times — the last one only recently. I shall take up these very points, fully assured, I believe, of the support of Parliament.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Bonaccini.

Mr Bonaccini. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I have little to add to what has already been said, not only because I have not much time in which to speak, but also because I had the impression that Commissioner Ortoli essentially shared our view of the questions that we intended to raise in this House as general problems.

It is not a question of following a ritual, simply because we are faced with yet another — a fifth and substantial — devaluation, and not only because we have just received a report — Mr Purvis' report — which was approved almost unanimously, but also because a meeting of the European Council will shortly take place and an occasion like that — I have noted what Commissioner Ortoli had to say on this matter — makes it incumbent on us to assert the will of Parliament fully and forcibly.

If the Member of the Commission here present will permit me, I should like to make the humble observation that while realigning parities is certainly part of the European Monetary System as it was originally conceived, there is no doubt that such realignments have no part in an overall strategy intended to deal with the structural problems of the economies of the countries concerned, as was stated in the Commission's *communiqué* of 22 February.

These are two completely different questions, and to rely on solving structural problems by monetary realignments alone would be as hopeless an undertaking as trying to put out a conflagration with a few buckets of water. We need to improve the mechanism governing the lower fluctuation margin and other EMS mechanisms, just as we need to take due note of the threat of competitive devaluations.

I must say that, in spite of the Commissioner's soothing words and persuasive powers, the readjustments of the exchange rates of the Luxembourg franc

Bonaccini

and the Danish crown — which in this latter case were of very modest proportions — are not convincing, nor were we told what initial operations were carried out.

I should like to conclude with a political comment, because we are in agreement with the remarks that have already been made as regards the rest of the question. There is a serious risk that a repetition of these events could decisively damage the image of Europe and the process of European integration. Everyone has seen how much space the international press devoted to these events. What I want to say is that this is our main concern.

Clouds are gathering over Europe and over the process of European integration, and I do not think that it can have escaped the notice of any Member of this House that some of these clouds augur, or may augur, storms from which only the shattered wreck of the European ship of state may emerge. Our desire is to see that this danger is completely eliminated from the Community's horizons.

For this reason, we lay particular emphasis, on the eve of the European Council meeting, on the need for the Commission to adopt an absolutely firm attitude and for Parliament to speak with the broadest possible majority, so that it can contribute in this vital area to bridging the rapidly widening rift between the peoples of Europe, who are little aware of the reason why these things are happening or of our powers of decision.

It is, vital therefore, that the citizens of Europe should feel they are important protagonists in this process and that we should succeed in setting — and keeping — the drive towards the construction and integration of Europe.

(Applause from the Communist and Allies Group)

President. — I call Mr Piquet.

Mr Piquet. — *(FR)* I listened to Mr Ortoli's remarks with interest. I think that nobody in our Parliament disputes that the high exchange rate for the dollar, and even more so, the interest rates in force in the United States, are having a direct effect on the economies of the Community countries. Everyone acknowledges that this situation is damaging to the countries which wish in practice to follow a policy of economic revival and a policy of investment to create jobs. Although each country must try to find within itself the ways and means to help it to overcome the effects of the crisis, it remains true that this international dimension of the problems is a very important factor. France, for its part, has the will to follow a policy of revival and job-creating investment. But neither France, nor any other of the Ten, can accept the consequences of American policy without reacting. That is why I think

we could consider adopting a concerted attitude which would lead to a lowering of interest rates in the ten countries of the Common Market. Moreover, an agreement has been reached at the highest level between France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy.

My question is therefore this: is it possible to go further? I myself think that the Council should take a political decision along these lines. I admit that such a decision could lead speculative capital to seek more profitable returns on the other side of the Atlantic. However, I think we are capable of finding technical and political means to prevent this flight of speculative capital. Are the Ten really unable to adopt a firm attitude on these international monetary questions, particularly in relation to the United States? I would also add that firmness does not rule out either the necessary negotiation or the necessary cooperation. Could we not also propose that countries which are not members of the Community, and which might wish to do so, should associate themselves with the lowering of interest rates which we could bring about? In conclusion, although it is up to each Member State to define its own policy options in all fields, I still think that European cooperation in this field is an additional dimension, which is indeed essential for the success of a constructive policy. That is why, like Mr Ortoli, I hope that the Council will take decisions tomorrow in this spirit.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Moreau. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased that we are able to have this debate in Parliament after the decision to readjust the Belgian and Danish currencies.

It is always difficult to follow Mr Ortoli, in that he has anticipated some of our questions, but we are sufficiently familiar with the matters now raised by the Commission to ensure that this debate enables Parliament to state its views.

We recently held a debate on the report by Mr Purvis. It is clear that Parliament has already had an opportunity to make its viewpoint known. However, I think it is essential that every time a decision is taken on this subject, we should be involved in it. And I would like to express regret at the fact that, even though we are being informed of developments today, we still have not been associated with the taking of the decision. I am very well aware that these matters are very delicate, but it seems to me that on questions of this kind it would be desirable for us to have debates both in the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and, in an appropriate form, in Parliament.

Moreau

I am well aware that the present obstacles to strengthening the EMS and strengthening monetary policy at Community level are not, strictly speaking, institutional obstacles but that our difficulties arise from the delicate situation of our economies. However, in our view, it is nonetheless still true that there does not appear to be in the Council enough political will to consolidate the system and take the first steps for the transition to the second stage. Of course things are not easy, particularly in view of the monetary policy of the United States and the difficulties of the international monetary system, but it is essential that the Council of Ministers take the necessary decisions in the next few weeks to create in Europe a system capable of cushioning the shocks caused by the present disorder. We all know that this monetary stability is absolutely essential both for our internal trade and for the development of our own internal market.

May I remind you that, for us, the various points I have just made must be taken into account, and I know that you, Mr Ortoli, are very sensitive to them, since you mentioned them yourself a short time ago. I simply wish to stress the fact that, in our view, what is essential is not so much to move on to an institutional stage but to create the conditions for the stability and cohesion of the system — the basic conditions for a European Monetary System to ensure stability in our region. I would also like to remind you that the creation of the EMS will not in itself be enough to create the necessary economic and monetary union which we desire. It must go hand in hand with economic policies and a strategy aiming at re-convergence. We hope — you mentioned it, but I would like to stress this point — that the ECU may be gradually introduced on the capital markets as a financial instrument. But we do not think the time has yet come for the ECU to be a parallel currency. In conclusion, I would like to stress the need to take determined action to obtain a concerted lowering of interest rates.

Those, very briefly, Mr President, are our thoughts on the current development of the EMS and the Community's monetary policy. It goes without saying that our Group will vote for the two motions for resolutions.

President. — I call the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr Giavazzi. — (*IT*) Mr President, I too should like to offer my congratulations to Commissioner Ortoli for the statement he has just made, which was, as always, meticulous and inspired. And I think it is right that it should be so, because monetary matters once again occupy the attention of public opinion and of this Parliament: high interest rates, changes in exchange rates and their effects on the restimulation of investment, which is essential to combat the present economic difficulties of the Community and the world

at large. The recent modification of the central parities of two currencies in the European Monetary System, which is the fifth such modification and — as far as the Belgian franc is concerned — the biggest that has occurred since the setting-up of the EMS, has created additional worries. This too is logical, and so it is obvious that the matter should be discussed in detail, both because the EMS is coming up to its third birthday and because a year will soon, unfortunately, have elapsed since the date which was supposed to mark the transition to the second stage of the EMS not only without any of the fundamental measures that were agreed on having been adopted, but without even any of the minor but important measures promised both to improve the functioning of the system and to guide the system — albeit gradually — towards European monetary union having been adopted either.

Only today, Mr Ortoli — and I welcome his doing so — referred to the desirability and the need to encourage greater use of the ECU: this is something that we approve; we hope, however, that it will be done in the manner and with the efficiency needed to constitute a genuine step forward for the whole monetary system.

Opinions differ on the recent realignment in the EMS, as we have also heard here. On the one hand, the fact that an agreement was reached on the scale of the devaluations is considered a proof of the strength of the system; on the other hand, some people object that the fact that this measure had to be adopted under the pressure of an urgent request from one of the Member States once again demonstrates that the economic and financial situation can only be controlled by the Community with great difficulty. But the real problem is not in choosing between these two discordant views, which both contain some elements of truth in spite of their discordancy. The real problem is to be found in the fact that, because it has not succeeded in developing as planned and has only completed its first stage — an important and positive stage as we all recognize — the EMS runs a serious risk of losing its momentum, as was pointed out very early on by this Parliament, and of falling short of that further, more important goal of providing the decisive stimulus to proceed towards a more comprehensive and more incisive Community policy, which was originally its most important feature.

This risk is all the more serious now, at a time when the need for a consistent and genuinely common European policy is more acute than ever, especially for internal purposes and also, but perhaps more importantly, for external purposes, particularly in view of the deterioration in trading relationships between the United States and the EEC, about which President Thorn spoke in considerable detail during his last appearance in this chamber at the last part-session. But this situation must not be remedied with recriminations, which are always in some way partial, nor by a last-minute rush for protection, much less by means of

Giavazzi

bilateral agreements between individual states which, even though they might be temporarily necessary, certainly do not help to strengthen the Community as a whole. No, the situation must rather be resolved with a consistent Community economic policy and by breathing new life into the common monetary policy, particularly with regard to the world outside the Community. Here once again, as far as the dollar in particular is concerned, Mr Ortoli has pledged the Commission to follow this policy, as proposed to the Council.

In conclusion, I find it very appropriate and timely that Parliament should have addressed itself to these matters today; the House has been assured by Mr Ortoli — and I have taken note of this — that these problems will be submitted to the Council as matters of utmost urgency and with the greatest possible insistence at its forthcoming meetings, which are particularly important ones in this respect. I believe that, looked at from this angle, the real problems, the monetary problems, are inevitably part and parcel of that general policy of giving new life to, and reforming, the structures of the Community which we discussed at length during our last part-session and which we shall also discuss during the coming part-session. This inevitable nexus between economic and monetary problems is the real heart of the matter, which must be dealt with in all its ramifications, both in a longer-term and future perspective — here I am referring to the numerous resolutions on these matters which we have adopted on as a result of our discussions — and, even more so, at a time which is as serious, as crucial and as worrying as the present. At the next meeting of the Council of Ministers the Commission's power to make proposals and the Council's power to deliberate must work together to advance these matters, which are of vital importance for the future of Europe.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mrs Gaiotti de Biase on a point of order.

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase. — *(IT)* Mr President, I have been told — and I should like to know if it is true — that during the debate on the amendment to the agenda I was honoured with a word of thanks for my willingness to amend the agenda.

I should like to point out that whoever said that was either lying or had not been correctly informed. No one ever informed me of the existence of a proposed amendment to the agenda. I had no idea that it would be submitted and so I was not present in the chamber, and I can only deplore such methods.

People say that there is not much politics in this Parliament. I think that so noble and just a cause as

that of the baby seals should have been brought before this Assembly with greater rapidity.

President. — We take note of your remarks, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase.

I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Purvis. — Mr President, I do admire Mr Bonaccini's persistence in keeping the question of the EMS and monetary integration before us, month in, month out. I should also like to thank Mr Ortoli for the seriousness with which he responds to these initiatives by the Parliament; I think it is becoming increasingly accepted in this House, and perhaps outside, that the move to monetary integration is the essential element in the future construction of the European Community, in all its aspects.

We can agree with Mr Ortoli that the EMS provides stability with flexibility, but there is a risk, that this flexibility will become preponderant. We recognize the Belgian and Danish problems and also that they did not participate in the October realignments, but the more frequent the changes the less credible will become the EMS as it stands at the moment. It is precarious. It must therefore go forward or risk collapse, or perhaps just a slide into general irrelevance. If it does collapse it will be all the harder to start again. It will be a drastic step backwards politically, as much as monetarily or economically. This month the EMS is to be discussed by the Council. A year late, but better late than never. We must hope that concrete steps will be taken to implement Phase Two. This requires an act of political will and commitment to the European Community. It may require considerable daring and forcefulness from Mr Ortoli and the Commission, but if such progress is to be made, all the Member States must be involved, including one of the Community's most important currencies — the pound sterling. Not only will membership of the EMS be good for Britain, it is part of Britain's obligation to the European Community and to its partners in the European Community.

It is no use complaining about the effect on our economies of American economic and monetary policies if we ourselves cannot summon up the requisite political will, the requisite Community solidarity and the requisite common sense to take the EMS forward to its second, more stable, phase. There is however, one promising aspect emerging almost unnoticed in the wings, and that is the development of the ECU. Gradually, acceptance of the ECU is gaining ground. Several international banks and the European Investment Bank have shown commitment, often in the face of some technical difficulty, to use and popularize the ECU. I agree with Mr Ortoli that we must remove the legal obstacles and make it easier to use the ECU, but I hope he will be more forceful and daring and imaginative in his approach to this matter.

Purvis

Some people, politicians mostly, rather than the bankers or economists, have questioned whether our concentration on the ECU is not futuristic, unrealistic, utopian. I don't agree. Everything points to the need for an alternative to the US dollar, for Europe to provide this alternative, in its own interests and the interests of the world. The pressure for this is not just monetary theory but also commercial, economic and political. There is something we can do to make this more readily attainable. There must be a borrower and lender of last resort. There needs to be a greater availability of a practicable currency for day-to-day transactions with some assurance of its stability and credibility. All this points to some sort of European monetary or European currency authority. Far from threatening the sovereignty and independence of Europe and the Member States in the monetary field, it will be the only sure way of enhancing that sovereignty and independence, of our being able to determine our own futures ourselves, and of our being able to influence directly world economic developments. There is nothing that could do more to provide that new impetus we so badly need to start again the process of building Europe. Perhaps we needed a respite to consolidate, to sort out the imperfections that the Community's previous hectic development had caused, to consider the implications of the massive pressures resulting from the oil price shocks of the 1970's. But we can't dither for much longer. We can't pour out self-pity *ad nauseam*. We can't blame everyone else, Americans, Arabs, for all our troubles, because it is up to us now to show the necessary determination, to pick up the ball that is fairly and squarely at our own feet.

This group will, therefore, support most of Mr Bonaccini's resolution as it seems to us to be positive, to accept our responsibilities and show the way ahead. The Fanti resolution, it seems to us, falls into the trap of blaming others. Sure, we must be firm, but firmness is only credible if it emanates from our own strength, from our own commitment, from shouldering our own responsibilities, from real Community solidarity. The time is running out. There must be progress with the EMS this spring, this very month. There must be a real effort to provide the necessary framework in which the ECU can develop and play its full part in Europe's development.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr De Gucht. — (NL) Mr President, the EMS is one of the European Parliament's favourite sons, but also one of its problem children. We have had a chance to discuss the matter on a number of occasions: not so long ago on the basis of the Purvis report, and now with reference to the Bonaccini and Fanti resolutions, which are parliamentary reactions to the devaluation of the Belgian and Luxembourg franc and the Danish

krone on the one hand and the very high dollar exchange rate on the other. It would seem reasonable, then, not to go over the ground covered by the general debate, but rather to evaluate what has happened in the light of the general philosophy of European Monetary Union and greater worldwide monetary stability.

The Bonaccini resolution rightly emphasizes a number of dangers facing the EMS as a result of the recent adjustment of the central rates — chief among them being the possibility that an accelerating series of competing devaluations might ensue and that doubt will thus be cast on the credibility of the EMS. The EMS is in itself a highly imperfect set-up — in fact, no more than a first step along a road which has been mapped out, but for which there is apparently very little in the way of political enthusiasm. Within the current structure of European monetary cooperation, changes in the exchange rates are inevitable, given that we cannot — and should not — ignore the fundamental lack of balance between the national economies. Express provision is made in this context for adjustments to the exchange rate, which thus follow a set procedure. In fact, too little credit has been given to Belgium for the fact that the whole operation was carried out at European level. In the case of previous devaluations within the EMS, consultation was by telephone only and the smaller countries were often presented with a *fait accompli*. In this case, however, devaluation was decided on in a course of joint consultations. The eight-hour meeting of the Ministers of Finance was preceded by lengthy discussions within the Monetary Committee. You can of course say that Belgium had no option but to adopt that course if it wanted to achieve such a major adjustment in the parity of its currency, but the way in which it was conducted remains a good example of how things should be done in the future.

As regards the Belgian attitude to Luxembourg, I have the following comments to make. Belgium and Luxembourg have a monetary union and it therefore follows that an exchange of information and consultation must precede any request for devaluation. With the benefit of hindsight, it is of course possible to argue that Luxembourg was forced to go along with devaluation or leave the monetary union altogether, but that was not a genuine alternative. The Belgian-Luxembourg Economic Union is proof positive that monetary union is barely tenable in the absence of quite extensive economic integration. For economic reasons, Belgium had no option but to devalue. In fact, devaluation was essential for Belgium but not for Luxembourg, because Luxembourg is in a healthier position. But Luxembourg, as the junior partner, had no alternative.

Progress in the field of economic convergence is absolutely essential if we are to improve monetary stability on a step-by-step basis. The main thing is that we should refrain from condemning a system for whose

De Gucht

imperfections we are ourselves responsible and where it is up to us to come up with the political will needed to make the necessary changes. The adjustment to the central rates was linked with extensive European consultation on the economic state of Belgium, and remedies for that situation constitute a part of the projected global solution for the Belgian disease. Belgium has put forward a detailed plan for economic recovery, something that was certainly urgently needed after years of socialist mismanagement and wishful thinking, made possible by a barely recognisable and, in any case, admitted slackness on the part of the Christian Democrats. The economic recovery plan steers a course between a number of highly unstable economic, social and political extremes. It is very difficult to do other than link the necessary savings to a cut in domestic demand. If we are to avoid getting into a deflationary spiral, this cut-back in domestic demand must be balanced out by more exports, and that is undoubtedly the whole point of devaluation. Does it really constitute 'stage-managing' to gain an advantageous position for exports? I think not. The fact is that devaluation is a response to a basic imbalance. You can hardly claim that Belgian devaluation was speculative in nature in view of the fact that, last year alone, the central bank was forced to spend 310 thousand million francs on supporting the Belgian currency.

In my opinion, the devaluation of 8.5% should be seen as an indication of the solidarity of the other Member States in their determination to support Belgium in its very difficult endeavours to restore order. The Belgian Government is treading a very narrow tightrope — economically, socially and politically — but there is no doubting the amount of effort being put in. The thoroughgoing budgetary reform, the unfortunate increase in social welfare contributions, the global and subsequently selective price freeze, the adjustments to the indexing system, the injection of new life into business, and devaluation are all part of a coherent plan for economic recovery which will, in the final analysis, be in the interests of Europe too.

The situation is different with regard to the Danish krone, which has got into the habit of jumping onto the bandwagon whenever an adjustment takes place within the EMS. I should like to say — and I am speaking here too on behalf of the Danish members of the Liberal and Democratic Group — that we must condemn the lax attitude of the Danish Government, which is trying to pass its domestic problems on to its partners and refuses to put its own house in order. Once again, the Danish Government has applied for devaluation without putting forward even a single proposal for economic reform. That is not what the EMS is all about.

Another element involved in the recent adjustment of the central rates is the introduction of new monetary compensatory amounts. In principle, the Liberal and

Democratic Group is against MCAs, but we have to admit that they are sometimes inevitable. It would have been better to have adjusted the various green rates to coincide with the actual values of the national currencies, but some countries were against such a move. In particular, France may find the ball back in its own court if it in turn devalues straight away, as seems highly likely with the policy the French Government is pursuing at present. As part of the procedure for fixing agricultural prices for the coming season, MCAs must be got rid of by way of either the proportional or integral realignment of the green rates.

Finally, Mr Fanti's motion for a resolution gives the impression that we are seeking a scapegoat for our problems. Of course, it can hardly be denied that the United States is steering anything but a clear course ahead. Fluctuations of the order of 33% in the dollar rate in a single year do not accord with the basic economic facts, but are part and parcel of a deliberate policy. The Americans are merely indulging in sanctimonious cant when they claim to be the great protagonists of free competition. Here again they are steering anything but a straight course, although they are good at covering their tracks. The Americans are anxiously protecting their domestic and foreign patches and their position on the world market and are prepared to use whatever means they think fit. We too must examine our own conscience and not take the easy way out of blaming others for our own problems. If we wish to achieve more monetary unity in Europe, we must find the political will to pursue a convergent economic policy, of which lower interest rates are bound to form part. And if we wish to pursue a more coherent economic and monetary policy *vis-à-vis* the United States and Japan, we must make more progress along the road towards European integration. There is still plenty of room for optimism as regards monetary and economic policy. The main point at issue is the international division of labour, and there is plenty of room for manoeuvre for a prosperous and thriving Europe.

Mr President, this kind of thing is possible, but we urgently need to find the political will to divest ourselves of our nationalist tendencies and to pursue a genuinely European strategy, both inside and outside the Community. That may be a platitude, but the fact remains that that is what it is all about.

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

Mr Paulhan. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in order to cope with the serious monetary situation which concerns us today, the Group of European Progressive Democrats has always thought that Europe needed effective instruments capable of creating additional links between the Member States. The Community loans procedure described by Mr

Paulhan

Ortoli is one of these Community links, and we entirely approve of it.

In our view the European Monetary System contains serious gaps, shown up by the present situation — the non-participation of the United Kingdom and of Greece. As long as the EMS does not include all the Member States of the Community, it seems to me very difficult to ask all of them to accept the creation of a Community authority to manage the ECU, which would mean their giving up a part of their monetary sovereignty, whereas two of the Member States would retain theirs intact. That would seem to me to be very dangerous. The worrying question of the rise in interest rates must be stressed here. If we wish to make progress, we must arrive at an agreement and achieve more intensive and more effective consultation on interest rates between Community Europe on the one hand and the United States and Japan on the other, with a view to seeking an understanding with those two countries.

It would be extremely dangerous to practise a kind of 'monetary socialism' which would probably ultimately lead to depreciation of the currencies in the EMS in relation to the dollar.

It is therefore by seeking a Community solution, a joint position on interest rates, and a fairly close link between the dollar and yen zones and ourselves, that we may perhaps be able to perfect the EMS and work out realistic solutions. This is an essential precondition for survival of the Community.

President. — I call the Non-attached Members.

Mr Pasmazoglou. — (*FR*) Mr President, I think this morning's debate is of great political value. The convergence of the viewpoints which have been presented and the fact that we can give our full support to the principles set out by the Commission Vice-President, Mr Ortoli, are of major importance, especially in view of the fact that in a few days' time the Council of Ministers of Finance will be meeting and that negotiations must be begun with the United States and Japan, probably with a view to setting up a new system for monetary stability.

I wish to make two remarks. The first, as Mr Bonaccini noted, concerns structural problems and seeks to ensure the participation of all the Community currencies in the European Monetary System. We believe that stabilization agreements, firm on principles but flexible on methods, seeking to establish a transition period with a view to stabilizing all the European currencies within the European Monetary System, constitute an approach of major importance. I would like to hear the views of Mr Ortoli on this possibility and this approach.

My second remark is this: in order to guarantee that an agreement will be reached in negotiations with the United States on the question of exchange rates and interest rates, could Mr Ortoli indicate the fundamental guiding principles for such negotiations? This could lead to a specific result of major political importance, to which our debate this morning and our Parliament will have made an effective contribution.

President. — I call Mr Herman.

Mr Herman. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, in order to judge the most recent adjustments in the EMS, one must bear in mind that the convergence of economic policies is far from being guaranteed and that the inflation rate in some countries is three or even four times the rate in others. One must also imagine what the situation would be like without the EMS and remember the pre-war devaluations, in which currencies were devalued by 30 or 40%.

In the absence of a supranational monetary authority — itself unthinkable without substantial progress towards political unification — it is vain to hope that the EMS will not require periodic adjustments. Mr Bonaccini, you are signalling your approval to me, and I am glad of it, but I do not entirely agree with the reasons adduced for your proposal. As Mr Ortoli explained very well, there are situations which have to be corrected, and it is essential not to wait until the tension is too strong, in order to avoid ending up with what have been called 'leaps' in devaluation; but the other extreme must also be avoided, namely the 'stepped' devaluation of the Danish type which we are now witnessing.

I therefore fully agree with your aim — to encourage monetary integration and strengthen the EMS — but I do not agree with your assessment of the latest adjustment. That is why we shall vote for your resolution, because of its content but not because of the reasons adduced.

With regard to Mr Fanti's motion on interest rates, I would like us to have a more objective view of this matter. It takes a pointlessly aggressive attitude towards the United States. We bear as much responsibility as they do for the rise in interest rates. Moreover, interest rates rose in Europe before they rose in the United States. It should also be borne in mind that, in relation to inflation rates, today's interest rates are not as high as all that. Thirdly and finally, even if the United States lower interest rates, it will not necessarily mean a lowering of interest rates in Europe if the national deficits continue at their present level. Therefore, whereas we agree on the idea of having as much consultation as possible to coordinate interest and exchange rate movements at the international level, we have reservations about the aggressive or

Herman

antagonistic attitude underlying this motion. For that reason we shall vote for it only if it is amended.

On the content, I would like to support fully the Commission's proposals, and particularly the following three:

Firstly, the proposal to promote the use of the ECU. I think there are things to be done which have not yet been done. This aim can be achieved by better coordination among the central banks, but also by better coordination among governments.

The second point is of course the attitude towards third-country currencies, particularly the dollar. I know that certain central banks, particularly the Bundesbank, today have special motives and attitudes which we do not always share, because the deutschmark has become a reserve currency. But one reason for its becoming a reserve currency is that the ECU has not become one. It is clear that if our German friends do not want the deutschmark to become a reserve currency, they have every reason to encourage the use of the ECU, which could become a reserve currency and thereby relieve the national banks of this worry.

Finally, the third attitude to be encouraged is of course consultation on monetary and credit policies. We still have a long way to go in this field: we need to determine the rate of development of money supply, try to harmonize the various interest rates in accordance with the terms, and make more use of the 'Ortoli facilities' and the Community's borrowing facilities. If we support the Commission in this field, and if the Council is prepared to follow the Commission's lead, we shall achieve our aims.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Ortoli, Vice-President of the Commission. — (FR) Mr President, of course I cannot answer all the questions put, in the context of such a short debate. But I think we have adopted a good practice, that of periodically discussing monetary problems not only in committee but here in plenary sitting as well. I am very willing to continue this dialogue, and to go into detail.

My second remark is that, as I told you, we have taken up in the various committees and we are taking up with the Council — as I shall confirm on Monday — positions which are entirely in accord with what has been said here. Personally, I am very pleased about this.

Thirdly, I am very aware of what has been said about the ECU, its use and particularly the development of Community loans. May I express the wish, Mr President, that there will be no contradiction between what has been said today and what will take place on

Monday, when we shall consult on Community loans and the facilities offered by the new instrument. Given that all of us — Commission, Parliament and Council — think it essential to make a visible investment effort under the Community aegis, it would be highly regrettable if we could not — let us say, next week — finally approve a project which was proposed in October 1980 and which deals precisely with investment and the possibilities for development of the ECU.

President. — The joint debate is closed. The vote will now take place.

We begin with the *Fanti motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1107/81): Level of interest rates in the Community.*

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now consider the *Bonaccini motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1104/81): Adjustment of the central rates of the European monetary system.*

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

5. Position of political parties in Uruguay

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1086/81/rev. II), tabled by Mr Barbi on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group), on the position of political parties in Uruguay.

I call Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti.

Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, more than a year has passed since this Parliament approved the excellent Van den Heuvel report on Uruguay and the serious and continuing violations of human rights in that country, which was at one time a model of democracy in the southern part of the American subcontinent but which from 1973 onwards has become one of the countries with the highest percentage of political prisoners per inhabitant!

The results of the referendum on the constitution were a serious slap in the face for the military regime and have obliged it to pledge itself to a return to democratic institutions.

The method adopted in this case by the regime, through the bill on the status of the political parties,

Cerretti

cannot be distinguished in any way from the traditional methods of all dictatorships and its purpose is to maintain the familiar oligarchy in power.

How can one really speak of a democracy which respects fundamental rights and freedoms if the forces that make up the principal political movements, such as Christian Democracy (active for 60 years in that country) and Socialism (active for 70 years), are removed from the scene on the pretext of their international connections and links?

How is it still possible to speak of a 'democratic' system, when this very system provides for a series of discriminatory measures against broad sections of the Uruguayan population (former members of political parties that have been dissolved or banned, trade unionists and students)?

As I did when we adopted the Van den Heuvel report, I now call upon the ten Member States to undertake concerted action with regard to Uruguay, both at the level of trade and at the diplomatic level; we can no longer content ourselves with verbal protests and general motions; we must exert real pressures on the military regime, which, unfortunately, has shown that this is the only language it understands.

From this point of view, I trust that the Foreign Ministers of the ten Member States, meeting in pursuance of Community political cooperation, will review the situation and decide by mutual consent on specific and immediate action, and that the Committee on Political Affairs will keep an eye on the follow-up to this crucial issue.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Lezzi. — (*IT*) Mr President, the Socialist Group has the greatest sympathy with the motion tabled by Mr Barbi on behalf of the European People's Party.

I, who have the honour to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group, had occasion to raise the same problem, at the sitting of 15 January 1981 — which Mrs Cassanmagnago reminded us of just now — denouncing the discriminatory measures taken by the Uruguayan Armed Forces Movement to exclude from political life all political parties, whether Liberal, Christian Democrat, Socialist, or Social Democrat, that maintain regular communication with one another and cooperate internationally with parties and political groups that share their ideals and political aims.

This is the reason for the importance of the amendment which has been tabled almost as a testimony to this agreement between Christian Democrats and Socialists in the European Parliament by Mr Glinne and Mrs Van den Heuvel. Naturally, Mr Barbi's motion for a resolution and the Socialist amendment do not in any way diminish the role which the 'Blanco'

and 'Colorado' parties have played in the history of the Uruguayan Republic, or detract from the responsibilities for good and for evil which they have had in the political life of that country. No one underestimates their contribution, along with that of the other political parties — which have been obliged to go underground or into exile — in rejecting, by 700 000 votes, of the constitution which the military attempted to impose upon them in November 1980. The 10 000 signatures rule and the thinly-veiled threats concealed behind it will certainly not succeed in preventing the inexorable progress towards democracy which is the will of all the people of Uruguay.

We trust that this Parliament, the Community Institutions and the diplomatic representatives and governments of the Member States will be able — and I fully agree with Mrs Cassanmagnago here — to do something to show more than verbal solidarity with people who are suffering under a tyrannical regime.

(*Applause*)

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

Mr Castellina. — (*IT*) Mr President, I welcome, but only up to a point, this resolution, because only a few weeks ago, during this very same plenary session, I asked a question. The answer I obtained was not very satisfactory at all, and I think that, as we are talking about Uruguay now, some account should also have been taken of this aspect of the matter.

In my question, I asked what the Commission thought of the fact that the Uruguayan armed forces had been included in a move which was in itself already extremely deplorable, namely the sending of United Nations troops to Sinai. On that occasion I also produced copies of newspapers published by the Uruguayan regime, which made much of this participation by Uruguay in the Sinai peace keeping force alongside European troops, almost as if this was tantamount to recognition by the European states of their regime as the legitimate government of the country.

Well now, if we want to be consistent in condemning the Fascist regime in Uruguay, then we should be thoroughly consistent and adopt a resolution stating that it is utterly inconceivable that the soldiers of a fascist regime should operate side by side with troops from democratic countries. One final very brief reflection: I hope it was a technical omission that the Barbi resolution mentioned every kind of party except the Communist Party. What are we to do with the Uruguayan Communist Party? Are we going to keep it in political quarantine, or are the Christian Democrats prepared to say that the Uruguayan Communist Party also has the right to be declared a legitimate party?

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — (DE) As far as Community policy goes, Mr President, the Commission shares Parliament's critical stance. A trade agreement with Uruguay has existed for about ten years but this agreement has been frozen since the outset and the Community has no contact with the country.

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will now be put to the vote.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

6. Situation in El Salvador

President. — The next item is the joint debate on two motions for resolutions on the situation in El Salvador:

- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1087/81/rev. II) by Mr Fanti and others;
- motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1098/81/rev.) by Mrs Van den Heuvel and others on behalf of the Socialist Group.

I call Mr Fanti.

Mr Fanti. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we had already presented this motion for a resolution on the problems of El Salvador in the last part-session, to draw the attention of the European Parliament once more to the serious situation which increasingly threatens that country — the serious violations of human rights, the ruthless political and military repression carried out by the junta, the dangers threatening the whole country and above all the international risks involved in that situation.

By means of this motion for a resolution, we wish to bring the matter to the attention of the democratic political forces represented in the European Parliament, to induce them to take up once more the themes dealt with in the Final Act of the Fifth European Community — Latin American Interparliamentary Conference, which took place in Bogotá — a conference which condemned any supplies of arms or military equipment to El Salvador and hoped even at that early stage for a political solution to the problem. In this context I would like to say, in parenthesis, that I would have liked Mr Rumor to have been present here today, since he is the President of the Interparliamentary Committee for Latin America and I think it necessary that he and his assistants should meet to study what initiatives ought to be taken to meet the commitments solemnly entered into at Bogotá.

Secondly, I think it necessary, in view of the small glimmers of hope which have appeared in the last few weeks in the situation in Latin America, forcefully to support now the position which the Revolutionary Democratic Front recently reaffirmed in a letter addressed to President Reagan, in which it called for the opening of general negotiations between the governing junta and the Revolutionary Democratic Front in order to find a political solution to the conflict.

The Socialist Group have presented at this part-session a motion for a resolution, the text of which is therefore more up-to-date than ours since it refers to these initial steps. We are therefore prepared to withdraw our motion and support the Socialist motion, provided that its text is respected, i.e. that the Socialist Group, together with us, rejects those amendments to its resolution which have been tabled and which would change the whole character of the argument. Indeed, to accept, even ambiguously, the 28 March elections — the rigged elections organized by the Duarte junta — is certainly of no help to these negotiations, which we should instead encourage through a responsible and wide-ranging political initiative.

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call Mrs Van den Heuvel.

Mrs Van den Heuvel. — (NL) Mr President, this House has every reason to be discussing the situation in El Salvador here again today. Almost every day, the people of Europe are stirred by reports of repression and mass murder, and a report issued recently by Amnesty International has once again a shocking tale to tell. But the impression one gains, Mr President, is that public opinion is becoming immune to the appalling facts. It would appear that people are closing their minds to what is going on because it is all simply too terrible. In my own case, for instance, however sympathetic I may be to the action that has been going on over the last few days with regard to the slaughter of seal pups, it does appear to be a disturbing fact that people are more capable of appreciating the suffering caused to seals than the results of even more brutal methods applied to human beings.

(Applause)

It is alarming when you realize how you yourself are beginning to become numb to this kind of news. And — as I have said here before, Mr President — that is precisely what the oppressors and violators of human

Van den Heuvel

rights are hoping to achieve throughout the world. So long as public opinion is silent, they are free to persevere with their violent practices undisturbed. That is something we must not allow to happen, and for that reason, we must applaud the wholehearted way in which organizations like Amnesty International set about their work. Let us also record our respect for the Committee for Human Rights in a country like El Salvador which, despite the attendant risks and the fact that various of their members have already been murdered, perseveres with its task of denouncing violations of human rights. One encouraging fact, Mr President, is that more and more political elements are condemning what is going on in El Salvador in increasingly clear terms, and that attempts are being made to help towards the achievement of a negotiated political settlement. For instance, a group of European Liberals came out in favour of such a settlement recently, and the Dutch Parliament voted by a very large majority to adopt a resolution urging commencement of negotiations. It is also encouraging to note that the United Nations have, on the basis of a Dutch proposal — and I am just a little proud of that fact, Mr President — adopted a resolution calling for a negotiated political settlement.

There is an increasing amount of concern even in the United States, where so far the impression has been given all too often that there is little opposition to the policy being pursued by the Reagan administration. A number of senators and congressmen have taken part in fact-finding missions to El Salvador and are adopting an increasingly critical attitude to American military aid. They are beginning to wonder more and more whether a system of violence and repression should receive support from a democratic country like the United States. And people over there are realizing more and more that what was seen as the panacea of elections is really nothing more than an unfortunate attempt to legitimize the existing regime. Even in the United States, there is growing acceptance of the view expressed by the federation of Salvadorian attorneys, among others, that elections are impossible unless the emergency legislation — including martial law and the imposition of a state of siege or emergency — is repealed. For that reason, the federation has refused to participate in the preparations being made for the elections. My group takes the view that it is particularly deplorable that the governments of our Member States should intend to give these show elections a semblance of legitimacy by sending observers.

Mr President, the answers given at yesterday's Question Time by the President-in-Office of the Council on cases of this kind were not exactly encouraging as regards the possibility of the Community taking an active part. We fervently hope that the motion for a resolution we have presented to this House — and we would urge the House to adopt it — may perhaps be able to give a fresh stimulus to the Commission and the Council, and especially the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation, to act. We reject

those amendments which seek to tone down the text of the resolution.

Finally, Mr President, I have one more comment to make. When criticism was voiced in this House yesterday with regard to the United States' attitude to Turkey and Central and South America, the point was made that we ought to be grateful to the USA for everything it did for Europe in the Second World War. It is perhaps a good thing that I should have the opportunity to state once again quite clearly and categorically that the Socialist Group has no interest whatsoever in bringing the American people into disrepute. All we are doing is passing objective judgment on the policy pursued by the Reagan administration, and we feel that we have a right to subject that policy to critical appraisal precisely because we respect the American people and their tradition of democracy. In our view, the policy being pursued by the American President is making a political settlement impossible. We hope that the resolution before this House will play a part in a development which is in keeping with the democratic tradition of the American people.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul. — *(DE)* Ladies and gentlemen, the reputation of our Parliament is closely bound up with the fact that so far we have usually steadfastly avoided letting ourselves be guided, when dealing with questions of human rights and democracy in the majority decisions of this House, by tactical, diplomatic and official considerations and considerations of day-to-day politics. Quite recently we discussed the situation in Poland and adopted a position on the question as a parliament.

Now our reputation as a moral authority in Europe is being called upon. At this moment the hopes of very many people in Latin America, in Central America and in the rest of the world are pinned on us. Let us not take refuge today behind the decisions taken yesterday at the United Nations, or by the majority in the United States House of Representatives. I am saying this particularly for the benefit of the Dutch Christian-Democratic members, who have tabled an amendment to delete the point expressing criticism of the elections: the fact that the elections planned for the end of this month in El Salvador are drawing nearer and that Christian Democrats are members of the government in the country should not lead us to adopt a purely tactical attitude. I call upon you to withdraw this amendment. We, as a Parliament, should not express critical views, as we did on the situation in Uruguay, only when no parties with affiliations to our own are in any way involved in the government of the country in question. I should like to call upon you to adopt a more consistent attitude.

Wieczorek-Zeul

Such an attitude is not anti-American. On the contrary, I should like to point out that there are already three new motions before the American House of Representatives and Senate in favour of a peaceful solution to the problems of El Salvador and against further intervention by the United States Government in Central America. I, as a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany, am especially well placed to say this: we young Germans are aware that the USA liberated our country and others from Fascism. We expect higher moral standards of such a country. But we cannot reconcile the attitude which the United States Government has adopted in Central America and El Salvador with these high moral expectations. We cannot reconcile this attitude with the fact, for example, that the USA from time to time sends terrorist commandos over the border into Nicaragua. The two just do not go together.

If — and I am saying this for the benefit of the other groups in this House — there was ever a vote of conscience, then this is it, and not a vote that should be guided by ostensible party considerations and mistaken consideration for others.

Ladies and gentlemen, according to the estimates of Amnesty International at least 12 000 persons have been murdered in El Salvador in recent years — each year 0.3% of the population of El Salvador are murdered, the majority of them by the regime's own soldiers. For my country, for the Federal Republic, that would be the equivalent each year of the murder of all the inhabitants of a town of 180 000 persons, and the same for the United Kingdom. For France that would be the equivalent of the murder of 165 000 persons, for Greece the murder of a town of 30 000 inhabitants. For the Netherlands that would be equivalent to 40 000 deaths and for Italy 150 000 persons murdered per year.

Ladies and gentlemen, many of the questions that come before this House are turned by some Members into questions of conscience. This is a question of conscience, and if we can recognize the true nature of the situation we must also recognize that it cannot be cured by calling for the holding of phony elections, but only by our insisting on a mediated political solution, in order to really strike at the root cause of the crimes, the cruelties and the conflicts in El Salvador.

If such a vexed situation arose in your countries, you too would say: we must do more than we have mentioned so far, and the situation cannot be remedied with rigged elections of whatever kind. We must ask ourselves whether the so-called elections planned for March — which, moreover, are by no means so certain to take place — constitute a contribution to a long-term solution. They do no such thing, ladies and gentlemen, because they leave the causes of the violence in El Salvador untouched and unaltered. Even the Duarte regime will be surprised. Quite apart from the total absence of the general conditions needed for

the holding of free elections, how can this regime prevent the military and the extreme right-wing parties, such as the *Partido de Conciliación Nacional*, from further rigging the elections?

They are not free elections because, as far as the United States is concerned, these planned elections are meant precisely to constitute the alternative to a negotiated political settlement.

I should like to remind you, ladies and gentlemen of the Christian-Democratic Group, of how you voted as Christian Democrats today and yesterday on the Guatemala question — that is, you will once again be speaking of rigged elections. The elections that are about to take place in El Salvador are not free elections. I therefore call upon you to vote with us in favour of the most important point in this text, namely the critical assessment of these elections, and to make plain that we in this Parliament do not make our political and moral judgments according to two different yardsticks.

(Applause)

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

Mr Vergeer. — *(NL)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it should not be assumed that, because the EPP Group yesterday cooperated in making today's debate possible, we therefore welcome the proposal from the Socialists now under discussion. I will refrain from the moment from giving any opinion on the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Fanti and others, as I understand that it will very probably be withdrawn.

Mr President, I should like to remind Parliament that we held an exhaustive debate last September on the political situation in El Salvador — a political debate on a joint resolution by the Socialist Group and the Christian-Democratic Group and on a fact-finding mission to Central America by a joint delegation from both of these groups. Last September's motion for a resolution won the support of an overwhelming majority of Members, with the consequence that the views expressed are quite specific. I would ask the Socialist Group to reread it very thoroughly, and then perhaps they could let me know where the essential differences lie, not in the recitals, but in the proposals contained in the motion for a resolution and submitted to us once again today. Parliament's decision, backed by the large majority, did not go unnoticed in the rest of the world, and particularly not in Central America, where it was very well received. It is well known that over the last few months there have been a number of moves to get a dialogue underway.

Mr President, it is news to no one — and that is why I think that this resolution is really rather pointless —

Vergeer

that elections are to be held on 28 March. Last September too, my Socialist colleagues who had been in El Salvador were aware that elections were to be organized in 1982. So what was the point in tabling this resolution with urgent debate? Every proposal in this motion for a resolution — I am not talking about the recitals — is fully covered by the resolution which Parliament adopted last September. Nothing new has emerged. Of course, my group too is aware that, for example, the President of Mexico recently declared that he was prepared to mediate in the conflict, and he is not the only one to have done so. Any claims that America's policy has ruled out the possibility of a political solution are much too naive and we cannot agree with them.

We have, as you will be aware, tabled an amendment to this effect. Criticisms of America's policy and expressions of concern are all well and good. But the terms used in the proposed text would only promote anti-American feeling. My group, Mr President, would find this both politically rash and unacceptable, particularly at a time when Mr Genscher is proposing an essential intensive and on-going dialogue between Europe and the United States, when France's Socialist President is flying out to visit his American counterpart to try to prevent a further deterioration of relations, and when the American Congress is reconsidering its position with regard to Central America.

I should like to make myself clear about the elections on 28 March. The EPP Group considers it wholly desirable that elections should be held in El Salvador with the free and guaranteed participation of as many of the country's political forces as possible. Elections are essential if El Salvador is to make real progress towards national peace and the establishment of democratic institutions which are truly representative of the people. I should also like to mention the attitude adopted recently by the Church in El Salvador, as expressed by Monsignor Rivera Damas, the Archbishop of El Salvador, when he very clearly encouraged the people to take part in these elections. Of course, the forthcoming elections will not and cannot provide a solution to all the country's problems, but they are still an important step. We shall try to get as complete a picture as possible on the spot, so that that at least is clear. Mr President, there is also a procedural objection to a debate on this resolution. I must point to Parliament that the Political Affairs Committee is at present examining two motions for resolutions on El Salvador. I should like to make it perfectly clear that my group is gradually becoming sick and tired of the fact that our excellent procedures are being increasingly thwarted by the tabling of urgent resolutions.

Mr President, I understand that my time is up. It will, I hope, be perfectly clear to you that the proposed text of the motion for a resolution by Mrs Van den Heuvel

and others, in its present form, is unacceptable to the vast majority of the Members of my group.

I should like to express my strongest support for the amendments tabled by a number of members of my group.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Simmonds. — Mr President, I regret that I must disagree with everything that Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul said with only one exception, and that is that, because I am an honourable gentleman, I cannot deny that Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul spoke as a young German.

No one in this House, Mr President, can fail to be alarmed by the problems of El Salvador. But I believe that the proposers of the motions today are misguided or prejudiced, or both, in seeking to ascribe all the blame for the troubles there to the Americans whose aid to El Salvador is widely publicized. There is no mention in either resolution of the massive amount of arms, aid and manpower that has entered El Salvador secretly from the Soviet Union and from its satellites like Cuba.

(Applause)

Therefore it is hardly surprising that our Communist Members have sought to condemn the forthcoming elections in El Salvador as undemocratic. Communist-controlled countries know all about free and democratic elections, especially when there is only one name on the ballot paper.

I prefer to be guided, Mr President, not prejudiced, in this matter by the opinions of a majority of the countries and peoples closest to El Salvador who believe that whilst the March elections will not solve all the problems of El Salvador, they should still be held. That majority opinion includes the democracies of Venezuela, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama and Ecuador and likewise the churches of El Salvador, including the Roman Catholic Church which suffered the assassination of Archbishop Romero. They all support the elections and have urged the population in El Salvador to vote. It is interesting that Mrs Wiczorek-Zeul has urged the Christian-Democrats today to look to their consciences and to vote for the motion and against elections. It is also interesting that the Holy Father has also appealed to his flock and asked them to support the elections.

I must admit that I am sorry that in the list of people at the end of her resolution to whom the resolution should be sent, Mrs Van den Heuvel has not mentioned the Soviet Union, because I believe that it would be well sent there.

(Applause)

Simmonds

Mr President, it would be negative and destructive and, most important, a terrible precedent for this Parliament to condemn the elections just because the Soviets, the guerillas and the Socialist International do not want the elections to be held.

That is why I believe the House must amend or reject the motion to ensure that the basic democratic process of election, however fragile, is at least given a chance.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Ephremidis. — *(GR)* Mr President, for reasons of conscience and for reasons of political integrity and humanity we are definitely in favour of the adoption of the resolution before us, naturally without any amendment to make it any easier for the government in El Salvador to get away with its underhand election fraud. Because it is only by adopting such a resolution that it is possible for this Parliament to contribute to the effort, to the process which has begun, to find a peaceful political solution to the tragedy of the people of El Salvador. It is also possible to prevent open military intervention by American imperialism and the dangers which threaten peace, not only in Central America but also more widely.

With regard to these views, Mr President, we also call on those groups which seemed to be against the motion to stand in horror before the massacres of the downtrodden people of El Salvador and to free themselves at last from the fetters of American imperialist scheming. Let them take this opportunity of obtaining a fig leaf to hide their nakedness, because the sham armour which they are wearing like knights in defence of human rights, freedoms, democracy and the self-determination of nations does not convince anyone.

(Applause)

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

Mrs Castellina. — *(IT)* Mr President, I cannot refrain from pointing out, at a time when we are preparing to vote on a resolution on El Salvador, the very serious responsibility which the forces in the right of this Parliament have taken upon themselves — the responsibility of having contributed by their attitude to keeping the tragedy of El Salvador in being. Moreover, the speeches made this morning only confirm this.

If an institution like the European Parliament had taken a practical initiative in good time to encourage

negotiations between the two sides — explicitly dissociating itself from the Reagan administration's policy of support for the fascist regime in El Salvador, and condemning the appalling crimes committed in that country by the armed forces and the police — perhaps we would not find ourselves in the situation we are in today, for one should realize that the El Salvador regime survives through international complicity and silence. And yet every proposal to this end put forward by the left has been systematically blocked, or watered down to such an extent that it has become ineffective. At all events, nothing has been done to stimulate international political initiative day by day, as should have been done.

But it must be said that on El Salvador a special responsibility must be borne by the European People's Party — the Christian-Democratic parties of Europe, who have refused to withdraw their tacit support for Napoleon Duarte, a Christian Democrat who, frankly besmirches the undoubtedly democratic inspiration and tradition of the Christian-Democratic parties . . .

(Interruption by Mr Barbi)

. . . Are you pleased to have such a symbol? I thought you were better than Napoleon Duarte! If, instead, you want to tell me that you are like Napoleon Duarte, I think we should draw the appropriate conclusions . . .

And unfortunately, it is also this tacit support which has enabled Duarte and his regime to survive, thereby perpetuating the tragedy of El Salvador. But it is even more serious to go on pretending that nothing is happening, when no one can pretend any longer that they do not know what is happening in El Salvador, when the democratic people of the United States has raised a great protest against the policy of its own government — which stands accused of supporting Duarte and his military colleagues — and when horrifying documents, photographs and journalists' reports have been made public. Well, today it is no longer possible to refuse to admit the illegality of the farcical elections which will be held in a couple of weeks' time. Yes, Mr Vergeer, these elections are not an unexpected event, but a very serious one — elections without a shred of legality, without any form of guarantee, carried out in the midst of massacres. And therefore to keep quiet about these elections — as some of the amendments propose — or to use adjectives like 'inadequate' to describe them, means to make oneself jointly responsible for their criminal illegality and to deprive this Parliament of any democratic dignity. Do we really need any more proof of their illegality? And we can say this, Mr Simmonds, because we are not being blackmailed by the United States of America, as are some States of Central America, induced by this means to condone these events. Let us demonstrate our independence and our

Castellina

freedom! I believe that, on this question of the elections, there is frankly no room for any compromise.

(Applause)

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr De Goede. — *(NL)* Mr President, the media and the public show more interest in seal culling than in the atrocities of the civil war in El Salvador. Parliament is right to devote its attention to the two nations, but unfortunately opinions are obviously more divided over El Salvador than over seals — there are even, and regrettably, two motions for resolutions on the subject.

Mr President, we wholeheartedly condemn the appalling massacres in El Salvador. The present escalation of violence is now increasing the danger that the conflict will reach an international scale. America's support for the junta is attracting increasing support for the Revolutionary Democratic Front from the Eastern Bloc and from Cuba. Where will it all end? We applaud the offers of mediation made by Mexico and others, and we regret that President Reagan is proving so obstructive on this. The suspension of all foreign interference, the restoration of democratic freedom, respect for human rights and the launching of thoroughgoing social reforms are all prerequisites for a lasting solution. The RDF recently declared in a letter to President Reagan that it was prepared to begin general negotiations with the junta in order to reach a political solution.

President Reagan's refusal might well lead to a second Vietnam. The European Parliament should now rightly make a clear statement on this matter, and that is why support is needed for both resolutions. Europe can use the framework of European political cooperation to put pressure on the United States; a European Parliament resolution passed with a large majority is absolutely essential for this, and we should be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to do so today.

President. — I call Mrs Van den Heuvel.

Mrs Van den Heuvel. — *(NL)* Mr President, Mr Vergeer asked to be given new facts. He himself has already provided us with quite a number: Mexico's offer to mediate, and the emphatic reaffirmation by the FDR-FMLN of its willingness to negotiate. I should like to draw his attention to the overriding importance of further new facts which once again have cost hundreds of lives in El Salvador: the unremitting escalation of violence prompted among other things, by American interference in the area.

Just one short comment about the elections. During the joint group delegation's visit to El Salvador in June, the Christian-Democrat Members also continually asked questions about the elections. They, too, realized that any opposition movement taking part in the elections would automatically be signing its own

death warrant. And perhaps I might particularly remind Mr Vergeer that, when he returned to Schiphol, he claimed that elections were pointless at that particular time, and that they could only be held as the final phase in a series of moves towards democracy. That was what he said then, and I would beg him to be consistent on this point at least today.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — *(GR)* Mr President, I would ask my Conservative colleagues the following question: what do they prefer — the elections, which are certain to aggravate the situation and lead to thousands more being killed, or the policy of negotiations and of trying to find a political solution, which is being proposed by the Revolutionary Democratic Front and international personalities, such as the President of Mexico? This is the question to which they will have to reply by their vote.

Some Members of the House are annoyed when we criticize the United States. Of course we are not asking for retaliation against the United States for its intervention and its backing of a murderous regime. We want to welcome and encourage the mobilization of American public opinion, which is turning against the policy of intervention, and we are calling for a policy which does not seek to create unproductive enmity towards the United States but a policy which can strongly influence the present situation so that further interference in the internal affairs of other countries is avoided and Washington is prevented from strengthening militaristic and despotic regimes everywhere to the detriment of people's struggle for peace and for their social and political liberation.

President. — I call Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul.

Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul. — *(DE)* I can inform Mr Fanti that my group will naturally be voting against the amendments.

Mr Vergeer, you know yourself that rigged elections were organized in 1972 to the detriment of the Christian Democrats and that no international observer was able to prevent it happening. Do you really wish to take part in such a charade as the representative of your group?

You, Mr Simmonds, are grossly oversimplifying things if you interpret domestic difficulties in a country only as evidence of subversive action by the other superpower. This is exactly the argument the Russians, for example, are using in Poland. Let me remind you of what the former American ambassador in El Salvador, Mr White, said — namely that all resistance movements in Central America had begun as movements opposed to Marxism. It was the United States that contributed to the radicalization of these movements

Wieczorek-Zeul

by its behaviour, that is to say, by its constant blocking of reforms. I think that says everything!

(Applause)

Mr Langes. — *(DE)* Mr President, I should not have asked for permission to speak if you had not given it to both Mrs Van den Heuvel and Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul. As a member of the delegation of Socialists and Christian Democrats to El Salvador, I should like to reply to what has been said here.

President. — You cannot speak now. Your name is not on the list. I call the Commission.

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(DE)* Mr President, on behalf of the Commission I should simply like to make one comment on an aspect of the matter which has scarcely been mentioned in this highly politicized debate but which we all know has been particularly close to the heart of this House, for which we, as a Community, can also in fact do something, not through words but through deeds. I am talking of the need to provide aid to alleviate the want and suffering of the persons caught up in these conflicts, something that was also mentioned in the resolutions.

During the last 12 months the Community acting through non-governmental organizations, in particular the International Red Cross and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, has made almost 10 million EUA available. Of these, more than 7.5 million went directly to the population of El Salvador and approximately 2.5 million to refugees from El Salvador, particularly in Nicaragua and Honduras.

Our belief is that this vital aid must naturally be continued.

(Applause)

President. — The joint debate is closed. The vote will now take place.

We begin with the *Fanti motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1087/81/rev. II): Situation in El Salvador.*

I call Mr Fanti.

Mr Fanti. — *(IT)* Mr President, after the statement by Mrs Wieczorek-Zeul on behalf of the Socialist Group, I wish to announce that we are withdrawing our motion and supporting the motion for a resolution by the Socialist Group.

President. — Your statement is noted, Mr Fanti. Your motion for a resolution is thus withdrawn.

I call Mr Haagerup.

Mr Haagerup. — *(DA)* Mr President, since I had tabled some amendments to the Fanti motion on behalf of my group, I now withdraw them of course. I would like to point out that I go along with all the Christian-Democratic amendments, which must be accepted if we are going to vote in favour of the Socialist motion for a resolution.

President. — We shall now consider the *Van den Heuvel motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1098/81/rev.): Situation in El Salvador.*

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

7. Situation in Cambodia

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1106/81), tabled by Mr Habsburg and others and by Mr de la Malène on behalf of the Group of European Progressive Democrats, on the situation in Cambodia.

I call Mr Habsburg.

Mr Habsburg. — *(DE)* Mr President, the Khmer people have suffered considerably more than other nations over the last ten years. The loss of life that occurred as the consequence of the Vietnam war was later followed by the inhuman excesses of the Khmer Rouge regime and finally by the occupation of the country by the Vietnamese, coupled with serious internecine conflicts.

This sequence of events resulted in countless deaths, hundreds of thousands of refugees, disease, famine and the devastation of a unique cultural heritage. It can be said without fear of contradiction that today the Khmer people are one of the endangered races of mankind. Cambodia is one of the great human tragedies of the 20th century. For a long time Europe had ties with this country; we, therefore, have no right to forget Cambodia.

This was impressed upon us here in the European Parliament, during our last part-session, by Son Sam, the leader of the National Liberation Front of the Khmer people. That is the reason for the motion for a resolution before this House today, the urgency of which is a direct result of the tremendous daily loss of life and the misery in Cambodia and the Community's responsibility. The motion calls for an end to foreign intervention in Cambodia and genuinely free elections.

Habsburg

It also calls for better distribution of Community aid to ensure that it reaches the entire population, for which purpose the motion also calls for the dispatching of a monitoring delegation, since complaints have frequently been made that the areas occupied by the Vietnamese are being unfairly favoured with aid. Finally we call on the Committee on Political Affairs to prepare a comprehensive report and, to this end, to send a delegation to investigate on the spot. This latter request is all the more justified in view of the fact that in the near future a similar delegation will be dispatched to investigate the situation of the Afghan refugees.

Nothing can take the place of this form of direct information. Since Europe's humanitarian obligations towards the severely tried Khmer people are being called upon, I urge the House to approve this motion for a resolution.

(Applause)

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

Mr Deniau. — *(FR)* Mr President, I would like to support the motion in terms very similar to those which Mr Habsburg has just used. We are familiar with this tragedy, but it is still going on, and we would like to improve the European Parliament's position on this matter.

At the moment there is, on the one hand, a *de facto* government — the Heng Samrin government — and, on the other, a government — that of the Khmers Rouges — whose behaviour when in power we remember only too well. These two are in conflict, and we provide them — I almost said equally — with European Community aid for distribution to the afflicted population. This is not in keeping with reality, since in fact Cambodian refugees, particularly in Thailand but also in other South-East Asian countries, for the most part support not the Khmers Rouges but more moderate movements, such as those of Prince Sihanouk or Mr Son Sann, or quite simply refuse to deal with the Khmers Rouges because of the latter's extortionate activities. In these circumstances, our aid must be distributed to all the afflicted population of Cambodia, whether inside or outside its frontiers, in a more discerning way which takes account of real conditions.

I would also remind you that Cambodia's neighbours, meeting in ASEAN, expressly called for all the Cambodian resistance movements to join forces and for the Khmers Rouges not to be allowed a kind of monopoly of representation which they do not deserve. In these circumstances, Mr President, I think it necessary to draw up a new report on the conditions under which Community aid is distributed, and to send a new mission to Cambodia to obtain more

precise information on the way in which we help the refugees or the people still in Cambodia. This will make possible, firstly, better distribution and allocation of our aid, and secondly, encouragement for a multipartite body representing the resistance movements, which could possibly negotiate with the Heng Samrin government and help to re-establish peace in this region.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(DE)* I should like to make the following remarks on the political aspect of this question: on several occasions in the past the Council and the Member States have supported the demands set out in the United Nations resolution for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia and the holding of free elections as the basic preconditions for any lasting political solution. We have also voiced this wish repeatedly in the form of joint declarations with the representatives of the ASEAN countries, in particular at the meeting of Community and ASEAN ministers in October 1981.

We shall continue to press for a continuation of the efforts initiated at the various Cambodia conferences to get the parties to the conflict to come together around the negotiating table. In this respect we fully and totally support the ASEAN countries' efforts. As for aid to the people affected by this conflict, the Community has made considerable funds available during the last three years. Altogether, financial aid for the people of Cambodia and for the Cambodian refugees in Thailand runs to more than 80 million units of account. The financial aid granted during the last three years for the relief of Cambodian refugees in the other parts of South-East Asia — Malaysia, Indonesia, etc. — runs to more than 20 million units of account. We shall, naturally, be continuing this aid in the future.

As the House is aware, this aid is distributed through international organizations, in particular the International Red Cross and the UN High Commission for Refugees. In this connection we have been called upon to carry out our own checks on the spot, to which I must reply quite frankly that I have some doubts as to whether Commission officials would be able to do the job any better than the organizations I have just mentioned — in which we have so far always had the greatest confidence and with which we have been collaborating very closely for many years. Nevertheless, I am prepared to suggest that we discuss these matters at the earliest opportunity with the organizations in question and submit a report to Parliament on the results we obtain from these discussions concerning the distribution of emergency aid and guarantees that this aid really does reach the people it is intended for.

President. — I call Mr Deniau.

Mr Deniau. — (FR) Just a second to reply to the Commission. We asked for a parliamentary delegation to be sent and not just a party of Commission officials.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

8. Films

President. — The next item is the *motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1088/81) by Mr Papapietro and others on national financial aids to film-makers.*

I call Mr Bøgh.

Mr Bøgh. — (DA) I should like, at this point, to put a question in the light of Rule 62 of our Rules of Procedure which states that documents forming the basis for Parliament's debates shall be printed and distributed to Members. The basis for this debate is a document which was sent to five or six governments. I have been trying to get hold of this document for five weeks but the Commission is keeping hold of it. The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport has also been trying to get hold of the document through its secretariat but this has proved impossible. I should be grateful, therefore, for a clear answer to the following questions: where is this document and is it a legitimate practice for documents to be withheld from Members of this Parliament?

President. — I should like to point out to the honourable Member that we are debating only the resolution tabled by Mr Papapietro.

I call Mr Papapietro.

Mr Papapietro. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the warning which has been issued by the EEC to the governments of three Member States on national aids to film-makers does not, in our view, have a sound basis in the Treaties. There are three reasons for this.

The first reason is one of fact. In one of the film industries concerned — that of Italy — such discrimination based on the nationality of those working in the sector does not in fact exist. On the contrary, in Italy there is a bill before parliament to give EEC companies and citizens exactly the same treatment as Italian companies and citizens.

The second reason is one of principle. The exception made in the case of directors and writers, who are required to belong to the Italian cultural sphere, is

based on the principle, now accepted in nearly all the more advanced legal systems of the Member States of the Community — France, Greece, Germany — that film-makers are not merely technicians but authors of the work in question. The work is therefore of a specifically cultural nature, and every State has the right to pursue its own cultural policy.

Moreover, this principle was accepted by the Commission of the EEC itself in a note of August 1979. In other words, we are dealing with an untypical industry, whose cultural creativity aspect is necessarily linked with its national nature. We therefore think that in principle the application to this sector of the Treaty provisions invoked by the Commission is somewhat forced, for those who drew these provisions were certainly not thinking of the film industry!

The third reason is that there is a need for individual States to provide incentives for the creation of national production structures, not least in order to counter the very high volume of imported cinema and television products from third countries such as the United States and Japan.

We need only consider a few figures which have been given for Italy. In that country, the invasion of American films and television programmes has reached the figure of 2 800 films and television series, representing a foreign currency outlay for Italy equivalent to more than Lit 60 000 million in the first few months of 1981, compared with only Lit 35 000 million for the whole of 1980. We have before us the excellent report on promotion of the film industry drawn up by Mrs Pruvot on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport. This document provides us with data on the invasion of Europe by American films — information which is really disturbing.

We are dealing with a monopoly of production and distribution: we need only think of Gaumont! There are also films which were made entirely with people and resources belonging to a country outside the Community — for example the film 'Flash Gordon' — but which are regarded as European films simply because they were mixed in laboratories in London.

Now, we want the principle of the creative nature of this industry to be affirmed, and support to be given to the creative efforts of smaller companies, which are at a disadvantage and which sometimes produce works of higher cultural value, for while the industry is untypical, so is the market. The quality of the product does not always guarantee a market. Often the reverse is true — a product of high artistic value has a more restricted market.

We therefore call upon the Commission to rethink its policy on the matter and to settle the question with the governments concerned on the basis of recognition of these principles and of the need to overcome the diffi-

Papapietro

culties which the present situation of monopoly and invasion of our market by foreign products creates for the work of European film-makers.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, I wish to express my wholehearted support for the excellent report presented by our Italian colleague Mr Papapietro and should like to say that we approve of the national financial aid provided by the governments of Germany, Denmark and Italy to encourage and protect their national cultural values.

I should like to raise a more wide-ranging issue: now, when the Community is faced with an economic crisis, when the usefulness of the Community is itself being called in question, the solidarity of the peoples of Europe will be further eroded if specific actions or omissions lend weight to the impression that the chief consideration, the main criterion which guides the policies of the Community, is the defence of commerce and the subordination of all other values to those of the market place. Clearly, this would destroy the unifying bond of Community endeavour which we see as the defence of human and national values in the framework of a wider international Community.

We believe, ladies and gentleman, that the matter under discussion raises a question of wider significance. We believe that the decisions which we shall take should ward off the threat of monopoly control of our cultures and stimulate national aid to cultural activities in Community countries, whether large or small.

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (GR) I should like first of all, Mr President, to raise a point of order. You said that the time allotted to the Communist Group had been used up while Mr Papapietro was presenting his report. If the rapporteur ran over his time, I think that should be taken from the time allotted to the rapporteurs and not from the Communist Group.

Mr President, in the opinion of the Greek Communist Party it is inadmissible that the Commission should call for withdrawal of the support provided by national governments for the film industry. We see this as a move dictated by the interests of multinational film companies, which are thus seeking to wipe out the film industry in individual countries and so leave the way open for such examples of multinational sub-culture as 'Emanuelle' or 'Jaws'. What the Commission has to say about the freedom of competition reminds us of Karl Marx's statement in the Communist Manifesto, to the effect that the bourgeois class had deprived all respectable occupations of their prestige, had turned

the doctor, lawyer, priest, poet and man of learning into its hired labourers and had substituted for countless honourable liberties the solitary unscrupulous liberty of commerce.

I should like to state here that the Society of Greek Film Directors fully and unreservedly supports the tenor of the resolution. What the Greek film-makers do not say is that Greece has a national film industry of high quality and considerable potential which for decades has been starved of opportunities for growth because of the influence of the commercial film sector and the policy of cultural subjection followed by previous governments. In conclusion I wish to stress that, in fact, there are no schemes specifically designed for the protection of national cultural activities or intellectual or other creative artists nor do they benefit from any expedients or delaying tactics.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — Mr President, let me stress that the point made by the honourable Member to the Commission does not concern the admissibility of aid for the film industry. Such aid systems are accepted in all the Member States of the Community and by the Commission itself. That point does not concern us, and it is therefore utterly wrong to suggest, as happened just now, that the Commission was out to do away with national aid to the film industry. In fact, the opposite is true; as regards the aid aspect, the Commission's policy has always been to respect the specific cultural aspect of the film.

The real subject of disagreement, Mr President, is whether national aid measures of this kind, claiming to be of a cultural nature, should be allowed to feature elements which are diametrically opposed to the spirit and the letter of the Treaty. Should that be the case — and it is the case where discrimination is on a national basis — the Commission has a duty to try to improve such elements, and that is precisely what the Commission is engaged in doing at the moment in a number of Member States. As I said, that it is the Commission's duty, and we cannot comply with the honourable Members' wishes on this one aspect on which we have voiced criticism of the activities of certain Member States simply by virtue of the cultural argument. As regards the cultural aspects of the film, the Commission takes the following view on the aid issue. If there is any question of discrimination by nationality, which — in the Commission's view — is the case in some places, the Commission is bound to raise an objection, and Parliament cannot possibly expect the Commission to react otherwise.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

9. Drought in Sicily

President. — The next item is the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-1101/81) by Mr De Pasquale and others on the drought in Sicily.

I call Mr De Pasquale.

Mr De Pasquale. — *(IT)* Mr President, I simply wish to urge Parliament to adopt this resolution, which was tabled by Italian Members of all political groups and which aims to obtain active aid from the Commission to combat the very serious consequences of the drought which has afflicted Sicily this year.

President. — I call the Commission

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — *(IT)* Mr President, the problem to which Mr De Pasquale has drawn attention is extremely important, and the Commission is particularly sensitive to it. I would like to tell Mr De Pasquale that the Commission has asked the Italian Permanent Representation in Brussels for detailed information on the nature and scale of the problem to which he has just referred. It has also asked for information on the losses caused by the disaster to the inhabitants of Sicily. When we have this information, the Commission will be able to assess whether to allocate emergency aid for the victims.

However, I would like to tell Mr De Pasquale — he is well aware of this, but I would like to remind him of it — that the emergency aid covered by Article 690 of the budget has a purely humanitarian purpose — that of giving individuals a token of Community solidarity in the event of natural disasters, when the scale and seriousness of those disasters and their effects on the inhabitants of the area are acknowledged to be exceptional. With regard to the specific request contained in Mr De Pasquale's motion for a resolution, we intend to investigate the desirability of carrying out a study of the overall water-supply situation in Sicily, subject of course to consultation with the Italian authorities. By Italian authorities — by virtue of my background I am also familiar with the Italian administrative structure — I mean the national and regional authorities which you, Mr De Pasquale, know well.

As to Community aid in these sectors, I would like to remind you that Regulations Nos 1760 and 1362 envisage, for Sicily in particular, Community aid to improve rural infrastructures including — and I think this is important — both the supply of running water and the creation of collective networks. We shall certainly be contacting the government and the regional authorities with a view to studying ways of intensifying the use of these Community instruments in the areas worst affected by the drought. As Mr De Pasquale knows, this drought has a series of causes,

some of which, I would say, are related to climatic conditions, whereas others arise from an undeniable disorder in the water supply structures. It was partly because of this, Mr De Pasquale, that in the past the Regional Fund financed in Sicily, as in other regions, works for the supply of drinking water and water for industrial use. I would like to remind you that, as recently as December 1981, the Commission decided to grant aid of 162 000 million lire for the construction in Sicily of five irrigation/drinking water systems which constitute the first phase (1980-82) of a ten-year programme, the later phases of which have yet to be examined.

President. — The debate is closed.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

Ladies and gentlemen, in view of the time the last two items for urgent debate cannot be dealt with.

(The sitting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.)

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

10. Multifibre Arrangement (continuation)

President. — The next item is the continuation of the debate on the two oral questions on the Multifibre Arrangement.

I call Mr Cohen.

Mr Cohen. — *(NL)* Mr President, before I get on to the subject proper, there is one preliminary point I should like to make. The debate on the Multifibre Arrangement has been spread over three days, starting on the day before yesterday. Mr Welsh spoke to his oral question and the Council then replied because Mr Cousté was not able to be present at that moment. The following day, Wednesday, we continued the debate, and Mr Cousté made his contribution then. Now we are having to resume the debate because something else was on the agenda in the meantime.

So now the debate is in its third day, and that on a subject which is of great importance not only to the Community, but also to a lot of other countries. Of course, it is patently absurd to spread a debate like this over three days. I trust, Mr President, that you will bring this point up for discussion in the Bureau,

Cohen

because it is of course impossible to discuss a subject like this, which is so important to the Community and to many developing countries, over a period of three days with all manner of interruptions in between. I wish to protest most vehemently against this state of affairs, and let me repeat that I trust the Bureau will be discussing the matter.

Moving on to the point at hand, Mr President, I believe that no one in this House nor outside has come out against the Multifibre Arrangement. That is a sad state of affairs, because the fact is that the Multifibre Arrangement is, in the final analysis, dictated by protectionist sentiments. Unfortunately, protectionism is essential at the present time; after all, we all realize what a state the Community's textile industry is in, characterized by tens of thousands of people unemployed and firms closing and going bankrupt. Given that situation, it is of course understandable — and even justifiable — that the Community should be seeking ways of countering the serious threat to the future of our textile industry. There is, unfortunately, no alternative to the Multifibre Arrangement, for a number of reasons, given that protectionism is an inevitable fact of life at the present time. If there had been no Multifibre Arrangement, if the Community had not adopted such an arrangement, we would probably have been forced to adopt even more stringent measures and apply Article 19 of GATT.

We have managed to avoid doing that so far, although the Community has expressly stated that, if the negotiations on the bilateral agreements entered into on the basis of the Multifibre Arrangement do not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, the Community as such can revoke its signature to the Arrangement and apply Article 19 of GATT. I am sure we all hope that such a step will not be necessary, and that the negotiations on the bilateral agreements will come up with a solution enabling us to stand by the Multifibre Arrangement.

As I said before, the Multifibre Arrangement is protectionist in nature, and protectionism is unavoidable in the present circumstances. However, that does not mean that we should seek salvation in protectionism alone. To be sure, one of the Community's aims — as the representative of the Council reiterated here — in the negotiations on the Multifibre Arrangement was to seek to make it easier for our textile industry to restructure by introducing import restrictions. In other words, import restrictions are not seen as an end in themselves so much as a means to an end. What we really want — and that is the only basis on which we can accept the Multifibre Arrangement — is restructuring of our textile industry. That will require a transitional period, and for that transitional period we can accept the Multifibre Arrangement.

Not to put too fine a point on it, I think we all know that the problems facing the textile industry are not the result simply of a growth in imports. The financial position of the firms in the industry has been under-

mined, investment decisions have been forthcoming too slowly, management has been found wanting and too much attention has been paid to production rather than market considerations. The protectionism we intend to introduce has in fact been in existence in the textile industry for almost 20 years now. As we know, this Multifibre Arrangement has been concluded for another four and a half years. It is up to us to make good use of that period to make a start with restructuring, and I take it that this view is shared by the Commission and the Council. I also trust that the bilateral agreements will be brought to a satisfactory conclusion and that restructuring will enable the multifibre arrangement to be committed to the history books at some later time.

President. — Mr Cohen, you know very well that the constraints of our proceedings do not allow us to satisfy everyone all the time. But you are right and I shall forward your comments to the Bureau.

I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — Quite apart from that, Mr President, have you had an apology from the Commission and the Council for not being here during a matter for which they are totally responsible, in terms of unemployment within the Community and starvation in the developing countries? They did not even bother to turn up. Is there an apology?

President. — Unhappily, Mr Enright, I can offer you no explanation.

I call Mr Van Rompuy.

Mr Van Rompuy. — (NL) Mr President, I was pleased that the Community maintained a relatively firm stance at the recent Multifibre Arrangement negotiations and that we received more watertight guarantees this time with regard to a more effective control on imports from developing countries. It was, after all, a highly abnormal situation — and you do not need to be a protectionist to admit that — whereby, in the period between 1973 and 1980, imports into the Community from the low-wage countries increased by 110%, compared with 31.5% in the United States and no change at all in Japan. It is a welcome development that account is now being taken of the drastically reduced rate of growth in textile and clothing consumption in the Community and that the import quotas for certain sensitive products from the four main exporting countries are being cut back. However, I regret that no place has been found for the social clause, as a result of which there is too little guarantee of social progress in the developing countries. It is, to my mind, socially unacceptable that, in a country like Hong Kong, the working week should still be in excess of 50 hours and the daily rate of pay less than \$ 2.

Rompuy

The Multifibre Arrangement is no more than an outline agreement, and the important thing now is to convert that into bilateral agreements, and I was pleased to hear Mr de Keersmaecker take the same line. We must adhere strictly to the promised reduction in the rate of growth to, for instance, an average of zero for the main exporting countries, with even a negative rate of growth for sensitive products from the dominant exporting countries. As a result, we must have no qualms about applying the mechanisms provided for in the agreement for stemming a sudden and unbalanced increase in imports into the Community.

Finally, I should like to express a certain sense of dissatisfaction in my own country with regard to the rigid attitude adopted by the Commission on the Belgian textile plan. Scientific studies indicate that half of all the jobs in the Belgian textile industry have been eliminated by an abnormal level of imports from the developing countries. What the Belgian aid measures amount to is a desperate attempt to save the companies which have got into trouble as a result of these imports. It is therefore incomprehensible and unacceptable that the Commission should be resisting the financial concessions made by the government with a view to increasing productive capacity at macro and microeconomic level. The Commission's attitude militates against the healthy activities of firms and effectively outlaws expansion on the part of dynamic companies. The Commission is thus condemning firms to stagnation and is interfering with the effects of productivity-boosting investment. And not only that — it is being made difficult for firms to turn their attention to new and more future-orientated products. All this seems to be part of a model for economic suicide and is particularly disastrous for our most dynamic industries dealing with such things as carpets, furniture upholstery and wall coverings. Let me conclude by saying that the Community's policy is evidently a two-faced one, bearing in mind the substantial aid given by the German *Länder* to their own textile and clothing manufacturers.

President. — I call Mr Kyrkos.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, the problem to which the questions by Mr Welsh and Mr Cousté refer is extremely serious and in some aspects problematic. Can we, for example, who support the development of the Third World, call for protective measures which would hinder this development? Can we, on the other hand, be indifferent to the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs in the textile sector as a result of the crisis which threatens particularly the less-developed countries of the Community? It is clear that a different approach is needed.

It is well known that European, American and Japanese big business is abandoning traditional sectors such as textiles and going for advanced technology

sectors, since it turns to its own account the possibilities offered by Third World countries by taking advantage of the low wages and cheap raw materials. By pursuing such a policy it condemns hundreds of thousands of workers in Europe to unemployment, but it also goes against the workers in the underdeveloped countries, and we ought to get this clear in our minds.

We think that the Community will have to adopt a political direction to aid the domestic industries of Third World countries but also to protect the textile industry in the Community, by pursuing the following objectives: firstly, to promote bilateral agreements with those Third World countries which are trying to support their own national textile industries; secondly, to press for the United States and Japan to increase their imports from third countries; and thirdly, to rid the internal Community market of trade barriers such as those recently imposed by the French Government.

Mr President, in drawing up its trade policy, the Community will have to take account of the fact that some Member States are producers of raw materials and their industries are based directly on processing them. So there will have to be a re-examination of the clause which provides for greater aid to the cotton-producing countries of the Third World, so that the interests of Community cotton producers are not ignored but protected.

Lastly, measures will have to be taken to avoid the extension to third countries, beyond the internal Community market, of the manufacture of ready-to-wear clothing by outward processing. Such a development will be sure to hit thousands more workers in the ready-to-wear clothing sector unless the necessary measures are taken.

President. — I call Mrs Nikolaou.

Mrs Nikolaou. — (GR) Mr President, it is well known how very important the textile industry is for Greece from the point of view of employment, of its contribution to our gross national product and of our foreign currency earnings.

Today the Greek textile industry is going through a crisis which is mainly due to the drop in exports to Community countries, which are the main export market for Greek products.

Our export performance during our first year of Community membership was disappointing, particularly in certain categories of textile products and clothing. This is due both to the restrictions imposed on us by Member States and to the increased competition from the low-cost countries in the Community. We have also had to contend with increased competition following our accession on our domestic market, since Greece is obliged under the Treaty of Accession to open its market to low-cost countries as part of the

Nikolaou

preferential agreements concluded with them. On the other hand, EEC trade policy in the textile sector was designed to cater for the interests of countries which do not produce raw materials. As a result, Greece's position is a special one since it is the only cotton-producing country in the Community with the exception of the small quantities produced by Italy.

The comparative advantages enjoyed by Greece in this sector and the need for structural changes — needed because we are now operating in the wider area which is the common market — together with the crisis which is currently affecting the sector, mean that measures must be taken to reinforce the protection of the domestic and Community market.

We are therefore in favour of the renewal of the Multifibre Arrangement. But we would ask that measures be adopted in the bilateral agreements so that the improved treatment of the cotton-producing developing countries does not damage Greece's interests and above all does not affect the degree of protection of its cotton products.

The bilateral agreements will also have to include a mechanism to deal with the problem of sudden and considerable increases of imports to Greece, which hitherto has had very few imports from third countries because of the high degree of protection afforded to its domestic market. Thus even if we have a small percentage share of the quotas, imports from third countries might seriously perturb the domestic market.

Lastly, great stress will have to be laid on the geographical re-orientation of quotas with a view to supporting the less-developed countries and not those countries which represent multinational interests, as is indeed the spirit of the Multifibre Arrangement.

The Commission will have to be asked what possibilities it sees of taking account in the bilateral agreements of the special features of the Greek textile industry and of dealing satisfactorily with the pressing problems confronting it today.

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

Mr Enright. — Mr President, pursuant to Rule 87, in view of the absence of Council and Commission, I would propose that we adjourn this debate until the April part-session, when they may have the courtesy to attend and listen to what is being said. I require the support of nine other Members.

President. — I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh. — Mr President, I have a great deal of sympathy with the honourable gentleman's point. I

regard it as regrettable that the Commission is not represented. However, as Mr Cohen pointed out, we ourselves have not been particularly successful in organizing our agenda, and I think we have to extend a certain amount of latitude to our fellow institutions.

What I would say to him — and I hope he will withdraw his point — is this, that we have a resolution that will be tabled at 6 o'clock if that debate is concluded, which has important constitutional implications for the relationship between the Parliament and the Council, particularly as regards the ratification of treaties. I think that if we miss this opportunity to vote on that resolution, we shall have missed an opportunity to assert our authority. However regrettable the circumstances may be, I think we have to have a regard for our own priorities.

President. — I call Mr Enright.

Mr Enright. — In that case, Mr President, and provided that Mr Welsh is prepared to sign a motion that we may put down about the Council and Commission since he has expressed general agreement, I withdraw my point of order.

President. — I have noted that, Mr Enright.

I call Mr Vernimmen.

Mr Vernimmen. — (NL) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I shall refrain from reiterating what I said on 19 November 1981. I should just like to confirm what Mr Cousté said to the effect that there is no climate of confidence in industry, and certainly not among the tens of thousands of workers who, after all the vague information we have received, are bound to have grave doubts about their future. That being so, it seems to me perfectly reasonable that we should request — and, indeed, demand — the following from the European Community. First of all, we need protection for our own jobs in an industry in which tens of thousands of women are still employed and where, as a result of misguided policy, their jobs are likely to be at risk within the foreseeable future. It is all very well to approve a resolution on unemployment, but we ourselves would then become a party to that unemployment.

Secondly, we must make a clear distinction between the genuine developing countries on the one hand, for which we cannot do enough, and those countries which are using European technology and capital and which are interested in low labour costs. I should like to draw your attention here to a resolution passed by the European trade unions urging the adoption of minimum social standards in this latter group of countries.

Vernimmen

My third and final point concerns something we can do ourselves. Imports in the Member States must be orientated not to general distribution, but rather to those companies which are themselves producers and which can thus safeguard their own production levels. That is one of the results of a round-table conference we had on the clothing industry in Belgium and which has already borne fruit.

President. — I call Mr Welsh.

Mr Welsh. — Mr President, I know that people are anxious to discuss seals and there is one particular Seal in this Chamber whom I would be very happy to discuss, so I will be as quick as possible.

It has been an interesting and useful debate. We have established, I think, three things: the first is that the Council did reach an internal compromise, but neither the President-in-Office nor anybody else was able to explain to us exactly what that compromise was. The second thing is that denouncement of the MFA is not a realistic possibility because there is no alternative strategy other than Article 19, and we have established that that would actually provide the industry with a lower degree of protection than that which it enjoys already. And therefore, by inference, everything depends on the bilateral agreements. My committee, I am sure, will closely monitor the progress of these bilateral negotiations. We shall expect regular reports from the Commission on each significant one and we shall make regular reports to the Parliament. We shall then at the end of the process draw our own conclusions as to what constitutes an acceptable bilateral arrangement and therefore whether, in our view, the MFA can continue or not.

That is for the future, and perhaps I could finish with one personal comment. I have not heard a single speaker in this long debate once mention the question of consumers. We have heard everybody professing to talk about the unemployed, but nobody has even asked himself whether a continuation of this particular arrangement is not going to increase the expenses the unemployed have to pay for a very basic commodity indeed. It is believed that the continuation of the MFA will actually increase the prices of basic clothing by around 7-10%, and how many of you, honourable ladies and gentlemen representing the people of Europe, have bothered to think about that? I hope very much that if Parliament is going to make a sensible contribution to this debate, it will not allow itself to become the mouthpiece of its national textile lobbies. I think it is high time that the voice of the consumer was heard in this Assembly and as long as I am rapporteur for the committee I shall do my best to ensure that Parliament preserves a proper balance of interests, because I say to you, Mr President, that we have not heard it in this debate.

President. — The joint debate is closed.

I have received from Mr Welsh, Sir Fred Catherwood, Mr Van Aerssen, Mr Seeler and Mr Rieger a motion for a resolution with request for an early vote, pursuant to rule 42(5) of the Rules of Procedure, to wind up the debate on the oral questions (Docs. 1-1038/81 and 1-637/81) on the Multifibre Arrangement.

(Parliament agreed to the request)

11. Community trade in seal products

President. — The next item is the second report (Doc. 1-984/81), drawn up by Mrs Maij-Weggen on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on Community trade in seal products and in particular in products deriving from the whitecoat pups of harp and hooded seals (*pagophilus groenlandicus* and *cystophora cristata*).

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Maij-Weggen, rapporteur. — (NL) On a number of occasions over recent years, the Commission and the European Parliament have come out in favour of affording protection to animals threatened with extinction and subjected to cruel treatment, with varying degrees of success. Our major successes include the ban on imports of whale products and the European contribution to the Washington Convention. I think the Commission's officials are due a large vote of thanks for these achievements.

It is important to view the report and the motion for a resolution on seals that we are discussing now in the light of this list of ongoing activities. More than a year ago, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection discussed Mr Johnson's motion for a resolution and dealt in detail with the situation of seals in the northern hemisphere, with particular reference to the Atlantic and adjacent waters. We have endeavoured, with the help of independent experts, to ascertain the situation with regard to hunting, trade, protective measures and the chances of survival of the eight species of seal which live in these areas. You will see from the study, a summary of which is reproduced in the explanatory statement, that one of these species, the monk seal, is virtually extinct, that six species are facing threats of a greater or lesser degree to their continued survival and that only one of the eight species, the ringed seal, is completely safe.

As you can see from these few details, there is an urgent need for thoroughgoing international and independent control of hunting and trade in all these endangered species. The protective measures currently in force, often organized on a local, national and bilateral basis, are inadequate, particularly in view of the

Maij-Wegen

fact that it is difficult to distinguish between the skins of those species which are most under threat and those which are in rather less danger. We are therefore asking the Commission to have all the species affected included in the Washington Convention. This Convention, which bans or at least controls trade in the products of endangered species, is the best international protection for animals whose survival is threatened or which are likely to be under threat in the near future. One species for which the committee is requesting special attention is the monk seal, which lives in the Mediterranean and which is sometimes sighted off the coast of Northern Africa. This species, whose numbers are expected to have fallen to about 650 by the end of this century, will become extinct unless something is done to prevent that happening. We are therefore calling on the Commission — and this is the second point — to enter into consultations with Italy and Greece with a view to establishing reserves and thus affording optimum protection to these animals. Experience with the common seal in the Dutch Waddenzee has shown that it is possible to give seriously depleted populations a fresh chance of survival. We therefore address an urgent appeal to the Commission to take the necessary action and to save from extinction a species for which we Europeans have a special responsibility.

A third aspect which it is worth emphasizing is not so much the threat to the species as the hunting methods used, an aspect which has been given by far the most publicity. Certain of these methods of hunting seals, and especially newborn harp and hooded seal pups, are so cruel and so degrading for both human being and animal that there has been a public outcry against the practice in practically all countries of the Western world. Let me stress here that we are not complaining about the hunting practices of the traditional hunting peoples of the north; what we have in mind is the mass, industrialized hunt which goes on for between 4 and 5 weeks in each year in Newfoundland, around Jan Mayen and in the White Sea. This hunt is so inhumane and causes so much disgust that a number of countries have introduced national import bans, including the United States, the Netherlands, Italy and now Sweden, where legislation has recently been passed. However, it is worth noting that, despite the years of protests against the culling of newborn seal pups, the countries concerned have still not managed to guarantee a disciplined form of hunting. On the contrary, when in 1979 cases of extreme brutality on a large scale were once again reported, especially from Newfoundland — and, incidentally, confirmed by the Canadian Government — a regulation was passed in Canada whereby all spectators and journalists were banned from the hunting grounds so that no more photographs and films could be taken. In other words, it is not the seals which are being protected, but the hunters.

Mr President, the Committee feels that 20 years is quite enough, and we therefore believe that we should

follow the example of the United States and other countries and announce an import ban on all products of seal pups well before the 1983 cull gets underway.

The fourth point I should like to make relates to the distinction between the traditional hunting practices of the people who live in the far north and industrial-scale hunting. The committee feels that we must respect the traditional practices of the Eskimo populations, given that the livelihoods of these people in Greenland and Canada depend entirely on hunting. I should therefore like to call on the Commission to enter into consultations with representatives of the Eskimo population and give them the chance to give voice to their concerns in Brussels. Allow me to point out that the Eskimos have always adopted a very responsible attitude to seal hunting and have never indulged in inhumane practices.

Finally, there is one last point I should like to make with regard to official Canadian opposition. Canadian delegations have informed us that they were not in a position to consider the substance of this report. I should like to point out that the Committee drew up the report with the assistance of independent experts and that, when the Canadians published a document containing criticism of a number of matters, we took the trouble to withdraw the report from the January agenda to give it a fresh appraisal. All this was done in consultation with our Canadian opposite numbers and resulted in a second, revised version of the reports. I should also like to point out that many of the objections raised in the Canadian document are groundless, and I can tell you that there is a good deal of indignation among the international scientific community with regard to the subjective way in which the Canadians make use of scientific data. I would draw your attention here to an article which will be appearing in the *New Scientist* in the next few days.

Mr President, I am sure that 20 years is enough time to have protested against an inhumane form of hunting which is degrading to both human being and animal alike. The European Community is partly responsible for these hunting methods since 75% of the products of these seals are sold on the Community market. It is now up to us to put an end to this practice by imposing an import ban. Millions of people throughout Europe support us on this issue and I would therefore call on all the Members of this House to support the motion for a resolution.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Collins. — Mr President, I want to address this Assembly in the name of the Socialist Group because first of all, I think that we have had a great deal of action on similar matters over the last 2½ years of this

Collins

Parliament, but also, I may say, because I think that we in the Socialist Group have a special insight into the problems of the seal. Alone among all the groups of this Parliament we actually have one on the Bureau of the group, and as this debate concerns principally the harp and the hooded seal (*pagophilus groenlandicus* and *cystophora cristata*) we must also consider the problems of *Pagophilus bradfordicus contraeuroparicus*.

This debate has been brought into focus by public opinion. There have been petitions, there have been letters sent in great and unprecedented quantity to Members of the Parliament, right across Europe, and these probably amount to well over 5 million signatures from Canada itself, from the United States, from all over Europe. So we are concerned with a demonstration of public opinion which is not just European in scope but worldwide. This is a demonstration of public reaction across the world to the commercial slaughter of seal pups in conditions that we consider make control difficult and perhaps impossible . . .

There have been allegations of immense cruelty. We have been told in the committee and we have been told in the evidence we have received that as many as 10% of these pups may well still be alive when they are skinned, and there can be few more horrific possibilities than that. There have been allegations of some of the species concerned being endangered and indeed some people have argued that seals themselves are endangered; both the harp seal and the hooded seal but also, nearer home, the monk seal of the Mediterranean. The report, for which Mrs Maij-Weggen is due a great deal of admiration, has also focused attention on the plight of the Mediterranean monk seal.

There is no question in our mind that there is a need for action. The European Community has a particularly important role to play since the European Community has immense power in the market place of the world. Therefore, it is possible to use the Community and its power to exert an influence on questions related to a humane care for animals. And so there is a need, as far as we are concerned, as far as the committee is concerned and also as far as the Socialist Group is concerned, for a ban on seal products in the European Community. We have to have a total ban because there are certain problems of identification, as Mrs Maij-Weggen has said.

Of course, we recognize that there is a need to protect indigenous populations. We recognize that there are people here who have come half way across the world, Mr President, to listen to this debate. That itself, mind you, is a mark of the way in which the European Community is seen outside the Community, and I hope that these visits will be noted by those who perhaps have different views on the future and destiny of the European Community itself. None the less, the point is that there is a need to recognize that there are

people whose livelihood depends to a very large extent on seals and on seal products, and we must protect their future and their livelihoods.

Mr President, may I make two points which I think are terribly important and which, I think, have got lost in the outflow of public sentiment surrounding this debate.

First of all, can I make the point that this report from Mrs Maij-Weggen is essentially a statement of principle. It is a statement that there is a problem, and there are several issues within that problem that need the attention of the Parliament and of the European Community itself. Unfortunately, the debate has been confused by the fact that some people seem to have given the impression that if the vote is successful, the trade will stop. Mr President, would that that were the case, but the European Parliament, sadly, does not have that kind of power. We therefore have to emphasize that before we can have the legislative power to make this work, we need to have a proposal from the Commission. That is what we are demanding here today, that the Commission bring forward such a proposal.

(Applause)

I want to make one other important statement. When the Commission brings forward its proposal — and I say 'when' and not 'if' — I hope that that proposal will be the result of a great deal of consultation and discussion in the Commission — done speedily of course — also that when it comes into Parliament our next statement in this will represent the fully consulted views of the Committee on External Economic Relations and the Committee on Agriculture. I think it is important that we are seen to tackle this very serious problem with the seriousness that is needed.

Finally, Mr President, I should like to say this: over 5 million people have submitted signatures on this problem. I think that we have to reflect, as a Parliament and indeed as citizens of Western Europe, that that 5 million is very nearly half the number of people who are unemployed in the European Community just now. We have to recognize that when the North-South dialogue was debated in this Parliament, we did not get 5 million letters. I do not think we got any letters — or very few anyway. When we debated poverty, when we debated hunger, when we debated torture and the misery of many people across the world, the letters did not appear. That, I am afraid, is a reflection on the values that our society sometimes has.

(Applause)

Also, from the Socialist Group's point of view, I think we have to express just a little degree of doubt about the values of those who will weep tears for seals in Canada, or seals in the Mediterranean, or seals

Collins

anywhere else, and yet will quite heartlessly condone the policies of those who continue the catalogue of torture, misery and poverty and indeed death of people in just as distant and just as deprived parts of the world.

(Applause from the Socialist Group)

President. — I call the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group).

Mr Ghergo. — *(IT)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, Mrs Maij-Weggen's report is so clear that there is absolutely no need to add anything to it: the arguments on which it is based and the aims it sets are backed up by the very force of the facts with which its case is documented.

Those who are opposed to the motion for a resolution have challenged some of the figures and historical facts provided in it.

As far as the figures are concerned, it is not difficult to see that those cited in the Maij-Weggen Report are the most moderate of all those cited in the vast number of official accounts and reports that are available.

However, though the problem is certainly one of quantity, it is also, and I might even say especially, one of quality.

It is a problem of quantity because if we can accept that in the last few years, in given areas and in the case of certain species a definite increase in the population has been recorded, it must nevertheless be pointed out that these increases have taken place against the background of an extremely critical situation, after decades of constantly falling stocks, and we have no valid evidence for arguing that these increases constitute a definite reversal of the trend.

Then, there are other areas where a decline has been recorded for the same species or for different species up to the extreme example of the monk seal, a native of the Mediterranean area, which is almost completely extinct, stocks having been reduced to a few hundred animals. In Sardinia, in particular, for many years now no monk seal has been sighted, which gives grounds for fearing that the animal may be almost extinct.

But even if we can take the view that the general situation is one of broad equilibrium as regards total numbers of seals, though still an unstable equilibrium because it is based not on natural selection but rather on an artificial containment of the growth in numbers by the extermination of a certain number of animals, there is still, as I said before, the problem of quality.

The inhuman methods adopted to hunt the baby seals, even though it cannot be said that they have yet been

employed on a large scale, have been verified and documented.

Europe is making decisions that reflect basic civilized values and there is no reason why these decisions and the resulting commitment should only concern the major themes of history, and, what is more, we only need to consider the attention and the interest this topic has aroused in public opinion and in expert scientific circles throughout the world to see the truth of that.

There is no doubt that pressing human needs make the culling of some animals inevitable. There are so many valid reasons, foremost among them being the question of seals as a source of food, and it is reasonable that the by-products of these animals should be used for different purposes from their original ones.

But in the case of seals, leaving aside the reasonable 'needs' of the local populations who are obliged to hunt the seals for lack of any alternative employment, it is not obvious that others — and in this instance we Europeans — have any 'need' that justifies a massive seal hunt on an industrial scale that effectively constitutes a threat to the very survival of the species.

This 'need' is even less obvious in the case of baby seals, the by-products of which are used exclusively to satisfy the fashion industry's need for luxurious raw materials. The problem is in its origin a commercial one and a commercial solution should be adopted to deal with it. The proposal that the market for these products should be suppressed would therefore appear to be right and consistent. Ultimately, a lack of demand will be a more efficient way of curbing baby seal hunting than official limits and regulations which, apart from the fact that they offer no concrete guarantees, would not in any case solve the basic problem, which is essentially a problem of civilized attitudes. Here I am referring to the undoubtedly detailed regulations designed to 'humanize' the culling of the seals, which have been adopted by various countries but regarding the effective implementation of which one may have very serious reservations.

Somewhere, someone said that there was no question of culling the pups, inasmuch as the hunters only hunted adult animals. This is not true, because the baby seals retain their characteristic white coat for only about three weeks after birth.

The legislation set out in this resolution to protect the last surviving examples of the monk seal living in Greece, Italy and France is particularly worthy of attention.

Apart from protection, which also includes indemnifying fishermen whose livelihoods are threatened, the report also contemplates the creation of special reserves in Greece, Italy and in France so that the survival of the species may be guaranteed.

Ghergo

Mrs Maij-Weggen's report is a considered and balanced one which does not yield in any way to the cheap sentimentality that this topic may arouse. What matters is the facts: the facts set out in the report are well-documented and the proposed measures, which, moreover, take due account of the needs of the indigenous populations, are properly related to these facts.

The question of the pollution of the seas is also given due consideration, which is just as serious a problem for the various species of seal as being hunted, and the rapporteur calls for a strengthening of the regulations designed to protect the marine environment.

For these reasons, on behalf of my Group, I give full support to Mrs Maij-Weggen's motion for a resolution and would like to give Mrs Maij-Weggen our sincerest thanks and congratulations for the serious, meticulous and thorough work she has carried out, to which the balanced and responsible report accompanying the motion for a resolution bears ample testimony.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Scrivener. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we shall vote in favour of the report on Community trade in products deriving from seal pups for the following reasons:

In the first place because the hunt has become a commercial hunt using cruel methods and is not a matter of subsistence.

In the second place because certain endangered species must be protected.

With public opinion so aroused over a period of several years on what has been called 'the baby seal slaughter', we might well wonder why less barbaric hunting methods were not developed sooner at a time when new techniques could no doubt have been found, but also — and this is perhaps the underlying reason — why the expenditure involved was not considered worthwhile. We do not believe that this report can be regarded as an emotive document and to those who argue against it on the grounds that humans ought to come before baby seals, we would reply that caring about one thing does not by any means prevent one from being concerned about other matters. Experience shows moreover that the reverse is true and that the generous of spirit do not simply confine their attentions to certain areas. Finally it would be difficult to accuse the report of failing to take account of the economic interests of the indigenous population of the polar regions — a fair point since they have a real problem of survival — because in paragraph 7 the rapporteur proposes that limited and controlled hunting and trading should be authorized. There you have, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the few specific points we wanted to make.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Chambeiron. — (*FR*) Mr President, this is the first time, I think, that we have seen such a reaction to a question concerning our living heritage. But since all forms of life are bound up together, I should like to hope that the millions of young people who are moved by the slaughter of baby seals will on future occasions be just as active in opposing all forms of aggression which we see in life, taking up the cause above all of our human brothers and sisters whose faces and bodies are all too often disfigured by war, torture, hunger and disease.

As regards the baby seals, the Communist and Allies Group shares the feelings expressed in petitions and letters calling for a halt to this slaughter. We believe that it is essential for the Community to take measures, as other countries have done, to ban imports of skins and products derived from seal pups. In fact, there appears to be a very serious risk of extinction if we go by the figures provided by the rapporteur, which show that whilst there were 10 million white-coated seals at the beginning of the century, there are now only approximately 3 million.

Although we understand the economic reasons which the indigenous population might adduce, we do not consider that anything can justify wiping out a species. We believe that it is in the interests of humanity as a whole to protect all species against irreversible human aggression. In this matter every country bears the responsibility of preserving the balance of nature which is entrusted to successive governments.

We therefore support the motion for a resolution in its entirety and would stress in particular the importance of the application of point 1 thereof, asking the Commission to adopt regulations, as other countries have done, to ban imports into the Community of skins and products from harp seal pups and hooded seal pups.

President. — I call Mr Johnson.

Mr Johnson. — Mr President, I returned last Thursday from Canada, more precisely from the Magdalene Islands in the Gulf of St Lawrence. I count myself privileged to have been able to witness on the ice floes the arrival of thousands of harp seals which, together with the seals in the front ice off the coast of Newfoundland, make up the North-West Atlantic herd.

Mr President, these seals have travelled thousands of miles from the Arctic to reach their breeding grounds. While I was there the pupping had begun and the females were congregating on the whelping patches with their white-coated pups beside them. I have travelled in many different parts of the world, but I would

Johnson

say that the arrival and migration of the harp seal to its breeding grounds off the Canadian coast is a natural spectacle whose magnificence rivals that of the movement of vast herds of wildebeest across the plains of the Serengeti in Africa.

It is argued that the seal hunt is justified on five basic grounds: that the seals are an abundant resource — I have heard it said that they are to be harvested in the same way as seaweed is to be harvested — that the method of killing is humane; that the seals would damage fisheries if they were not harvested or culled; that the seal hunt makes an important contribution to the economy of the area and, finally, that it has the support of the Canadian people.

I should like briefly to take each argument in turn. Scientific evidence suggests that the North-West Atlantic harp seal population was reduced in size in the post-war years — 1959 to 1970 — by perhaps 50-66%. I would point out that IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature), whose members include some 58 governments and over 100 non-governmental organizations, now regards 'endangered' as a term defined as, and I quote, 'the continuous operation or likely operation of deleterious factors which, if unchecked, may lead to a steady decline in stock'. Dr Sidney Holt, the chairman of the Marine Mammal Committee of IUCN, stated on 3 March this year that under new IUCN criteria the harp seal is indeed an endangered species. And management policies ought to reflect this situation. This is true of the harp seal. It is true *a fortiori* of the hooded seal. In any case, even if you do accept the argument for a cull, which I do not, you do not cull the newborn, you kill the breeding female, if you really have to, at the start of her fertile life. That way you get five deaths for the price of one.

Turning now to method. Bad weather delayed the start of the hunt. I did not personally witness the method and the killing. I rely, in this context, on comments made by others like Dr Jordan, the British RSPCA, Mr Justice Allison of the Federal Court of Canada. I did go out into the ice floes, and I find it very hard to imagine that this can be a wholly humane method of killing when you consider the sheer number of deaths involved, the speed with which the sealers work, hundreds of clubbings a day and the conditions which obtain.

As to the impact on fisheries, here again I would like to refer to the recent statement by Dr Sidney Holt, chairman of the IUCN Marine Mammals Committee. 'There is no doubt' he says, 'that fisheries affect marine mammals. There is great doubt whether marine mammals substantially affect fish populations.' Despite much research, there is no clear evidence that any whale, dolphin or seal species has had such an effect, though many have been accused and it is now fashionable to make scapegoats of them in situations where

there has been failure to properly regulate fishing and fish stocks have dwindled or collapsed in consequence.

As far as economics is concerned, undoubtedly considerable amounts of money are made by a few people involved in the seal hunt, for example, the large shipowners and pelt processors. If you take the latest statistics in Canada — and these are the only figures I have — 73% of the 6 thousand people involved in the seal hunt grossed, in 1976, less than 500 dollars. When I was there in the Magdalene Islands, it was pointed out to us by the sealers that this might amount now, in a good year, to 10% of their income, and I think that is perhaps an optimistic statement.

On political support — even if this seal hunt does have the support of all the political parties in Canada, which I frankly doubt (I certainly got a letter from Tom MacMillan, the MP for Prince Edward Island — whom I also talked to — which indicates that it does not have his support), I doubt if it has the support of the people of Canada, judging by the volume of correspondence I have received, and also which Mrs Maij-Weggen has received, some of which you see up in the foyer today.

Mr President, both the original resolution which I put down in 1980 and the current resolution from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, which is before the House, call upon the Commission to propose a ban on the import into the EEC of products coming from young harp and hooded seals. Also, by the way, there is an amendment from me asking for a ban on products coming from seals whose stocks were depleted, threatened or endangered. The European Parliament will be voting on that resolution today. If it is passed, as I hope it will be by an overwhelming majority, it will be up to the Commission to prepare the necessary draft proposal. I hope the Commission is listening very seriously today. Few issues, as we have heard, have aroused such public interest.

I warn the Commission that if it fails to act in response to a resolution of this Parliament, it will actually suffer as painfully before the power of public opinion in Europe as those baby seals are now suffering on the ice. The Canadian Government, and I say this with great respect, has shown itself to be totally intransigent on this issue for decades. It is now up to us to act and to act in time to avoid next year's seal harvest, even if it is too late to avoid this year's. So we expect a concrete proposal from the Commission. It will then be up to the Council to vote it through.

Among EEC countries, the Netherlands already has a ban. Italy has a ban. France has voluntary restrictions on traders. Britain still imports 40 thousand skins a year. Britain is still a major entrepôt centre. So is Germany. We will expect both countries, I think, to give real consideration now to supporting this EEC initiative and moving beyond their present policies towards EEC-wide restrictions.

Johnson

Members of Parliament, Mr President, are often accused of travelling around from country to country, passing enough motions, if you like, to paper a ball-room, never doing anything which really interests the people of Europe and never doing anything concrete. Well, here is an initiative which has been passed with only one dissenting vote in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. I do congratulate Johanna Maij-Weggen, I congratulate the chairman of the Environment Committee. Let us now pass it in this House with an overwhelming majority.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Muntingh.

Mr Muntingh. — *(NL)* Mr President, in June 1844, the last surviving Great Auk was clubbed to death on a small rocky island off the coast of Iceland. The Great Auk was a very common seabird which was at home on all kinds of islands off the coasts of Greenland, New Foundland and Iceland, and was even found in British and Scandinavian waters. In other words, it used to inhabit precisely the same areas as the seals which are nowadays being clubbed to death in just the same way as the last Great Auk. Things have not changed much since 1844.

There are plenty more links between the fate of the Great Auk and what is happening to the seals today. No one knew for sure where the auks lived — they could be found alright, but nothing was known of their activities throughout the year. Nothing was known of their place in the ecosystem, and in fact, very little was known at all about the status of the auks. The same is still true of seals. We do not know how many there are of them; of course, the Canadians and the Norwegians are bound to come up with a different estimate from those whose interest is in nature protection. We do not know precisely what their place is in the ecosystem, and we cannot say for sure what effect seals have on the other animals in the food chain. Nor do we know for sure where seals spend the major part of the year.

And there is another side to this whole affair. The human race has managed over the years to pollute the oceans to quite a substantial degree. Traces of heavy metals and polychlorinated diphenyls have been found in seals from the Arctic to the very far north and at the southernmost points of the globe. Who can say what the long-term effects of this pollution are likely to be? Then we have the fact that everyone is frantically busy at the moment drilling for gas and oil in the Arctic with a view to safeguarding our energy supplies. One of the projects being discussed in this context is the arctic pilot project, with the aim of transporting gas in huge ice-breaking tankers from the coast of Melville Island via the coast of Greenland to Canada.

Should any disastrous accident occur, what would be the effect on the flora and fauna in the area? No one knows for sure, but we may reasonably assume that the effects would be catastrophic and that, Mr President, is one argument for saying that we should conserve as large a population as possible of endangered species so that, should an accident occur — and statistics show that an accident will occur one day — the species in question will still have a chance of survival.

Then, Mr President, we have the question of fishing. The human race is quite capable of fishing entire seas completely empty — there are instances of that everywhere. It is therefore not right to say that it is human beings who are regulating fish stocks and not the seals, as is usually claimed. Finally, Mr President, there is the ethical and moral aspect of killing seals. Here again, there is precious little agreement and no clear evidence to go on. The Canadians and Norwegians claim that their hunting methods are the most humane. The conservationists, on the other hand, say that the methods used are appallingly brutal. Then there are the Russians, who, — so I have heard — kill their sealpups by hypodermic syringe. However little agreement there may be on this point, one thing is sure in any case, and that is that, before the eyes of its mother, the pup has its brains clubbed in, and is skinned and left to bleed before being dragged away. And that, Mr President, is, in my view, a barbaric form of treatment.

So, taking all these things together, and bearing in mind that there have been plenty of instances in the past — and there are plenty more where they came from — of man's ability to exterminate very common species, and given that there is no clear information on the biological phenomenon of the seal, that there is a very good chance of seals being adversely affected by pollution and that terrible disasters may be expected in the future as a result of accidents in the Arctic waters, that man is probably capable of regulating seal populations by his fishing methods and that what is going on at the moment is a morally and ethically unacceptable form of slaughter, I think we can conclude that the measures being proposed to this House at the moment are reasonable, and I and my Group feel that they should be adopted by this House.

Mr President, although I said that I entirely agree with what has been proposed, the fact is that I do have certain reservations as to the way in which the whole thing is being approached. In particular, there is one aspect which I find very embarrassing and which even seems to contain some element of hypocrisy, and that is the fact that we here in Europe are concerning ourselves with the fate of seals on the other side of the ocean — in other words, with animals which can be counted in hundreds of thousands, not to say millions, and of which you could therefore say that they are not under direct threat in the short-term — in the long-term may be, but not in the short-term — whereas we

Muntingh

here in Europe have the species of seal which is more endangered than any other species in the world. I am referring to the Mediterranean monk seal, and the fate of that species is, to my mind, a very serious matter. The fact is, Mr President, that we are paying plenty of attention to the splinter in the eye of the Canadians and Norwegians, but overlooking the beam in our own. We are simply oblivious to the fact that our own Mediterranean monk seal is becoming extinct before our very eyes.

The same goes, of course, for the seals which live in the international Waddenzee region, the numbers of which amount now to only a few thousand. Mr President, the monk seal, which was described by Homer, sung of by Pliny and described anatomically by Aristotle, occupies an immensely important position at the moment on our list of priorities. However right it may be — and I agree that it is right — to close our borders to seal pelts, it does seem a little paternalistic to lay down the law in one case and at the same time allow our own seal population to become extinct.

Mr President, I have written a letter to a Member of the Commission on the subject of the monk seal, asking him to take steps to protect the species. As yet, I have received no reply, and I hope that the Member of the Commission will soon be in a position to do so.

Finally, Mr President, I must say that I am quite sure that it will be a good thing if we close our borders to imports of seal pelts from the other side of the world, but I feel I must add that, morally, we can only take such a step if we make sure that our own seals are afforded similarly effective protection. I should also like to point out to public opinion that when, at the end of last year, Greek conservationists raised the alarm because Greek fishermen were threatening to kill off 50 of the last remaining monk seals, accounting for between 5 and 10% of the total world population, that was something entirely different from the total percentage of harp and hooded seals which are being slaughtered elsewhere. When that appeal came from the Greek conservationists, there was no response whatsoever, despite the fact that we issued press releases on the subject. What happened to the full-page advertisements then? What about all the television programmes? And what happened to all the letters? No response at all. Mr President, all I wish to say is this. It is, in my opinion marvellous that the public should be up in arms at what is happening on the other side of the world. But I would appeal to public opinion, and to the people of Europe, to spare a thought for the fact that what is happening in Canada is happening here too. Let us do something to protect the monk seal. Time is rapidly running out, and officially, the species is all but extinct.

Mr President, that is something I felt I had to get off my chest. Let me repeat that I am pleased with the resolution as it stands, but I believe that we must take

a stronger line and take a look at what is happening in our own part of the world.

President. — I call Mr Papaefstratiou.

Mr Papaefstratiou. — (GR) Mr President, I am naturally in favour of the motion for a resolution, and I congratulate our colleague, Mrs Maij-Weggen on her detailed and well-documented report which, far from exaggerating in its call for the protection and rescue of seals, tries to take full account of the interests of those who are involved in this affair, i.e. the Canadian Government and the fishermen.

For many years, ladies and gentlemen, animals and fish themselves took care of the balance of nature and the protection of the environment, which is being so badly ravaged in our times — principally in order to feed the human race. It is time for mankind to take steps to protect in particular those animals, those mammals and those fish which are in danger of being wiped out and of vanishing for ever. Nor is this simply a show of tenderness or of academic interest — it is in mankind's own interest to protect the environment and the nature in which he lives.

I would, however, point out the following. The other side — i.e. the Canadian Government and the fishermen involved — have expressed certain arguments to the effect that, if there were to be an absolute and stringent ban on seal-hunting, it is highly likely that we would see the disappearance of certain species of fish on which the seals feed. I do not profess to be an expert on this subject, and I am not in a position to reply, but I have the impression that this argument by the Canadian Government could be countered if we recommended that hunting by private fishermen and seal hunters with economic interests be prohibited, leaving it to the relevant national bodies alone to take measures if there is a danger that the species of fish eaten by the seal may vanish. In this way, the countries involved could take responsible and unselfish measures.

Mr President, we can certainly accept the motion, and I am sure that the European Community can survive without the skins of seals, whether they be young seals or old seals, because people seem to be talking only about baby seals. In this context I should like to congratulate the hundreds of thousands of citizens of Canada and other countries who have shown such a lively and sympathetic interest. However, I wish these dear friends of ours, who have flooded us with letters and other evidence of their involvement, would take a similar interest in the violations of human rights taking place all over the world and in the missing Cypriots, approximately 2 000 of whom disappeared after the illegal Turkish invasion and whose families do not know whether they are alive or dead — not to mention all those missing in Argentina and in many

Papaefstratiou

other countries, Communist or otherwise, where terrible things really are happening to innocent people. The Community will survive without seal skins, Mr President, but it will not survive if the European Parliament and the Community do not become more closely involved in protecting mankind, particularly the weak and the persecuted in our continent and everywhere in the world!

President. — I call Mr Moreland.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, the nub of this debate and the motivation behind public concern on this issue is primarily the method of culling the harp seal off the Canadian east coast. Judgment on its humanity is essentially subjective. I have a suspicion that I am rather unusual in this House in that I have actually seen the cull which is not a pleasant sight, although I am prepared to concede that it is a relatively quick form of killing. Nevertheless, it is rather like Pandora's box. Mr Muntingh raised an important point, namely, if we are to condemn the Canadians on this issue we must condemn other issues where there is a time-lag between the knowledge that the animal is being hunted to be killed and the actual killing. Apart from seals within the Community, one could also mention fox-hunting or stag-hunting...

Mr Berkhouwer. — Fox-hunting where?

... Fox-hunting, Sir, in the United Kingdom, as much as anywhere else! I hope that this Parliament would not condone Community preference in cruelty. I said that the nub of this debate is the method of killing the pup seal, although the resolution goes beyond this point. I would have preferred to see an emphasis on urging the Canadians to improve their methods of culling. It seems dangerous to me to suggest a ban on imports which, in this case, is actually our ultimate weapon against the Canadians. Do we really want to throw away our ultimate weapon at this stage? Furthermore, paragraph 3 of the resolution goes on to include all the earless seals in Annex II of the Washington Convention on endangered species. My colleague, Mr Johnson, may refer to experts' views on populations. On this issue, as on other issues, one will find a variety of experts on every side. It seems strange that no reference has been made to the report prepared for the Commission on this particular issue by the Nature Conservancy Council, which was published last year. That report indicated that the hooded seal should come under Annex II but gave no support to extension to other species. In this context, paragraph 3 of the resolution is quite dangerous. The problem with the resolution is that it takes as its starting point the method of culling seals as being horrible — a point on which many people hold genuine and sincere views with which I sympathize — but that it then goes on to state things that should really not be linked to that view.

I welcome the statements on the Mediterranean monk seal. Indeed, I don't think the resolution goes far enough here, and I hope the Parliament will support the extra clause that I propose. I am also disappointed that there is not more emphasis on the grey seal, particularly as there is a report for the Commission by the International Council for the Exploitation of the Sea, published last year. I might add that that particular report was requested of the Commission by whom? — from the European Parliament. So I hope that Parliament will consider less the emotional than the factual side of this issue.

This does, of course, affect the livelihood of a number of people. Mr Collins referred to many people who have paid the fare to come over here. Let's make it clear: the Canadians, the fishermen in those areas who are actually affected, could not afford the fares. Let us be honest. I regard this motion as a dangerous precedent for Parliament. We should be very cautious in passing it without the amendments that have been tabled by me and by a number of my colleagues.

President. — I call Mrs Squarcialupi.

Mrs Squarcialupi. — *(IT)* Mr President, in a world dominated by violence, exploitation and the pursuit of maximum profit it is interesting and even important that a parliament such as ours should discuss the fate of small, defenceless animals and the way in which these animals are being killed. It is an industrialized form of hunting, as has already been pointed out, and not a hunt that is necessary for survival.

But there is no doubt that this report has a deeper meaning; it reflects a will to defend the fruits of nature and reasserts the need to put an end to the indiscriminate exploitation of nature itself and the resources it offers to Man.

On an occasion like this, however, we need to look at things in a wider perspective and almost all the speakers have attempted to do that. We must, it is true, take the side of these small defenceless seals and oppose the massacring of them, but we must also take the side of those weak and defenceless human beings to whom we Europeans send noxious pesticides and excess milk powder, even though we are aware that in certain climatic and hygienic conditions they may be dangerous and even fatal; to whom we send products that we no longer want ourselves precisely because they are harmful, that is to say, all those products that may give employment.

(The President asked the speaker to conclude)

... Mr President, I gave an approximate indication of how long my speech would last, but as a group I think we have a lot more time. I was saying that we send noxious pesticides, milk powder, in short all those

Squarcialupi

products that are harmful to us and which we attempt to rid ourselves of by selling them to others. And whilst we are doing that we permit the sale even of noxious products, merely in order to exhaust supplies.

Perhaps somebody could accuse us of moralizing rather than sticking to politics, and might also add that 'business is business'. But our choices, as a parliament, must be quite plain; we must take the side of the individual — in this case, those three million individuals who have expressed their opposition to violence and their support for baby seals; but at the same time we must be credible, that is to say, we must see that business — certainly — is business, but that business is not done at someone else's cost, whether they are human beings or animals.

President. — I call Mr Berkhouwer.

Mr Berkhouwer. — (NL) Mr President, Mr Muntingh was right. Of course, we must consider the Greek seals as well. The Canadians are a long way away. Mr Collins, who is unfortunately no longer here, was right too.

We are talking here about seals. When we were discussing world hunger, and bearing in mind that thousands of people die of starvation every day, we received not a single letter from Europe. That just goes to show how irrational politics can be. However, it does not detract from the fact that there is a considerable groundswell of European public opinion, which we should not ignore and should, in fact, take note of with some satisfaction. Our British fox-hunter, Mr Moreland, was on the scene, together with a compatriot of his, June Southworth. Together, they wrote an article for the *Daily Mail* containing the description: '... brutal and bloodsoaked, it was as close to hell as I have ever been'.

Mr President, another thing I feel we must bear in mind is that we have heard nothing of the *vox populi* in Canada. The fact is that there is a very substantial *vox populi* in Canada against seal culling. Mr President, let me repeat, the European Parliament has never, in its entire existence, received such a reaction from European public opinion. Whether or not this is rational, we can do nothing about it. As I said before, politics is largely irrational on issues like this.

Mr President, speaking personally, I have received so much correspondence that I can hardly get into my office any more. The most touching letters I received were from schoolchildren who expressed their hope that this kind of thing would no longer be necessary when they were grown up. I should like to conclude, Mr President, with a variant on Nelson's famous signal at Trafalgar: the European Parliament expects the Commission to do its duty.

President. — I call Mr Bombard.

Mr Bombard. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, thinking of the speakers who have gone before me, in particular Mr Berkhouwer, Mr Muntingh, Mr Chambeiron and our friend Mr Collins, I should like to mention the extraordinary groundswell of opinion for the protection of the baby seals. And it would be all too easy to make great play of this sentiment by mentioning the amazing reaction — three million letters — protesting against this slaughter which is totally unacceptable both in its methods and its aim. Such a line would be in accordance with the wishes of the people and would thus be a very easy course.

But we are in fact concerned with defending a species which serves no purpose. It is pointless to kill baby seals. In reality, even if there is some justification for seal hunting by those population groups for whom seal hunting is a tradition — provided of course that disappearing species are protected, and I am thinking here of the monk seal, which has not, as Mr Ghergo said, entirely disappeared; fortunately, there are still about 50 in the Greek Mediterranean and we hope that it will be possible to introduce them shortly in some French Mediterranean islands — the only reason for the slaughtering of baby seals is the fur, which will be used for luxury coats and luxury goods. And, quite honestly, it is no longer fashionable. This does not, however prevent the hunters from continuing to kill these animals under conditions which are shaming to humanity and make us blush. I shall therefore defend here, as the three million letters asked us to do, the lives of the baby seals and I denounce above all the way in which all seals are killed — pups and adults alike — a particularly cruel and bloody method which is degrading to humanity.

Although I have used up nearly all my time I should just like, as a newcomer to this House, to say one or two things I probably ought not to — as is my wont.

I was surprised to hear Mr Berkhouwer saying just now that it had not been possible to find the signatures required to get an emergency debate on the prevention of world hunger only three days ago. I should just like to point out that we are fighting with three million people behind us, and I hope that we shall have these three million people behind us when we are concerned with saving, in the name of the environment and ecology, an equally interesting species — the endangered human child.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Beyer de Ryke.

Mr Beyer De Ryke. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it would be politically irresponsible to

Ryke

ignore such a wave of emotion as that inspired by the slaughter of the baby seals, but it would also be humanly irresponsible — and this in my view, is even more important.

Those striving to ban the hunt have certainly conducted a well-organized, coordinated and highly financed campaign and I would add that I fully support the comments just made by Alain Bombard in hoping that 'Objective survival 82' for 5 million humans will gather an equal momentum — I hope so too and wish it heartily.

But when one receives letters from people in all walks of life and of all ages who have taken the trouble to write in this high speed age in which people scarcely write letters any more, then we must pay attention to the collective conscience which such a movement reflects.

If such indignation springs from the conscience, the cruelty of the hunt is the cause. And suddenly, having said the word 'hunt' it somehow strikes me as inappropriate. Hunting and hunters have their ethics and these are known to forbid the killing of young animals. It will no doubt be said that the hunters take to the ice-pack for economic reasons, and some of them no doubt do, but might their number not also include some Sunday hunters? Might there not also be those who practice a sort of pagan 'Rite of Spring' which has nothing to do with Stravinsky or Bejart?

It is said that these ghoulish acts among the icebergs, these funeral pavans on the ice-pack, are a source of income for Canadians, who are obliged to spend an equal amount if not more in an unsuccessful attempt to repair the damage done to the country's world image. Might there not also be some political motive behind the obstinacy of the Canadian Government? Is it not more concerned with preserving political equilibrium in the Confederation rather than the ecological balance? The secession of Newfoundland, even though pointless, would increase tension within the community. I think we should help Canadians to face this fact; I am not trying to bully them but I should like to help them to find other solutions. The idea put forward by the Franz Weber Foundation for drawing up and financing a plan for retraining baby-seal hunters by setting up in particular workshops for the production of fur-fabric seals seems interesting; even if this is not the ideal solution, it is at least a practical gesture and may form the basis for a solution.

The organization of cruises, tourism based on hunting — but this time on baby seal photograph hunting — might also be possible. Let us, in a nutshell, be imaginative rather than cruel and let that dictate our behaviour and our voting.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Kirk.

Mr Kirk. — *(DA)* Mr President, in the report under discussion here today, we call on the Commission to impose a ban on the import of sealskin to the Community. However, I should like to put forward a number of viewpoints which the Commission might also take into account in its deliberations since there are many omissions in the report, which I do not think by any means covers all the aspects of the problem facing us. I strongly hope, therefore, that the Commission will take note of some of the figures I should like to quote.

It is a fact that the seal hunting which we are discussing is something which has existed for several hundred years and it is also a fact that seal hunting is carried out under the control of the competent authorities, i.e. the Canadian Government. Furthermore, it is a fact that quotas have been fixed with a view to avoiding wiping out the seal population. These are all known facts and it must therefore be admitted that the authorities involved are attempting to avoid harm being done to the seal population. In addition, it is a fact that the current world seal population — the harp seal, the monk seal and the hooded seal — numbers some 4.3 million and this number is increasing. The seal population in Barents Sea alone has increased by 7% per annum in recent years and the population in the North-West Atlantic increases by 2 to 3% every single year. Thus, we are not talking about hunting endangered species.

Another fact, which I should like to bring to your attention is that we humans are in fact in competition with seals for the fish resources. Every seal consumes one and a half tonnes of fish per year, and with a population of 4.3 million, which is increasing, this means that the seal population accounts for 6.5 million tonnes of fish every year in the North Atlantic and Barents Sea. This is more fish than the Community has. Thus, in a world where people are hungry for fish protein, we have a population which removes 6.5 million tonnes of fish from the sea every year. If we follow the recommendations of this report and this results in a ban on seal hunting in Canada, the seal population will grow to 10 million in the space of a very few years, which would then account for 15 million tonnes of fish per year. I should therefore like to put the following question to Parliament and the Commission. Is this a responsible course of action from the point of view of conservation policy? Is it a responsible act on our part, in the light of the situation, to simply decide to put such a burden on the fish stocks while there is hunger in the world and we have a political task to guarantee food supplies for the developing countries?

Finally, it also struck me that 18 months ago when we discussed another report, also by Mrs Maij-Weggen, recommending the Member States to make abortion freely available, it was the same majority as we can see here today which was in favour of this, i.e. in favour of killing unborn children. Now they are objecting to what is going on on the Canadian ice.

President. — I call Mrs Maij-Weggen to make a personal statement.

Mrs Maij-Weggen. — (NL) Mr President, I should like to point out to the honourable Member that I have never tabled a motion for a resolution on abortion. I do not know what he is referring to as no resolution has been tabled on that subject in this Parliament.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) The Commission has heard with the greatest interest the excellent report and Mrs Maij-Weggen's introductory speech on Community trade in seal products. Mrs Maij-Weggen deserves the special thanks of the Commission and I should also like to thank people for the many contributions to this discussion.

We are concerned here with a complex subject and the information on its various aspects is therefore not always complete and to some extent is even contradictory. I should like to refer to Mr Kirk's comments showing that the annual amount of fish consumed by a seal is according to our information 1½ tonnes and not 6½ tonnes; this is just an example of the divergent and even sometimes tendentious information.

Mrs Maij-Weggen has nevertheless managed to give a broad and thorough overview of the main questions which the European Parliament has, as everyone knows, been considering in depth in committee since Mr Johnson's resolution in 1980. The Commission is fully aware of the significance of this new Parliamentary initiative on nature conservation.

In view of the growing opposition from major population groups, and in particular of youth groups against the slaughter of seals — especially young seals only a few days or even hours after their birth and indeed often in front of the mother seal — this report has political import over and above considerations of nature and the environment.

I should like therefore to state quite clearly that no one, not even the Commission, can ignore the condemnation by the European press of this brutal hunting practice. There are several questions bound up with this vociferous protest on a European scale against the killing of young seals — e.g. on the position as regards seal population and seal species, on the trade consequences of the measures required, on the distinction between the commercial hunting of young seals on the one hand and the seal hunt within the context of the subsistence economy of the indigenous population groups in Greenland and Canada on the other. And finally there is the question — arising directly from a suggestion made by Mr Muntingh, whose letter I have already answered and shall not

therefore dwell upon here — on internal Community measures, in particular as regards Greece for the protection of monk seals.

Before I deal further with this question, I should like at this point to urge the Canadian Government and all competent authorities in Canada to take the necessary steps to put an end as quickly as possible to the brutal hunting of young seals.

(Applause)

The question is also one of the human countenance of the world in which we wish to live. There are still no established scientific principles for the preservation of seal species.

Scientists are rather divided. The work of an objective body already in existence should therefore be intensified in order to produce reliable data on the total seal population, migration, details of behaviour, the birth rate and of course also the death rate of seals plus other basic data and further disagreement on methodology and data acquisition should be avoided. The scientific committee of the North-West Atlantic fishing organization which has both European and Canadian members is just such an objective body and it is already investigating harp and hooded seal population levels. It would be desirable if Europeans and Canadians jointly adopted the necessary measures to speed up this scientific work.

In this connection it might be mentioned that as regards paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution that the estimates acknowledged for the harp seal population of the North-Western Atlantic do not — at any rate for the time being — indicate that this species is endangered in the general sense of the word — i.e. threatened with extinction. There is still however the question of whether the present hunting system will allow stocks to increase at the target rates in the long term or whether it will in fact further reduce them. We do not share the conviction of Mr Kirk here who is already working on the basis of a 2% annual increase in the seal population, although we are interested in exchanging information.

There is even greater uncertainty over the current figures for hooded seal reproduction levels. Uncertainty about the conservation of endangered species and press opposition to the type of killing of young animals I have already condemned have led to trade restrictions and import bans. The United States, as already mentioned, has such a ban under the Marine Mammals Protection Act. New Zealand also has a similar regulation and the Swedish Parliament has also recently asked its Government to take similar measures.

Within the European Community the measures range within the Member States from an import ban on baby sealskins in Italy and voluntary restrictions within the

Narjes

fur trade in France to the labelling order in the United Kingdom and trade restrictions for all seal products in the Netherlands. These examples from the Member States show that these actions do prejudice the free movement of goods within the Community. Community actions for the uniform application of the free movement of goods and above all to present a united front to the outside world are therefore essential.

As regards external measures the Commission will now examine all possible trade restrictions for products derived from endangered seal species or young seals.

The Commission is prepared to go as far as is practicable from the point of view of commercial policy. It will in particular make use of all possible courses of action under the EEC/Canada cooperation agreement, but will have to take account of the GATT provisions and not least to check what protective measures and reprisals Canada or other suppliers would be justified in taking should unilateral import barriers be imposed. The Commission will thus also examine the possibility of the banning of European deepsea fishing vessels from Canadian fishing grounds in the eastern Atlantic.

Both the spirit and the letter of the cooperation agreement with Canada and of GATT clearly forbid one-sided measures by one partner. Our first step must and will therefore be to request that negotiations begin immediately. This is not merely shelving the issue, but a necessary consequence of the agreed procedure.

In connection with paragraph 3 of the motion for a resolution, I am able to inform you that the Commission was, when the proposals from the Member States were being coordinated, preparing for the fourth meeting of the conference of parties to the Washington agreement on international trade in endangered species, wild animals and plants, to be held in March 1983. Thus the Commission will have an opportunity of keeping an eye on the figures for all types of seal or at least of implementing Annex II of the agreement which provides that world trade in seal products are to be brought under control and excessive exploitation of such species prevented.

In this connection and in accordance with paragraph 4 of the resolution, the Commission will not only examine but will also advocate possible Community measures for seals in conjunction with the draft directive on the implementation of this agreement in the Community.

I might, at this point, mention again what we are obliged to Mrs Maij-Weggen for stressing — that the indigenous population of the polar area must not be hindered in their traditional seal hunt. The Commission has already begun, on the basis of those suggestions, to make contact with the population groups of Greenland and now also with a delegation represented

here from the Canadian North-West Territories in order to guarantee, in agreement with them, that the traditionally accepted use of the seal stocks will not be hindered by Community measures.

As regards the Mediterranean monk seal mentioned in paragraph 5, it is clear that this is one of the most endangered species of mammal in Europe and that our measures are coming almost too late. We associate ourselves fully with what has been said on this matter by various speakers. Conservation measures are clearly not sufficient and we shall have to rely on the creation of seal reserves and strict application of the protective measures prescribed by law.

The Commission is ready to play an active part in elaborating such measures — that is we have already made contact with the Greek authorities following Mr Muntingh's suggestion. Thus we heard first of all that the Greek Government had plans for two monk seal reserves — one in northern Sporaden and the other on the north coast of Samos. Additional areas in Greece are currently being examined. A programme was implemented in collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the World Wildlife Fund in order to make the local population more aware of these problems. Furthermore, seal stocks in those areas were investigated. The Commission has already promised the relevant authorities every possible support for the continuation and intensification of the monk seal conservation programme.

Finally, as regards paragraph 8 of the motion for a resolution, I can assure this House that the Commission will continue with its present policy in the field of conservation of the entire marine environment and take any steps necessary. I hope that this debate has constituted a turning point in world seal conservation policy.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed.

The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

12. Community education programme

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-845/81), drawn up by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on a Community programme in the field of education.

The debate will also include the following oral question (Doc. 1-1099/81) to the Commission by Mr

President

Schwencke on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport:

Subject: Recognition of diplomas and certificates

The Commission is obliged pursuant to the preamble of the EEC Treaty, to 'lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe' and 'to ensure the economic and social progress' of the Member States of the Community 'by common action'. Under Article 57 of the EEC Treaty it must present proposals to the Council, 'which shall, . . . acting unanimously during the first stage and by a qualified majority thereafter, issue directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications.'

Unfortunately, the Commission has not taken adequate steps to fulfil this obligation in spite of the European Parliament's numerous enjoiners (Doc. 43/74). Twenty-five years after the EEC Treaty was signed there is little mutual recognition of diplomas and degrees on the part of the Member States and neither freedom of establishment nor freedom to provide services (Articles 48 and 49 of the EEC Treaty) has been implemented fully.

1. What proposals has the Commission put forward for directives on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications and what factors or which Member States' governments were responsible for their failure?
2. What directives (pursuant to Article 57 of the EEC Treaty) are in force in the Community and have they had any appreciable effect in helping people to 'take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons', particularly in the case of the 'medical and allied and pharmaceutical professions' (Article 57 (3))?
3. What does the Commission intend to do, and within what timescale, to fulfil its Treaty commitment in this field including non-academic qualifications?

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, it seems that education policy is not a topic that provokes a 'mass mobilization', or that merits at least as much time as the topic of baby seals. Let us hope that the lack of response to the crisis of young people does not result in a new 1968 for Europe, a new, bitter and dangerous gap between the generations, perhaps less easily 'manageable' than the previous one.

Inside this house and outside it reminders of unemployment among young people and women, of regional disequilibria and European backwardness, of the situation of migrant workers and the social crisis on our continent are very frequent occurrences.

With each day that goes by we are more aware that the answer to the challenges of the present and of the future, the power to 'govern' modern society, which requires innovations, flexibility, responsibility, a new

inflection to the very processes of active social integration, can arise neither from pragmatic adjustments of the way we 'govern', nor from the automatic effects of the economic system — which, moreover, seems completely out of control — nor from the recurrent illusion of political revolution restricted to the national stage.

'Managing' the transformation which we are called upon to carry out requires from us, the political classes of the West, a converging plurality of approaches if we are to avoid being swept away by it.

It would be difficult for anyone to deny in the abstract that, amongst these many approaches, the approach based upon education policy is destined to become, more and more, one of the cardinal instruments for 'managing' the transformations. It would be just as difficult to deny, after so much analysis and research, both official and unofficial, international and national, that the very structure of the educational systems we have inherited from the nineteenth century has been called into question by the growing importance of life-long education, by sandwich courses, by critical examination of the learning process, by the need for an educational system that will take account of the growing importance of professional, social and geographical mobility and of the difficulties inherent in the transition to adult life.

Awareness of the growing link between the political role of Europe, the renewal of the movement towards economic integration, and cultural policy has now dawned even at the Council of Ministers, in the form of the Genscher-Colombo Document. As a sign of the goodwill — though still vague and ill defined — that this Document represents, Parliament must react with a body of proposals and initiatives designed to put the Council of Ministers in a situation where it is obliged to respond with concrete actions to the many expressions of goodwill.

It seems — and I should like to take advantage of this occasion, even if the topic is not strictly related to what we are talking about — that the coming meeting of the European Council has on its agenda the signing of an agreement to set up a cultural foundation. Parliament, however, should not permit the setting up of a foundation which is dependent for funding on the Community budget with articles of association that are completely inter-governmental, in other words a foundation that does not resemble an institution of the Community intended to promote a common cultural policy, but which almost looks like an instrument designed to keep this policy out of the Community.

The report which I have the honour of submitting to Parliament today and which was approved by the Committee on Youth and Culture with only one dissenting vote is being submitted at the right moment to open a dialogue with the Council and to make a contribution, even an institutional contribution, to our debate.

Gaiotti

This report, and the motion for a resolution that goes with it, Mr President, have been called ambitious and Utopian by some people. In fact, however, anyone who has read the report knows that, as far as its concrete proposals are concerned, it confines itself almost completely to repeating faithfully what had already been said in the Council of Ministers' resolution of 1976, repeating one or two further headings which have already been broached by the Commission's proposals and the Council's decisions on new technologies sandwich courses, the effects of demographic changes etc.

Emphasis is given with particular attention and particular force to those headings in the resolution concerning the problem of the transition from school to working life — which, in our opinion, is of central importance — linguistic education, the education of immigrants' children, equality, and opportunities for women etc.

It is hard to see how a vote by this Parliament which confines itself to calling upon the Council to carry out what it decided to do six years ago could be called ambitious and excessive. However, if this report is ambitious, it is ambitious at a different level: in its claim to deal fundamentally, once and for all, with the reasons for the delays and hesitations, the recurrent uncertainties and the equivocations which have accompanied the Community education programme, to base it on that legal and political foundation which was already evident in the 1976 resolutions, so as to protect it once and for all, from the restrictive challenges and interpretations which have threatened it so far ...

(The President urged the speaker to conclude)

Thank you, Mr President, you and the baby seals.

I must say that I did think that a report of this kind did at least deserve ten minutes of Parliament's time. I shall attempt to confine myself to the five extra minutes that have been granted me.

Parliament must rigorously build the foundations of this policy and make its own contribution to turning it into a consistent whole.

Which foundation?

No-one is attempting to take education policy away from national responsibilities. Awareness of the diversity of our scholastic traditions and their positive historico-political value goes hand-in-hand with reasoned criticism of centralistic models. What we are asking, fundamentally, is that educational policy should be based on the model of political cooperation as an institutional model, and not as a form of cooperation entrusted to the changeable goodwill of the Member States but as an organized form of cooperation subsidiary to the exercise of the appropriate

powers, in accordance with the Commission's document of 1975.

(Applause)

President. — I call Mr Schwencke.

Mr Schwencke. — *(DE)* Mr President, I am not speaking on behalf of the Socialist Group but in order to present an oral question by the Committee on Youth and Culture. I should like this to be made clear.

IN THE CHAIR: MR KLEPSCH

Vice-President

President. — Mr Schwencke, there is an agreement between the political groups to the effect that when oral questions are put the speaking time taken up by the question is subtracted from the total speaking time allotted to the group in question.

Mr Schwencke. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should not like to begin my explanation of the reasons for this oral question without thanking my colleague Mrs Gaiotti de Biase for her extremely important report on education policy.

Mr President, not a day goes by in the Europe of the Ten without the freedom of movement guaranteed to our citizens being infringed, in that somewhere, someone is in fact not being allowed to pursue his occupation without hindrance. That is a European scandal, to put it mildly. Today, on the eve, as it were, of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Rome Treaties, we are only just beginning to guarantee the right of establishment and the right to provide services which are enshrined in these Treaties.

This non-compliance with the requirements of the Treaties has been reflected recently in the questions that have been asked in this House by other Members: complaints, questions and petitions on the recognition, or actual non-recognition, of university degrees and non-academic diplomas. The range of examples goes from the non-recognition of a veterinary surgeon's professional qualifications in Belgium to the difficulty experienced by a self-employed hairdresser in setting up in another Member State. In other words: we are so far from the desired aim that not even a teacher of problem children or a social worker meets with official acknowledgement in respect of his work with his fellow countrymen in another Member State where they are working.

Schwencke

The Treaties are quite unambiguous on this point. They oblige the Commission and the Council to prepare and enact appropriate directives. In the oral question which I have to present here on behalf of the Committee on Youth and Culture I quote, as an introduction to the three questions, the preamble to the Treaty, which expressly obliges the Council

‘to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe’ and ‘to ensure the economic and social progress of their countries by common action’.

How much unhappiness have young persons who are starting out in their first jobs been caused by the non-enactment of appropriate directives! In this respect both the Council and the Commission deserve serious rebuke. The EEC Treaty states specifically — in Article 57, paragraph 1 — that directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, examination certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications must be issued. In other words, the question of mutual recognition clearly covers not only academic qualifications but also certificates awarded to persons who have completed courses of professional training, so-called *normal* professional qualifications.

The purpose of this oral question is to call upon the Council and the Commission to acknowledge this sin of omission which they have committed in particular — to emphasize it once more — against young people, and at last to fulfil better the tasks which the Treaties impose upon them.

The Commission, which will answer this question today, as the Council will certainly do next month, has demonstrably failed altogether to give some momentum to this question of mutual recognition. I see no reason for, and in particular no sense in, passing the buck to yet another official body, either to the Council or even to Parliament. The Commission's grave shortcomings are evident, since otherwise the outlook for young people in the universities in Europe would not be so black.

There is ample proof that the European Parliament itself has always been a motive force in this field of education policy. I am thinking, amongst other things, of the urgent report by Mr Hougardy, which was drafted as long ago as 1974 and was approved by Parliament with a large majority. In this report the Council and the Commission are called upon finally to comply with the requirements of Article 57 of the Treaties. In the last eight years little, all too little, has been done. I should have been happy if an urgent oral question by the directly elected European Parliament had not proved necessary. But I believe that it is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the excellent report prepared for us by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase to draw attention here today to this lacuna in the Commission's education policy.

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

Mr Hahn. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Group of the European People's Party thanks Mrs Gaiotti de Biase for her full and comprehensive report. It sets out a lot of original and laudable ideas, but it is also distinguished by profound knowledge of the matter at hand. The twofold aim of this report is wholeheartedly supported by the Group of the European People's Party.

The Institutions of the European Community are reminded in this report of the need for a common education programme. This situation has arisen because of insufficient commitment, itself the result of a misunderstanding of the importance of education policy for the European Community, but also of an excessively narrow interpretation of the Treaties of Rome. There is also, however, a failure to put the declared intentions of the Council and Commission into practice, and here I am referring to the remarks Mr Schwencke has just made on behalf of the Committee for Youth and Culture, which I emphasize once more.

Of course, this view of the matter also involves the European Parliament which, particularly during the discussion of the 1981 budget, significantly reduced the appropriations for the education sector, thereby bringing important activities which were already under way to a halt.

The second aim achieved by the report is the compilation of a list of all the possible and vital activities carried out by the European Community in the field of education. In so doing, the report respects the basic principle of European culture, namely that the individuality of national cultures and cultural trends must remain inviolate. European culture — to quote the oft repeated formula — consists of unity in multiplicity, and that is the way it should remain.

But even if we take account of this, there remain many problems and tasks which must be solved by us jointly. I should like to touch on only one or two of the essential questions, since it is not possible to deal with all the details in this debate. The European Community must abandon its one-sided concentration on economics and agriculture and give to the field of culture and, in particular, education the importance which it unquestionably merits in any modern society, and especially in Europe. Otherwise the European Community is condemned to decay, since the people of Europe will not be able to identify with such a Community. A Community that confines its attention to economics and agriculture is an incomplete structure which is only held together by self-interest. It will only survive as long as the members consider that they stand to gain from it. The spiritual and emotional bond, however, is absent from such a Community.

Hahn

A sense of identification is only possible where people feel that they are united by bonds of common blood or common destiny and can, ultimately, identify with the values of a common culture. This latter is the crucial element for Europe. We have a common history determined by our vast common cultural history, from which the modern world has grown.

But even if we proceed on the basis of a narrow interpretation of the Treaties of Rome, we are forced to admit that a modern competitive economy depends upon the achievement of the research and education sector. If we in Europe fall behind in the intellectual race and become uncreative, we will not be able to withstand the competition from the USA, Japan and other countries.

Europe's greatest capital asset is its educated citizens. These include both scientists and manufacturing workers. And every one of us knows that the productive modern agriculture of Europe is equally dependent on the farmers, who bring to farming the necessary intellectual and educational requirements. I therefore call upon you to support Mrs Gaiotti de Biase's motion for a resolution.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Patterson. — Mr President, the speech we have just heard from Mr Hahn illustrates a paradox which I find it extremely difficult to explain to my constituents. Education is clearly the foundation of our society and our civilization, and yet it is only at the very fringes of the Community. We do have an education committee, and I believe the Education Ministers meet; but when they do meet, it is not within the framework of the Council. Their meetings are purely informal.

This can have fruitful consequences. (I see the Commissioner shaking his head, so I stand corrected; perhaps he will explain.) It does have fruitful consequences: for example, co-operation between the Member States in the way of swapping good practices. And, I can add, cooperation and swapping good practices at the level of local education as well.

Perhaps I could pay tribute to the Commission here, for they do an enormous amount of good work with extremely limited resources. For example, the students handbook which the Commission publishes is of great use to students who wish to follow courses in different Community countries. The tragic thing is that it is so very little known, and something more could be done by way of publicity.

But even the swapping of good practices is really not enough. Mrs Gaiotti's report draws attention to the fact that there is a firm basis in the Treaties for a Community educational policy.

I want to draw attention briefly to four points. First of all, youth unemployment — clearly a major problem through the entire Community. No one could possibly deny that youth unemployment must have a connection with a failure in our educational systems. What is wrong with our education and training systems that so few young people can find jobs straight away? The report talks about a new conception of the relationship between education, vocational training and work. I understand that the Commission has great ideas on this matter, and I look forward to hearing Commissioner Richard outline some of them today.

The second point: the equivalence of qualifications, the subject of the oral question. Some time ago I was rapporteur for the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport on the subject of architectural qualifications, and I discovered to my horror that this Parliament pronounced on that draft directive as long ago as 1968, since when nothing, or practically nothing, has happened. I really do urge the Commission to drive much more strongly, as Mr Schwencke said, for making the European Community work in this particular sector.

Thirdly, language teaching. I have pointed out several times that since Britain joined the European Community, the standard of language teaching in our schools appears to have fallen steadily. We have fewer assistants in our schools than we did beforehand, and this is deplorable. There were Commission proposals on language teaching, and I wonder what has happened to them. Indeed, I wonder what has happened to all those so-called blocked dossiers which arose from the 1976 programme. Has the Commission forgotten about them?

I now end with three more questions. First of all, what has happened with the blocked dossier on the study of Europe and the European Community in schools? What has happened to the Kreyszig Fund, something which this Parliament has voted for on numerous occasions? Finally, what is with Eurydice? We are told that Eurydice is the great project for data on education available to all education authorities, and yet every time we try and find out how to get hold of this data, we are told it is not fully operative. When will it be fully operative, Mr Richard?

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs Pruvot. — (FR) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Liberal Group would first of all like to thank Mrs Gaiotti di Biase for this excellent report which she has presented today on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport.

In my opinion, this report has a significance which far outstrips the limited cultural and educational aspects

Pruvot

of existing Community policies. I have already stated on several occasions in this House that although there is no provision in the Treaty for the organization of a Community education policy, no one today would dispute the need for Community action in this area. The attainment of the European Union will depend largely on the interest and awareness shown by the Community's 50 million or so young persons in future years. The development of such a policy will require close collaboration between the different Community institutions. In my opinion, the success of the Community education programme is vital, not only to the creation of equal job opportunities for young people on the European labour market, but also to the creation of a first generation of truly European citizens.

To this end, we are not calling for the education policies of the Member States to be subjected to a series of Community directives, which could be regarded as a threat to the autonomy of national cultural identities, but rather for closer and more active coordination of education policies at Community level and for the implementation of new Community measures in this sector, in particular as regards the teaching of languages, mutual recognition of diplomas, exchanges between students from different Member States, etc. — in other words, all the projects currently being studied by the Commission's departments. In this respect, although we may wish to reaffirm our belief in the validity of the priorities set out in the education programme adopted by the Council of Ministers, as does Mrs Gaiotti de Biase in her resolution, I also believe that this House, while voting in favour of the motion, should put on record its immense dissatisfaction at the Council's inability to follow up the vast majority of the positions and resolutions which it has adopted in the field of education.

We shall be voting in favour of Amendments Nos 1 and 2 tabled by Mr Estgen, which in our opinion help to clarify certain points in the text. We are aware that the subject covers a very broad field, which no doubt explains the length of the text. To conclude, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to express a wish which, I hope, is yours too: that today's debate, and the motion which we adopt, will encourage our countries' representatives on the Education Council to provide a much needed boost for Community action in the field of education.

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

Mr Bøgh. — (DA) Mr President, it is very odd that Parliament, which cannot manage to get through its more legitimate business, should again be taking time to discuss the education sector which, in spite of all

the quibbling interpretations of the Treaty of Rome is not a Community matter, but a purely national affair.

It should be pointed out that the further we move away from our legal basis, the more vague and imprecise the statements get. I cannot go along with others in congratulating the rapporteur since, as far as I can see, it is probably the most nebulous and disjointed attempt to wangle the Community's way into the education sector that we have so far seen.

Pre-school education and the education of children, adults and older persons are being lumped together under the heading of continuing education, education aimed at developing the character is being mixed up with vocational training and so many justifications are given for all this over-zealous activity that one smells a rat. One minute there is talk of the technological reorganization of society and the next minute the free movement of workers. Then there is unemployment, the errors of youth, including drug abuse, and, last but not least, a plea for Community propaganda in the schools, which is probably what this is really all about.

The realization that it is a good idea to give an assurance that national peculiarities will be respected — having learnt from previous unsuccessful attempts at taking the education sector by storm — does not make the situation any clearer. However, in spite of these assurances, the net result would be Community standardization at the expense of the right of the individual Member States to self-determination.

There is one proposal in all this verbiage, i.e. for the establishment of an Advisory Committee for Education, but this is not gone into. For the rest, it is European ideological bluster, acrimony and irritation at the Council which is thinking twice before committing itself to infringing the Treaties.

It should, I think, be realized, that these attempts to smuggle Community influence on education in through the back door, known as vocational training, is a lost cause. It is impossible and it should be realized that there is by now such public awareness of these tricks that one government at least would not survive the attempts to smuggle Community objectives into the education sector. I am thinking, of course, of the Danish Government.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Viehoff. — (NL) Mr President, I always feel tempted to react to Mr Bøgh but I will restrain myself once more, since if I start there is no knowing where all this will end.

I should like to begin, in connection with this report, by reading out something from a brochure by the Commission on the European Community in education:

Viehoff

The developing European Community is not just about the free movement of goods between the nine member countries. The objectives of the Community as stated in the founding Treaties are to bring together the peoples of Europe and to improve their living and working conditions. Even though the Treaties make few explicit references to education these twin objectives elevate it to a central position in the process of constructing Europe. Bringing together the peoples of Europe implies a greater understanding of the way of life and language of neighbouring countries and also requires the extension of exchange programmes, particularly for young people. The European Treaties give every Community citizen the right to live and work in the country of his or her choice. To make this right effective, a number of linguistic and administrative obstacles need to be removed. Schools receiving the children of migrant workers must also be able to give them a more suitable education. Improving living and working conditions depends on education. Education enables a whole range of socially or personally handicapped groups to gain access to a less unequal and more satisfying social life;

Education is inseparable from employment and vocational retraining policies which have been highlighted for Community action by the founding Treaties. The history of Community cooperation in the educational field started in 1971 with the meeting of Education Ministers from Community countries. In Paris, in 1972, the Nine's leaders gave the fundamental go-ahead by underlining the necessity to develop the Community's social and human aspects. In 1974, the European Commission put forward its first proposals. The Education Ministers of the Nine, agreeing on the need to preserve the originality of educational traditions and policies in each country, stressed the value of developing European cooperation in a certain number of priority sectors.

These included the education of migrant workers and their families and we have seen what came of it — a directive which hardly a single Member State has implemented. The other sectors included:

the education of migrant workers and their families, establishing closer relations between the various educational systems, particularly in higher education, as well as the development of an information and statistical facility at the Community level, the improvement of foreign language teaching and encouraging the mobility of pupils, students and researchers, particularly by removing administrative and social obstacles to free movement and by the mutual recognition of diplomas.

Mr Schwencke has just mentioned this last point and nothing has so far come of this either. The document continues:

Based on this the Nine adopted the first programme of educational cooperation in February 1976 which was complemented in December of the same year by specific initiatives dealing with the transition from school to work — a problem which is becoming increasingly important given the present economic crisis and growing unemployment amongst young people. The implementation of this programme is taking place at the present moment.

This is all well and good, but what happens in practice? As Mr Hahn has already said, the Council deletes

over two million from the education budget for 1981. The negative consequences of this are that the planned extension of education programmes for migrant workers and their children and cooperation in the field of higher education cannot be put into practice. On top of this, the activities approved in principle by the Council of Education Ministers in 1980, i.e. admission policy and mobility in higher education, foreign language teaching, equal opportunities for girls in education and the preparation of girls for working life have been postponed, and since this item has not been reinstated in the budget for 1982, this postponement is likely to go on for some time longer. And as you know, postponement can lead to cancellation, which, we fear, is most likely.

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase's report should not really have been necessary, but this was unfortunately not the case, since it points out many shortcomings which still exist.

Mr President, I should like finally to draw your attention to another passage, this time from a document from the Economic and Social Committee, which states that it will be impossible to achieve the economic and social objectives of the Community unless economic and social policies are accompanied by an appropriate education policy aimed not only at strengthening the Member States from the economic point of view but also at enriching and intensifying the lives of the individual citizen. The future prosperity of the Community, its standard of living and quality of life depend on an imaginative and effective education policy.

Mr President, the Commission and, in particular, the Council, should take this to heart and get away from the attitude, which is still held by a majority, that the Community is only an economic Community. We are afraid that this attitude might turn out to be fatal for the future of the Community. The Community consists of millions of people and they expect to see something — not only fine words and publications but real action. Let us hope that Mrs Gaiotti's report might give the impetus for action of this kind. My Group intends to vote in favour of this report.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) D'66 gives this report its whole-hearted backing. Unfortunately, however, optimism it reflects is not entirely in keeping with the harsh realities of the situation. For example, the political problems which must be overcome before a start can even be made on most of the wishes listed in paragraph 21 are passed over rather lightly and paragraph 12 deplores the fact that the Education Ministers meet so rarely and suggests that Education Councils should be held more frequently. However, meetings were twice cancelled in 1979 and 1980 because certain Member

Eisma

States refused to come to decisions in the Council. For example, certain Member States will not hear of any influence whatsoever on the part of Brussels in the field of language teaching. It is true that the Council — as my colleagues have already mentioned, adopted a resolution on the changeover to vocational training but it failed to reach any decisions in its meetings in 1980 and 1981. In fact, the Council has not managed to produce anything since 1976 because of certain members refusing to agree. Thus, we have no Community education policy and in suggesting that one might come into being, the report reflects an unfortunately unbounded optimism. However, what we do have is cooperation in certain areas and exchange of ideas, and this must naturally be strengthened and extended.

Mr President, the reason for this lack of a policy is that certain Member States do not regard the Commission as competent in the field of education.

This does not apply in the case of vocational training since the competency of the Commission is recognized by all the Member States in this area, since it is considered as coming under social policy. I find it remarkable that this report barely mentions the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of education as the meetings of the Education Ministers in the context of the Council of Europe are not, I think, any less important than the meetings within the context of the Community. Indeed, in this very field of continuing education, and training of the aesthetic awareness etc., the Council of Europe has done a great deal. We in the Community of the Ten should not either let the work of the 21 members of the Council of Europe pass us by or duplicate it. These activities could at least have been mentioned in the resolution of explanatory statement.

We also regard the 17th indent of the preamble, for example, as extremely optimistic. Incidentally, I made it the 17th indent but when are we going to get around to numbering these indents or giving them a letter each?

Unfortunately, we also regard the view that the Treaties provide the legal basis and the necessary political framework as misleading because of its optimism. In the Dutch version, the last phrase of paragraph 17 speaks of greater equivalence between the *'curricula vitae'*. The word *'vitae'* may well be an error of translation, but I cannot see the Member States harmonizing the curricula of comparable educational establishments at this stage.

In the Netherlands, the government is having the greatest difficulty in doing this at national level and the universities are not even competent in this respect.

We also, therefore, unfortunately take a pessimistic view of the possibilities of carrying out, for example, the proposals contained in the second and third indent

of paragraph 21. The same is true in the case of the utopian visions reflected in paragraph 24 regarding the comprehensive system of continuing education, alternation of work and study and flexible training at Community level.

To sum up, Mr President, the ideals set out in the report are excellent and we shall be glad to give them our support, in the hope that all the Member States will play their part in putting them into practice so that our pessimism will be shown to have been unfounded.

President. — I call Mr Pedini.

Mr Pedini. — (*IT*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we must give thanks to Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, who has elevated the cultural level of this issue. The harmonization of educational programmes is a commitment that has occupied the attention of our Parliament since the moment it became an elected Parliament. The justification for this commitment is to be found in the Treaties and, *en passant*, permit me to inform Mr Bøgh that I do not believe that the Danish people, when they elected to join the Community, did so because they wanted entry to a vast super-market; I think they wanted to become part of a community that expects from Denmark that important contribution that Nordic culture can give to European culture.

I must pay tribute to Commissioner Richard and to the Commission for having administered what little has been achieved in the past, even during the 'year of economies', that is, the year when the budget was cut. But once again we are grateful to this Parliament, which made appropriate funds available this year, albeit to a very limited extent and has agreed to give the commitment on education a priority position in our budget. What is more, Mr President, it is clear that it is not possible to guarantee the development of the Community, its ability to deal with the problem of innovation, the new international economic order and the entry of new technologies into the market if we do not also prepare the citizens of Europe to translate these innovations of our age into their equivalents in terms of civilized values.

Addressing myself now, in the short space of time that I have been granted, to the Commission, and in particular to Mr Richard, I should like to ask him whether, amongst the various things specified by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, he feels he can accept that part that concerns the battle against unemployment among young people. And this is why I think that the useful experiments which the Commission is carrying out in the field of pilot programmes on the transition from school to working life are of fundamental importance and must be strengthened.

In the same way I would like to ask you, Mr Richard, to give the appropriate publicity in every university to

Pedini

the good results that are being obtained by the experiments carried out by various universities in the ten Member States of the Community in the field of common university curricula. This is an important experiment, and it is also a contribution to a topic which many people have brought up here: the mutual recognition of diplomas and degrees, which cannot be a purely formal matter but must be the result of a close *rapprochement* between teaching practices in the various Member States.

I give credit to Mrs Gaiotti de Biase for having drawn together the threads of this long debate, that has occupied the attention of our committee: the report highlights the things that are of national responsibility and the things that are the responsibility of the Community and the findings of the report should henceforth be considered basic Community philosophy, which should no longer be questioned.

Turning again to Mr Richard, I should like to ask him whether, amongst the initiatives that are of personal importance to young people — those same young people who might not be satisfied, if they could see the miserly amount of time we give to discussion of these topics in our agenda today — he does not think it possible to launch experiments into, at the least, mutual exchanges of information in the field of Community service, something that concerns all the young people of the Member States of the Community by now. If it is true that they are destined to become citizens of Europe it would be a good idea to launch some experiments in this area involving the *Forum de la Jeunesse* and other services.

We are just on the point, as Mrs Gaiotti de Biase reminded us — and we hope, it will happen, under the effect of the Genscher-Colombo proposals — of inaugurating the European Cultural Foundation. This is an important fact. It would be a good idea if Parliament expressed an opinion on the purpose of this foundation. But I should like to say, Mr Richard, that what we shall be concerned with is not so much the commitment to set up Community institutions in the fields of culture and education, which are certainly very important, but the need to provide a stimulus to existing schools and existing institutions to get them to function with a European outlook and in a European dimension.

So I hope that this foundation will become a secular arm which you, Mr Richard, can use to infuse a European consciousness throughout the educational system of our countries.

President. — I call Miss Brookes.

Miss Brookes. — Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I look forward to the establishment of European cooperation in the field of education as a contribution towards the development of the Community.

I look forward, perhaps, to the setting up of further European educational institutes.

Mr President, let us remember that one of the principles is to ensure the economic and social progress of the people of Europe.

I look for the abolition of obstacles to the free movement of people and to the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications.

There may be reservations about some of the proposals in this report. We may not all approve of a uniform system of secondary education or of a standard record card. We know that inadequate training policies may give rise to serious bottlenecks and an imbalance in mobility. This has already been seen in the field of new technology. But provisions guaranteeing freedom of movement are meaningless if the citizens of the Community find themselves unable, as the result of fundamental differences between their respective educational systems, to adapt easily to the social and work environments of other Community countries. The Community's own cohesion, it has been argued, may depend on the possibility of genuine cultural and educational cooperation and the recognition of common objectives through education. Only one in two hundred Community students in higher education study in a Member State other than their own! It would, of course, like to see more students taking advantages of courses on offer. I think we should strive to make it possible for students to transfer, without loss of acquired rights, from a higher education course in one Member State to a similar course in another, and I think it should be made possible for students to pursue post-graduate studies for people to take up employment or to start self-employment in one Member State with qualifications acquired in another Member State.

Mr President, I reluctantly bow to the chair. I have not quite finished, but I will bow to your order.

President. — I call Mrs Boserup.

Mrs Boserup. — (DA) Mr President, the worn-out old hobby horse of a joint education programme has been brought out again, so once more I have to protest. This is not a gut reaction from a party which is opposed to our membership of the Community, but rather, which is more important, an indication of the legal limits of Danish membership. A common education system in the European Community would be in conflict with our constitution, and this is something of which we take a serious view. The education sector must remain outside the harmonization machinery of the Community and the authors of this resolution know this perfectly well. They have been unable to find a legal basis and have had to make do with gener-

Boserup

alities about convergence and the bombastic verbiage of the preamble, which has nothing to do with a legal basis.

The fact is that one cannot one day beat us about the head with the Treaties and tell us that we must stick to them and the next day say quite blithely that the Treaties are, after all, not a fixed legal tool, but are in a constant state of development. It beats me, however, how printed pages can be in a constant state of development. That is rubbish! If you want education included in Community cooperation, you must draw up an appropriate Annex to the Treaty. Make no mistake about that! My party intends to do whatever it can to avoid this happening in Denmark at any rate.

For the rest, I am not in favour of the small-scale attempts which have been made either. If the Foreign Ministers find a way of meeting, they are perfectly welcome to do so. I wonder, however, what on earth the Commission is doing there, since there is no basis whatsoever in the Treaty for this.

Time and time again, this Assembly tries, by means of the budget, to draw education into its ambit. This is lust for power and in conflict with the Treaties to boot.

However, there is one point on which I can agree with Mrs Gaiotti de Biase. In her explanatory statement she says that expressions such as 'harmonization' and 'convergence' should be avoided since they are likely to offend some people in the Member States. This is perfectly true. We in Denmark, for example, attach great importance to the joint responsibility of parents and teachers for the education of children and we do not want this decentralized structure to be regarded as a sort of technical barrier to trade.

There is no reason to expect me to vote in favour of this here and I am sure no one thought that I would. What I wanted to say was that this is a serious matter and there is no point in attempting to use salami tactics to smuggle in a bit at a time. It may well be that our education system in Denmark is a bad one, but nevertheless we can read, and the people of Denmark have read the Treaty and they know what is legal and what is not.

President. — I call Mrs Nielsen.

Mrs Nielsen. — (DK) Mr President, I should like to draw Parliament's attention to the fact that I am speaking for many Danish citizens when I say that I deeply deplore the fact that Denmark — that is to say, official Denmark — has got itself into an extremely unfortunate situation as regards education policy within the context of community cooperation. It is a culturally and spiritually impoverished nation which is afraid of intercourse with other nations and is opposed

to cooperation — which is natural and necessary, in the cultural and educational field — indeed which prevents other countries from putting into practice decisions which have already been adopted in the Council of Education Ministers.

Those Danes who deliberately impede this cooperation have not understood — or rather refuse to understand — that culture is not an isolated concept. Culture is an integral part of all we are working on and cannot be cut off from the rest and wrapped in cotton wool. History has always shown that culture is constantly under outside influences and that it will always develop. Anyone who tries to deny this is quite simply denying the facts. Obviously, one is at liberty to do this if one lives in a fantasy world. However, those of us who realize that no country can get by on its own and that we are all interdependent, set great store by the enriching influence of the range of different cultures and traditions in Europe, and I should like to stress that we also have great respect for the various cultures and traditions, including naturally, the different languages, which form an important part of our culture.

I should also like, therefore, to put down the rumours which have been put about to the effect that education in the Member States is to be harmonized and standardized. This was never the intention — and during my time as Education Minister I myself took part in Council meetings, so I know very well what I am talking about. The intention is that we should exchange viewpoints and experiences, that we should learn from each other so that we will be able to take over what we wish to apply in our own respective countries — and we decide this for ourselves. We are certainly under no obligation to do anything which would be detrimental to our education systems, but it is quite likely, from a purely objective point of view, that the Danes could also learn something, that we too could get some ideas. I do not think that we in Denmark are the only ones to have found the philosopher's stone. Sensible cooperation is a process of give and take and one of the conditions which must be fulfilled if the people of Europe are to be able to move freely over the borders and settle and work in another Member State, as provided for in the Treaties, is that we should recognize each other's education.

I will not waste any time commenting on what Mr Bøgh had to say, except to say that it was self-explanatory. It was an example of intellectual and cultural parochialism.

I wanted to make these points so that Parliament would at any rate know that there are many people in Denmark who regard cooperation in the field of education policy as an extremely necessary and perfectly natural thing, and we take this view because of the respect we have for the various different cultures and traditions.

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

Mr Israël. — (*FR*) Mr President, I believe this is the first time you have chaired the Assembly, and I should like, on behalf of both myself and my Group, to wish you every success.

Mr President, Mrs Gaiotti De Biase's report contains elements for which we have a great deal of sympathy. She has chosen what seems to us a sensible direction and has attempted to show that when the European Community concerns itself with education it goes a little further than the other European organizations working in this field. As ten countries which have decided to share a common future, it is very important for us to coordinate our efforts much more closely. There is of course the Treaty of Rome, which makes no mention of this subject, but we all know that whatever the Treaty of Rome does not prohibit must be regarded as fair game if we really wish to create a united Europe.

Mrs Gaiotti has avoided a number of extremely important traps. She has shown that the Council of Europe could continue to act in its own way, but that we could go further. She has avoided giving the impression that we are seeking to establish a new European moral order. She has also shown that education at European level should not be considered as a substitute for civic education, which obviously remains the responsibility of the Member States.

Mr President, the report is also of interest to us, perhaps, because of what we feel is an important omission: there is no mention of the teaching of human rights. We think this subject should be an essential element of Mrs Gaiotti's report. We shall of course vote in favour of the report, but we are at present preparing a motion for a resolution, of which I have the honour to be the rapporteur, concerning the teaching of human rights in the European Community, and we believe this will perfectly complement the excellent work of Mrs Gaiotti.

President. — I call Mr Pesmazoglou.

Mr Pesmazoglou. — (*GR*) Mr President, the subject before us this evening is very important for our Community from an economic point of view but above all from a political and cultural point of view. I should like to congratulate most warmly Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and the committee on behalf of which she drew up the report, on this important piece of work. It opens new ways and a new direction for the activity and effectiveness of the Community, and we must be very thorough and positive in dealing with these proposals. I do not agree, Mr President, with the objections raised by certain ladies and gentlemen in the House who feel that a Community education policy may be damaging

to the cultural traditions of our peoples. Cultural tradition, as is stressed in the report by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, is an established fact. We must respect and protect it, but the exchange of experience on educational activities in our countries is something which will enhance our educational policy and will help generally to raise the level of political and economic activity in the Community. Having said this, Mr President, I think that three things are particularly important. The first concerns in fact the setting up perhaps not of an institution but of a single committee responsible for educational policy. The specific task of such a committee would be to protect cultural assets, and furthermore something very specific for which it will have to be responsible is the transfer of cultural tradition to the children of migrant workers who avail themselves of the freedom of establishment within the Community. Young children will have to be able, when they go to schools and universities in other countries, to continue being taught the popular traditions of their own people and to retain their familiarity with them. The second point, which I feel is also important, is the need to ensure that the level of education in all the countries is progressively raised. This means that the European Regional Fund must finance and support educational institutions, especially in those countries where the amount spent on education is very low as a result of their economic weakness. The third point is the need to ensure equality of conditions in the way young people are received and the costs they have to bear when nationals of one country go to another country to be educated.

These three points are, in my view, necessary complements to the general guidelines put forward by the report by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, on which I should like to congratulate her once again.

President. — I call Mr Estgen.

Mr Estgen. — (*FR*) Mr President, I know that I have only a few minutes in which to speak, and I shall endeavour to observe the time limits as strictly from here as I did when I was in the Chair.

I should like to begin by mentioning the exemplary qualities in Mrs Gaiotti's report, and in particular her ideas on the functions fulfilled by the school education system in general. I share her ideas, of course, but I would warn against underestimating the most basic form of education, the education received for better or for worse, within the family. This education can never be replaced nor entirely corrected.

I subscribe to the Community harmonization measures advocated in the report, in particular as regards the mutual recognition of diplomas, access to and harmonization of different training systems, especially in the area of vocational training, and the teaching of new technologies.

Estgen

However, I must warn against any idea of introducing a uniform European education system. A part of Europe's richness resides in the diversity of its education systems, adapted as they are to regional requirements.

I would also stress that, although everything may begin with education, education cannot be held responsible for all personal shortcomings, and I reject the idea that the education systems are to blame for all today's problems — the crisis among young persons, their distrust of institutions, their lack of interest in politics. The causes lie rather in the demolition and disintegration of the essential values of our Judeo-Christian civilization. I have therefore tabled two amendments pointing out that the problem is not one of a general crisis in our education systems but simply of adapting the systems to take account of the problems facing young persons today: unemployment, the changing roles of the sexes, etc.

To conclude, Mr President, I must tell you that I am against the mania for continually modifying educational structures by means of constant, uncoordinated and often premature reforms. What really matter are the contents of the syllabus and the quality of the teaching staff. The greatest enemies of education are inconsistency, improvisation and instability. In a way, it is acting the demagogue to keep insisting unilaterally on the need to guarantee equal opportunities for all through education. It is an illusion. Quite simply, we must eliminate all social and sexual discrimination while continuing to encourage talent, since grey matter will be all that is left to Europe once it has disposed of all its other raw materials. For these reasons I fully support Amendment No 8 tabled by Mr Galland.

I would like to end by putting the following question to the Commission: is it true that the creation of the European Foundation mentioned in the Tindemans report is imminent, and can the Commission tell us how this Foundation will be financed?

President. — I call Mr Kallias.

Mr Kallias. — (GR) Mr President, education provides us with general and specialized knowledge, the skills for life, intellectual pursuits and the ability to appreciate the works of art. At the same time, however, education also enables us to contribute to the creation of a climate of European unity and of deeper mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe, quite apart from the contribution to economic development.

Essentially, there is no contradiction between supranational cooperation on education and recognition of the responsibility of the Member States in those sectors of education which are based on the national culture of each country and on the fund of popular traditions.

Let us not forget that the frontiers of the exact sciences are not just a single country but the entire planet, and that their application extends to the known and even unknown limits of space. Technology has the same content in all countries, and this is also true of the rules determining private and public finances. However, even in those fields in which the content of education is determined by the language, the national culture and traditions, the method of study and teaching and the rules for research are supranational. Finally, let us not forget that, alongside the national cultural resources of each country, there is also the common European heritage.

Apart from the wealth of specific proposals, the excellent report by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase also contains general guidelines which will take on a specific content when we come to take further decisions.

I should like to highlight and stress certain points which are of particular value.

I am referring in particular to the efforts to achieve equality of educational opportunities and of careers for all young people, to the usefulness of learning foreign languages, to the modern need for continuous education with alternating periods of professional employment and study, to the major problem of the education of the children of migrant workers, to the recognition of diplomas, to the need to tackle unemployment among young people with new strategies for basic and vocational training, to the link between democracy and a high level of education and culture, and the deeper mutual knowledge between our peoples which will do so much to promote the political unity of Europe.

There is one thing I feel I must say with regard to the fifteenth recital of the preamble: I do not believe that there is a crisis affecting youth. It is simply that a great many young people are inspired by the psychology of challenging established values. I make this distinction because of the great sensitivity of young people. My own attitude towards the young generation is that I do not criticize them but try to help them both through the content of what I say and the way in which I approach them.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, turning our attention to education at wider Community level as well as at the national level is an expression not so much of noble idealism as of highly positive realism.

IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

President. — I call Mr Bournias.

Mr Bournias. — (GR) Where are the young people in our countries going, and how are we to stop their

Bournias

excesses and the destruction of their spiritual and bodily health other than through education — education which is up to date in its social, cultural and moral aspects? As is quite rightly pointed out in the detailed and valuable report by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, the very cohesion of the Community may depend on the possibility of basic cooperation on education. As Heracles says in one of Euripides' plays: 'Life without education is nothing.' I am not a specialist on educational matters, but allow me to express my belief that, ever since the countries in the zone of European culture — including my own — started moving away from the classics, from humanistic education, and secondary education started giving grammar school pupils only a very small taste of the classical texts, mankind has been moving away from the principles which inspired it. It is perhaps hoping for too much to expect that the Community programme on education, which is the subject of the motion for a resolution, will stop the rot and take education back to its origins. Should this be achieved, however, it will be of enormous benefit to education and society, Mr President, and this should be the aim of the new educational programmes — all that is needed is a modern educationalist and philosopher on the lines of Pestalozzi.

I shall make only three brief comments, Mr President.

The first concerns the resources which will be needed for the implementation of the measures proposed in the report. These must be given priority and be made available in full in both the Community and the national budgets.

Secondly, apart from education, these measures should be extended to include the fight against three dangers — drugs, tobacco and politics, all of which have no place in schools.

My third remark, Mr President, is that innocent schoolchildren throughout the Community should be protected against scenes of horror, terror and violence on television. All these are essential measures, and I hope that we will not limit ourselves to education alone, but will fulfil these social obligations towards young people.

Mr President. — I call Mr Papapietro.

Mr Papapietro. — (*IT*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the tyranny of the time-limit obliges me to make only three rapid remarks.

The first is a word of sincere appreciation for Mrs Gaiotti's articulate and well-documented resolution. As regards the principles on which it is based, this is one of the most important documents that we have discussed in this House. The importance of a common education policy rests on the development of science and technology, which obliges us to adopt such a

policy in connection, also, with the question of production, given the closer and closer link between science and the productive process. In addition, the increasing divergences which the report speaks of, as a consequence of the inevitable changes in the educational systems of the individual Member States, will be the cause, in the end, not only of a 'Dialogue of the deaf' amongst the various educational systems, but will also prevent the setting up of a cultural system of world and continental dimensions, such as is required today by the level of culture and science. And this divorce between what is happening to culture on the one hand and the educational systems and structures, on the other, is doing irreparable damage; the events of May 1968 in Europe were caused, amongst other things, by this divorce.

In the third place, I should like to remind you of the need to see that the right to study is fully respected, not only as a right in itself, but also as an aspect of the right to work. Anyone who denies the need for a common policy on education must inevitably question these essential foundations of Community policy.

This is why we fully support Mrs Gaiotti's report.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Richard, Member of the Commission. — I am grateful to you and indeed to the House for amending the Rules of Procedure somewhat so that I can, in fact, reply to this debate immediately upon the ending of the debate and not, perhaps, in two hours' time. I am so very conscious of the fact that I do not propose to speak about seals.

May I try and deal with the points that have been made directly in the debate as quickly as I can. Mr Patterson raised a number of interesting ones. He asked about the operation of Eurydice. It has completed its first full year of operation. There is no problem in securing access to it, provided that the questions raised relate to the first set of priorities and the fields of coverage of Eurydice.

Mr Eisma raised a question on the Council of Europe. I was very pleased to hear a mention of this work. I would like to stress the important cooperation already taking place between the Commission and the Council of Europe, OECD and UNESCO. Regular meetings are, in fact, being held with the secretariat of the Council of Europe. As a result of that there is no duplication of activity but a growing number of cooperative projects.

Now, Mr President, various people raised specific points. I must say I find it difficult to deal with all the points which have been raised since there has been a comprehensive debate. Let me just conclude by making one specific point to Mr Estgen. He asked

Richard

about the European Foundation. The decision to establish this Foundation will, I believe, be taken this month by the Council of Ministers. Discussions are still in progress within the Council on the method of securing basic financial provision from the Community budget as well as over the relative size of that budget for the first three years of operation.

Mr President, I am also conscious of the fact that I am, in effect, trying to do two things at once: first, to reply to the speech by Mr Schwencke and second, to take up the very important report presented by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase. Let me start off with Mr Schwencke. I have to say to him, and I hope it will be perfectly clear, that the Commission does not share his view that we have not acted speedily enough to facilitate the free movement of professional persons within the Community, particularly with regard to the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence. Could I give Mr Schwencke a brief account of the proposals presented by the Commission and the results achieved so far for the different liberal professions or sectors of activity?

With regard to the first of the three questions he posed: the Council is at present dealing with no less than five proposals from the Commission for directives relating to the recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification. Those proposals relate to architects, engineers, hairdressers, transport assistants and pharmacists. And they were submitted to the Council in 1967, 1969, 1971 and 1975.

With regard to the second question that he raised, which related particularly to the medical and paramedical professions, tangible results in our view have already been achieved. The Council has adopted directives as follows: in 1975 for doctors, in 1977 for nurses in general care, in 1978 for dentists and veterinary surgeons and in 1980 for midwives. And with the exception of restrictions due to nationality and domicile, which have already been lifted since the end of the transitional period in application of Articles 52 and 59 of the Treaty, these directives have facilitated the free movement of the professional persons concerned.

With regard to the last question posed, it is wrong to assume that no progress has been achieved to facilitate mobility within the Community of professional persons for whom the Member States do not require an academic qualification. In effect, a dozen directives of the Council covering, without doubt, 80% of industrial, commercial and craft activities already ensure recognition by the Member States of the experience in vocational training required by the persons concerned within the Community.

I would like to underline finally to Mr Schwencke that the Commission does not regard the present situation as being entirely satisfactory. Obviously not. But I have to confirm that the results obtained do not

entirely measure up to the efforts which we have expended. We will, however, not lessen our activities in favour of free movement of persons, which constitutes one of the basic aims of the Community. But as I said at the outset in answer to Mr Schwencke, I could not accept on behalf of the Commission that the criticisms which he has levelled in his oral question, and indeed in his speech, are justified or indeed well directed.

Could I now turn to the main debate on the report of Mrs Gaiotti de Biase? This has been, I think, an important debate. It is the first time that Parliament has had the opportunity for a full-scale debate on the role of education in our society and on the educational dimension of Community policies. The debate has shown that in this Parliament and right across the political spectrum there is an exceptionally high degree of understanding, sensitivity and commitment to the development of educational cooperation in the Community. I would like to congratulate Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and her committee on having had the imagination to raise these issues in this form today.

Education is not an easily definable area. It relates to the whole process of development of individual attitudes, capacities and behaviour. Any new policy initiative in a democratic society, any one, presupposes a learning process by all those who are to support or participate in that policy. And this debate is of more urgent and topical significance because of the role of education and training and the importance that that has now taken on in the current economic and social situation.

The Community's most important natural resource, as many people have said from time to time, is indeed its people, and as we talk about such things as industrial restructuring or innovation, regional development or job creation, in the end we rely upon our people, the working population and the new generations of people leaving school, to take the initiative and provide the necessary innovative skills for economic development. The Community needs to recognize itself as a learning society and one indeed which is in a continuous process of learning. Education therefore has a vital contribution to make in stimulating creativity and adaptability.

In parallel, it also has a role to play in the achievement of equal opportunities in society, whether we are talking about the design of curricula or examination systems, the allocation of resources for training and continuing education, or the provision of guidance or counselling facilities. For practically every aspect of our education and training systems does influence the relationship between the stronger and the weaker members of our society.

I think that at the moment education and training systems are being called upon to face up to the joint challenges of both social justice and creativity. Responses vary.

Richard

May I make one fundamental point, particularly to some of the Danish Members who have spoken in this debate. The very diversity of education and training systems in the Community produces a wealth of expertise and experience which we should be proud of and which we can all benefit from, and I think that this applies equally to many other areas of policy. But perhaps in no other area have we in the Commission so consistently demonstrated our fundamental commitment, which I now repeat, to respect and build on the separate experiences of Member States. There are some in this debate who, perhaps, seem to ignore this and to deny that Community action in the area of education has been built up on the basis of cooperation, respecting the autonomy of Member States. The resolution could in fact make this point a little more specifically. When it comes to cooperation at Council level, the Assembly should, perhaps, understand that the 1976 resolutions setting up the action programmes provided an open framework for cooperation. In my view, they represent a realistic political basis for promoting closer relations between our educational systems, and I think that is a prerequisite to the development of joint action at Community level.

We really must look a little under the surface, Mr President, not just at the Council resolutions but also at the many points of contact that are developing across national frontiers — amongst teachers, administrators, researchers and others involved in the educational process at local and at regional level. If you take higher education, for example, study visits, the inter-university joint study programme, the activities of Eurydice, the work on mutual recognition of academic diplomas — all these form one coherent whole which now involves many thousands of people. They break down the barriers between Community systems of higher education and enable students and staff to move more freely across national frontiers. Of course it has not been all plain sailing. One Member State had difficulties with the resolution and, indeed, still has. It has not been possible, therefore, to move to a form of commitment on equal treatment as regards, for example, access to higher education. But this in no way diminishes the importance of what has been achieved and what will go on developing, particularly through the joint study programme, which, I hope, will receive a further impetus as a result of the ministerial meeting to be held in May.

Mr President, may I make two further points, as I am conscious that the Assembly is anxious to vote. As regards priorities for the future, I should very much like to welcome Mrs Gaiotti's choice of themes. As regards new technology, this is a clear example of a theme where the issues of education and training are of special significance, yet need to be developed as integral elements of a range of social and economic initiatives. We know that from an education point of view new technology provides both the means of action and a challenge to social and vocational skills. On the basis of the response of the Standing Employ-

ment Committee to its last memorandum, the Commission is now well advanced in finalizing a specific action programme in which education and training initiatives will play a leading part.

Secondly, I want to say a word about young people. As I have already had occasion to explain to this Assembly, the Commission attaches the highest importance to the implications of youth unemployment for Community policy in several areas. I have spoken in the past of the achievement of a social guarantee providing all young people with a combined set of educational, training and work experience opportunities during the period after the end of compulsory schooling and before they come on to the labour market. Our proposals for action in this sphere will be ready by the summer and will, I hope, be submitted to the Council of Ministers towards the end of this year. As far as youth exchanges are concerned, their development, going beyond the young worker's scheme, which has a long history, and the more recent initiatives of the Commission in this area, is also a priority.

Let me in conclusion say how especially important the role of Parliament is for the Commission in identifying the priorities for future lines of education cooperation in the Community. The rich possibilities for cooperation in the educational field, without interfering one scrap with the competence or indeed the diversity of national experience, need to be linked closely with all our efforts to promote better mutual understanding and communication between the peoples of Europe. This should be one of the many foundations rather than just an afterthought to the construction of the European Community.

For these reasons, the Commission welcomes this report and the thrust of this important resolution.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time¹

13. *Votes?*

President. — The next item is the vote on the motions for resolutions on which the debate has been closed.

¹ *Membership of committees:* see minutes.

² The report of proceedings gives only those parts of the vote which gave rise to speeches. For a detailed account of the voting, see minutes.

President

We shall begin with the *motion for a resolution by Mr Welsh and others (Doc. 1-8/82): Multifibre Arrangement*.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now consider the *Maij-Weggen report (Doc. 1-984/81): Community trade in seal products*.¹

(...)

Explanations of vote may now be given.

Mrs Veil. — (FR) Mr President, I do not think I am wrong in saying that this is the first time in two and a half years that so many men and women and children inside and outside Europe have got together to support one of our motions for resolutions. This fact probably annoys some of us but others are delighted, either because they are pleased at the interest shown in the baby seals' cause and at the fact that in these difficult times people are still capable of contributing, even financially, to the survival of endangered species, or else because they are pleased at this opportunity for the European Parliament's voice to be heard.

Speaking personally, I shall be voting for this motion as I think it is a useful and desirable thing to think about protecting nature and conserving species and I also feel that in this respect we are in a particularly good position to do so. But I would like to say I am even more concerned about protecting another species which is even more endangered. I mean the human species.

(Applause)

I want to say a word to all the many people who wrote to us, and who seem to have considerable resources. I want to say to them: We have given our support to your resolution, and now it is your turn to support us in our struggle to combat hunger in the world.

(Applause)

Mr Prag. — Mr President, I am neither an ecofreak, nor an animal freak, just, I hope, an averagely ...

(Laughter and applause)

¹ The rapporteur was:
— in favour of Amendments Nos 4, 11, 16, 18 and 19;
— against Amendments Nos 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 17.

... just, I hope, a normally humane citizen of the European Community. I have studied carefully the overwhelming mass of data with which we have been bombarded on the size of seal herds, species, the dangers of trade agreements and fishing agreements being abrogated, but, in the end, I have drawn my conclusion on three simple points.

First, if seals need to be culled in order to conserve fish, you don't do it by killing seal pups a few days old; you do it, as Mr Johnson says, by culling young fertile females in a humane manner. Second, normal decent human beings are revolted by the idea of seal pups being clubbed to death for commercial gain while their mothers look on helplessly. Third — and this to me is the most barbaric aspect of all — there is the method of slaughter. It is revolting and repulsive, it is degrading and dehumanizing. Yet, we in the European Community make this brutality profitable to its perpetrators by importing 70% of the skins. We should have no part in it, and that is why I shall vote for this report and for a total ban on the import of seal into the Community.

Mrs Pruvot. — (FR) Mr President, I should like to follow Mrs Simone Veil's example in urging all those who have devoted themselves to this cause for months to mobilize themselves now — since the baby seals' lives will, I think, be saved — so that every possible effort is made to save the many human beings who die every day all over the world.

Mr Habsburg. — (DE) Mr President, after mature reflection I am unable to make up my mind to vote in favour of this motion, though I am just as unable to decide to reject it. A member of this House who lacks personal knowledge of a matter — and that must without any doubt be the case of more than 90% of those present here today — can only decide an issue where the jobs and the living standards of large numbers of people, not least European fishermen and their families must be weighed against the viewpoints of animal conservationists if he can look at both sides of the question in an objective light.

Objectivity, however, is what is lacking here. We have heard speech against speech, statistic against statistic. Only an objective examination of the issue by genuinely respected scientists could have clarified it. But clarity is lacking, not least in the report we are called upon to approve now. If we want a genuinely harmonious and lasting solution to this problem, we can still make good this patent deficiency even now. It is also regrettable that only too often those who shed tears for newborn baby seals are the very people who have spoken in support of the aborting of human babies!

(Cries)

Habsburg

They ought at least to have shown the same sympathy for tiny, defenceless human beings as they do today for animals!

(Cries)

It is doubtful whether there is really any point in bringing about a fishery war with our Canadian friends by making a big fuss here today, and thereby damaging; the interests of our long suffering fisher folk, before we have exhausted all the opportunities open to us to gain acceptance for our humanitarian wishes, which I approve, through negotiations and in a manner which is acceptable to both sides.

Mr Eisma. — *(NL)* Mr President, I intend to give a somewhat different explanation of vote than the one just given by Mr Habsburg, which I think was very peculiar. We realize that the question of seals is just the tip of the iceberg as regards the maltreatment of animals. We join in the protest against this cruel method of hunting and are also in favour of a ban on imports into the European Community. We therefore intend to vote in favour of the resolution and would like to congratulate the rapporteur and other persons directly involved, such as Mr Johnson, for their initiative. However, as Mr Muntingh has already argued, this should not be the end of European action for the protection of animals.

We have been very much impressed by the many letters which we have received on this subject. It is to be hoped that the people of Europe will retain their interest if this action is followed up with similar operations concerning other species which are maltreated and threatened with extinction nearer to home. The adoption of this resolution will not in itself provide a final solution to the problem of seal hunting and we hope, therefore, that the Commission will soon come up with proposals for an import ban on sealskin and that the Council will take a decision. With this end in view, we intend to vote in favour of the resolution.

Mr Howell. — Mr President, I think I am the only Member present who has been to witness the hunt this year. On Monday this week, I was on the ice outside Nova Scotia in the Gulf of St Lawrence. I went as an impartial observer. I was given every opportunity by the Canadian authorities and I congratulate them for the facilities they provided. I met all the hunters concerned and saw, at first hand, the slaughter. This is not a hunt; under no circumstances can the activities that take place on the ice be called a hunt. It is an industry involving ships, aircraft, helicopters.

In no way is there any skill attached to the hunting of this animal.

Having tried my best to ascertain all the available facts and recognizing the difficulties that the local fish-

erman will endure, I have come down on the side of banning imports. I have done so after a great deal of trouble and energy, taking in all the facts at my disposal, in order to come to the right conclusion. I hope that people here will understand the searching I have gone through to come to this decision and will join me in voting for this motion.

(Applause)

Mr Cottrell. — Mr President, I shall vote with enthusiasm for a ban on seal products coming into the Community, but I cannot let my enthusiasm pass without comment. The debate is important in one other respect at least, namely, the new-found affection on the part of some members of this House — whose previous enthusiasm for the Community has not especially been noted — for being photographed sitting on top of the petitions at the top of the stairs. We welcome the conversion to our cause. In the case of Mr Barry Seal, of course, it was not entirely an act of self-preservation.

(Laughter)

Mr Marshall. — Mr President, it is impossible to compete with such a final line, but there is no doubt that this issue has captured the imagination of the people of Europe in a way nothing has done since direct elections. In my own small constituency I have received petitions with over one thousand signatures, as well as many hundreds of letters. There is no doubt that the people of Europe find the cruelty involved in the annual seal-cull quite intolerable. There is an article today in the Daily Mail, which is a moderate and normally unemotional paper. This article says: 'When you hear these four-day old pups cry like human beings as they wriggle defencelessly on the ice in those beautiful fur coats, a terrible sick anger wrenches your guts when a muscular sealer brings a heavy club down between those trusting brown eyes.' It goes on to refer to 'those welling eyes from a mother whose baby had just been slaughtered in front of her'. No-one in this chamber can surely support a continuation of this obscene activity. As far as jobs are concerned, some activities are so repugnant to decent people that they should not be allowed to continue. In my view, the annual seal-cull is one of those abhorrent activities.

(Applause)

Mr Hord. — Mr President, I am one of those who has yet to be convinced that the way forward is not to cull the adult female seals. We have already heard sufficient about this being an industry and not a hunt. But I want to exhort the Commission and the Council to pursue the message proclaimed here on behalf of millions of people — possibly the largest manifestation

Hord

of public opinion which the European Parliament has received. All the good work that has been done here will come to nought if we do not have the support of the Commission and the Council.

Mr Seligman. — I respect the emotional sincerity of all those who wrote to me in my constituency. The method of slaughter is quite unacceptable and I therefore accept 99% of this report. But paragraph 1 is too extreme. The amendment to give the Canadian Government the chance to find a more humane way of slaughtering these animals was defeated by this House, and that is not fair to our allies. So I shall vote against the report because a complete ban would damage the livelihood of quite a lot of people.

Mr Seeler. — (DE) Mr President, I shall vote for this report because I approve of its aims. Concern for living creatures, for more humanity in the deeper sense of the word is, in my opinion, also a part of our European cultural heritage, to which this Parliament must feel itself committed. I also expect, however, that all the aspects covered by this report, in particular the interests of the European fishing industry, will be carefully taken into account during the necessary negotiations.

My Hamburg colleague, Mr Blumenfeld, has authorized me to make this statement expressly in his name as well as in my own.

Mr Moreland. — Mr President, I shall not be talking about my constituency. I only wanted to rise on this occasion because I shall be voting against the report. But I do not wish to be misunderstood in voting against. I go along with a number of other speakers, such as Mrs Veil, and the sympathies they put forward. I certainly applaud the speech by the Commission on this subject this afternoon, which I thought was one of the most responsible speeches I have heard on this subject. I hope that Parliament will back the Commission on the actions that it is proposing to take.

Mr Kirk. — (DA) Mr President, I too will be voting against the report, not because I am against more humane methods of seal hunting being introduced on the Canadian ice, but because I believe this report is an expression of an all-or-nothing policy.

Together with other Members of my group, I tabled a number of amendments which concerned one way of having these more humane methods introduced. However, these amendments were rejected, and I think that if we had instead voted in favour of our Amendment No 9 to Article 1 of the report, there might have been a way of putting pressure on the Canadian authorities.

Instead, we are now in a position of saying 'all or nothing', and I do not think the Commission has much of a chance of following up the resolution Parliament wants to approve. That is why I shall be voting against.

Written explanations of vote

Tyrrell. — Never in my years as a MEP have I received so many messages on one issue as I have urging me to vote for a European Community ban on imports of the skins of hooded and harp seals. Letters, of which I have had over five hundred, have come not only from my constituents in Romford, Ilford, Barking and Newham, but from much further afield.

Few of us can fail to be distressed at reports of seal hunting each year, in particular because of word of the apparently inhumane methods of slaughter used. Nevertheless, I lend my support to the ban only after consideration of the repercussions such an act would have on the many thousands whose livelihoods depend to a greater or lesser extent on trade in seal skins.

But the hooded and harp seals are endangered species. As the caretakers of our environment, we have a duty towards future generations to arrest not only the extermination of these seals but also that of other endangered species.

That is why on balance I shall be voting for a ban.

Mrs Van Hemeldonck. — (NL) As a socialist, I am naturally against any form of violence against human beings or animals. As a member of the Committee on the Environment, moreover, I am naturally in favour of all moves to protect endangered fauna and flora everywhere in the world.

I shall nevertheless be abstaining in the vote on this motion for a resolution in protest against two things:

First of all against the scandalous and expensive way in which both supporters and opponents have used the media for publicity.

Then I wish to protest against this Parliament's reluctance to do anything about physical and economic violence and cruelty against human beings. Only yesterday, a request for an urgent debate on hunger in the world was turned down. Subjects such as unemployment, job security and occupational medicine are consistently neglected.

In view of the eleven million unemployed in the EEC, the 5 000 people per year in my country who are victims of serious accidents at work, and the nearly 90 000 people who die of some occupational illness or other, I shall be abstaining.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We shall now consider the *Gaiotti de Biase report (Doc. 1-845/81): Community education programme.*

I call Mr Megahy.

Mr Megahy. — Mr President, in reply to the question 'Would you kill a seal', is it in order for a Commission staff member to give the answer 'No, but I would kill B. Seal'?

(*Laughter*)

President. — We shall now proceed to the vote.

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, rapporteur. — (*IT*) Mr President, I wish to inform the House that in the document, in the tenth indent of the preamble in fact, there is an error. There is a reference there to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Gaiotti de Biase and Mr Barbi. The minutes of the committee meeting indicate that this reference should be deleted as the present motion for a resolution does not consider the motion referred to.

(...)

15th indent of the preamble — Amendments Nos 1 and 4

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, rapporteur. — (*IT*) Mr President, I am in favour of Amendment No 1 and of No 4, even though the Italian version of the latter is difficult to understand as a result, I suppose, of the translation.

(...)

Paragraph 1 — Amendment No 6

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, rapporteur. — (*FR*) I do not feel I can speak for the committee in giving my opinion. It is not a matter of education policy but of general Community policy. I shall let the House decide.

(...)

Paragraph 21 — Amendment No 8

Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, rapporteur. — (*FR*) I cannot accept it in this place because it makes no sense in this article. I could accept it after Amendment No 25 if Mr Galland is agreeable.¹

¹ The rapporteur was also:
— in favour of Amendments Nos 2, 5 and 7;
— against Amendment No 3.

President. — It will be entered as a new paragraph 25(a), since Mr Galland and the House agree and subject to the agreement of the rapporteur.

(...)

Explanations of vote may now be given.

Mr Alavanos. — (*GR*) Firstly, Mr President, the proposal for a Community educational programme is outside the scope of the Treaty of Rome, as Mrs Boserup has quite rightly pointed out. Secondly, the so-called Common Educational Policy is nothing but an extension to the educational sector of western European integration, to which our party is opposed. Thirdly, there can be no doubt that it conflicts with the national and sovereign right of the member countries to determine their policy on education, which is a sector of critical importance for their existence. Fourthly, as this report again shows, the need to avoid another 1968 flies in the face of the views held by students and young people on social changes in their countries and in the whole of western Europe. Fifthly, our country has bitter experience of interventions by supranational bodies such as the International Bank and the EEC. For all these reasons, and despite certain isolated, positive elements such as the reciprocal recognition of diplomas, the Communist Party of Greece will be voting against the report.

Mr Petersen. — (*DA*) Mr President, my reason for voting against Mrs Gaiotti de Biase's report is that, in the view of the Danish Social Democrats, general education falls outside the scope of the Treaty of Rome. Making this a Community matter would constitute giving up an aspect of sovereignty to the Community which we have not given up and cannot give up in view of the political situation as it stands in Denmark. The Danish Government, which is a Social Democratic Government, cannot therefore vote in favour of a Community programme in the field of education in the Council of Ministers. The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education etc. should realize this so that if a programme is to be drawn up for limited activities within this sector, this can only be done on an intergovernmental basis. If intergovernmental cooperation is possible between the ten Community countries in the field of foreign policy, i. e. in the form of European Political Cooperation, — which we Danish Social Democrats are very pleased about — it would also be possible in a limited area within the field of education policy, instead of using education policy for purposes of constitutional policy. I must therefore vote against the report.

Mrs Viehoff. — (*NL*) Mr President, there is something I must rectify. In my presentation I said that the whole of my group would be voting in favour. After

Viehoff

Mr Pertersen's speech you will have realized that this is not the case; I therefore call for a roll-call vote, so that we can establish how much importance Parliament actually attaches to this matter.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

14. *Radio and television*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1013/81), drawn up by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on radio and television broadcasting in the Community.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the stimulus for the motion for a resolution promoting a European television broadcasting system came from the spectacular developments in satellite technology. Whereas other continents already transmit a large proportion of television programmes by satellite, this year will mark the first trial satellite television broadcast in Europe. Satellite transmissions cover an area extending far beyond national frontiers.

To take account of these developments, the 1977 World Administrative Radio Conference in Geneva promised each country a five-channel satellite in geostationary orbit 36 000 km above the equator. At the same time, however, it made the technically absurd proviso that national satellite transmissions should be limited to the relevant national frontiers. At all events the new technology will bring about a fundamental change in the European media system, with each country being able to receive a large number of programmes from other countries. No wonder the media experts are looking so closely into the technical possibilities and their applications. In addition to plans for commercial use, there is also the idea of a European television channel. This idea has been taken up with special interest by the European Broadcasting Union, which in 1981 alone devoted four international conferences to the question of a European television channel and which intends to begin trial broadcasts of a European channel via the OTS satellite in May of this year.

It was therefore the media experts who made us aware that satellite television offers an opportunity which, in the interests of European unification, we cannot afford to miss. When we speak today of a crisis in European unity, the crisis has less to do with economic and social problems than with the decline of a European identity among the public.

Do the citizens of Europe want European unification? This is a question we must ask ourselves! European

unification will only be achieved if Europeans want it. However, they can only want it if they are adequately informed, since political judgments are based on media reporting. The citizens of Europe are poorly informed about Europe — naturally, this criticism is not levelled at the journalists accredited here, who have enough problems with their national media.

Even the work of the European Parliament goes mainly unreported to the public. Only when we have broken down the wall of silence and the public become aware of Europe through the media will European unification be achieved, for in our modern democratic society what does not appear in the media does not exist. What is at stake here is the future of European unity, so the European Community must play its full part in the reorganization of the media.

As a result of the intensive negotiations which I, as rapporteur, have conducted in the one and a half years since the introduction of the motion for a resolution, there has been a major change in thinking. Instead of the independent European television broadcasting originally envisaged, we now advocate a European television channel operating to the design of the European Broadcasting Union and the national television broadcasting companies, transmitting the same picture to all the Member States of the European Community simultaneously (in addition to the national broadcasts) via one or more satellites, but using the respective national languages.

However, before the European Parliament can take a final decision many difficult problems need to be clarified. The Commission has therefore been asked to submit a detailed report on the media to the European Parliament within six months.

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission should be closely involved in the discussions and preparations for a European television channel. They should agree now as a matter of principle to make the fifth channels of their future satellites available for the European channel. The transmission of such a channel in the Member States naturally raises problems, which need to be resolved at European level. The most important, in my view, concern the protection of young people, the protection of authors' rights and advertising. For this reason, the Commission has been asked to submit to the European Parliament draft outline rules on European radio and television broadcasting. In addition, since many Member States are at present preparing legislation concerning the media, while at the same time their media will inevitably be penetrating into other national territories, such outline rules will be essential to avoid media conflicts between the Member States. At this point I should briefly answer a few questions: what I am proposing in my report is not an official channel, to be controlled and transmitted by the Commission or the European Parliament, but rather an independent editorial unit, which can best be achieved within the

Hahn

framework of the existing European Broadcasting Union by cooperation between the relevant television broadcasting companies and the European Community. Naturally there will be a need for a Statute defining the role and the terms of reference of this independent editorial unit, although the central editorial department must remain free to direct the channel as it wants within its terms of reference. There can be no question of simply transmitting programmes about the European Community or reports from the European Parliament. The European television channel should be a comprehensive channel, incorporating all the elements of the existing national channels, but placing them in a European context.

There is one final question which needs answering. Is an initiative by the European Parliament and the European Community for the creation of a European television channel really necessary if the European Broadcasting Union and other media institutions are already planning such channels? If it was simply a question of occasional Eurovision broadcasts, to be shown on national channels only if the national television broadcasting companies so desired, there would be no need for our initiative.

However, if we are talking about a common, regularly transmitted European television channel, to be broadcast alongside existing national channels, then it is necessary to obtain the approval of the States in which the channel will be received.

Even the decision to make a channel available via satellite is a political decision. The politicians must not control the channel, but they must eliminate the political and legal obstacles to the achievement of a European television channel. Without their help the European television channel can never become a reality.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

President. — I call the Political Affairs Committee.

Mr Van Minnen, draftsman of an opinion. — (NL) The question of radio and television in the Community is obviously, with all due respect to the rapporteur, above all a political question, i.e. a question of broadcasting policy or broadcasting market policy. The Community market users trade in brands of 'media' as if this was the same as trade in brands of soap. Total television as total merchandise.

Wise men are increasingly pointing out to us that commerce is bearing right down on us, that the broad-

casting giants really want to do trade with us and if we go a single step further, our Economic and Monetary Committee will become the competent committee as far as this question is concerned. And what we in the Community have never managed to achieve is hanging our heads above the Community! I am referring, of course, to a literally supranational broadcasting system.

Mr President, it can be seen from the Opinion of the Political Affairs Committee that we have no wish to ban commerce or advertising. That would be unrealistic and a very different question than that of launching a satellite. You will see from our report that what we want to do is to maintain a reasonable balance, which is essential in a good newspaper as well as in good broadcasting. It will also be seen from our opinion that we wish to avoid commerce having an influence over the information services and this, I think, will be a central issue over the next few years. If we fail to maintain the independence of information, we will very soon be faced with a situation similar to that in America and I am sure even the most pro-American of us would not want such a thing for themselves and their children, even if it is counterbalanced by the other idea of certain enterprising cable television companies in the Netherlands to bring Russian TV programmes into our homes too — programmes which would obviously be enormously popular with the viewers.

The Political Affairs Committee therefore joins Mr Hahn in asking the European Commission — although, as you know, it is still something of an enigma which of the Commissioners is in fact responsible — nevertheless, we are asking the Commission to submit a report on the media as soon as possible. We also call on the Commission to consider the broadcasting media not simply as merchandise but as an aspect of our common cultural property and it would also be very nice if the Commission would at the same time look seriously into the question of how the money which is so obviously available for satellite TV and, let us not forget, satellite radio, can be used as efficiently as possible for the system as envisaged by the Community. It is vital from this point of view that the Member States as a Community should come to some agreement with a view to seeing what joint approaches should be adopted since if we fail to do this, there is on the one hand the threat of the commercial broadcasting jungle and on the other hand the threat of a system of censorship which is already again being considered in certain quarters, for example, in the Netherlands. This would mean that the authorities could prevent certain programmes reaching the consumer — which is just as disturbing as the idea of one soap opera after another.

Mr President, we in Europe have something to lose. What you in fact tend to get from so-called free-enterprise television is pseudo-information via a sort of electronic tabloid. Programmes via satellite will be

Van Minnen

extremely expensive, we know that, but to try and take refuge in the belief that none of this will actually happen, would be self-deception. We can reasonably expect to see satellites in the next few years and however far they may be sent above the earth we shall nevertheless have to keep our feet firmly on the ground in dealing with them so as to avoid the whole thing becoming trivialized.

The experimental stage of satellite television has already begun and the practical stage may start at any time now. Mr Hahn makes a number of practical recommendations, which the Political Affairs Committee supports — with a number of amendments and refinements, which I also strongly recommend to you. However, we should not jump out of the frying pan into the fire by trying to introduce Community broadcasts. We, as a Community, should provide the best possible facilities to enable independent and competent teams to make European programmes.

What we need is attractive programmes, i.e. as few pictures as possible from our European Parliament and programmes which are not so short-winded and rushed as we are obliged to be here. In brief, programmes which turn the threat of the new satellites into a benefit for the listeners and viewers, and this is something we may well achieve if we keep on our toes.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Schwencke. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Socialist Group thanks Mr Hahn for his important report.

Together with the opinions of Mr Van Minnen of the Political Affairs Committee and Mr Sieglerschmidt of the Legal Affairs Committee we now have for the first time in Parliament a comprehensive paper on media policy. Although we Socialists would have liked to see a more political approach in places, and would have liked some of the recommendations to be more unequivocal, nevertheless we regard the report as the first vital step along a road which must surely lead to a European convention on the media.

That so little progress has been made in this matter is not the fault of the parliamentarians. Both the parliamentarians in our respective countries and international bodies such as UNESCO, the CSCE and in particular the Council of Europe have made numerous statements and specific proposals on questions of media policy.

For example, in 1974 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution prepared by myself on 'The role and management of telecommunications in a democratic society'.

That resolution called for the drafting of a European convention on the media; all these years later there is not the faintest sign of any progress in this direction. The opposition comes from a certain political direction and from economic pressure groups, and I assume that the two are very often identical. Today it is clear that the spectacular advances of the media industry are forcing us to act with undue haste.

The latest recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on cable and satellite television in Europe — the Stoffelen report of September 1981 — also takes up the question of a common European convention. But a convention does not simply fall out of a clear blue sky. It involves careful preparation of the dates and facts and long political arguments over the contents. I have the impression that the European Parliament recognizes this problem and will take up the challenge. Mr Hahn's report is an important first step. I have not yet gained the same impression from the Commission. The fact that we need to ask the Commission so late in the day to produce a report on the media speaks for the lack of real interest shown by the Commission and the Council in this matter.

The request for a report on the media is a key element in the list of demands. We are not asking the Commission merely to prepare facts and dates; what we want are proposals on the legal and political framework for a European media channel. Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I must confess that I am not only excited about this report, but also a little sceptical. I am expecting and hoping that more will come of it than has so far been suggested.

What will the report achieve? It will enable us to define the political and legal structures for a European media channel. Politically speaking — and I think here that the Socialists' expectations go much further than those of any other Group in this House:

1. We do not simply want an additional channel, we want a European channel based on diversity of opinion, a channel not designed for commerce and the media industry but for the citizens of Europe.
2. We believe that such a channel can and must be controlled by a public institution rather than an institution financed solely by advertising, and therefore dependent.

Finally, I feel that the Commission's purely commercial approach deserves sharp criticism. If we are not careful, I fear that this scheme could go the same way as films and books, and that — as Mr Van Minnen has already pointed out — the media could end up being treated as a commercial product rather than a cultural asset. It is essential that we reflect the diversity of European opinion and that we develop a structure, in terms of both contents and policy, which will ensure

Schwencke

that the channel serves the citizens of Europe rather than the interests of outsiders, such as the Americans.

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

Mr Brok. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin by thanking Professor Hahn, firstly for his report, secondly for the initiatives he has undertaken in this area in the past one and a half years, and thirdly for recognizing that technological developments provide a great opportunity for Europe if we use them in the interests of Europe.

Satellite television is coming, and the question is whether we will be in on it or whether it will be left to others. I think it is important that we, as Europeans, should have our own media. One of the reasons why it is so difficult to propagate European ideas, it seems to me, is that we do not have our own autonomous European media, and so all European news in the media is presented from a purely national point of view. A European channel could introduce a new dimension to European unification.

In this connection, however, I would also like to state that I oppose Mr Van Minnen's proposals in so far as the Community would be excluded from the decisions and consultations of the national television companies and would end up playing a passive role. I believe that the European Community should be actively involved in seeking to make full use of the developments in technology, which offer new possibilities in the field of transfrontier information. All the Member States have signed the CSCE Final Act, which provides for the free flow of information across frontiers. We in the European Communities should at least stand by our signatures and make use of the possibilities for the transfrontier dissemination of information, particularly as the television companies are already far ahead of the politicians in many respects and are due to start trial broadcasts this year.

It is often said that we are exposed to the risk of total television, and Mr Van Minnen was correct in drawing attention to this risk. However, if we tackle this question constructively we can ensure that television of the future will be used responsibly and that the risks, for example, the risks to young persons, can be avoided. The European television channel will certainly be a public channel, but the private television stations will also have to be accommodated. There can clearly be no total ban on advertising, but here too there must be certain limits — block advertising or something along similar lines. On the basis of the proposals in the Commission's report on the media, which we have called for as a matter of urgency, we must at least produce sensible outline rules on broadcasting and so clarify the position in these areas. The awaited Hutton

report will also help us in this matter. We need to seize the opportunity offered by the Hahn report, and we hope that rather than dragging its feet the Commission will sense the urgency of the situation and submit a report on the media as soon as possible so that we can quickly achieve the positive results we all want.

IN THE CHAIR: MR VANDEWIELE

Vice-President

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Papapietro. — *(IT)* Mr President, on behalf of the Italian Communists I should like to say that we approve of this motion for a resolution. I do, however, feel that we need to draw a finer distinction between the problems of the Parliament's and the Community's information services, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the more general problem of information raised by the technological development which lies at the root of Mr Hahn's report and which it is our task to comment upon. The technological development in question can radically change the mass media. It raises the question of the relationship between power and information, which contains within itself the seeds of threats to the freedom of information, leading to real restrictions on it. In this debate, therefore, we must reaffirm the principles of freedom and our determination — within the limits of our powers — to make sure that the media never become monopolized by only a few interest groups.

Abundant documentation on this problem already exists for the Parliament and Commission; the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pedini in 1980, the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Schall, the present document, and the European Commission's programme, recently put before one of Parliament's committees by Mr Natali. There is a wealth of material here, but we feel that all the elements do not quite mesh. Now, this debate could have been an opportunity for the meshing of ideas, but this is not happening, because — while the Chamber in which it is held changes — those present, and the protagonists of the debate, remain the same people.

Finally, I should like to voice a statement of protest made to us — and possibly to others as well — by journalists of the European Press Association of Strasbourg and members of the international press corps in Brussels. They have complained to us about some of the statements made in Mr Hahn's report and over which — I feel — they might be somewhat mistaken. However, if it is going to be claimed that journalists do not have a vision of Europe and that they therefore

Papapietro

produce rather negative information about it, it must also be acknowledged that we in Europe do not yet have a European vision, permeating our culture, our mutual awareness and the media too.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mr Beyer de Ryke. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Hahn report is based on an admirable principle: to provide more and better information on European affairs. This is an idea to which we can subscribe, and it is the reason why we shall be voting in favour of the motion, while stressing the need for the Commission to make an in-depth study of the subject and to start up a dialogue with Parliament.

One specific proposal emerges from the Hahn report, namely the proposal to reserve the fifth channel for the transmission of a European channel by agreement with the European Broadcasting Union, the administrative body promoting cooperation and coordination between the national broadcasting companies.

I must confess — and please forgive me for saying so, professor — that I cannot quite see how the project will work in practice; although of course this is certainly no reason for shooting it down.

All the same, certain observations can and must be made, based on the practical experience of those who work or have worked in the field. The report states that journalists do not 'think European', their reporting role being defined too strictly in national or regional terms; hence, according to the report, the predominance of negative reporting.

I sincerely believe that the problem has been badly put. Certain journalists are angry at the terms used, it seems to me with good reason. Certain journalists feel that they are being accused of doing nothing for Europe. We must understand one another! In effect, backing Europe means identifying with a political ideal, and it is not the journalists' job to sing the praises of this ideal. Their job is to relate, to describe and to inform. The technical complexity of the problems makes it difficult, often impossible, to transmit information in the condensed form required for television news programmes, with their strict time limits. In addition — and there is no denying this — the very nature of the European Parliament, and its relatively restricted powers, contrive to reduce the time devoted to it.

The European Parliament and Europe will get coverage if they create news. This is probably an apposite day to say so, for I would be very surprised if our vote on seal pups does not make the front pages tomorrow.

When, on the other hand, we fail to make news, we should not be surprised at being ignored and should not attack those who ignore us.

However, we can and we should support Professor Hahn's desire to provide more and better information without imposing it. It will be enriching for all Europeans to know more about Europe. I said 'without imposing it' and I know from my conversations with Professor Hahn that this is indeed his intention, but I also know how much certain journalists fear that the European institutions simply wish to create their own channel in order to influence opinion. This would amount to distortion rather than information, and I would like to say here and now, as a parliamentarian and a journalist, that it would neither be acceptable nor accepted.

Once again, I have no fears that Professor Hahn, whom I regard as a man of integrity and good intentions, would yield to this temptation.

For this reason we shall support his motion, while inviting the Commission and the Council to give further thought to this complex and difficult subject. I shall perhaps ask the Professor to organize a round table featuring not only the controllers of information but the real professionals, the journalists in the field.

I shall conclude by quoting J. L. Servan-Schreiber, who said of the media that they reflect a barely distorted image of the society of which they are the mirror. Society is never the mirror of television. Television does not therefore make society. Television will be European on the day when Europe truly exists.

President. — I call Mr Estgen.

Mr Estgen. — *(FR)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, we know that we have reached two crucial stages in the development of television technology: orbital television satellites and cable transmission. These two technological revolutions will facilitate more than ever the free circulation of information, an indispensable corollary of the freedom of thought and speech which is the bedrock of any democratic system: this principle of freedom of communication must be paramount, whatever fears there might be about certain advertising abuses or other forms of abuse.

Overspill, i.e. the encroaching of satellite transmissions onto neighbouring territories, the transgressing of national frontiers, may cause problems in some Member States, but should not surprise us Europeans. We should welcome it as a means of Community communication par excellence, particularly since modern techniques will enable all Europeans to see the same images at the same time, but in their own languages.

Estgen

It is easy to see that these new technological possibilities can become a major factor in the policy of European unification, which cannot be achieved without first creating a common European identity.

Until the European institutions acquire their own means of communication they will remain at the mercy of the different Member States and pressure groups, with their self-interest and political subjectivity. This particularly applies to the European Parliament, whose work is often ignored or deliberately caricatured. I am therefore very grateful to Mr Hahn for his initiative and his report.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Natali, Vice-President of the Commission. — (IT) Mr President, the debate we have held and Mr Hahn's report have both emphasized the need to tackle this problem.

It has emerged that — even without the satellites — we would hope for European cooperation in the television sector. The fact that television satellites are soon to become a reality gives the situation today an additional dimension of urgency and danger. We needn't kid ourselves — the lack of a European channel does not mean that our place will not be taken by others. On the contrary, the transnational coverage offered by satellites will be used by others, not just the existing television networks but also multinational groups with commercial interests, who are only too well aware of what is at stake.

We must not adopt a purely defensive attitude, therefore, by trying to keep a tight grip over everything in order to stem our losses (not just in economic terms but also culturally and politically), but must come to grips with reality with a willingness and a vigorous intention to carry out the action that is required. This is the necessary basis for the idea of setting up a European television channel. At this point, I should like to say to Mr Schwencke that I heard his sceptical judgment of our intentions. Personally, I think it would be better to pass such judgment after the event and not before. The Commission is quite prepared to give all the support it can to this idea.

When we talk about a European channel, by that we do not mean one which talks about Europe or which places the emphasis on the Community institutions. We mean a channel which has been conceived and set up to promote Europe's cultural unity, which is the very basis of the Community idea. This channel should therefore be very wide-ranging, providing information, instruction and entertainment. We can concur wholeheartedly with Mr Hahn's report, and I should like to express our appreciation of the work he has carried out, including his speech today.

In his report, Mr Hahn has outlined a line of conduct and has not advocated the setting-up of a new structure from scratch, in his attempts to give some form of legal framework to cooperation which will enable a vital principle to be safeguarded, namely, an absolute guarantee that the professionals who will be responsible for making the programmes must be independent. European television companies will have to be asked to help prepare programmes, since they have the production capacity to do so. A central professional body, which should be both streamlined and flexible, would be responsible for the overall task of transmitting programmes for the European channel. Community representatives would have to participate in laying down the general criteria and principles which programmes ought to follow and to check periodically that these principles are being applied and, indeed, that they are still valid when they are actually applied. Of course, Mr Van Minnen, news programmes ought to be given special attention. Naturally, this is a sector where professional independence must be safeguarded against any influence — national or otherwise — as a matter of fundamental and acute importance.

In his report, Mr Hahn asks the Commission to present a report on the mass media within six months. I should like to make just two points.

In this context, we interpret 'the media' as being only radio and television, and not including the press.

What is more, the six-month time-limit is too short for us to provide an exhaustive and proper response to all the questions raised in paragraph 8 of the motion for a resolution. We will nevertheless do our best, because at the present time, ladies and gentlemen, both the national television networks and the European Broadcasting Union are keeping a close watch on the progress of the European Parliament's initiative.

For a number of years, the Commission departments have placed an abundant collection of archive films at the disposal of Eurovision and the European television networks and have offered ample technical assistance, in terms of both staff and resources, for the presentation of news and for the production of programmes about the Community. In saying this, I think that I have more or less answered paragraph 8 of the motion for a resolution.

I should like to pass on — since it concerns us — a piece of information which I think is of extreme interest. The European Broadcasting Union is already transforming its intentions into a first attempt at carrying out a series of pilot transmissions via the OTS satellite, supervised by a group of five television companies in the United Kingdom, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands and Germany. The Commission was informed about this initiative right from the start and is following its progress with keen interest. We do of course also need practical experiments, and these will be carried out over a five-week period during the year.

Natali

Any problems inherent in televising in this new way should thus be highlighted. There is a whole series of other problems: problems of international law — both public and private, — problems of finance, problems of political cooperation, etc. These problems are all highly complex and we will of course have to work hard at them. Even in the recent past, it has been shown that errors can be traced back to decisions made when insufficient account was taken of the effect of technical developments on the future. Even if there were no initiative on the part of the Community, it is highly likely that these problems would arise. So we might as well tackle them. I need cite only the complexity of the regulations governing an author's rights, conflicts over advertising, and the clash of different national cultures — which my colleague, Mr Narjes, will no doubt refer to shortly. These are all part of our real world today and even more, our world of the future, a world which is being transformed into an electronic global village, as it has been called.

We must be able to visualize these problems and try to initiate the solutions to them.

Mr President, I have just one more point to make with regard to the amendments. Some of them contain outlines of schemes which we must think about carefully. I believe that it is much more useful and worthwhile for our task not to predetermine at this stage the solutions that are required, but to reflect on, and tackle, the relative problems and their solutions after we have submitted our report.

As we thank Mr Hahn once again for his report, and the committee and all those who spoke today, we are quite certain, Mr President, that the European Parliament — which, today and in previous debates, has shown its keen awareness of this subject — will continue to assist us in our tasks and to support us in the choices which will have to be made from time to time.

IN THE CHAIR: MR ESTGEN

Vice-President

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) I have asked to speak because I want to consider one extremely important aspect of the role of television in the building of Europe. In doing so, I risk arousing the wrath of Mr Schwencke, for it is not the case, Mr Schwencke, that we can choose between adopting a cultural or an economic approach to this problem. The powers conferred on us by the three Communities

relate to the approximation of laws and economic matters. It is for the politicians — in fact for this House — to maximize the cultural potential of this project. The Commission can only make any headway in the Council on the basis of the powers conferred on it, i.e. on the basis of Article 100 and the related provisions. As regards the approximation of laws, the creation of a policy for the media is an important issue, since the aim is not only to transmit European channels but also to promote the transfrontier transmission of existing channels. Before this can be achieved it is necessary to remove the obstacles which have impeded or in some cases completely prevented access to television broadcasting and transfrontier transmissions.

I would like to stress that these constitute not only political objectives but also tasks for the Community, on the basis of the Treaty of Rome. The basic European tenets of freedom of association and freedom to provide services within the Community also apply to television broadcasting activities. And insofar as use is made of them, the existing national structures will automatically become looser.

Apart from these two directly applicable principles on the equal treatment of national undertakings of other Member States, Articles 57 and 66 of the EEC Treaty provide for the coordination of national provisions on the taking-up and pursuit of activities as self-employed persons, which clearly also includes television broadcasting activities. In harmonizing the provisions, full account can and must be taken of television's cultural and social functions.

The aim of approximating laws through the directives of the Council of Ministers should be to facilitate the taking-up and pursuit of activities as self-employed persons. There is also a need to create conditions similar to the domestic market for television within the Community, such as already apply in a large degree to the press and its products.

To this end, at point 7 of his motion for a resolution Mr Hahn, on behalf of the Cultural Committee, calls for the drafting of outline rules on European radio and television broadcasting. First, however, the national laws of copyright protection and advertising would need to be harmonized. The transmission of cable television within the Community is already hampered by the existence of different restrictions on advertising in the Member States. The rules therefore need to be harmonized.

The creation of a Community-wide channel is also hampered by the territorial limitation and the national form of copyrights. Any harmonization of copyright law must therefore be designed to simplify the transfrontier use of copyrights, as, for example, with films. This could be achieved through the statutory granting of licences on payment of a fee, or through the involvement of the companies which protect the interests of copyright owners in the individual Member

Narjes

States. Naturally, I am also aware that we shall have to bear in mind problems of public order and the like, including the question of the protection of young persons stressed in Mr Hahn's report.

For this reason, and in accordance with point 1 of the motion for a resolution, the Commission intends to produce a public memorandum this year on the phased creation of a common market in cable and satellite television. Depending on the situation we could also perhaps produce, on the basis of this memorandum, the requested review of policy in relation to the media, provided we have sufficient personnel available.

President. — I call on Mr Penders.

Mr Penders. — (NL) Mr President, what is the most important aspect of Mr Hahn's report? It is not the statement to the effect that the Community should acquire broadcasting rights, nor is it the idea that the European Commission should produce television programmes. That would obviously be ridiculous as they would end up sending everyone to sleep with their propaganda. Just imagine debates of this kind being broadcast live on television. It would be absurd, quite apart from the fundamental objection that in the field of the media the only task of the government, in this case the European government, is to lay down requirements. However, what the Community should do is to develop a European media policy, and this is found in the Hahn report.

For months now all we have been doing is saying that on the basis of the mandate of 30 May Europe must develop another policy in addition to the agricultural, regional, social and industrial policies. Well then, is it not true to say that in highly industrialized societies communications and information, radio and television are extremely important? We should never overlook this fact. Thus, if we want a new European policy we should not forget to develop first and foremost a European media policy. This is not to say that national and regional languages and cultures should take a back seat — by no means, since these are obviously both the roots and the life-blood of our European culture. However, a European media policy is necessary in itself.

A particularly urgent reason for this is the state and development of media technology. The satellite era in particular will have overwhelming consequences and if we do not ourselves fill the present vacuum with a European concept, the vacuum will be filled in some other way, either by commercial broadcasters who make their money from advertising and who will probably broadcast dreadful trivia, or by the national broadcasting authorities withdrawing into protectionist systems. Without going into the question of whether protectionism of this kind could be successful, I nevertheless think that such a policy would be

vulnerable and essentially defensive and for this reason, Mr President, I wholeheartedly support Mr Hahn's report.

President. — I call Mr Van Minnen.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) I should like to make a point of order before we close for the evening, if I may, Mr President, since Mr Natali has given rise to an element of ambiguity which he might be able to clarify immediately. We have called on the Commission to submit a media report within six months but all the Commission has answered is that that is short notice. Obviously, it is short notice if we have not yet started work on it. However, we are assuming that the preparations are already underway and I think this House should be given a specific answer to the question put by Mr Hahn and myself as to whether the Commission thinks there is any chance of meeting our deadline of six months or not. A simple yes or no would help us know where we stand.

President. — That was not a point of order, Mr Van Minnen.

The debate is closed. The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at the next voting time.

(The sitting was closed at 8.05 p.m. and resumed at 9.10 p.m.)¹

IN THE CHAIR: MR NIKOLAOU

Vice-President

15. *Administrative expenditure of Parliament for the financial year 1981*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1069/81) by Mr Konrad Schön, on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control, on the administrative expenditure of the European Parliament for the period 1 January to 31 December 1981 (1981 financial year).

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Konrad Schön, rapporteur. — Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the report which has been submitted to this House is based on Article 74 of the Financial

¹ *Verification of credentials: see Minutes.*

Schön

Regulation, which provides that every institution, that is to say, including Parliament, shall communicate to the Commission each year, by 1 April at the latest, the information required for drawing up the revenue and expenditure accounts and the balance sheet relating to the Community budget. This was the case with this report, and here I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the figures contained in the report which were accepted unanimously by the Committee on Budgetary Control, have not yet been analysed in detail. So this report will initially be a kind of interim representation, an interim report, which will fulfil the requirement of complying with the provisions of the Article I mentioned above.

Nevertheless, permit me, Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, to make one or two political comments in connection with this report. The right to control the budget, the right to control the European Community's revenue and expenditure, belongs to the foremost privileges of this European Parliament. We in the Committee on Budgets — but also in the Committee on Budgetary Control, for which I am acting as rapporteur — take this right of control very seriously, because if we are to provide credible assurances to the taxpayer that it was worth having this Parliament directly elected, we must be particularly rigorous in questions of budgeting control, because here we are talking about the European taxpayers' money. I may say, to start, that we have achieved success in our endeavours. Thanks to the activity of this Committee on Budgetary Control, in cooperation with the Committee on Budgets and the European Court of Auditors, we again achieved significant savings in 1981, and Mr Irma once said of these savings that they were already enough to justify the existence of this Parliament, that is to say, to cover the costs of this Parliament. Nevertheless, our control activities must also be seen to be credible, which means we must also exercise the same control over our own institution when the question is one of the use appropriations are put to, that is, the budgetary behaviour of Parliament itself. Permit me to make a few comments on that. If we, for example, compare Parliament's budget with the Council's budget, as was possible in earlier years, there was evidently also a significant increase in 1981. That was naturally the result of the enlargement of Parliament and the preparations for the accession of Greece to the European Community. All the same, we may say that, apart from certain problematic items in the staff budget, things have at least been guided in the right direction by our control activity. Let me draw your attention to staff costs in particular, because here too our Parliament is not in any way different from other institutions, or from other public institutions in the Member States. In order to control and to limit the rise in staff costs, we have instituted a halt to new recruitment.

Over and above that, a study designed to suggest better and more rational ways of organizing the administration of the Parliament has been commis-

sioned. Here let me express some scepticism: according to the information I have received, the management consultants concerned with this study, which has been submitted in the form of an interim report to members of the political groups, was supposed to have as little contact as possible with Members of Parliament, for reasons that are unknown to me. It will be our task in the Committee on Budgetary Control to look into this question on the basis of this report, because the report is only meant to open the discussion of the budgetary discharge, which is why this is a very important point.

We have also — which constitutes another positive point — adopted internal measures designed to promote better administration of the Community's resources. This must be chalked up without any doubt as a victory for the Committee on Budgetary Control, but we — and I should like to say this also on behalf of my fellow members of the committee — should now I think set about clearly defining the sphere of action and the responsibilities of the bodies within Parliament. Here I should like to make a subsidiary remark, because lack of time prevents me from going into details: our administration is faced with an in-house lawsuit, probably because of delays in the settling of issues to do with buildings, for example in Brussels. These are matters which we in the Committee on Budgetary Control cannot accept in the form in which they are presented. Let me give you another example — again I shall only sketch out the outline of the matter because I cannot go into the details: we should like to establish who was responsible, for example, for the procurement of a television transmitter vehicle. Perhaps you think that these are petty matters, but the credibility of Parliament — which, as part of the budgetary authority, exercises control over the other institutions and which has set up a control committee with appropriate responsibilities, something which other committees in other parliaments envy us — this credibility is at stake when we sit in judgment on our *own* expenditure, on the execution of our budget and the activities of our administrators. I am not trying to say by that that we should also ask whether the administration — noting, we hope, that Members with the legitimacy of direct election are sitting here — has always acted in accordance with the political intentions of Parliament.

Those are things that we must certainly examine, and I think that it will also appropriately strengthen our image in the outside world, because, Mr President, you know as well as I do: nothing is more harmful for us than those partly misleading representations of the cost of this Parliament, of the question of whether it even makes sense to enlarge such an institution or to have it directly elected. Permit me to remind you that, in connection with official travel and with visits of delegations overseas, the press has disseminated very strange and scarcely flattering impressions.

Schön

I was extremely happy that so many people were present during our debate on seals, but what is at stake here is ourselves and our image of ourselves, which is why I appeal to the few Members who are still present and why I am of the opinion that this House should approve this report. We Members of the Committee on Budgetary Control will be starting the detailed control immediately we have the overall figures.

I should just like to remind you of one thing which, of course, my predecessors had to do each time: it is an old refrain in the Committee on Budgets — not just in the Committee on Budgetary Control — that we must be somewhat clearer in the question of estimates. For example, we must note once again for 1981 that the rate of utilization of appropriations corresponds to only 86% of the estimate. I know from my own experience at home in a national parliament that when appropriations are estimated too high there is in every administrative system an almost unconscious tendency to utilize and spend correspondingly. In respect of this matter, therefore, we must discuss, with the help of our control work, how we in the Budget Committee can organize things so as to achieve more budgetary clarity, more clarity of execution and more budgetary accuracy and, above all, strengthened detailed control.

For these reasons, I call upon the Members of this House now present to approve the report of the Committee on Budgetary Control which I have had the honour of presenting to you.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Price. — Mr President, I am sure the House would want to thank Herr Schön for having done a detailed job well. Having been the rapporteur on this subject last year, I know the task that befell him, and I congratulate him on the way that he has done it.

When we look at these accounts, the thing that must strike us most forcibly is that only 86% of the appropriations in the budget were committed and only 77% were actually paid out in the year in question. Now that has led to 14% simply being cancelled. Some people might call that underspending. That is not a phrase that I would use. I call it bad estimating, and I think that the administration and the Bureau of Parliament are responsible and that it has happened repeatedly. It is not just the average degree of error which is unacceptable. Within that average of 23% of payments unused, there are 54 lines where the error was more than the average of 23% in underestimation. There were also six lines in which the original budget figure was exceeded, so the entire pattern of Parliament's budget has quite clearly shown a very high degree of error.

Some of these errors have been on standard items, the kind of thing that a small business would hope to get

right, and certainly we would expect Parliament to be able to do so. For example, water, gas, electricity and heating: 37% unspent. Last year the error was 30%. Cleaning and maintenance — 49% unspent. Last year the error was 51%. Even on a routine item like postage — 27% unspent. Last year the error was 39%.

Now those are items where one can just say 'very poor estimating'. But then one notices information and publicity — 43% unspent at the end of the year and last year 79%. Do we really want the people of Europe to know what we are doing? Do we really want to use appropriations in the information sector?

It really, in my view, Mr President, is simply not good enough. When I had the privilege of presenting this particular report last year, it was on the 1980 financial year, and I felt that there were reasons, in view of the late adoption of the budget, why the administration might then be excused. In respect of 1981 those excuses are far less substantial, while for 1982 it is vital, I believe, that we should improve our procedure to make quite certain that we do not have this kind of error in estimating in future.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Leonardi. — (IT) Mr President, in order to be brief, I need only refer to the speech I made last year on this very subject. Quite simply, we reject the notion of passing these accounts. The important thing is to give a political opinion on the way in which such accounts are passed. People are continuing to bemoan the fact that there is a divergence between the sums estimated and those used. I should like to point out that this discrepancy affects mainly the headings concerning Members of this Parliament.

The truth is that this is not an administrative act with which we are dealing and we therefore cannot talk about shortcomings in the administration, which Mr Price was complaining about just now. The fact is that, when estimates are drawn up, we do not have the nerve to increase appropriations in order to improve matters. Then, when the budget is implemented, we are either unable or too fainthearted to deploy the funds. Direct elections were held more than three years ago now, but the appropriations which could have been used, by means of transfers from chapter 010, for instance, have not been employed to institute minimum common basic terms of employment for these Members, not even for the simple matter of medical care.

The blame is often laid at the door of the Council of Ministers for this shortcoming, but it is in fact Parliament and its managers who are to blame for not being brave enough to face the facts, which would reveal that in this House, where we are all doing the same job, some Members are paid three or four times as

Leonardi

much as others. This situation is scandalous and we must put a stop to it!

We need look no further to discover the reason for our budget's operational failure, and the Council of Ministers has nothing to do with it. These are problems which we can solve ourselves, provided that we have the courage to do so. This Assembly has found itself in this situation for three years now and while it has the nerve to preach common policies at others, it is incapable of instituting a common policy for itself. This state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue and that is why we are pronouncing an adverse political judgment on the budget. As I said before, rather than simply passing the accounts as a matter of routine administration, we prefer to offer a political response.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be held at the next voting time.

16. *Trade in poultrymeat*

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-981/81) by Mr Combe, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-98/81) for a directive amending Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting trade in fresh poultrymeat.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Combe, rapporteur. — (*FR*) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection adopted by a very large majority this report on the proposal for a Council Directive on trade in poultrymeat which we are examining today in plenary sitting. This directive sets 15 August 1986 as the latest date for the total abolition in the Community of the sale of dressed poultry — poultry which has been slaughtered, plucked, bled and stripped only of its intestines and sold with the liver, gizzard, heart and sometimes the neck and head, and I dare say even the feet — in favour of the marketing of eviscerated poultry which has been stripped of all its intestines and offal and marketed in a standardized form, generally wrapped in cellophane, on which are indicated the weight and price.

Our committee protested against this ban and expressed its concern for the maintenance of variety in consumer products within the Community.

We are also concerned about a better quality of life. Of course, large supermarkets and the large slaughter-

houses which have installed freezing systems see the development of production of eviscerated poultry as a possible way of getting rid of competition from small slaughterhouses and poultry butchers; these large supermarkets would like to see dressed poultry disappear altogether.

However, the production and sale of dressed poultry are traditionally higher in some Member States.

This is a most important point, because the word poultry often raises a smile, and I should like to draw your attention to it. This is not a political problem in the accepted sense but it is a question of principle. If, in future, the Members allow themselves to be walked over, there will be standardized produce throughout Europe. We shall no longer have the opportunity to buy non-standardized produce, and no allowance will be made for conscientious farmers who wish to continue marketing quality produce — which in the case of chicken can only be distinguished by keeping the head and feet, otherwise they will all look the same when wrapped. I think it is our responsibility today to defend the consumers and to fight against standardization.

What would become of Europe if we were faced tomorrow with another directive requiring all our sausages to be identical, if we could no longer distinguish between sausages from Toulouse, Strasbourg, or Hamburg. The variety of products is one of the advantages we enjoy in Europe — this is the spice of our lives!

Using hygienic considerations as a pretext, an attempt is being made to make us believe that this standardized chicken is, in fact, better for the consumer. It does not take any special knowledge to understand a chicken stripped of its innards makes it easier for the veterinary officer to look for danger signs, but people must realize that this also facilitates the entry of microbes. Gamekeepers know very well that to preserve chickens they must be kept intact. I consider it our duty to defend all the European producers and I ask you to think about what kind of life we would have if we allowed ourselves to be walked over.

The large slaughterhouses found no method other than stripping the chicken completely of its innards. They made a vain attempt to adopt the manual method used by the farmers or small slaughterhouses. Now, on the pretext of hygiene they are trying to impose this type of standardized chicken on us. That is why our committee rejected this directive and we would hope for the support of the entire Assembly.

Another aspect of the proposal for a Council Directive concerns the cost of health inspections. We fail to understand why the directive proposes that these expenses should be included in the cost of the produce. It is logical for these inspections to be carried out by the public authorities, since they are for

Combe

consumer health protection. What is more, these costs are met by the public authorities in the case of sheep and pig slaughterhouses. There can be no reasonable explanation for a different system for poultry slaughterhouses.

I often lend my support to the Commission, but I am afraid that I cannot do so in this case. It would be a pity for Europe and for European products. I sincerely hope, therefore, that all the Members will understand this viewpoint in the interest of all consumers.

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

Mr Mertens. — (*DE*) Ladies and gentlemen, I believe Mr Combe succeeded in giving a clear presentation to this House of the essentials of the problem. I should like to thank him for the clarity of his statement, and we shall gladly give him our support. He also had a majority in favour in the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

If I might repeat it here again, the subject is of very little importance to the members of the European Community. We are dealing with something peculiar to French cuisine, but since all of us here have a certain weakness for French cuisine, we should also include it in our discussion.

What is of more concern in this case is that the checks and safety regulations being applied to this speciality are of a similar kind to those we must require for the protection of the general health of citizens of the European Community.

I believe that this control is guaranteed and can be put into effect by appropriate specialist personnel. I should like to think that — and it is of equal importance — through this we have achieved a common basis for control within the European Community. We lay great emphasis upon this and since we are sure that this is actually happening, we can support the rapporteur's proposal with an easy conscience.

Mr President, I do not wish to waste the time which was so kindly allowed me, since we all regret that we do not often manage to deal with our business on Thursday evening or Friday morning.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Turner. — Mr President, I am extremely pleased that the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection has at last recognized with complete approbation the position of the English environmental health officers. On the continent there are veterinary officers, but in England we also have environmental health officers who have been

specifically recognized by Mr Combe's report. I am pleased that they can now at last enter the EEC as fully recognized servants of environmental health inspection. That is very sensible.

The second thing is the question of costs. Mr Combe said, and I understand his motives completely, that it is better to have the inspection paid for by public authorities because it is then independent of the producers. Originally the problem lay in the fact that many producers — at any rate in Britain — thought the inspection was paid for and subsidized by national governments, not the case in Britain, and therefore they were at a disadvantage, which is why the Commission set up its enquiry. The Commission decided that costs throughout the EEC should be on the same basis and should be charged to the producers. I am sorry to say that my group feels that this is still the case and that we ought to charge the producers. One of the problems in Britain is that it is the local governments who would pay if it were charged to the public authorities. Now local government areas are very small areas: in Suffolk, for instance, my own area, we probably produce almost a third of the poultry eaten in the whole of Great Britain, and quite clearly that district could not pay the expenses of the inspection. So I am afraid we have to depart from the rapporteur and the committee on this. If the Commission were disposed to accept the rapporteur's view on costs, then we should have to say that in Britain special provisions would have to be made for dealing with them.

The new tightened-up details on uniform inspection conditions are also welcome. That was another great complaint. People felt that inspection was carried out differently in different countries to the disadvantage of some farmers. I am very glad that has been cleared up.

I turn last to the uneviscerated chicken which Mr Combe spoke about so eloquently and which, for some extraordinary and very uneloquent reason, is known in England as the New York dressed chicken. It does not only exist in France, the New York dressed chicken exists in England too where it is much appreciated and where I believe the taste for it has gone up. I am very glad that you have assured us, so far as the Commission supports you, that we will continue to have the New York dressed or uneviscerated chicken. We are very much on your side. Of course we are speaking here of farmers and local markets, and not of the large mass-production industry.

I have one last brief comment. Unfortunately paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution is slightly inaccurate in that it says that there should be the same degree of inspection for uneviscerated chicken as for eviscerated ones. Of course, that is physically impossible for the simple reason that they are uneviscerated and you therefore cannot look at the viscera. I ask Parliament and the Commission, and anyone else who reads this document, to overlook this slight slip. There

Turner

cannot be the same inspection for uneviscerated poultry; let us forget it was ever said there could.

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

Mr Nyborg. — (DA) Mr President, unlike the last speaker I intend to speak for less than the time which has been allocated to me.

Today, we are to adopt a decision regarding a report on the revision of one of the many directives on agricultural products. Even if the proposal deals only with one of many small details which go together to make up the entire organization of the agricultural sector, I should nevertheless like to take this opportunity to draw attention to a number of important principles.

I should like to draw your attention to the two main objectives in connection with trade in fresh poultry-meat. Firstly, the legislation should guarantee that the products we produce are of high quality — particularly, of course, from the health point of view where foodstuffs are concerned. Secondly, the regulation should be such as to avoid distortion of competition. If it is at present possible to slaughter, process and wrap poultry from which only the entrails have been removed under satisfactorily hygienic conditions, there is no reason why this should be banned and I therefore wholeheartedly go along with Amendment No 4 by the rapporteur, Mr Combe. I am pleased that all over Europe one can still buy poultry complete with liver, gizzard and heart etc. which still tastes of poultry unlike the cardboard chickens we often get.

I wholeheartedly agree with the rapporteur that there is no reason why this method of slaughter should be banned nor is there any reason why we should return to this subject in 1986. There is no sense in introducing or maintaining restrictions for their own sake. Why, then should we be content with making a provisional decision today if we could just as well make a final decision once and for all?

As regards Amendment No 3 to the Commission's proposals, however, I have a number of reservations. When costs are to be borne by public authorities I always sound the alarm since, as we all know — and you know just as well as I do — that they always turn out considerably higher than if they are borne by the private sector. I think, therefore, that in this case the Commission's original version is better than the Committee's proposal. However, I should like to say at the same time that we should endeavour to establish standard rules for all products, regardless of whether it is beef, pigmeat or, as in this case, poultry.

With this minor reservation, I can give my support to Mr Combe's report and, for the rest, I agree with the points made by Mr Martens.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Andriessen, Member of the Commission. — (NL) Mr President, I am very fond of French cuisine and although I have not eaten chicken this evening I was nevertheless very interested in the report and the debate which has just been conducted. I should now like on behalf of the Commission, to make a few brief remarks. Firstly, it is not the intention of the Commission to eliminate any possibility for the slaughtering, sale and consumption of fresh poultry of the type under discussion. This possibility will remain open at a restricted local level within the Community, and if the rapporteur is assuming that this will be impossible I think there must have been a misunderstanding. So much for my first remark. My second remark concerns the sixth paragraph of the resolution. For health reasons, it is not possible to market the type of poultry we are discussing here this evening on the same terms as eviscerated poultry. Thus some sort of special directives and provisions for the inspection of this kind of poultry must be maintained. However, this possibility is not to be completely eliminated and the consumer will thus continue to have the choice, and I hope this will also be true in the case of the New York dressed chicken which Mr Turner has just mentioned.

As regards the cost, it is normal practice in most of the Member States for the costs of health inspections to be passed on in the cost price and the Commission therefore sees no reason to depart from this practice.

Thus, on this point, Mr President, we come closer to Mr Turner and Mr Nyborg than to Mr Combe in his report.

I should also like to comment on the inspectors. In the amendment in question it is suggested that the words 'environmental health officers or meat inspectors' should be added. I am afraid that this could cause problems as regards the tasks and competencies of the environmental health officers. This question is currently being dealt with by the Commission in a Commission proposal and Parliament will be consulted for its opinion. It does not, therefore, strike the Commission as advisable, pending completion of this procedure, to incorporate a mention of an officer of this kind into the Directive. The concept 'meat inspector' is an entirely new one and without knowing exactly what we are to understand by it, for example as regards the demarcation between 'meat inspector' and 'assistant', the Commission feels it would be difficult to include an officer of this kind in the regulation. This means, in practical terms, Mr President, that the Commission has and must continue to have objections concerning the points made in Amendments Nos 1, 2 and 3. The Commission is not so much concerned with the details as with the standardization of health controls which will enable the production of these eviscerated chickens to be allowed to continue on a limited scale in the long term.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be held at the next voting time.

17. Campaign against smoking

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1053/81) by Mr Del Duca, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the campaign against smoking.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Del Duca, rapporteur. — (IT) I should like to begin my speech, Mr President, by paying tribute to the Chairman of the Italian Anti-Smoking Campaign Committee, Dr Andrea Camera, for having presented his petition in September 1980, thereby launching an appeal through this Parliament to the various populations which we represent, and giving us a forceful argument which was both clear and detailed.

Highly relevant in this context are the initiatives of Mr Petronio and Mrs Squarzialupi. I am quite sure that the motions for resolution that they have tabled and today's discussion will rightly succeed in being recognized as well informed and effective proposals which will be very useful in the sphere of public health.

This motion for a resolution has a number of purposes: it appeals to smokers to exercise consideration towards non-smokers, it seeks to inform smokers of the damage which results from using or misusing tobacco, and it constitutes an appeal to the younger generation — but above all to teachers — so that young people will not have this vice or will at least be free from dependency on tobacco.

Tobacco — or *nicotina tabacum* — is grown throughout the world between a latitude of 63° north and 35° south and a number of governments are involved in its cultivation.

Use is made of tobacco leaves which contain an extremely poisonous alkaloid — nicotine. The quantity of this substance varies between 1 and 8% depending on the quality of the tobacco.

The ingestion of a milligramme of nicotine causes feelings of malaise and salivation; two milligrammes causes headaches, dizziness, sweating and nausea. But when tobacco is smoked, the organism absorbs other toxic and irritant products apart from nicotine, namely combustion-produced substances, such as prussic acid, carbon monoxide, pyridine bases, formaldehyde, etc. — the so-called tobacco tar.

The fact that smoking — and particularly, excessive smoking — is harmful has been demonstrated extensively in medical literature and at various medical congresses on the subject; the most important ones are those held in London in 1971 and the official conference on smoking in Bad-Homburg which remains fundamentally important, but we must also not forget the last conference organized by the Cini Foundation in Venice last year.

Let me just briefly list some of the ills which result from smoking: the mouth being the first organ to suffer the deleterious impact of smoking, harmful effects include bad breath, inflammation of the gums and dental decay. But smoking can also give rise to more serious diseases, such as cancer of the lip or tongue.

But the main victim of smoking is the respiratory system. Harmful substances accumulate in the lungs, causing chronic bronchitis, asthma, pulmonary emphysema and cancer.

Two hundred thousand cigarettes are a passport to cancer. Smoking ten cigarettes a day, you are 15 times as likely to get cancer and, if you smoke 40 a day, the risk rises by a factor of 65.

The milk of mothers who smoke is not so rich nutritionally and the smoking habits of mothers can cause the weight of children to increase irregularly, as well as insomnia, restlessness and intestinal troubles in babies.

Smokers are more likely to get heart disease such as angina, infarction, arterial hypertension and tachycardia. The nicotine and carbon monoxide in smoke are sworn enemies of the human heart. It has been shown that there are twice as many deaths from heart disease among smokers as opposed to among non-smokers.

Where blood circulation is concerned, smoking damages veins and arteries, encouraging the onset of arteriosclerosis. Diseases of the circulation are even more likely to occur if tobacco use is associated either with alcohol, contraceptive pills or obesity.

Smoking also speeds up the ageing of the skin, gives rise to impurities, boils, a pale complexion and wrinkles.

While any kind of smoking is bad, excessive smoking is worse!

Of course, it is by no means easy to wean smokers off their dependence on, and addiction to smoking, but it is nevertheless our duty to inform people of the damage they are doing to themselves. This Parliament's Committee on Public Health has discussed this at length and has agreed that non-smokers need to be protected.

Del Duca

It has been shown that, when non-smoking subjects spend an evening in an environment where people were smoking, samples of their night urine prove to contain a quantity of nicotine equal to that found in the smoke given off by seven or eight cigarettes.

There is no way, ladies and gentlemen, that any motion for a resolution tabled here could succeed in combating the selfishness of individuals in their dealings with their fellow human beings, unless they can be convinced by education. That is why we have to concentrate our attention on the younger generations. It is clear that we will only solve this problem if we can convince those who smoke — by publicity in schools, hospitals, meeting places and transport vehicles — that harm can come to others through their smoking. We must do all we can, with conviction, so that young people become aware of the harm they can do themselves through a vice which could easily be avoided, especially if caught in time.

Naturally, there will always be enormous problems when it comes to reducing production. We need only remember that national taxes on cigarettes represent 70% of the sales price and 350% of the production price for the coffers of Member States, as can be gathered from the European Commission's last report. Nor can we ignore the fact that the European tobacco industry employs more than 100 000 people, that there are 250 000 planters of raw tobacco and another 500 000 people directly or indirectly involved with distribution.

But we can take heart from the report since, when it talks about health, it fosters the hope of limiting tobacco consumption through better health education. That is why I began my speech by depicting our battle cry as an appeal which we are launching to our populations.

The Committee on Health — which I am representing here today — hopes that this appeal will be heard and first of all welcomed by everyone in this House as they approve this motion for a resolution which is excellent from the point of view of prevention and public health.

I should like to close by thanking all those who have contributed in a positive way with studies, speeches and amendments to improve the work that we have done and which will give us all the satisfaction of knowing that we have performed our duty towards our fellow men who need to know the facts in order to change their lives for the better.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Krouwel-Vlam. — *(NL)* Mr President, we all know how difficult it is to get a genuine European

public health policy off the ground and this does not only result from the lack of specific provisions in the Treaty of Rome. The Commission has repeatedly promised to draw up a public health action programme, in which the campaign against smoking would be included, and this has taken place on the basis of agreements reached at a meeting of the Council of Health Ministers. Unfortunately, this was only the second and at the same time the last meeting of that Council. That was in 1978.

I hope you will forgive me, but the reluctance of the Council of Ministers to meet, let alone to make decisions, should not be an excuse for the Commission to do nothing about the ambitious action programme which has been frequently promised. Fortunately, this Parliament itself takes initiatives and the Commission can go to work and come up with concrete proposals on the basis of this excellent report by Mr Del Duca, which my group wholeheartedly supports. This may enable it to wake up the Council of Ministers and provide them with a stimulus to take Community-level decisions aimed at countering excessive smoking with all its detrimental consequences. A rapid start on a large-scale anti-smoking campaign is very desirable, if not essential, particularly with an eye to young people who are taking up smoking at an increasingly early age. An information campaign of this kind and a total ban on tobacco advertising — the latter of which would be in accordance with the WHO four-year plan — might lead to a reduction in the damage done to the health of the smokers themselves and the harmful consequences for community from the social and economic point of view. If you cut down or stop smoking you save money and prolong both your own life and that of non-smokers. Your own health and the health of your environment is an irreplaceable and priceless asset.

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

Mr Nyborg. — *(DA)* Mr President, I should like to begin by saying that I am a smoker myself so that I cannot be accused afterwards of being unqualified to comment on this subject.

I am sure all of us can go along with and support any initiative aimed at protecting public health, but at the same time, I should like to say that we should take all the statistics with a pinch of salt. Statistically speaking, there are vast numbers of people who die in bed, but this does not mean that it is dangerous to lie in bed. It is by now, I think, an established fact that tobacco smoke is harmful and that it may in many cases cause cancer, which is why I can also understand the rapporteur calling for sensible arrangements to permit people who do not themselves smoke and have no wish to get tobacco smoke into their lungs to avoid it.

Nyborg

Broadly speaking, I can go along with the motion for a resolution but I would like to suggest that we should not take such a hard line. It is quite right that legislation on tobacco advertising should be harmonized, but I do not think one should let oneself be so much carried away by one's enthusiasm that one ends up adopting a nursemaid attitude. We should legislate in such a way as to avoid distortions of competition, but not, in my view, to such an extent as to interfere with the individual's personal freedom and I take the view that the individual must continue to be able to buy the product he wants where and when he wants.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Petronio. — *(IT)* Mr President, the idea of this motion for a resolution of mine, which has been incorporated in the Del Duca report along with Mrs Squarcialupi's motion, was to deal with one of the aspects of the campaign against the effects of smoking. I mean the idea of giving consumers more information about the dangers of smoking. What we have to avoid as far as possible is the doctor's having to tell the patient to stop smoking, right at the last minute, with the result that his ban is ignored by people who are already addicted. What we have to do is to persuade people who smoke too much, not to give it up just like that — as this can bring with it considerable psychological problems — but to cut down steadily by reducing the number of cigarettes they smoke and by switching at least to brands which clearly contain lower nicotine and tar levels.

This can be done by clearly indicating on each packet on sale the amount of these substances in figures, and perhaps to make things easier to understand, the warning could also say whether the amounts were high, medium or low. In addition, there could be provision for these warnings to appear on suitable notices displayed at every retail outlet, so that every brand could be easily compared with all the others and smokers could switch to those with less nicotine and tar. This might also encourage the cigarette firms to produce light cigarettes with small amounts of alkaloids and less tar.

What I have proposed in other words is a kind of battle plan for the campaign against smoking, which is a deadly vice and one which is hard to deal with using shock treatment. The fact is — if I may give you an example — that I personally have always smoked and I find it hard to imagine that I could give it up completely. Anyway, as the Romans used to say, *si parva licet componere magnis* — which means, if the small may be compared with the great — Sigmund Freud himself was a man of science with an iron discipline who could use hypnosis and self-hypnosis and yet he never managed to give up smoking and died of cancer of the pharynx.

At any rate, by way of conclusion, let me say that the rapporteur has produced a happy marriage of my ideas and Mrs Squarcialupi's proposals. I mean by this the ideas of exchanging opinions on the measures adopted in the various Member States, organizing advertising campaigns aimed primarily at young people — because people start smoking when they are young — and working out a common approach on the matter of advertising. As far as this is concerned, I think the only kind of advertising that should be allowed should be restricted to cigarettes with low nicotine and tar contents and these aspects should be stressed.

As Mr Del Duca's motion for a resolution is sensibly along these lines, we shall be voting for it and we hope that something will come of it in the various Member States.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* The Commission would first like to thank the rapporteur for his report and introduction to this topic, which we have already had to consider on more than one occasion here.

The tendency noted in Community countries towards increasing drug abuse, of which smoking is only one example, and the resultant effects on health present serious problems for the individuals concerned and for society as a whole. The concern about this trend is clearly reflected in the many questions put by Members of this House to the Commission, reports and resolutions. The Commission shares this concern and is seeking to make whatever contribution it can, especially in the field of health education, all the more so since health education must be an essential part of health policy if lasting results are to be achieved.

The Health Ministers of the Community at their meeting on 16 November 1978 also stressed the importance of health education within the context of health policy and expressed the view that smoking was an important field which warranted particular attention in health education.

The Commission has acted upon the decisions taken at that Council meeting, as has already been stated in answers to written questions. I should like to take this opportunity of agreeing with the regret expressed by Mrs Krouwel-Vlam regarding the slow, not to say cumbersome, rhythm of meetings of the Council. Unfortunately, we have no great hope that a Council of Health Ministers will be convened during the present Presidency of the Council. We even fear that no such decision will be taken during the next Presidency either. However, that is no reason for the Commission to sit back and do nothing.

In connection with the answer to an oral question put by Mrs Schleicher on aspects of European health

Narjes

policy, I should like to refer in this House to my remarks about the measures initiated by the Commission in the sphere of health education, amongst others.

Further to what I said earlier, I should like to inform you that the report which I mentioned on measures adopted by the Member States against smoking is now available and has recently been passed on to the relevant committee. This report includes the list of the legal measures concerning smoking in the Member States for which Mr Del Duca asked; point 10 of the draft is therefore covered.

Two further investigations dealing with trends in smoking in the Member States between 1960 and 1980 and the extent to which these may be influenced by campaigns and other health education measures have in the meantime also been completed and will be published shortly. I should like to recommend here in connection with these reports that the committee responsible should hold detailed discussions with the Commission's experts on the various questions raised regarding the content of noxious substances, the population distribution of smokers (increasing proportion of women) and health consequences; such matters go beyond the scope of this debate.

The actions taken by the Commission so far have not yet all been evaluated and detailed discussions are still required with the experts of the Member States. Certain trends which may be regarded as marginal requirements for further action and possible measures at Community level may be singled out at this stage, such as the relationship between various risk factors — misuse of tobacco, alcoholism, misuse of medicines and drugs (and here there is a well-founded assumption that there is a certain correlation between these individual factors); the increased extent to which family and socio-economic factors have been taken into account (social classification conditions should perhaps be taken into account to a greater extent than in the past to explain this phenomenon instead of considering single factors in isolation). Finally, there are the special problems concerning underprivileged groups.

The above-average figures for misuse of drugs by groups who are underprivileged in terms of education and social status are obviously increased by the fact that these groups have not been reached effectively enough by measures taken so far and have thus been less strongly stimulated to change their behaviour than have other groups.

In addition, there are still special problems in the case of certain subgroups — e.g. young people, women, etc. Here, we shall have to consider how to improve results by means of measures aimed at specific groups — I hope that this can be translated into other languages.

Then there is, finally the need for additional forms of exchange of experience and cooperation between the

Member States. A great deal can be achieved here by exchanges of knowledge, experience and observations — which may be of general use in the field of health education.

Although as you know, Mr President, the legal bases in the EEC Treaty for the Commission's activity in the field of health policy are decidedly weak, the Commission will endeavour to continue its work in the sphere of health education. It therefore welcomes also the motion for a resolution on the campaign against the misuse of tobacco which has been submitted to this House today for adoption. It will be a great help to us as well.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be held at the next voting time.

Since personally I am a heavy smoker but not an alcoholic, it is quite a relief for me to pass on to the next subject.

18. Alcoholism

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1012/81) by Mrs Squarcialupi, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, on the problems of alcoholism in the countries of the Community.

I call the rapporteur.

Mrs Squarcialupi, rapporteur. — (IT) Our committee came to discuss this question, Mr President, not only at the request of Mr Hutton, with his motion for a resolution, and in response to moves made by the Commission, which has organized meetings on the topic of alcoholism and has carried out various studies, but also and above all because we were aware that we were facing a problem which, while not novel, was certainly very widespread. In dealing with the problem of alcoholism, we wanted to avoid falling into the trap of facile moralism by adopting a practical approach.

In our opinion, the widespread availability of alcoholic drinks is a good thing since it is an indication of improvements in living standards and the consumption of products made here in Europe. We are among the biggest producers of wine, beer and spirits. However, the misuse of alcohol — rather than just its consumption — is a very bad thing in our opinion, but it is very difficult to draw a dividing line between the two. We found ourselves faced with a serious shortage of data, contradictory statistics and data which were incomparable. If we are to tackle this problem properly, then, we must have reliable and comparable data and we have asked for this in our motion for a resolution.

Squarcialupi

Priority must be given to prevention, especially where young people are concerned. The process of becoming an alcoholic starts at a young age, induced by the false values attributed to drinking: success, power of seduction, ability to compete, to be sociable and to do well at work. These goals may well be attainable provided one knows how to drink. But the effects of excessive drinking have quite the opposite result, leading to violence, incapacitation, accidents on the road and at work, disorders in the individual and the breakup of families, and fights — even among family members. Above all, it leads to physical and psychological dependency on alcohol.

Alcoholism therefore has social repercussions but it also — and above all — has a social origin, due to insecurity about the future and the lack of jobs. The greatest number of alcoholics is found in areas where employment is at its highest, as we know. Alcoholism can be induced as a result of uncertainty about roles, for example, which explains the considerable increase in the number of female alcoholics. That is why we have called for studies and experiments to determine why certain individuals become alcoholics.

Apart from asking the Commission to give us precise and comparable data, as I have already mentioned, we have also requested the Commission to ask the Council to approve without delay the directive against misleading and unfair advertising, which has a negative impact on young people. We have asked for checks on the level of alcohol in the blood of motor-vehicle drivers to be carried out, including in countries where there are no provisions for this, such as Italy; we have also requested that a maximum permissible level of alcohol in the blood should be fixed for employees and professionals who are engaged in delicate and dangerous activities. We have asked for whole series of measures to forestall alcoholism before it can take root, to establish the consequences of alcoholism on human reproduction, to determine the effect of alcohol consumed in conjunction with other products and to establish which educational methods are the most effective among those which have been tried out. In addition, we are appealing to the mass media to cooperate as much as they can in our prevention campaign.

We have made it quite clear that we do not believe anyone can be helped by banning alcoholic beverages, with all that prohibition implies. In short, we want to make drinking a reasoned practice. We do not want the pleasure of those who drink 'correctly' to be marred by the many unpleasant consequences which can befall those who drink 'incorrectly', in other words, too much.

Mr President, I trust that you are pleased, since I have spoken for one minute less than the time I was allotted.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mrs Krouwel-Vlam. — (NL) Mr President, the use of alcohol is fairly widely accepted. Social drinking is normal in many levels of society, but interest in the reasons for and consequences of abuse of alcohol is very slight. The fact that alcohol takes its toll of victims and can lead to addiction is deliberately ignored. In her report, Mrs Squarcialupi has given an excellent account of the possible reasons for the ever-increasing consumption and abuse of alcohol. It is depressing enough to realize that it is particularly young persons who see no clear prospects for the future in our present-day social and economic situation — which is far from rosy — who turn more and more to alcohol. However, alcohol is a temporary refuge which must be followed by a return to harsh reality.

The report contains excellent recommendations which can be used by the Commission as a basis to develop activities in the short term. Alcohol abuse leads to increased health risks. The number of hospital admissions resulting directly from years of excessive drinking is increasing rapidly. Psychiatric establishments are full of people who have ended up there because of excessive drinking. The number of people turning up at counselling centres for alcohol and drug abuse is also on the increase. The governments see the harm done, spend vast amounts on counselling and treatment but nevertheless take no preventive measures. The world is still swimming in alcohol. We regard it as perfectly normal that the government should save a lot of money which would otherwise be spent on caring for invalids if every motorist wears a safety belt and if this is made compulsory. The same is true in the case of crash-helmets for motorcyclists. The damage to our society resulting from alcohol is enormous. To give an example, in 1979 almost 50 000 persons were injured or killed in road accidents as a result of alcohol. An active prevention policy is called for and the policy aimed at discouraging the consumption of alcohol can only be successful if accompanied by other structural measures. If we are to conduct an alcohol prevention policy we must accept the fact that this is a social problem which calls for political solutions which must be taken here in this Parliament.

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

Mrs Lentz-Cornette. — (FR) Mr President, it might seem surprising that the European Parliament is considering the problems of alcoholism, but this is not a problem affecting just one State but one which is, I believe, common to all States and I would therefore just like to repeat briefly what has been said by the two female members of my committee who have spoken before me — and that is that we must consider all the

Lentz-Cornette

harmful social effects of alcoholism, i.e. violence between marriage partners, violence in the streets, juvenile delinquency, road accidents, to name only a few of the social consequences of this scourge.

But what is required above all is a single maximum permissible blood level of alcohol throughout the Community. We note for example that in Ireland the maximum is 1%, in Holland 0.5% and in Luxembourg 0.8%. I think that for the purposes of harmonization we should tend towards the lowest level. Mrs Squarcialupi mentioned in particular a chapter on alcoholism amongst women and spoke also of the study required to assess its tragic consequences; I am thinking in particular of premature births, infant mortality, the stunted growth of new-born babies and physical malformations and mental retardation.

In view of the dramatic consequences, the committee is studying alcoholism amongst women from all its socio-medical aspects, but I think that the research should include also the genetic effects of alcoholism amongst men and that the heavy responsibility of alcoholic fathers should be scientifically established.

Our committee also stresses the need for close collaboration with the mass media. It is important for the mass media, which have a certain audience amongst young people, to work in collaboration with the national and Community authorities.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Provan. — First of all, may I thank the rapporteur for her report. I think that in the course of steering it through the committee she has gained a great deal from the deliberations. I believe it to be a very useful report that is before Parliament this evening, Mr President. Also let me deliver to her the apologies of my colleague, Alastair Hutton, who had the original resolution before Parliament on which this report is based. He is unavoidably detained this week and cannot be with us.

Mr President, it is essential that we know what we are really talking about in this debate: the use and the abuse of alcohol. There are many differences in the consumption of alcohol and the different types of alcohol in the Community. I think it has been proved beyond all doubt that prohibition as such just does not work. I welcome the suggestion in the report that preventive action at an early stage in schools is something that we should really be aiming at.

One thing in the report that I take exception to is the discrimination that is suggested against spirits. If we look at the consumption of alcohol in the Community it is very easy to discover that in fact spirits are not the bogey in the woodpile at all. Alcohol is alcohol. Whether it be wine, beer or spirits, they can all have the same effect on human beings.

The data on the incidence of alcohol abuse are not generally available and are very imprecise. In the absence of such definitions and criteria, there are a number of indicators that we can refer to. The main one, of course, is cirrhosis of the liver. It is interesting, Mr President, if we look at France and Italy, to find that for every hundred thousand of the population about 33 die every year from cirrhosis of the liver. In Germany, Denmark and Belgium, which are beer-drinking rather than wine-drinking countries, it is only about 13 per hundred thousand of the population. If we look at the spirit-drinking countries of the Community, the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland, we are down to 4 per hundred thousand of the Community. Therefore, any suggestion put forward in the report that spirits are really far worse at causing alcoholism than any other form of alcohol is completely refuted by the figures that I have provided tonight.

Increasing public concern has been expressed in most EEC countries, and we must go on and make sure that alcoholism is not a threat for the coming generation.

IN THE CHAIR: MR LALOR

Vice-President

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Mr President, we find Mrs Squarcialupi's report, resolution and explanatory note excellent. The report is, we think, lucid and well-balanced. However, the question we would ask is what is the Commission going to do with the results of this report, in view of the fact that it is a Parliament initiative? The Commission can say, 'Yes, this is an interesting report,' but as we see it, it cannot be left at that. In other words, this resolution should not be allowed simply to gather dust on the Commission's shelves. However, this brings us to the question of what can be done with it in the context of Community policy and, more particularly, what the Commission can do with it in the subsequent stage? The proposals made in this report should, I think, be linked as far as possible to what we have already achieved in Europe. I am thinking in this connection of paragraph 9 of the resolution regarding driving which should be fitted as far as possible into the context of Community policy on transport, for example, by means of harmonizing the legislation on alcohol levels in the blood along the same lines as the provisions which already exist regarding the use of tachographs. My second point concerns paragraph 13(i), which, as we see it, could come under consumer policy.

Eisma

Products must be made more readily identifiably. Wherever the beverage in question originates, it must be possible in every country to read from the bottle the alcohol content. This cannot be achieved on a national basis, but must be done at Community level, in the context of the consumer policy. I should also like to ask the Commission — and I hope that it will answer this question shortly when the Commissioner speaks — whether it would draw up a list of governmental organizations responsible for prevention and alcohol abuse which exist in the various Member States, and perhaps also cases where such organizations do not exist.

Mr President, in Amendment No 1, Mr Galland says that the spread of alcoholism is affecting women in particular. I hope to return to this question later as rapporteur on health questions.

Mr President, this report may also serve as a basis for a sound alcohol policy on the part of the Member States.

Finally, Mr President, I should like to say that the significance of this report, as we see it, lies particularly in the fact that we cannot pretend that alcohol does not play a part in our society and we must therefore take certain measures with a view to preventing abuse.

President. — I call the Commission.

(Mr Sherlock asked to speak)

Your name is not on the list.

Mr Sherlock. — I am on the list.

President. — I understand that you were to have confirmed that you wished to speak. No confirmation was received.

Mr Sherlock. — I confirmed it by staying here through all that lot.

President. — You may speak for two minutes.

Mr Sherlock. — I apologize to the Commissioner, but do not include my apology in the two minutes!

(Laughter)

I was going to say, Mr President, *Kali spera*, but I notice that nationality has changed, so *céad míle fáilte* to the late night spot.

You will, of course, already have observed that when I am in jest I am always at my most serious, so *vesti la*

giubba. I wish to deal in an omnibus manner with the three excellent reports that have been presented tonight on alcohol, on smoking and on poultry. A word on behalf of the featherpluckers has already been said by one of my colleagues, and I think a word on behalf of the brewers and the distillers has already been very well expressed by my colleague here.

I must say that we have tabled motions saying that the ultimate cost of poultry inspection should fall upon the public, who in the end will pay any way. Do not let us have any nonsense; whether it is rates, taxes or anything else, the public are the only ones who pay because they are the only ones who have got any money.

I also wish to say, if the Commissioner will take a message to his colleague, Mr Andriessen, EHOs had better solve the problems. They are a fact of life; they are a darned reasonable cheap way of doing a very simple bit of morbid anatomy. I speak as an ex-coroner and I know what morbid anatomy is about.

We are, of course, here all a miracle of survival, those who have lasted here tonight. We most of us began with breast feeding, which is the last item but one; a few of us have smoked and a lot of us have drunk. Thank God for it. Drinking, of course, is the only way in which the general public can ever put up with politicians.

(Laughter)

This, of course, is why, despite the fact that there is no advertising, drinking is so popular behind the Iron Curtain.

There are many things that we have to do. There are many things in the health field. As Commissioner Narjes has already observed this evening, the way in which we are all choosing our own paths to suicide is one of the most distressing things. In all seriousness, we must do the best we can. But let us not set off with too much hopefulness in our heart. We are, as I have said already tonight, miracles of survival. We are not going to be the first generation that will live for ever. Thank God for that, say some of you.

Well, we move rapidly, Mr President, towards the last item. I would like to set the final seal on this memorable day by pointing to the trade in citrus fruit which is the last item on our agenda and, in the old English saying, express the view that I hope the answer will not be a lemon.

(Applause)

President. — Thank you, Dr Sherlock. You have actually got ahead of yourself by now, but I presume that is an achievement for someone who might be described as a late coroner.

President

I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, without Mr Sherlock's speech the evening would not have been as instructive an occasion as it has now become.

(Applause)

May I first thank Mrs Squarcialupi most sincerely for her report on the problem of alcohol in the countries of the Community. This report is bound to put us in a reflective mood, but it should also arouse reactions and lead to specific measures at a national and Community level. From this point of view I shall look at one or two questions raised by Mr Eisma.

The effects on public health of the increasing abuse of alcohol, and drugs in the broadest sense, in the Member States of the European Community, along with the generalized rise in the cost of health care, have been for many years amongst the principle social problems discussed in the Community. But the problem of alcohol abuse is more complex and more difficult to pin down than tobacco abuse. The complexity of the matter does not just derive from the manifold damage done to people's health, but also from the varying social and economic effects that it has.

What can we realistically expect the Commission to do in this field? I must first remind you, unfortunately, that the topic of alcohol abuse, which was on the agenda at the meeting of the Council of Health Ministers in 1978 during the discussion of health education and costs of national health organizations, was deliberately — I repeat *deliberately* — excluded, because certain Member States were resolutely opposed to discussing the matter in the Community context.

Not least in view of the possible harm which various drugs — medicines, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs — do to the health of those who abuse them, the Commission has nevertheless initiated some exploratory work in this area. I may mention in this connection the drafting of a report on the medical and social dangers of alcoholism, the preparation of the results of comparative research into alcohol consumption and diseases caused by alcohol, which will be published in 1982, that is to say, this year. A research report on the main causes of alcohol abuse is being prepared. Finally, the future multi-annual programme on medical research, which is being examined at present by the Council with a view to a decision on it, also provides for the investigation of the effects on health of alcohol abuse.

Mr Eisma asked where a list of institutions in the Community devoted to fighting alcohol abuse could be found. We are working on a pilot study for this purpose, in which the overall drug situation in the Member States is analysed and which also contains the

list he asked for of institutions devoted to fighting alcoholism.

As is the case in other areas of health policy, the Commission also collaborates with other international institutions in the control of alcohol abuse. In particular, it has collaborated with the Council of Europe in the drafting of a report on measures to protect young people from the dangers of alcohol abuse. This report is part of a resolution and will shortly be submitted to the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe for a decision.

Taking account of the economic, agricultural, fiscal and regional policy aspects of the matter, the Commission will also have to check, and will check, which health policy measures designed to combat alcohol abuse may be considered in the future at the Community level, and which may have a chance of being implemented. In this connection, it is our intention to recommend the motion for a resolution on harmonization of the maximum permitted alcohol content of the blood to the Community transport ministers as an essential element of transport safety policy, in the hope that the ministers responsible for transport safety will address themselves to these topics. The same thing is true of the recommendations for consumer policy and the obligation to mark goods clearly, in dealing with which we shall also keep this topic in mind. Given that the Council of Health Ministers has not, as I have already remarked, taken a definite decision on this matter, and given that the legal bases for Community action in this field, as we have already discovered in the case of tobacco, are somewhat weak, even as defined in the Treaty, it would seem to me, unfortunately, that, at least at present, the political feasibility of health policy measures designed to protect against alcohol abuse through legislation is somewhat limited.

For this reason the Commission considers it expedient, at present, to establish, initially on the basis of available knowledge and taking account of the report we have before us now, which measures, particularly regarding exchanges of information, joint consultation and promotion of research, can be promoted and taken further, not only in the narrow field of alcohol abuse but also in the overall area of drug abuse generally.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think that the question of when the Council of Health Ministers will finally decide to address the question of drug abuse, in particular, alcoholism, as a European topic, and when they will recognize it as such, is fundamentally a question of time, that is to say they will finally be forced to this position when public opinion in this respect leaves them no other choice but to recognize this topic as a genuinely European topic. In order to promote this trend, the task of this Parliament and of the committees responsible for these matters is to take up this

Narjes

theme undaunted, and persistently, so that these pressures can finally be translated into reality.

(*Applause*)

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — (*NL*) Earlier in the week I made use of a point of order to criticize the Commission for a skimpy answer. I should now like to use a point of order to voice my appreciation for the fact that the Commission has clearly listened to the suggestions made by Parliament. Thank you very much, Mr Narjes.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

19. *Harmful substances in the milk of nursing mothers*

President. — The next item is the oral question with debate (Doc. 1-1037/81), tabled by Mrs Seibel-Emmerling and others, on behalf of the Socialist Group and Mr Muntingh and others to the Commission:

Subject: Residues of harmful substances in the milk of nursing mothers

In some Member States dangerously high residues of harmful substances have been found when samples of milk from nursing mothers were chemically analysed.

1. Can the Commission give information as to the kind and concentration of the residues of harmful substances in the milk of nursing mothers?
2. Does the Commission consider that it is necessary to determine by sampling the concentration of harmful substances in the milk of nursing mothers in all Member States?
3. Does the Commission believe that, whilst fully acknowledging the advantages of breast-feeding, where there are specific high concentrations of harmful substances in the milk of particular nursing mothers it is advisable that they should be recommended not to breast feed?
4. Does the Commission agree that every mother should be able to find out the concentration of harmful substances in her milk?
5. Does the Commission see any possibility of persuading the Member States of the European Communities to provide free milk analyses within the social security sickness insurance schemes?
6. Does the Commission share the view that the alarming quantities of harmful substances found in the milk of nursing mothers are not solely attributable to the fact that far in the past they consumed

foodstuffs containing residues of, for example, hexachlorobenzene (HCB), alpha, beta and gamma isomer, hexachlorocyclohexane (HCH), DDT, heptachlorepoxyde or pentachloronitrobenzene (PCNB)?

7. Can the Commission supply information as to whether all 10 Member States have complied with Council Directive No 79/117/EEC of 21 December 1978 prohibiting the placing on the market and use of plant protection products containing certain active substances and how does it check what cases there are in which the directive is not complied with?
8. Does the Commission know what exceptions have been made under Article 4 of the abovementioned directive, according to which the placing on the market or use of plant protection products containing certain active substances may be permitted? Which Member States have asked for such exception and in what circumstances, in other words, which plants were treated for which diseases with which plant protection products and to what extent?
9. Which Member States of the European Communities have prohibited without exception the manufacture and use of DDT and heptachlor and since when?
10. Does the Commission already have information as to which animal feedstuffs imported into the European Communities contain residues of plant protection products which contain certain active substances and which are prohibited in the European Communities?
11. What checks does the Commission carry out on feedstuffs imported from third countries with regard to residues of harmful substances or is it notified of control measures by the individual Member States, and how can it check this information?
12. Does the Commission know which pesticides whose use is already prohibited in the Community are manufactured in the European Communities for export to third countries and does it know the volume of this production?
13. Does the Commission share the view that the export to third countries of plant protection products which are prohibited in the EEC or the use of which is restricted endangers not only the population of those countries, and can it supply information as to how it monitors the effects on the human body of the combination of the plant protection products absorbed through the import of animal feedstuffs and foodstuffs for human consumption into the Community from third countries and those plant protection products used in the Community?
14. In the Commission's view, when is the Council expected to adopt the following two directives on which the Parliament gave its opinion on 16 January 1981:
 - the directive on the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on cereals intended for human consumption;

President

- the directive on the fixing of maximum levels for pesticide residues in and on foodstuffs of animal origin?
- 15. Does the Commission have at its disposal in the meantime information as to the effects of the accumulation of harmful substances in the human body and in the milk of nursing mothers?
- 16. Does the Commission share the view that particular attention should be paid to the short and long term damage caused by the combined effects of harmful substances in the human body and that the results of investigations into this should shortly lead to a proposal for a directive?

I call Mrs Seibel-Emmerling.

Mrs Seibel Emmerling. — (DE) It is perhaps a little late to be breast-feeding and it seems to me that most of the Members of this Parliament are at present devoting their time to the study of alcoholism, but thank you, Mr President.

Ladies and gentlemen, Parliament is obviously celebrating its 'baby day' today. Much as I support all of today's proposals for the protection of seals, I equally hope that the House will give its attention to another endangered species: the offspring of *homo chemicalis*, which quite literally does not always seem to me to be the same as *homo sapiens*.

The last thing I want, and what I am trying not to do, is to spread any fears which might deter mothers from breast feeding. Breast-feeding is and will always be the best method for feeding babies, and I am very pleased that it is being rediscovered and practised by increasing numbers of young women in our countries.

As everyone knows, mother's milk is the only food whose composition makes it ideally suited for the baby and its special requirements. But it is precisely because there is nothing better for future generations, and because I know that there is no adequate substitute, that I am concerned and justifiably so.

Man is not only spiritually and mentally a product of his environment, but also physically, as a link in the food chain connecting us with plants, lower forms of life and animals.

This is why man is affected, perhaps as an act of poetic justice, by all the consequences of his often irresponsible treatment of nature.

By the time the milk is given to the child, the concentration and high level of harmful substances in the food chain is such that we can no longer afford to ignore the danger and its roots.

I am familiar with the studies the Commission carried out from 1969 to 1973. Since then both the methods used for measuring the substances and the sources of

danger themselves have changed. The WHO research project, in which the Community, as far as I know, is taking only a small part, has as yet failed to produce adequate information. But these tests will probably not produce the definite and convincing results which I believe we owe to our mothers.

The fact that harmful substances take such a long time to disappear should not lead us to conclude that the alarming results obtained in some Member States — I am thinking here, for example, of tests the Freiburg Ecology Institute in West Germany, which were first ridiculed and then last week emphatically confirmed by tests at one of the regional health laboratories — concern substances originating from earlier years.

At present, when DDT has not yet even been banned by all Member States, when it will take years for bans on heptachlor to have an effect, when we are continually reimporting animal feedstuffs which contain pesticides which we have banned, when we are exporting highly dangerous substances by the ton from the EEC to other countries without considering the consequences both for the recipients and for ourselves, and when the implementation of bans which have actually been passed leaves something to be desired, and inspection measures are really deplorable, we are even now creating the basis for increasing threats from poisonous substances in years to come.

I have already said that I am wholeheartedly in favour of breast-feeding. However, as there have unfortunately been cases where the concentration of harmful substances has been considerable, it would seem to me to be essential for mothers to know what their position is. Free milk analyses should therefore be available for women in every Member State; knowing the truth helps to overcome fears, and gives a feeling of security and the courage to breast-feed. It is a facility which mothers should not spurn, especially if their job has put them at particular risk.

I would remind you, ladies and gentlemen, of those young mothers who visited the Parliament, and, knowing the concentration of harmful substances in their milk, and fully aware of the levels, still decided in favour of breast-feeding and stressed that they wanted to breast-feed, but need to know their position in order to be able to come to terms with what is in them and with what they are giving their children.

If we read the list of exceptions to which Member States can refer if they wish to use pesticides, we cannot help but suspect that this system of ours can never work.

In addition to this we have the Council's famous delaying tactics. I put it to you and myself: can we assume responsibility for the next generation in this manner?

(Applause)

President. — I call the Commission.

Nr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President I would firstly like to thank the Parliament and particularly the author for her detailed and responsible question on this very important subject, which has already long been discussed in scientific circles.

I should like firstly to consider paragraphs 1 to 6 of your question. The Commission carried out an investigation between 1969 and 1973 to determine the existence of organic chlorine compounds in the milk of nursing mothers, involving an analysis of more than 200 samples for five different compounds. In almost every case, and for all the five compounds examined, the results showed that the concentration in the milk were below 0.1 parts per million only in less than 1% of the samples did the levels exceed this. However, the results must be interpreted with a certain amount of caution, as there are technical difficulties involved in carrying out analyses of this nature on very low concentrations. In addition, it was discovered that the methods used tended to produce inconsistent results. The problems in obtaining accurate measurements have also delayed the collection of samples up to now.

A World Health Organization study was initiated in 1978, but it has taken until now to develop analysis techniques and standard, universally applicable analysis procedures. The Commission will ensure that samples can be collected as soon as possible.

In addition, it is not only pesticides, but also other toxic substances ingested by the mother, which are passed on in the milk. Thus, for example lead, was found in the milk of nursing mothers who had been exposed to it at work. The Commission's research of scientific literature led it to the conclusion that an investigation on a wider scale is needed before the threat from such substances can be positively identified. In the Commission's view, this is an area in which research should be intensified, and methods are at present being developed to analyse lead in mothers' milk.

As regards the clinical aspects, if there is any reason to suspect that a mother has been exposed to high concentrations of a toxic substance, her doctor should have her milk analysed to establish the presence and concentration of this substance.

Whether the mother may continue breast feeding or not depends partly on the results of these analyses.

On the subject of the time taken for levels of organic chlorine compounds to build up in the milk, as mentioned in paragraph 6 — and according to the information available so far, this does not give cause for alarm — this can be regarded as a function of earlier or current ingestion of such substances.

Because these compounds take so long to disintegrate, it is highly likely that a large percentage of the food contamination being discovered may be ascribed to earlier ingestion.

The questions in paragraphs 7 to 14 concern legal steps to make existing directives into national law, and aspects of foreign trade.

In view of the short time available, I would suggest that I give a written reply to all the particulars of this section, so that the committee responsible will have more than just this speech as its answer.

This also enables me to give more detailed consideration to the effects of the compounds mentioned earlier, as described in the final two paragraphs. In a communication from the Commission to the Council in 1976 on the dangers to human health of organic chlorine compounds, the conclusion reached was that it was at that time impossible to determine criteria defining the levels of concentration and enabling the connection between exposure and possible effects.

The World Health Organization has recently been discussing the feasibility of the idea of a permitted daily dose, and the Commission is at present assessing this.

It is proving even more difficult to determine the combined effects of toxic compounds. In view of this, the Commission is working towards preventive measures aimed at eliminating the exposure of humans to these compounds by progressively reducing the use of organic chlorine pesticides. In addition, legal limits are to be imposed on the residues of these compounds in food and animal feedstuffs.

A further possibility is integrated plant protection. The Commission is at present involved in work on this solution, with a view to making a reduction in the use of pesticides possible.

In addition, a number of measures are being prepared in connection with the environmental protection programme and the programme for safety and health at work, aimed at reducing exposure to toxic and noxious substances. The World Health Organization is planning a conference — in which the Commission will also be participating to examine the necessity and possibility of adapting the idea of the permitted daily dose, which we mentioned earlier, so that it may be used for children as well as adults. Particular account is to be taken of the child's specific metabolism and sensitivity, as well as its special relationship with its mother.

To sum up, I should like to say that we need a wide reaching solution to the problem of the residues of harmful substances in the milk of nursing mothers, and one which will involve our environmental, agricultural and health policies. But this mainly depends on a

Narjes

balanced approach. We must also consider the damage that can be done if mothers are induced to give up breast-feeding their children.

Mr President, I would ask your indulgence if this has been a somewhat lengthy reply, but I believe that it is justified by the important nature of the topic.

President. — I call the European People's Party (Christian Democratic Group).

Mrs Maij-Weggen. — (NL) Mr President, I shall be very brief, partly because Mr Narjes has gone into the question put by Mrs Seibel-Emmerling with exceptional care and thoroughness. I think he has already pointed out that he takes the question exceptionally seriously and that it is indeed an exceptionally serious question.

It is a very serious matter if it emerges from studies that harmful substances occur in the milk of nursing mothers so that this is a genuine cause for concern, and since these studies are on occasion not yet all that well balanced, I think it is particularly necessary that the EEC should play its part in studying this area with a view to obtaining a clear picture of the problem. I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Narjes and Mrs Seibel-Emmerling that we must avoid making mothers afraid of breast-feeding their children since this would have harmful effects not only on the physical health of the children but also on their psychological health, since breast-feeding is an important element in the link between mothers and their children. It would be particularly harmful if mothers were to become afraid of breast-feeding their children and I think, for that reason, that it would be particularly useful, indeed vital, for the European Community to look into these reports which are genuinely alarming. I must say that I am particularly pleased that the Commission has already reacted in such a positive way, it is a serious business which calls for all our attention and, Mr Narjes, if you can do anything about this, i.e. coordinate studies, I think you will be doing a great service to the mothers of Europe.

President. — I call Mrs Seibel-Emmerling.

Mrs Seibel-Emmerling. — (DE) Mr President, I should like to thank the Commissioner for his detailed reply.

As you know, under Rule 42 the questioner has the right to table a motion for a resolution. However, I am not prepared to do so at present for two reasons: firstly, because I find the whole form of Rule 42 totally unsatisfactory — perhaps I might just make this point now — for, as far as I can gather, I would have had to have prepared a motion beforehand, and thus been completely unable to assess and incorporate the Commissioner's reply.

And yet I would have had good reason to prepare a motion for a resolution: for example, we need to step up research to find safe biological pesticides; we need better controls on the guidelines in force; and we must be informed about the results of the test and research programmes we are carrying out with the WHO. We must call upon the Council immediately to adopt the amendment to the 1974 Directive on animal feedstuffs and to give priority to the second directive on pesticides. All this would certainly have been more than enough to justify drawing up a motion for a resolution, and after talking to many of the Members of this Parliament, I know that I have support for it.

The reason why I have nevertheless decided not to do so is because I believe that we owe it to our mothers not to make do with shoddy workmanship, as any motion tabled under these conditions would have been. That is why I am announcing, on behalf of myself and my friends, that we will take more time to consider the replies which the Commissioner has so kindly given us, and then attempt to table a motion incorporating all of this. We would ask all Members to cooperate with us in this motion, because we believe that we should all equally bear the responsibility for our children's future, in which mother's milk is an important element.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is close.

20. Production and marketing of citrus fruit

President. — The last item is the report (Doc. 1068/81) by Mr Gatto, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture, on the

proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-671/81) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2511/69 laying down special measures for improving the production and marketing of Community citrus fruit.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Gatto, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, with this motion for a resolution on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture — which adopted it unanimously — I am asking Parliament to approve the proposal from the Commission for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 2511/1969, which lays down special measures for improving the production and marketing of Community citrus fruit. The 1969 provisions arose from the need to remedy the serious problems besetting this sector and the attendant economic and social consequences.

Gatto

Some of the major causes of the crisis in a production sector of such vital importance for whole regions of the Community were inadequate production structures on farms, which were in general too small, badly organized and without irrigation; the lack or scarcity of centres for sorting, packaging and processing produce; the varieties of produce which were often unsuited to the tastes of foreign consumers and increasing competition from other producing countries.

But, as explained more fully in the document before you, the so-called 'Citrus fruit plan', appended to Regulation No 2511/69, has failed. The reasons for this failure may be summarized as follows: the incentives provided were insufficient to encourage producers to uproot their orchards and to replant them more rationally with more suitable varieties; no distinction was made between replanting and regrafting, with the result that farmers preferred the easier method of regrafting, although only replanting could have produced satisfying results all round.

The new regulation largely manages to get round these disadvantages. Firstly, aid may also be paid to part-time farmers — of which there are many in this sector where agriculture is fragmented — provided that they are involved in a collective reconversion operation. Secondly, lemon orchards are now also covered.

Lastly, the deadline for implementing restructuring projects has been put back to 31 December 1990.

These new measures constitute a step forward with respect to the original regulation from 1969. They have been prompted both by practical experience and by the entry of Greece into the Community. They nevertheless remain within the logic of an ill-conceived agricultural policy which lays down different guarantee provisions for products from different zones, thereby establishing a hierarchy which is supposed to relate to products but which, in reality, hurts men in the poorest areas because of what they produce. It nevertheless seems more and more obvious to us that Mediterranean products must be given comparable protection.

Finally, I should like to draw attention to the amendment — adopted unanimously by the Committee on Agriculture — to Article 1, paragraph 8, point 2 of the proposal for a regulation by the EEC Commission, which aims at abolishing the difference in treatment for lemons and clementines concerning the marketing premiums needed until restructuration operations have been completed.

One final observation is that the reconversion projects must be implemented not independently but in conjunction with other Community measures for structural improvement, particularly those envisaged

in the Mediterranean 'package', concentrating all the available aid to ensure maximum impact.

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

Mr Giummarra. — *(IT)* Mr President, before assessing the scope of the Commission proposal on the amendments to the regulation on citrus fruit in the Community, I feel I must clear up what may be a basic misunderstanding as far as discussion of the matter goes. The proposal before Parliament concerns amendments to an existing regulation which so far has failed, unfortunately, to produce the planned results. The idea was for production quality to improve and to ensure that what was produced reached the markets. The fact is that these aims will not be achieved, even in the future, unless the Community acts upon its undertaking to review citrus fruit policy in the light of a reexamination of Community policy in this area with reference to guarantees for Mediterranean fruit.

The citrus fruit sector is now in its thirteenth year of crisis, what with producer associations constantly withdrawing fruit, loss of income, the awful destruction of oranges and mandarins with the consequent public reaction, massive inroads to Community markets by fruit from outside the Community, the effects — which are in fact a double blow to people and growers in southern Italy and the islands — of trade and cooperation agreements with third countries, and disregard for the principle of Community preference. All this represents a complicated set of problems which need to be dealt with before, or at least together with, the initiatives and proposals for improving matters in the Community citrus fruit sector.

It has to be made clear that any proposal is bound to be negative again in nature until we can get from the Commission an assurance that the citrus fruit sector is going to get support measures similar to those applicable in the case of other products in the rest of Europe.

We like the Commission proposal which is before the House today. The idea is to get round the series of barriers and difficulties which cropped up during the operational stage of the citrus fruit plan. The difficulties were caused by cumbersome procedures, the extreme effects of inflation on commitment estimates, the steady reduction — at a time of continual crisis and falling incomes — in the room for manoeuvre of growers who had to support reconversion as costs went up, the inadequate levels of marketing premiums, the restricted range of categories covered by the measures, the difficulties of calculating just how benefits worked, and the exclusion of some areas from reconversion and improvement schemes.

Giummarra

The Commission proposes amendments to the regulation so that lemon growers can benefit from restructuring and additional aid. The increase in the value of such aid is fixed, part-time growers are included in the list of those aided, and there is support for expanding the greenhouse sector with suitable measures to improve reproductive material and encourage research, on the basis of a rigorous correlation between production circumstances and market requirements.

These proposals have to be viewed as a sign of wider-ranging plans which foreshadow the outline of a new plan covering the citrus fruit sector as a whole and not limited to the old and inadequate idea of conversion and nothing else.

This new plan must include on the one hand specific measures for infrastructure — equipment, roads, water, electricity — and for technical upgrading, and on the other hand wider-ranging action on marketing with regard to sales outlets, information and advertising campaigns and the trade decisions and agreements by the individual Member States which can no longer be allowed to resort to continual derogations as a way of getting round the principle of Community preference which is a basic element of the Treaty of Rome.

The current state and future outlook of the citrus fruit sector in Europe must be viewed from this angle, in which there is no room for cutting back on any of our commitments but which requires a tremendous campaign of support for these traditional Mediterranean products which cannot be replaced by any others. The Community cannot afford to go on underestimating the state of ongoing crisis in this sector, even though production has not reached surplus levels. The enlargement of the Community to accommodate other countries means that the need to tackle the root cause of the problem is even more urgent. The citrus fruit sector is going to be a real testing ground in the next few years to see just how strong the Community spirit and European unity really are.

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Kyrkos. — (GR) Mr President, we are today debating — extremely belatedly in our view — a proposal for an amendment to the regulation on the production and marketing of citrus fruit.

These amendments represent a recognition that, despite the twenty years of efforts in this sector, it has still not been possible to harmonize the production sector with the requirements of the Community market. In our view, Mr President, and despite the steps being discussed today, this confirms the failure of Community policy in this sector and is a further indication of the bias of the common agricultural policy

in favour of products from the countries of northern Europe and of the lack of interest in the products of the Mediterranean countries. For how else can one explain the fact that non-Community countries such as Spain, Israel and Morocco have succeeded in covering the Community's requirements, while Community produce is looking for a market in eastern countries and in other countries outside the Community? Can the Commission feel proud that it has performed its duty towards the treaties and the farmers of Europe when the products which the producers have taken so much trouble to create are tipped into pits — as frequently happens in Greece?

We regret, Mr President, that we are once again not in a position to be cooperative, but we are obliged to support the interests not only of the producers in our country but also of the Community, and we have objections to both the proposal by the Commission and the report by Parliament's Committee on Agriculture, because they did not take account of the special needs of Greece.

The proposed regulation lays down the same time limits for its application for the old Member States — Italy, France — as for Greece, which only became a member of the Community last year, disregarding the fact that the first two countries have had the whole period of adjustment from 1969 up till now. And this despite the fact that Greece still has three years to go before it has the same scheme as applies to producers in the rest of the Community.

Mr President, we propose that discussion of these two texts — the proposal for a regulation and the report by the Committee on Agriculture — be postponed, with a view to debating them again once they have taken into account the problems of the Greek producers, who cannot accept such unfavourable treatment.

Of the Greek producers' problems and demands, the most important in our view is the immediate abolition of the transitional period, so that Greek producers can enjoy the same basic and intervention prices as their colleagues elsewhere in Europe, the immediate equalization of the marketing premium on Community markets, the immediate equalization of processing subsidies to bring them into line with those applying in other Community countries with a view to achieving a substantial increase in Greek exports of citrus fruits to the rest of the Community.

Apart from these purely Greek demands, however, we believe it is in the interest of the Community, firstly, to try to achieve an increase in export subsidies, so that we no longer have withdrawals and destruction of the products. Secondly, higher prices should be established for oranges intended for consumption, so that oranges in classes II and III could be used for making juice — something which would improve the situation as regards consumption and exports. Thirdly, there should be an increase in the processing premium so

Kyrkos

that wider sections of the consuming public would have access to the processed citrus products whose ingredients are so good for health. Fourthly, the legislative principle of Community preference should be strengthened and the prices established for citrus fruits should be based on the real production costs.

Mr President, I should like to conclude by asking the Commissioner responsible and my honorable colleague, Mr Gatto, to withdraw the documents we have before us, since that will also facilitate the talks between the Greek Government and the Commission on citrus fruits — talks which are due to start in Brussels within the next few days. If, despite all this, the debate is not postponed, we shall vote in favour of the motion subject to the reservations I have just made, since it does at least represent a small step forward.

President. — I call the non-attached Members.

Mr Almirante. — *(IT)* Mr President, it is certainly not your fault or the fault of the chair if such an important topic is the last thing to be debated in an empty Chamber. But it is nothing new, and today's sitting just about sums things up. We all got worked up this afternoon in a full Chamber about the sad fate of the baby seals. But in this Europe of ours, which seems to be turning more and more to the North Sea and less to the Mediterranean, no one cares about the oranges dying on the trees or rotting in railway trucks or in the holds of ships. And behind all these rotting Mediterranean oranges there are people, you know, the farmers of Italy and Greece. And let us not forget Spain, which is about to join the common market, and Portugal, which can be called a Mediterranean country even if it does face the Atlantic. And behind all these rotting oranges and withering fruit you have the farm-workers who are leaving the fields, to swell the ranks of the unemployed and to perpetuate the high levels of emigration from the Mediterranean countries.

I therefore want to thank the rapporteur, Mr Gatto, for his bold report and in particular for the parts of his report which he mentioned this evening. I am referring to the conclusions where the rapporteur is quite frank and to the point in stating:

Although these proposals, prompted both by practical experience and by the entry of Greece into the Community, represent an improvement on the original regulation of 1969, they remain within the logic of ill-conceived agricultural policy which lays down different guarantee provisions for products from different zones.

That is the problem: an ill-conceived policy. And another thing, Mr Gatto. There is this matter which was mentioned earlier by Mr Giummarra and also by our Greek colleague. I mean the business of letting countries from outside the Community, such as Israel, into the market. I am not sure if the figures are still

correct, but I think I am right in saying that Israel gets a customs reduction of 60% — which it wants to increase to 80% — when it sends its oranges to the Community, and remember that these oranges are competing with our oranges from Italy and with oranges from Spain, Portugal and France as well. There is just no system to protect the market. Now, I am not advocating protectionism but I do think there is something wrong when non-Community produce gets better treatment than what our own countries grow.

I therefore agree with the proposals in Mr Gatto's report, and in particular I hope that when there is talk of reconversion people bear in mind that the Mediterranean package, which is mentioned in this excellent report, must be tackled with restructuring measures involving Italian and Mediterranean agriculture as a whole, and in this instance the whole of Mediterranean fruit-growing with particular attention — if I may say so in my capacity as an Italian MEP — being paid to fruit-growing in Italy, which as everyone knows is in a very bad way.

President. — I call Mr Kaloyannis.

Mr Kaloyannis. — *(GR)* Mr President, in general terms the Commission proposal — after being processed by the Committee on Agriculture and presented in the form of the report by Mr Gatto — does indeed have some positive aspects as regards the production and marketing of citrus fruits.

It provides a certain degree of economic encouragement to cultivators of citrus fruits for conversion to different varieties of their products — particularly oranges and mandarins. In my view, however, the economic aid during the seven-year period which will be needed to complete this conversion is not enough to make up for the loss in income.

This aid should be increased to a level sufficient to ensure that the producers can continue to survive during the period of conversion to other varieties.

Another point I should like to make is that producers should not be obliged to carry out this conversion in accordance with strict instructions from the Community. In other words, the Community proposals should be flexible and leave enough room for the technical services in the Member States to determine precisely what varieties to convert to, taking account of the local, climatic and economic conditions obtaining in the regions in question.

Other steps which might help to improve the position of producers of citrus products are as follows:

1. An expansion in the Community market with a view to absorption of the quantities of citrus fruit available.

Kaloyannis

2. Multiannual agreements with third countries interested in these products. These would take Community export policy beyond the third countries of the Mediterranean region (Arab countries, Africa, Asia etc.), i.e. we would have to approve a dynamic, longer-term and more imaginative export policy.

3. The principle of Community preference and priority for fresh citrus products and their processing should be maintained more consistently. Most of these remarks, Mr President, derive from a certain amount of unfortunate experience we have had with the fate of citrus fruit growers in recent times in Greece where, as you will know, enormous quantities of these products have faced, and are continuing to face, serious marketing problems.

President. — I call Mr Martin.

Mr M. Martin. — (*FR*) Mr President, with the examination of the Gatto report on citrus fruits, we are finally beginning to deal with the important problem of Mediterranean produce.

It is true that the problem merits urgent attention and requires solutions which meet the needs of producers in the Mediterranean regions. It must be admitted that, in comparison with other sectors of production, they have not been guaranteed by the Community regulations the security, level of income and opportunities which they had a right to expect. These deficiencies are also reflected in the Community budget, because the appropriations allotted to the organization of markets for this produce are very limited and do not measure up to its importance in the Community.

It is for this reason that we are pleased to note that the European Council recently stressed 'the need to improve the organization of the markets in Mediterranean agricultural products'. But these intentions must be translated into acts and decisions will have to be taken quickly.

The proposals made by the Commission in its 'Mediterranean package' — even if some of them represent a significant step forward — are still not radical enough, not only to cope with the prospect of enlargement, to which we are more than ever opposed, but especially to correct the injustices and inequalities which the Mediterranean producers have suffered for such a long time.

This is particularly true as far as citrus fruits are concerned. The Commission proposals do not provide the necessary guarantees and support for producers. Even though, for the sake of quality, it claims to be encouraging the changeover from the production of mandarins to clementines, the Commission wishes to bring about a deterioration in the situation of the Corsican clementine producers, especially by abol-

ishing the marketing premium between now and 1985. On behalf of the French Communists and Allies, I am pleased that the Committee on Agriculture, with the support of its rapporteur, Mr Gatto, has accepted the amendments proposed by my friend Dominique Bucchini, which aimed at correcting the gaps in Community regulations on Corsican clementines, including, in particular, the readjustment of the reference price and its annual review in terms of the basis price and purchase price, the inclusion of clementines in the common organization of markets, so that they benefit from the basis price and purchase price mechanism, their inclusion on the list of 'sensitive products' with the granting of processing subsidies, the granting of export refunds and, of course, the rejection of the progressive abolition of the marketing premiums proposed by the Commission.

We therefore have good reason for carrying the Gatto report, in the hope that the reports which we shall shortly be examining on the other aspects of the 'Mediterranean package', that is, wine and fruit and vegetables, are just as positive.

President. — I call Mr Alavanos.

Mr Alavanos. — (*GR*) Mr President, I should like to start by saying that, while Greek producers of citrus fruits cannot accept that their problems should be settled in Strasbourg or Brussels, it is a unacceptable insult to have a debate held in front of empty benches and to have the interpreters struggling to translate in vain into certain languages to which not a single Member is listening.

And now to the subject.

In the explanatory statement the view is expressed that the main reason for the problems in disposing of citrus fruits is the range of varieties, which does not meet the requirements of the international market, and the inadequacies in the marketing and processing system.

These problems naturally also exist in Greece, and are even particularly serious there, but they are not the main problems. The principal and fundamental problem is the unilateral trade policy which has been followed in our country up till now. Our accession to the EEC has even created new barriers to the development of equal trade relations with all those countries which could provide substantial help in disposing of Greek citrus fruit. In the case of Greek citrus fruit, in particular, it is clear that the socialist countries could absorb a large part of our production as part of the development of mutually beneficial relations. This is confirmed by the fact that exports to these countries account for 85% of our total exports of oranges, 96% of lemons and approximately 95% of mandarins.

The fundamental question as regards the absorption of Greek citrus fruits is thus the widening and develop-

Alavanos

ment of markets in all directions beyond the framework of Community obligations, which have become more restrictive recently, ostensibly because of events in Poland.

It is undoubtedly true that improvement in the range of varieties and in the trade and processing cycle could help to improve the absorption of production, but this must take account of the land and weather conditions in each country and must be left to each country to determine itself. We therefore disagree radically with Article 3, which states that such a programme must essentially be drawn up under the supervision of the Commission.

In Greece, for instance, clementines have very high cultivation and picking costs, and any further extension of their production would make them a doubtful proposition. For the same reasons, round about 1979, the campaign to have the Merlin variety replaced by other varieties proposed by the EEC was a failure because of the fact that these varieties need 10 years, and not 7, for the tree to reach full production, and the market prospects are also doubtful.

Finally, we have some specific remarks:

Firstly, the compensation proposed by the Commission is totally inadequate for the producer and will not cover his loss of earnings.

Secondly, experience also shows that such restructuring of varieties is used to reduce cultivation as part of the policy of making our agricultural economy complementary to the EEC.

This is what emerges from Article 4.

Thirdly, the expenditure involved in improving trade is to be borne in whole by the Member States, and this is something we cannot accept in the case of a Community programme.

Fourthly, we support the all-round strengthening of cooperatives, and not of producer groups, so that they can take over the processing and marketing of the products.

Fifthly, there is no binding reference to the need for implementation of the principle of Community preference nor to export subsidies for the producers themselves.

Sixthly, the way the report is drawn up clearly indicates an ignorance of the special conditions obtaining in Greece. The Commission has also shown its contempt on the subject of prices, with the unacceptable proposals it has put forward. For these reasons, the representatives of the Communist Party of Greece have extremely serious reservations on the proposal.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — (DE) Mr President, I should first of all like to extend my warmest thanks to the rapporteur, Mr Gatto for his report and for his introduction to the problem. The debate has shown that there is a whole series of general problems which recur again and again in connection with the specific tasks and difficulties of the present amending regulation. I should not like to begin a general debate on the Mediterranean question but rather to concentrate on three aspects.

Firstly: in the document submitted to the Council of Ministers in accordance with the mandate of 30 May 1980, the Commission proposed explicitly a comprehensive package of measures concerning primarily the Mediterranean region, which, if they could be introduced — and it is our intention that the Council of Ministers should do so — would lead to drastic long-term structural changes in this area.

The concentration of the resources of the Regional Fund, the EAGGF, and the Social Fund together constitute an offer which, in our estimation, will stretch the administrative capacity of the region concerned to its limits.

By region I mean that this programme is intended to cater not only for individual farms but for the whole farming regions, to include those people who are not employed in farming. We wish to create the conditions for a sustained improvement in incomes — through radical increases in farming — which would bring them into line with Northern Europe. It would be illusory to try to equate incomes in an area where 20 to 25% of the working population is involved in farming with those in a Community region — for example, in the United Kingdom or other areas — where only 3 or even 4 or 2.5% is involved. A solution could not be found on this basis. Hence this comprehensive offer, which should be implemented to the full and not carry a time limit.

My second remark is addressed to the Greek Members who have spoken. Greece is still going through a transition period — also in the area of adjustment to the technicalities of investment policy — and I do not therefore consider it advisable after only 14 months of membership of the Community to pronounce sentence on the workings of this mechanism.

My third point concerns those speakers who mentioned the external trade aspects. I ask you whether it is really in the interests of the Mediterranean countries and the whole Community to cut out imports altogether, since a refusal to import from other regions and countries of the Mediterranean could have political consequences for the Community which would be more expensive than such imports. We need not go into this question now — but I should

Narjes

like to recommend to the House that it discuss this consideration on another occasion.

As far as the report itself is concerned, I should like to point out that the amendment to Regulation No 2511/69 'laying down special measures for improving the production and marketing of Community citrus fruit' is very necessary. The Commission considers this an important proposal, because the implementation of Regulation No 2511 has not so far led to the realization of the desired goals — in particular a highly competitive citrus fruit industry — before the Community is enlarged.

The Commission welcomes the call to this House to support the proposal. It cannot, however, agree to Amendment No 1. Furthermore, it considers unjustifiable the granting of equalization payments and marketing premiums for lemons and clementines even after the end of the 1984/85 financial year. As there is a readier market for clementines and lemons than for oranges and mandarins, an adjustment period of three financial years should be sufficient.

As far as the vote — called for in the same amendment — against the Commission's proposal for degressive equalization payments is concerned, the Commission would like to point out that the gradual abolition of

marketing premiums for both products will be accompanied by phased adjustment of the reference price, as was finally proposed in the accompanying measures on the fixing of prices for fruit and vegetables — I refer you to Document No 82/10.

The other amendments concern the motion for a resolution, but the Commission would like to stress, with regard to Amendment No 2, that it has already given prominence to the mandate of 30 May 1980 in its report — and I reiterate the importance of an integrated structural policy for the development of the Mediterranean regions that is, a policy which goes beyond the common agricultural policy to encompass regional and social policies. The Commission is therefore of the opinion that its proposal is on the whole coherent, and urges you to accept it in its present form.

President. — The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken at the next voting time.

(The sitting was closed at 11.40 p.m.)¹

¹ *Agenda of the next sitting: see Minutes.*

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IN THE CHAIR: MR DANKERT

President

(The sitting opened at 9 a.m.)¹

1. *Membership of Parliament*

President. — I remind Members that, at yesterday's sitting, Mr Fergusson raised an objection, in accord-

¹ For items concerning approval of the Minutes, documents received and reference to committee, see the Minutes of Proceedings of this sitting.

ance with the provisional interpretation of Rule 7 (3) of the Rules of Procedure, to the resignation of Mr Fanton.

The written justification of this objection is as follows:

The objection is made, first, because Mr Fanton's resignation is one of a series of systematic changes in the parliamentary composition of Mr Fanton's party. It is suggested that his resignation was made under pressure, or took place in consequence of a promise made in the past on which his inclusion on a party list was contingent. This promise featured in Mr Fanton's party's manifesto of 1979. It appears to infringe Rule 2 (2) of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure, which precludes Members from being bound by any instructions and

President

from accepting any binding mandates. That provision in turn derives from the Act of 1976.

Objection is made, secondly, because the resignation infringes the Act. The Act also requires that Members be elected for a five-year term, or for such time as is left of a term. It implies that only *bona fide* reasons for resignation be entertained.

Objection is made, thirdly, because the practice of systematic rotation, known as the 'tourniquet', derides the Parliament and, if widely followed, would make unsustainable the parliamentary process of understanding, debate and decision.

(Parliament decided that this objection should be considered)

2. Votes¹

President. — The next item comprises the votes on those items on which the debate is already closed.

We begin with the Price report on the use of wind energy (Doc. 1-1081/81).

(...)

Written explanation of vote

Mr Protopapadakis. — (GR) I intend to vote in favour of the Price report in spite of the reservations I shall express in a few moments, because I believe that wind energy may, within twenty years or so, develop into an important source of energy in the countries of the Community and produce an amount of energy comparable to that produced, at the end of the twenty-year period in question, by nuclear power-stations, particularly in isolated and problematic locations.

Nevertheless, I disagree with the Price report inasmuch as, when he expresses the doubts of the Committee on Energy, he seems very half-hearted about advocating the value of wind energy. Fortunately, the Commission seems to be more dynamic on this subject, and I hope that in agreement with a statement by a representative of the Commission, the beginning of autumn will see the commencement of an integrated study that will give us the opportunity to discuss again the subject of utilizing wind energy, which, I repeat, may provide substantial relief to our energy problem, especially in out-of-the-way places such as the Aegean islands, which are supplied today by dozens of independent electric power-stations running on Diesel engines at a cost over four times as high as the cost of production in mainland Greece.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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President. — We proceed to the Battersby report on EEC — Norway fishing arrangements (Doc. 1-7/82).

(Parliament approved the draft decision and regulation and adopted the resolution)

*

* *

President. — We proceed to the Hahn report on radio and television broadcasting in the Community (Doc. 1-1013/81).

(...)

Fourth indent of the preamble: Amendment No 8

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, although the content of the amendment and the resolution is the same, the wording of the original text is better, and I therefore call on the House to reject the amendment.

(...)

After the ninth indent: Amendment No 2

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — (DE) The amendment has already been rejected by the committee.

(...)

After the twelfth indent: Amendment No 3

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — (DE) Mr President, the amendment is acceptable. The Dutch translation, however, is impossible and must be changed. Instead of 'publicly-controlled' it refers to 'government'. I do not think that is what the authors of the amendment wanted.

(...)

Paragraph 4: Amendments Nos 6 and 1

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — (DE) I ask the House to reject Mr Van Minnen's amendment for the reasons I gave just now and to adopt my amendment, because the European Space Agency has meanwhile launched the L-satellite.

(...)

Paragraph 7: Amendment No 4/corr.

Mr Hahn, rapporteur. — (DE) The amendment would entail a substantial restriction of the outline rules on

¹ The report of proceedings reproduces only those stages of the voting which gave rise to speeches from the floor. For other details of the voting, see the Minutes of Proceedings of this sitting.

Hahn

television broadcasting. These rules should be more comprehensive, and the original text is better.¹

(...)

President. — I can now give the floor for explanations of vote.

Mr Alvanos. — (GR) Mr President, in connection with the proposed resolution on radio and television broadcasting in the European Community, we wish to make the following comments:

First, these will involve very considerable expenditure, and this at a time when the Commission and the Council are invoking the inadequacy of the Community's resources as an argument for substantially limiting the income of farmers and other workers in the Community.

Secondly, the Community is now, apparently without any hesitation, expanding its activities into spheres quite beyond the scope of its terms of reference.

Thirdly, the above factors are leading to the creation of a psychological climate in favour of implementing the so-called European Union-, contrary to the national independence and sovereignty of our countries.

Fourthly, specifically in the case of Greece although one could argue that the people should be better informed about the Community, this does not mean that the Greek people are not sufficiently well informed about the Community; rather, in spite of the positive changes brought about by the present government, the state mass information media have not yet become open to an equal participation by those political and broad social forces which are opposed to Greece's membership of the EEC and which advocate pursuing an independent path of economic development.

For these reasons, the representatives of the Greek Communist Party will vote against the report.

Mr Van Minnen. — (NL) Mr President, as the resolution now unfortunately places the emphasis on broadcasting by official institutions, governments, even the Community as an independent broadcasting authority, rather than on independent broadcasting organizations, the only ones which should have this authority, I can no longer vote for this resolution.

Written explanation of vote

Mr Bonde. — (DA) We note that in their opinions both the Political Affairs Committee and the Legal Affairs

Committee recognize that an EEC-controlled Television programme is an activity not covered by the Treaty of Rome. Moreover, it seems to us, in view of the serious political and legal reservations expressed in the opinions, that the Hahn report can be regarded as mere wishful thinking.

The second problem dealt with in the report — TV programmes financed by advertising — seems to us so complex that the appropriate forum for an international agreement would be the Council of Europe rather than the EEC.

The representatives of the People's Movement against the EEC will vote against the motion for a resolution.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We proceed to the Schön report on Parliament's administrative expenditure for 1981 (Doc. 1-1069/81).

(...)

Parliament adopted the resolution

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* *

President. — We proceed to the Combe report on Trade in fresh poultry-meat (Doc. 1-981/81).

(...)

(Parliament approved the draft directive)

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Combe, rapporteur. — (FR) Mr President, in his speech yesterday our colleague Mr Turner made an objection which in my opinion is quite justified. I think I can say on the committee's behalf that paragraph 6 should be appreciably modified inasmuch as it speaks of freeing, on the same terms, drawn poultry and eviscerated poultry and obviously this cannot be done on exactly the same terms since some poultry has viscera and other poultry does not.

I therefore propose a new version of paragraph 6 to take account of this logical point: 'Requests that the production, slaughter and marketing of drawn and eviscerated poultry-meat be freely allowed on a permanent basis.'

President. — Mr Combe, it is not possible to adopt an oral amendment during the course of the sitting. All you can do, as rapporteur, is to suppress the para-

¹ In addition, the rapporteur spoke *in favour* of Amendment No 7 and *against* Amendment No 5.

President

graph. The adoption of an oral amendment in plenary sitting would create an unfortunate precedent.

Mr Combe, rapporteur. — (FR) In these circumstances I prefer to maintain the paragraph, since the consequences of suppressing it would be even more serious. I wish my observation to be reproduced in the report of proceedings.

President. — I call Mr Sherlock.

Mr Sherlock. — I would like the opportunity to do this paragraph by paragraph, Mr President.

(...)

President. — I can now give the floor for explanations of vote.

Mrs Squarzialupi. — (IT) Mr President, I asked at the beginning to speak in order to give an explanation of vote. I must say that the document presented by the Commission was in line with the principles and the orientations of health policies already being applied in many Member States.

Since the proposed modifications completely alter the thrust of this directive, we are naturally against them. In fact, from the health viewpoint, it is impossible to equate the normally eviscerated chicken with that from which only part of the internal organs has been removed. These modifications are a step backwards in respect to the health advances already achieved in many countries. For this reason we shall vote against this directive, and also against the motion for a resolution.

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We proceed to the Del Duca report on the campaign against smoking (Doc. 1-1053/81).

(...)

After paragraph 8: Amendment No 4

Mr Del Duca, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I am opposed to this amendment, which, moreover, was rejected in committee.

(...)

Paragraph 10: Amendment No 6

Mr Del Duca, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, this is in fact already envisaged in the preceding paragraph, and I am therefore in favour.

(...)

Paragraph 11: Amendments Nos 3 and 1

Mr Del Duca, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, there is a small difference between these two amendments. I am in favour of both of them, although I prefer that tabled by Mr Alber.¹

(...)

President. — I can now give the floor for explanations of vote.

Mrs Desouches. — (FR) I have followed with much interest the debate devoted this evening to this report, but the vote that has just been taken on the amendments is, in my opinion, a scandal.

I do not know whether we have paid proper attention to what we have all just voted. We have voted in favour of exports to the developing countries of cigarettes with a high nicotine content; in other words, we are of the opinion that it is all right for the developing countries to poison themselves, but as far as we are concerned, it is preferable not to do so... We have voted an amendment — I have really been most surprised at the way some people have voted in this Assembly — which lifts the ban on smoking in public places, by recognizing simply that it is *desirable* (this is Article 8, which is maintained) not to smoke in public places lacking sufficient ventilation. I really think this is extremely restrictive.

I would add that, while it is true that smoking is an individual vice in respect of which, as a colleague said yesterday evening, it is advisable to act with moderation and restraint, smoking has another aspect which is collective and with which we are all very familiar, having sometimes been put to a good deal of inconvenience.

Now I do not see why we should continue to permit smokers to poison others. I share the view of those people, who are continually growing in number, who believe that 'enough is enough', if I can put it that way, and who therefore ask, ever more insistently, that they be allowed to live in an air unpolluted by tobacco.

While I regret the voting of the amendments which have just been adopted, I shall nevertheless vote for this report, though with many regrets.

(Applause)

¹ In addition, the rapporteur spoke *against* Amendment No 2.

Mrs Squarcialupi. — (IT) Mr President, I was one of those who tabled the resolution from which this report has sprung.

My explanation of vote is very similar to that of the colleague who preceded me. Yesterday our Parliament was invaded by a profound feeling of humanity in regard to baby seals. This was 'taken back' today, in particular by the suppression of paragraph 12.

It is considered legitimate to export to the Third World everything that we no longer use — harmful pesticides or, in this particular case, cigarettes containing a high level of nicotine, which our market rejects. I think there are no epithets to describe the contradictions demonstrated by this Parliament in the last 12 hours. In spite of this, I shall vote in favour of the resolution, while expressing the not only humanitarian but also profoundly political regret that this Parliament should be incapable of consistency, contriving in the space of a few hours — there is only one night in the interim — to be humane with seals and inhumane with the peoples of the Third World.

(Applause)

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We proceed to the Squarcialupi report on alcoholism in the Community (Doc. 1-1012/81).

(...)

Paragraph 12: Amendment No 5

Mrs Squarcialupi, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, one cannot be opposed to the carrying out of studies. I am therefore in favour.

(...)

Paragraph 15: Amendment No 6

Mrs Squarcialupi, rapporteur. — (IT) I am against it because a parliament cannot renounce possession of a legislative power.¹

(...)

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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* *

President. — We proceed to the Gatto report on the production and marketing of Community citrus fruits (Doc. 1-1068/81).

(...)

Parliament approved the draft regulation

Motion for a resolution

Paragraph 1: Amendment No 2

Mr Gatto, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I am against these amendments proposed in the Chamber in opposition to the unanimous vote of the committee.¹

(...)

Paragraph 3: Amendment No 4

Mr Gautier. — (DE) Mr President, there is something not quite clear here. As a result of the adoption of Amendment No 4, which reads 'welcomes the progressive abolition of 'marketing' premiums', various other things have become superfluous, because paragraph 6 reads 'rejects, therefore, the progressive abolition of marketing premiums proposed by the Commission'. We have therefore just decided the opposite of what paragraph 6 says.

President. — Mr Gautier, we will vote paragraph by paragraph in order to avoid such difficulties.

(...)

I can now give the floor to explanations of vote.

Mr Papapietro. — (IT) Mr President; I wish to declare that we were prepared to vote in favour of this resolution, but its meaning has been radically distorted by the vote, both by the adoption of Amendment No 4 and by the suppression of paragraph 4 and others.

I think the resolution which has resulted from the vote is unrecognizable even to Mr Gatto. We consider this vote to be particularly serious, because it has to do with a Mediterranean culture and because the European Community is preparing a Mediterranean programme which in this way is distorted in advance. For this reason, although regretting the necessity, we are obliged to vote against the resolution.

Mr J. M. Taylor. — Mr President, because of the amendments that have been carried and the para-

¹ In addition, the rapporteur spoke *in favour* of Amendments Nos 2, 3 and 7 and *against* Amendment No 4.

¹ In addition, the rapporteur spoke *against* Amendments Nos 3 and 4.

J. M. Taylor

graphs that have fallen our group now consider this report adequately modified and will be able to support it.

Mr Gatto, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, I naturally submit to the vote expressed by Parliament.

As the committee's rapporteur, I cannot return an unfavourable vote, because of my respect for Parliament. I must abstain, however, for Parliament has rejected all the reasons given to justify — to justify, and not to accomplish — an equalization of Mediterranean agriculture with the more favoured agriculture of other areas of Europe.

I am not surprised at the votes of the right, for each person must do his own job. Personally, in many years of militancy, I have never moved away from my natural position, which is that of the left. What therefore disturbs and surprises me — and which I have never seen before — is how some people can assert that they belong to the left and still follow a line of this sort.

(Applause from various quarters)

(Parliament adopted the resolution)

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

Mr Fergusson. — To return very briefly to this whole question of resignations from and appointments to the Parliament. Since this is a matter of great interest to many of us here, I wonder if you would be good enough to ensure that announcements of resignations and appointments are made at the beginning of the day's business instead of slipped in at moments when it is not possible to ensure that one is in the Chamber simply because one does not know that the announcements are going to be made. I refer particularly to last night, when two appointments were announced. No one, of course, knew that it was going to happen. Had the announcement been made this morning, we should have been able to assent or dissent as we saw fit.

President. — Mr Fergusson, I shall do my best. But I cannot guarantee to do so, if a resignation arrives during the Friday morning sitting, with effect from that Friday. One has to be flexible. In principle, however, I agree that it should be made at the beginning of the sitting.

3. *Controlled thermonuclear fusion*

President. — The next item is the report by Mr Sassano, on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research (Doc. 1-1080/81), on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-433/81) for a decision adopting a research and training programme (1982 to 1986) in the field of controlled thermonuclear fusion.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Sassano, rapporteur. — (IT) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, after the second World War it was believed that twenty years would suffice to perfect reactors for the production of nuclear energy by fusion; the fact it is still believed today that twenty more years are needed in order to reach the stage of an experimental reactor demonstrates the enormity of the difficulties which have been encountered.

It is true, however, that since that time appreciable progress has been made. We have, for example, the birth of the physics of plasma — a new material present in the entire universe, but which must be reproduced in the laboratory.

We are now almost at the threshold of demonstrating scientific feasibility, and we can outline the steps leading to the production of a demonstration reactor.

It may be useful to remember that in 1980 the European Community consumed 1 milliard toe of energy. Of this energy, about 55% was imported, and it cost around 100 milliard ECU, which ended up for the most part in the OPEC countries. Strong measures of energy conservation, an increase in the use of coal, nuclear fusion, and the thorough exploitation of renewable energy resources can bring about an improvement in the coming decades. Most of the technology required to implement these measures is already available, and its use depends exclusively on political and economic factors, on public acceptance of such technology and on its impact on the environment.

While an energy transition can be accomplished in this way, carrying Europe into the next century, new energy sources must be developed for the period when combustible fuels such as oil, gas, coal and even uranium will no longer be available. Among the few solutions which can contribute to the building of Europe, controlled thermonuclear fusion should certainly be included.

Nuclear fusion has great promise as a virtually inexhaustible source of energy.

If the fusion fuel-cycle used is deuterium-tritium, with tritium obtained from lithium, then the energy potentially available amounts to 3 000 milliard toe if we use 10% of the available lithium resources, or to 10 million milliard toe if we also use the lithium in the sea, where it is present in the proportion of 0.17 g/ton.

If the fusion fuel-cycle is deuterium-deuterium, the quantity which can potentially be extracted from the seas corresponds to 100 milliard milliard toe.

Sassano

At present, the world's annual consumption of energy corresponds to 10 milliard toe, and a consumption of 30 milliard toe is predicted for the coming century.

It is precisely the recognition of the inexhaustibility of such energy sources which has stimulated research on controlled nuclear fusion since the second World War. Since that time, Europe, the USA and the USSR have been active in this field.

There is no doubt that the degree of integration of effort achieved by the Community in this field constitutes a brilliant example of collaboration among all Member States for the attainment of a common objective. Up to now there have been satisfactory results and constant progress, in particular with the Tokamaks, which put European activity on the highest level. We must not, indeed cannot, fail to be aware of the dimensions of the financial and human resources necessary to continue this exceptional technological effort, which will have considerable political and social repercussions.

It is the duty of the European Parliament to call for the full development of the programme of controlled nuclear fusion in the years to come.

The document presented by the Commission (COM(81) 357) on which Parliament must express its opinion has taken into account the considerations and recommendations of the Fusion Review Panel, a consultative committee composed of eleven members chosen among specialists in the scientific disciplines most closely connected with the subject in hand. It was assigned the task of carrying out a technical analysis of the European programme on controlled nuclear fusion.

I would like to mention, however, that this committee has played a political as well as a technical rôle, despite the fact that its members are understandably reluctant to deal with problems which should really be handled by politicians. Affirmations such as 'the Panel is convinced that Europe should maintain its first-rank position in the field of fusion, and therefore recommends the unbroken continuation of the European programme on fusion' have a strongly political content which clearly indicates the need for European autonomy in the development of energy resources.

Although I note with satisfaction that the state of work on the JET Programme corresponds to the commitments made, I feel obliged to ask for the continuation of research and activity with other Tokamaks. In particular, we should bear in mind the recommendations of the 'Review Panel on European Fusion', which your rapporteur strongly supports.

We should also be aware that the efforts made up to now to explore ignition by means of compact machines with a strong magnetic field have not been sufficient, and it is therefore necessary to give due

priority, among the non-JET activities, to experiments which, among other things, aim to demonstrate the possibility of ignition with the small-sized machines generally designated as 'with a strong magnetic field', both because of the low cost and because of the brilliant results they have provided up to now, which place them in the *avant-garde* of the effort to demonstrate scientific feasibility.

On this subject, I should not fail to mention to my parliamentary colleagues that it is our duty to defend at all costs the budgetary increases which will soon be necessary for controlled nuclear fusion if we want to see the accomplishment of the technological and therefore political and economic development of our Community.

The programme for 1982-86, on which Parliament has been consulted, will cost about 1 500 MECU.

In the United States, the expenditure, without counting the enormous sums invested in inertial confinement, with which Europe has almost no involvement, is 30% higher than in Europe.

It is particularly striking that Japan, which is making very considerable investments in other super-technologies, is rapidly catching up with Europe, and will certainly soon overtake her if she does not decide to abandon the very questionable policy of tightfistedness which is especially reserved for super-technologies.

Only countries with continental dimensions can afford the enormous efforts required by super-technologies, and in particular the technologies relative to nuclear fusion.

We must bear in mind that if the Member States of the Community are unable to make the great technological conquests together, Europe is destined to remain simply a 'geographical expression.'

Before concluding, I wish to express my utter indignation that the Council of Ministers, with no consideration for Parliament, should have made decisions concerning the fusion programme on the 8th of last month, completely ignoring the observations Parliament had advanced.

There is no doubt that this is the best way to make the construction of Europe increasingly difficult.

President. — I call the Committee on Energy and Research.

Mrs Walz, Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Research. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, by letter of 24 August 1981, the Council requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the Commission's proposal for a decision

Walz

adopting a research and training programme (1982-86) in the field of controlled thermonuclear fusion. The Council requested an early opinion. In the list of urgent matters in February, it finally asked the European Parliament to deliver its opinion in March, which is what we are now doing.

Very much to our surprise, a Council press-release reveals that the Council adopted the fusion programme we are now discussing on 8 March 1982. Admittedly, this was what is known as an informal decision and the Greek Government evidently expressed some reservations, which, however, according to a newspaper report today, have now been withdrawn. It was also said to have been agreed that, once the European Parliament's opinion had been received, the programme should be entered in the agenda for any future Council meeting as an A item, meaning that it would be formally adopted without any further discussion. Furthermore, serious amendments to the Commission's proposal have been agreed on such as the reduction of the allocation of financial resources and the fixing of maximum amounts. We must condemn this action on the Council's part in the severest possible terms. It conflicts with the undertaking the Council entered into in 1973 and with the isoglucose judgment, which prevents the Council from discussing the substance of a Commission proposal before the European Parliament has delivered its opinion. By treating the programme as an A item, after it has previously been informally adopted, the European Parliament's right to be heard is deprived of any meaning.

Mr Sassano's report calls on the European Parliament to adopt amendments to this Commission proposal, which it feels the Commission should accept pursuant to Article 119(2) of the EAEC Treaty, thus making them the basis for a decision. Parliament believes that the financial resources and, if appropriate, the number of personnel can only be decided within the framework of the budgetary procedure. We have therefore requested conciliation.

(Applause)

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Linkohr. — *(DE)* Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, early this week the Council of Research Ministers of the European Community adopted the new five-year programme for research into nuclear fusion, the total cost of which will be 1 500m ECU. Of this sum, slightly more than 400m ECU will be spent on JET, the actual fusion device, and some 1 000m ECU on what is known as the general programme. Of these total costs of 1 500m ECU the Community, in other words, our budget, will be providing 680m ECU. The remainder will be largely financed by the Member States.

These figures clearly show that fusion research is leading us into financial dimensions which should not be thoughtlessly entered under the general heading of 'Research'. Experience has also shown that inflation and technical innovations frequently result in a substantial increase in estimated costs.

In this connexion, a number of questions have arisen, and I feel we should not simply ignore them. For example, is there a genuine economic need for fusion? A reliable answer cannot, of course, yet be given, because fusion is a solution, if at all, for the year 2030, and by that time a great deal may have changed.

In view of the questions that remain unanswered in the scientific and technical area, little can yet be said on the implications for the environment, nor can safety aspects at present be discussed in more than very general terms. We are, in fact treading very insecure ground, which is always the case when practical achievement is far off.

What we can be fairly sure about, however, is that fusion reactors will be gigantic plants, many times the size of the light-water reactors usual today. In other words, they will undoubtedly be of no use for the decentralized supply of electricity.

Furthermore, the financial consequences of fusion research should be more closely observed in the future. As costs have so far risen steeply in a straight line, it is unlikely that fusion technology will require less finance in the future than in the past. In view of the strain on research budgets everywhere, I feel there is a need for caution.

The only feasible way out, it seems to me, is to strengthen international cooperation, by which I mean that, following JET, all four major research groups in the USA, in Japan, in the USSR and in Europe should cooperate more closely in this sector. If fusion research should develop into an area of genuine East-West cooperation, the thousands of millions it is being suggested we should spend might — politically speaking — even be justified.

Another question that arises is why the non-nuclear side of energy research is not being given the same amount of money from the public coffers. The resistance by the Greeks in the Council of Ministers to this expensive project and their call for more to be made available for renewable energies should therefore not be regarded simply as the reflexions of an outsider.

The final question that might be asked is this: who keeps a check on how the money is spent, and who assesses the political significance of fusion research findings? Neither the national parliaments nor the European Parliament has any practical way of exercising control. So we have here an example of the research bureaucracy for all practical purposes gaining the right to use tax revenue more or less as it will, and

Linkohr

it is not exactly encouraging when the Council of Ministers promises to consult the European Parliament but takes its own, and therefore final, decision before Parliament has adopted its opinion. However, to temper this criticism, I would add that we ourselves are slightly to blame. The European Parliament has surely had enough time since August of last year to form its opinion on this subject. We should be honest in this respect and be willing to admit our own failings for once.

The Socialist Group endorses the Commission's proposal, although it attaches great importance to the questions I have raised, which neither you nor we can answer at the moment.

We call for an annual financial and scientific review, so that we do not have a repetition of the Super-SARA project, the cost of which has now more than doubled. And as this condition has been included in the motion for a resolution, we approve the report drawn up by Mr Sassano, whom I should like to thank for the work he has done.

President. — I call the Group of the People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group).

Mr K. Fuchs. — (DE) Mr President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin by thanking very sincerely Mr Sassano for his devoted and expert work on this report. But above all I should like to express on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party my grave concern at the Council's action. Whatever the attempts to give some kind of explanation, they amount to no more than a very scanty figleaf, and the Council should particularly bear in mind the disastrous effect this will have on public opinion.

As the press reports say, the Council took its decision on Monday, whereas Parliament is only now, on Friday, considering the matter. Anyone who is against the Community and wishes to destroy it, will now be saying: There you are, this Parliament has no influence.

We shall lose all credibility if we deal with each other in this way. The loss of our credibility is far too high a political price to pay. The Council should bear this in mind.

The European People's Party approves the Commission's proposal. We see it as providing for forward-looking Community action to solve the energy problem in the long term and also to achieve the Community's independence from imported energy.

We also see in this project proof of the scientific and technical ability of the Community to introduce innovations on a grand scale. We are in favour of concentration on the Tokamak line. Fragmentation might

jeopardize the whole programme and exceed our financial means. I therefore have my doubts about amendments Nos 4 and 7 to the Commission's Proposal.

And this is the weak point, the Achilles' heel of the programme. Excessive commitment to one line may easily result in a neglect of other courses which may also lead to the goal. I therefore feel we are right to demand that other new developments be monitored very carefully.

This will make closer international cooperation, particularly with the United States, absolutely essential. And if you do not mind my saying so, I very much fear that resolutions like the one we adopted on El Salvador yesterday, do not exactly have the psychological effect of increasing the Americans' willingness to cooperate.

We need flexibility. I have the impression that the Commission thinks so, too. Mr Sassano has rightly, I believe, placed particular emphasis on the ignition aspect. Successful ignition would be a very important stage towards this goal. It would prove that the goal is correct and can be achieved. It would give the scientists working on this project a great deal of encouragement. I therefore feel that particular interest should also be taken in experiments in the field of ignition, which began with good prospects of success, but, unfortunately, were halted for financial reasons, an example being the ignition experiment that was begun during fusion research at Garching and was then suspended. Perhaps these and similar experiments can be included in the programme in the future.

We also consider it essential for work to be geared more closely to practical uses and for cooperation with industry to be increased so that there is greater concentration on the practical and technical side, the same being true of the associated research on the Trizion, for example. The highest possible priority must, of course, be given to the question of safety in all these measures.

To conclude, I must express some concern about the research staff. The average age of the staff is becoming rather high, and this may result in a gap in research, which would be fatal. Although the Commission's proposal mentions the problem, it does not offer a solution; and I therefore call on the Commission to submit to Parliament, and in particular the Committee on Energy and Research, proposals for solutions to this staff problem in the fairly near future, possible solutions being exchanges, research scholarships and the like. I believe that would be an extremely important step towards ensuring the programme will continue in the long term.

We endorse this important research and training programme, because we believe it can provide proof of the ability of our Community to function.

(Applause)

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Seligman. — Mr President, JET and the fusion research training programme is a magnificent Community project on which teams from several member countries are all working closely together to push back the frontiers of science. We are trying to produce a benign reactor with raw materials such as lithium and heavy water which are not radioactive. Nor are the waste products radioactive. Only tritium and the containment walls are likely to be radioactive, and they are not waste products. Mr President, the sun is the biggest fusion reactor that exists, and what could be a better reference than that?

Another good point is that the raw materials are in plentiful supply. Lithium, which is the lightest metal that exists — it even floats on water — is eight times as plentiful as uranium in the earth's crust. So here we have a renewable source of energy; and if we want to make it even more renewable, then we can use the breeder technique for breeding tritium in a lithium blanket. Of course, there are problems. Tritium itself is a very penetrating gas and therefore will be very inclined to leak. Nevertheless, I think we must face these safety problems, and the public will want to be informed. That is why I welcome Amendment No 15, which calls for a major programme of public consultation.

The public know very little about fusion, and when they do not know about something, they then get suspicious. They will want to be assured that fusion technology is not going to run away with itself, as happened to the sorcerer's apprentice. They must be confident, or at least their representatives in the Parliament must be confident, that all the successes and all the failures are discussed with them. That is why the report of the Fusion Review Panel is so important. Its main message is to concentrate on the Tokomak.

JET, which we are now supporting, will in fact be the biggest Tokomak in the world, and we shall try to achieve and hold the temperature of 100 million degrees Centigrade. If we reach that temperature, it looks as though we may be able to get more energy out of it than we have put in.

The point about the Review Panel's report which worries me refers to tritium technology, where it says: 'Political problems have interfered with technical planning'. Again, later it refers to inertial confinement with lasers and says: 'It has been difficult to implement the Council's decision because of political problems linked with possible military implications'. So it looks as though the Community fusion programme is severely handicapped whenever there is a military angle to things such as tritium technology or lasers. I understand, this morning, after discussing it with the Commissioner, there has been a change here. It is a

pity we were not notified about it. There has been an improvement in the situation and it looks as though there will be cooperation in these neomilitary areas. If so, then our attitude to Amendment No 7 will change and we shall vote to reject it.

In any case, thank goodness that the EEC are partners in the INTOR Project of the IAEA! I hope that this is a guarantee that the next European Torus which will follow JET, and finally the demonstration torus which will follow that, will have the benefit of American, Japanese and Russian technology as well as our own. I hope that under that cooperation military and political obstacles and secrecy will be irrelevant. Science and secrecy do not act as good partners.

One more point, Mrs Walz has asked us to vote in favour of Amendment No 10 in voting the conciliation procedure on this whole matter. This will delay the JET programme by at least six weeks and will be disastrous in its effect on Culham and the project there. We are cutting off our nose to spite our face if we invoke conciliation in this case. Conciliation is already taking place on the matter of raw materials. Can't we be a little selective in deciding where we use this hammer to fight the Council? I think we ought to have only one conciliation procedure going at a time. If we go on conciliating on everything where the Council has taken an informal decision, we shall hold everything up in the Community and get a very bad reputation for being dilatory. So I hope the House will reject Amendment No 10, though I do not mean this in any way personally against Mrs Walz.

Finally, Mr Linkohr is worried about the cost of fusion research. He says it has not been properly controlled. Mr Linkohr is an unusual socialist who does not like spending money. The Committee on Budgets, through Mr Kellett-Bowman, has in fact looked at this and explained that apart from inflation, during the design and research phase of any large-scale project lasting many years, many new ideas of research will come to light, and that is bound to be expensive. You cannot control brilliant scientists within fetters of strict financial control. The thing would dry up if we tried to do that.

Nuclear fusion is in fact the biggest and most important project the Community has. It is costing 680 million ECU, half of which goes on the JET programme, and it promises a complete solution to our present dependence on imported energy. We cannot expect to achieve this on the cheap. We may have to spend 100 billion ECU before we can launch the first power-station, but we spend that money every year on imported energy. So the solution would be well worth the money we have to spend. For that reason I call on the Parliament to support the Sassano report and resolution.

(Applause)

IN THE CHAIR: LADY ELLES

Vice-President

President. — I call the Communist and Allies Group.

Mr Veronesi. — *(IT)* Madam President, for a number of reasons we shall vote in favour of the resolution and the Council decision which have been submitted to us. The first reason is that we are convinced of the validity of the technological and scientific research on nuclear fusion. We have discussed this subject so often that there is no need to review the reasons for this conclusion once again. In any case, these reasons have been well illustrated in Mr Sassano's fine report; I thank him for this, and I congratulate him on the excellent synthesis he has provided on this vast and complex issue.

The second reason for our favourable vote lies in the fact that it is a matter of continuing a programme launched years ago and now in the process of being carried out; all this was already foreseen at the beginning, when we estimated that a lengthy period of time — reasonably lengthy — was necessary to complete the research and obtain results. It would be truly absurd to suspend or even to delay an experiment before ever having concluded it: it would be the worst possible way of investing the limited funds available for scientific research. All this appears to me to be blindingly obvious.

The third reason which persuades us to support the Council's proposal and the Committee on Energy's resolution is that the latter is supported by the Panel established to make an up-to-date evaluation of the programme in the light of the results obtained so far and the most recent scientific knowledge on the subject. This seems to us to be a sensible and reasonable procedure, very painstaking and serious and worthy of full confidence.

The fourth reason for our favourable vote lies in the conviction that the research undertaken will yield rich technological results applicable to other fields of human activity. Even if the object we are pursuing should finally prove to be unattainable — and we believe that it is not, in principle, on the basis of our present theoretical and experimental knowledge — we shall in any event have made a correct choice in investigating the possibility of producing energy by means of a physical process which absolutely had to be explored.

The fifth reason which determines our attitude is the guarantee of systematic and periodical information to Parliament on the progress of the research. We count on this, Mr Commissioner.

This, very briefly, is our position. There are also disturbing elements which were mentioned by some members, elements stemming from the procedure adopted. I will not dwell on these, for they have already been pointed out by previous speakers.

In conclusion, we are not absolutely sure that the proposed series of amendments to the Council decision would promote the rapid approval of the programme. We believe it is better to avoid going too deeply into questions that are premature or require a broader treatment of the problems raised. We think that the resolution, in the form in which it was approved by the Committee on Energy, provides the Council with a broad, unified view of the entire complex of problems concerning controlled nuclear fusion, and that is sufficient. We shall therefore vote in favour of Amendments Nos 6 and 10; we shall abstain from all the others.

President. — I call the Non-attached Members.

Mr Petronio. — *(IT)* Madam President, in the concluding portion of Mr Sassano's report, in harmony with the recommendations of the Fusion Review Panel, there is an outline of priority directions to follow in order to make nuclear fusion a scientific, technological, and commercial reality. One of these is based on the rapid accomplishment of experiments using devices with a strong magnetic field, devices capable of producing plasmas close to ignition: according to the technicians, these experiments have so far yielded excellent results at relatively low cost.

The rapporteur, moreover, is breaking a lance for an existing project that is, the 'Ignitor' project — conceived by Professor Coppi, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. We agree with the rapporteur when he invites the Commission to examine it and rapidly evaluate its feasibility and scientific validity. It seems to us impossible that the size of the financial commitment — whether it is 30 milliard, as first estimated, or more than this, as was subsequently asserted — can constitute a serious, not to say an insurmountable barrier. If Professor Coppi is right about his 'Ignitor', and we, for purely financial reasons, do not support him, we shall one day be obliged bitterly to acknowledge our inability to test and retest, search and research, according to the age-old rule of science. In the phase of research and development, but also in the context of international cooperation, and bearing in mind the interests of certain Italian regions, we feel that it is more appropriate than ever to back the 'Ignitor' which is an advanced Tokamak, far superior to the rest. Furthermore, the choice of the 'Ignitor' would eventually have the support of the Panel, which is composed of 11 scientists from the highest levels. If the judgment is favourable, therefore, no financial obstacle should

Petronio

stand in the way of establishing a programme which could be a feather in the cap of our Community.

It only remains to confirm our positive vote on the Sassano report, a report which is balanced, well-structured and coherently formulated, and adequately correlates the objectives and the financial resources needed in order to achieve, when the time has come, the production of long-term energy through nuclear fusion, an historical event for our civilization.

President. — I call Mr Eisma.

Mr Eisma. — (NL) Madam President, this research is an excellent example of a project that is eminently suited to a Community approach. It is very expensive and difficult. There is absolutely no advantage to be gained from duplication of effort, and all the Member States and the associated countries will derive equal benefit from it. Nuclear fusion research, which has as its object the experimental study on earth of matter under conditions which prevail on the stars, is of great interest to physics. The research must therefore undoubtedly continue until ignition of the deuterium tritium plasma has been achieved. JET must consequently be completed and exploited to show the scientific feasibility of controlled nuclear fusion.

The debate, on whether this process will ever be used for the commercial generation of energy has not yet been completed. Three questions must, in our opinion, be answered in this respect: firstly, shall we ever need it; secondly, if the experiment succeeds, will the generation of energy be safer or cleaner than nuclear fission; and thirdly, will it ever succeed?

As regards the first question, for the time being we can just make do with what little oil and natural gas we have left, and coal will last us another hundred to two hundred years. If it is very careful about conservation, makes more efficient use of energy and develops solar energy and wind power, the Western world may last out for a long time. I have not mentioned nuclear fission because we are opposed to fast-breeder reactors. But if we want to improve the situation in the Third World, it is unlikely that we can do without a new source of energy, such as nuclear fusion.

On the second question it can be said that, if we succeed in developing nuclear fusion, processes in which considerable quantities of tritium circulate may represent a potential danger inherent in nuclear fission. This, then, is undoubtedly another problem that must be solved.

Thirdly, will it ever succeed? To answer this question, the scientific feasibility I have already referred to must first be demonstrated. This will probably take another ten to twenty years. Only if scientific feasibility is proved, need we take a decision on whether we should

also investigate technical feasibility, and by that time we shall know rather more about the need for this process and its safety.

Our objection to the proposed programme is that it does not specify a definite point in time when the desirability of the deuterium tritium fusion reactor for the supply of energy will be discussed as a matter of principle. On the contrary, this desirability is assumed, and the last phase of the study of scientific feasibility, JET, overlaps the first phase of the study of technical feasibility. Scientifically speaking, the line between scientific and technical feasibility is rather arbitrary; but the activities referred to on page 40 of the Commission's report, particularly experimental tritium and blanket technology, can be regarded from a political angle as over the limit. These activities, involving the 68m ECU referred to in Table VI, should not be approved until the decision of principle has been taken to proceed to a study of technical feasibility. I would ask the Commission whether it shares this view.

Finally, we note that the Committee on Budgets has made what we regard as a number of valuable recommendations. Why, Mr Sassano, do we find no trace of these in the motion for a resolution?

To wind up, Madam President, we can give the Sassano report our approval. If a reduction should be necessary for whatever reason, the 68m ECU for experimental tritium and blanket technology could go.

I should also like to hear from the Commissioner if it is true that the Council discussed this programme last Monday, in which case Parliament's opinion will once again be offered too late to be of any use.

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the debate of the new multiannual research programme in the field of thermonuclear fusion concerns the very heart of Community research. The rapporteur, Mr Sassano, for the Committee on Energy and Research, and the draftsman, Mr Kellett-Bowman, for the Committee on Budgets, have rightly stressed the great importance to be attached to this research programme. The Commission thanks these two gentlemen for the thorough work they have done and also for their positive appraisal of the Commission's activities in this field.

It is not often that the spotlight is thrown on scientific research, as is the case with fusion research. Although over one million people are engaged in research in the countries of the Community, including some 370 000 research workers and engineers, and although a total of some 23 000m ECU of public resources was spent on the promotion of research in 1981, public interest in research unfortunately continues to be

Narjes

limited. This is regrettable, because the competitiveness and prosperity of our industrial society are largely attributable to successes in scientific research and technological development. For this we owe a debt of thanks and appreciation to the many people engaged in research and development.

Such appreciation is all the more important since we are particularly dependent on the creativity of scientists and research workers and the impulses for innovation they provide during the difficult phase of structural adjustment in which our national economies are at present engaged. The successes the Community can boast in fusion and in many other areas of research enable us to look to the future with some confidence, although we are well aware of the unanswered questions that have been listed here.

In the field of fusion research, it has been possible to integrate all research work being done in the Member States into the Community programme, thus ensuring comprehensive coordination and precluding duplication of effort and unnecessary financial burdens. In constructing JET, the Community is carrying on the world's largest experiment this decade. The highest temperature and plasma confinement values have so far been achieved within the Community programme at the Italian fusion laboratory in Frascati. European fusion research has a world reputation, making the Community a sought-after partner in international cooperation.

The new programme is a further step towards the tapping of a new, inexhaustible source of energy to meet humanity's energy requirements. There are very few even theoretically conceivable alternatives. The advantages of controlled nuclear fusion are obvious — the wealth of fuel available and low fuel costs — and added to this, these fuels — deuterium and lithium — and the final product of the fusion reactor — helium — are not radioactive.

Fusion research has set itself an ambitious goal. This goal cannot be achieved in the short term, and it will not be achieved without considerable expenditure. Mr Sassano's and Mr Kellett-Bowman's remarks leave us in no doubt about this. The Commission therefore fully endorses their view that the high financial input must be subject to constant critical assessment and control by the budgetary authority as the research programme is implemented.

The Commission is aware of its specific responsibility in this, and by commissioning the Beckurts Committee, as it has come to be known, to carry out a critical appraisal of the Community's fusion research programme and by subsequently publishing the committee's report, the Commission has greatly improved the control procedures and transparency. The Commission would also like to establish a framework programme as a planning instrument for the Community's entire research policy. A planning instru-

ment of this kind is needed in view of the rising expenditure, not least on fusion research, in order to set priorities for Community research policy and to ensure the financing of these priority areas. None the less, it should not be forgotten that expenditure on research under Chapter 73 accounts for 1.4% of the Community's total budget and total spending on fusion research, at 300m EUA, accounts for 1.3% of total public spending on research and can therefore be regarded as rather modest.

At its meeting on Monday of this week, the Council of Research Ministers also stressed the suitability of a general framework for Community research and suggested that this idea should be included in the recitals to the proposal for the new fusion programme. It must, however, be stated quite categorically — and I am thus answering a number of questions put to the Commission — that, contrary to perhaps confusing press reports, no decision of any kind has yet been taken on the programme, since Parliament has not yet delivered its opinion.

According to the Commission and according to the text of the press-release, another copy of which I obtained this morning, the Council of Ministers has not yet concluded its deliberations, and as the Commission sees it, it may put forward any amendments that may be adopted here today when these deliberations are continued. What the Research Ministers were doing was sounding each other out, and the reference in the German text to a positive alignment should not, in our view, be taken to mean anything other than what I have just said. It is not therefore right to say that the Council decision was adopted subject only to reservations on the part of the Greek Government — no, the decisive reservation was that Parliament's opinion had not been delivered.

But why did this happen? Because we are in a hurry, because we are two months behind. The Commission's timetable was as follows: proposal in July — communication to Parliament and the Council before the end of July, stating that the timing should provide for Parliament to deliver its opinion in 1981 and for the Council to take its decision in December 1981. The Council did not request an opinion until late August — on 24 August, as Mrs Walz has already said. The appropriate committees of Parliament did not appoint their rapporteur and draftsman until 19 and 20 October. It was not until 25 February that the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy and Research adopted their respective documents. That is the timing of events as revealed by the Commission's records.

To conclude, I should like to comment on the amendments to the proposal for a Council decision. The Commission has endeavoured to put forward a balanced proposal which accords with the present state of the scientific debate and leaves sufficient room for scientific freedom while clearly stating the objectives.

Narjes

The Commission feels that two amendments do not quite meet the requirement of balance. This is true of the proposal that great importance should be attached in the second recital to other systems of magnetic confinement — namely stellarators and the reversed field pinch. Just as research work in this area should not be excluded, special emphasis should not be placed on them to the detriment of other technical elements of the programme. Furthermore, the British Government's decision to halt the RFX-Reversed Field Pinch experiment for cost reasons means that the future of research work in this area is at present uncertain.

On the question of introducing a new paragraph 5a in the Annex to the programme decision, the Commission cannot completely agree with the Committee on Energy and Research. The Commission feels it would be premature to draw up proposals for their supply of fuel to fusion reactors as part of this programme, which, as you know, will expire in 1986. This would result in the programme assuming at this stage a task which not only concerns a politically sensitive area — the question of access to tritium — but which will not be necessary even after the completion of the experiments in 1986.

I should also like to point out that the United Kingdom and France have given written assurances that they will make their national tritium know-how available to the fusion programme, and that is perhaps worth bearing in mind when considering Amendment No 7.

If, however, the House should adopt these two amendments, the Commission would incorporate them, and the other two amendments, into the proposal.

The proposal for the inclusion in paragraph 1 of the Annex to the Council decision of a reference to international cooperation ties in with the Commission's idea that international cooperation should be sought and developed wherever possible. The Commission also welcomes the suggestion first made by the rapporteur, Mr Sassano, that a reference to experiments with ignition in compact devices with a strong magnetic field should be included in the programme decision. The Commission is at present investigating the likelihood of such an experiment being successful.

The Commission is thus able to accept Amendment No 9, by the Committee on Energy and Research, in the version submitted by Mr Sassano.

Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I will conclude by repeating a request from the Commission: let us not allow the question of institutional responsibilities to delay a research programme which is of cardinal importance for the future of Europe.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed. We shall now proceed to the vote.

(...)

Proposal for a decision

Third recital: Amendments Nos 5 and 9

Mr Sassano, rapporteur. — *(IT)* Madam President, Amendments Nos 5 and 9 are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary, and for this reason I am in favour of both of them.

President. — In the English text, Mr Sassano, it would be impossible to add both amendments. Perhaps you could advise which amendment you prefer. They are very similar in meaning.

Mr Sassano, rapporteur. — *(IT)* Nos 5 and 9. Both of them.

(...)

Annex: Amendment No 7

Mr Sassano, rapporteur. — *(IT)* Madam President, I am against it, also because of what was said a moment ago by the representative of the Commission.¹

(...)

Motion for a resolution

Paragraph 9: Amendment No 2

(Mr Seligman asked for a roll-call vote)

President. — I call Mr Arndt.

Mr Arndt. — *(DE)* You put this amendment to the vote and you are now having the result checked. A request for a vote by roll-call must, however, be made *before* the vote is taken. This was not done.

President. — You are of course quite correct, Mr Arndt. Mr Seligman, as I think I indicated before, if in future you wish to have an electronic roll-call vote, would you kindly ask for it before the first vote begins? You cannot ask for it once the voting has begun.

What we are doing now is checking the result of the vote which has taken place. It is not a new vote.

¹ In addition, the rapporteur spoke *in favour* of Amendments Nos 6, 2, 8 and 10.

Mr Seligman. — I misunderstood your ruling. I thought we had to ask for a roll-call vote when we asked for the electronic vote. You have to ask right from the beginning, do you?

President. — Perhaps I should just explain to Mr Seligman that if you want a roll-call vote the request must be made before the vote begins, regardless of the method by which that vote is held.

Mr Van Minnen. — Excuse me, Madam. I got my American Express card into it.

(Laughter)

I hope you will give me another opportunity to vote with my correct card. I wish to vote in favour.

(...)

President. — I can now give the floor for explanations of vote.

Mr Markopoulos. — *(GR)* Madam President, both the first and second generations of nuclear reactors — that is, the uranium reactors and the regenerative reactors — are already, as is known, fully developed. However, both attract emphatic criticism from the public. The so-called third generation — namely, the thermonuclear fusion reactors — seem to offer the hope of a permanent solution to the energy problem, which is becoming more and more acute as time goes by. It is clear, however, that to date nothing specific has been discovered by science and that a great deal of money is required for extensive experimentation. And I am sure that you all understand the dilemma of the Greek Government, which a few months ago inherited economic chaos from the Right and which has to meet urgent needs for our own people.

Is it right to hand over vast sums for a research programme when this money is needed for other and more immediate purposes? And if finally, in spite of our hesitation, it is decided that money must be set aside for energy research, should not some of it go to research centres for other forms of energy? To centres requiring less money — for example, to a centre for the utilization of solar energy?

Thus, in view of Mr Linkohr's call for a closer examination of the subject of research into thermonuclear fusion, and until the subject of research into new sources of energy has been examined as a whole, and although as a general principle we believe in supporting all forms of research, we cannot but express reservations today concerning a positive vote.

President. — May I point out to Members that during an explanation of vote it is not very courteous to that Member to have conversations while he is speaking?

(Parliament approved the draft decision and adopted the resolution)

4. Carriage of goods

President. — The next item is the report (Doc. 1-1076/81) by Mr Nyborg, on behalf of the Committee on Transport, on

the proposal from the Commission to the Council (Doc. 1-634/81) for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 3164/76 on the Community quota for the carriage of goods by road between Member States.

I call the rapporteur.

Mr Nyborg, rapporteur. — *(DA)* Madam President, with your approval, I should like to divide my speech into two parts, since while I naturally wish to speak primarily as rapporteur for the Committee on Transport, I also wish to speak on behalf of my own group.

The report before the House today is the result of a long and difficult struggle. It is not a particularly good document, but that is usually the case with a compromise.

As some Members present will recall, the committee examined last December a report which should have been taken at the December part-session so that the Council of Transport Ministers could use Parliament's opinion when deciding on the 1982 Community quota for the carriage of goods by road between Member States. The committee, however, was unable to reach agreement on the report, which was finally rejected by one vote and could not, therefore, be presented in December.

This was a setback for Community haulage contractors which, in view of the fact that the Community quota due to come into force on 1 January will now be delayed at least until 1 April, is highly regrettable.

As you are also aware, the Council of Transport Ministers drew up a so-called interim decision providing for a 5% flat increase for eight Member States and including a special clause for Ireland and Greenland. We welcome the fact that the Council showed, if I may put it that way, some respect for Parliament's opinion, since in the light of the Dijon cassis affair, it was unwilling to get its fingers burned a second time. That is as it should be. However, I maintain that the best course of action today would be to adopt this report.

Nyborg

I would say to Mr Moreland that I deeply regret the amendments he has tabled, since the report is the outcome of a compromise in committee. It is unreasonable to table amendments after a compromise of this sort has been reached. As rapporteur, therefore, I am against these amendments. That is all I have to say as my committee's rapporteur.

As spokesman for my group, I should like to state that we support Mr Moreland's amendments since we agree with the principle on which they are based. None the less, on behalf of my group and on my own behalf I regret that the compromise reached in the Committee on Transport has not been respected. I therefore leave the matter to the House to decide.

President. — I call the Socialist Group.

Mr Seefeld. — (*DE*) Madam President, Mr Nyborg has indeed had no easy task, and as chairman of the committee — although I am not now speaking in this capacity — I should like to thank him. My group also wishes to thank him for performing this difficult task.

Mr Nyborg points out in his report that this is the fifteenth time that we are submitting a report on this subject in the European Parliament, and I myself have already taken part in fourteen debates on the subject. The question is, therefore, and it is one that Mr Nyborg also asks, why we have to go through the same procedure every year, why it is not possible to allow things to continue for a longer period?

Another question is why we always have to work under pressure. This was to have been adopted in December, but the committee was for once unable to meet the deadline. We believe Mr Nyborg is quite right to point out in his resolution that an arrangement should be planned for a longer period than one year.

I should like to take up another idea. In 1977, the rapporteur at the time, Mr Giraud, made a suggestion on the question of the Community quotas, which was adopted. He said that during a transitional phase a progressive increase in the Community quota should be accompanied by the systematic removal of bilateral quotas.

This idea was generally accepted. We had hoped that it might be introduced and now find to our regret that the carriage of goods between Member States covered by Community authorizations at present represents only 5% of the total.

Everything must be done to achieve a substantial increase in the Community quota and at the same time to reduce bilateral authorizations, so that we can genuinely speak of a Community share in the quota system as a whole.

My group is very happy to see that this compromise has been reached. Seventeen members of the committee voted for, one against and one abstained. So you can see how difficult it was to reach this compromise. All I can say, therefore, is that the amendments tabled by Mr Moreland do not accord with the committee's view, as the rapporteur has already said. We should very much welcome it if the compromise were left untouched. We should welcome it if Mr Moreland's amendments were not put to the vote; but as he will presumably not be withdrawing them, we shall vote against them.

With these very general remarks and in the hope that we can come to a longer-term and appropriate solution with respect to this quota system, I can say that the Socialist Group will be voting for Mr Nyborg's report.

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

Mr Janssen van Raay. — (*NL*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin by congratulating Mr Nyborg, who has for the second time and in the most difficult of circumstances drawn up a report on a subject which is naturally of very great importance for the common market. But I should also like to compliment Mr Seefeld, because chairing the meetings to discuss this matter was certainly not easy, and with his usual objectivity and enthusiasm he put forward a compromise which leaves me in precisely the same schizophrenic position as Mr Nyborg.

On the one hand, speaking on behalf of my group, I can say that this compromise is acceptable to some of us, and they will therefore be voting for the Nyborg resolution. I shall be doing the same. On the other hand, Mr Moreland has tabled amendments with which some members of my group do not agree. They will therefore be voting against. Yet others regard the Moreland amendments as a sign that things are not well organized in the common market at present.

We have always felt that free competition, regulated in some way, of course, forms the basis of the common market, and yet so important an aspect of the common market as road transport is still governed by bilateral agreements. That is, of course, diametrically opposed to the principle and the basis of the common market. Although we find this compromise first-class, some of us feel that the signal that has been given must be passed on to the Council of Ministers by the Commissioner, who we know has always taken an interest in this subject, with an appeal for steps at last to be taken to liberalize this market.

I have myself twice used the word 'compromise', because Mr Nyborg and Mr Seefeld have used it. I

Janssen van Raay

hope you will not take it amiss if I comment on this briefly as a lawyer. It is not, of course, a compromise, since Mr Moreland, who tabled these amendments earlier, if I am not mistaken, did not have them put to the vote in committee. We know that compromises can be reached in committees, and the authors of amendments and the rapporteur can together arrive at a new version which enables the amendments to be withdrawn. That did not happen in this case. We thus have the familiar situation of the committee voting for amendments which are then rejected. We do not consider this important enough to vote against the report as such. Then these amendments come up again. What are we to do? We let people vote as they will, and although the report in itself is laudable in every way, we still feel that the amendments tabled, the signal to which I have referred — and that is what I mean, Mr Seefeld — must be passed on to the Council of Ministers.

President. — I call the European Democratic Group.

Mr Moreland. — Having heard the previous speeches I am surprised that I could cause so much trouble or schizophrenia. I can only say that the remarks made earlier were actually gentler than the remarks made to me following the speech I gave yesterday on seals: so it is calmer water today.

I would like to congratulate the rapporteur, Mr Nyborg, and, as last year's rapporteur, to sympathize with him on this subject. It is something of a bed of nails and in my view creates far more controversy than the subject really warrants. My group has always taken the view that we are actually against the quota as it stands; that we believe in the movement towards liberalization and that we believe that liberalization is indeed the objective in the context of the Treaty of Rome.

Now, of course, although we are today formally discussing the Commission's proposal, we all know that is not what we are really discussing. We are discussing the decision taken in the Council last December, a decision which has in brackets 'having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament'.

I suppose many of us would like to think that the opinion from the Council came after a long detailed discussion, a rigorous examination of all the statistics and a studied and sympathetic approach. I think we all know from what we have heard about what went on in the Council, that it was really rather different. Indeed what happened in the discussions on this subject would have been reminiscent of a Marx Brothers' film or a Bob Hope and Bing Crosby film. Indeed the reaction of certain Ministers gave the impression to their colleagues that their knowledge of transport might be somewhat wanting. Whether this is what we want from the Council of Transport Ministers is, I think,

somewhat questionable. So we know that what we have before us is at best a political compromise in which one Minister, namely the German Minister, was given an anaemic railway resolution to that he could go home and trumpet that he had done something in return for very modest proposals on the Community quota. We regard this as quite disgraceful.

Now I might say to my colleagues that I hope that Parliament has not got the false impression that I have broken any agreement in committee on a compromise. Indeed since the amendments do not replace any paragraph I am a little surprised by the comments, certainly as regards my third amendment, because I thought in the conversation after the committee meeting that it was generally regretted that we had not got into the resolution any recognition of the one bright light from the Council which was their recognition that the peripheral areas of the Community have a problem and that there is a need to examine their quotas. Therefore, Madam President, we would urge particularly support for our Amendment No 3. I wish to warn you we will call for a roll-call vote on that because the situation is intolerable. Let us put our cards on the table; what happens is that one or two countries have basically all the quotas they need and some of the others do not and that is inequitable and wrong and the situation has to be changed. It is actually bad for transport in the Community. It creates bureaucracy and we must, I think, stop it. Therefore, it is my belief that the Transport Council really has got to get down to adopting a phased plan for liberalization. I entirely accept, at the same time, harmonization of other social measures in the transport field, but we cannot go on with this ridiculous annual *ad hoc* battle which wastes a lot of the time of this Parliament and wastes a lot of the time of the Council meeting itself.

President. — I call the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Mrs von Alemann. — I wanted, Madam President, to start off by saying that I feel like Christmas at the moment, because usually we discuss this report just before Christmas. I noted last time when we discussed it that it must be Christmas because we are discussing the transport quota which the Council of Ministers, as usual, is passing on to us too late. I am sorry, by the way: I realize suddenly that I am speaking the wrong language.

(Laughter)

President. — You are at liberty to use any language you wish, including English.

Mrs von Alemann. — I think I will go on speaking English, as I am going to address some of my remarks to Mr Moreland.

von Alemann

I would urge the Council of Ministers not to get into the habit of making us discuss this proposition at Christmas and at Easter. I really find that is a little too much. We can recognize what season it is just from this subject.

I strongly reject some of the remarks which Mr Moreland made, because after all, Mr Moreland, what we have been doing is not particularly schizophrenic. We have been trying to come to a compromise in the committee on very different points of view. Of course, since Germany is one of the biggest countries, we have a different point of view from some of the other countries. I think that is only understandable.

But there cannot be any liberalization without harmonization. I agree there should be liberalization, but harmonization must go beyond the present level. All of us who work on the Committee on Transport know that there is very little harmonization, except for the very few points which we have achieved so far. I think it is a very sound principle. I think we should therefore not accept — I am now speaking on behalf on my group — your Amendments Nos 1 and 2. We could go along with your Amendment No 3, and if this is going to necessitate a roll-call vote, I am going to tell my colleagues that I think Amendment No 3 could be accepted. But I do urge you, all those colleagues, who are still here in the House to vote for the report, because we are late anyway, and because we know that the Council of Ministers, once again, has made a decision without actually asking our advice. It is a very bad habit. We should not be later with this report than is absolutely necessary.

(Applause)

President. — Thank you very much, Mrs von Alemann, and my congratulations on your excellent English.

(Applause)

I call Mr Newton Dunn.

Mr Newton Dunn. — Madam President, I hope I can acquit myself in an equal quality of English as the foregoer speaker, which was really first-class.

I am not a specialist in transport, but I have received letters from hauliers in my own particular area of the United Kingdom who wanted to enter the intra-Community transport business.

Not being an expert, I had to dig into it, and I found that there was an appalling system of quotas, with bureaucrats up in the north of England restricting free competition. Now, this is a common market, and we believe in free competition, and equal movement of goods and capital and people and, presumably, of

lorries too. I find it intolerable that we should have to have this appalling system of quotas. If a haulier wishes to enter the business, and if he is respectable and reputable and able to do the job, he should be allowed to have a go. He will offer lower prices, a lower freight rate which will ultimately be to the benefit of the consumer. And that must be a good thing. If we abolish quotas, we might also, I hope, get rid of the bureaucrats, who are not creating any wealth and are consuming our taxes. Quite simply, would the Commissioner please make a full-hearted commitment to abolish these quotas, as well as moving towards the harmonization which Mrs von Alemann proposed — particularly with regard to abolishing all internal customs and excise barriers?

President. — I call the Commission.

Mr Narjes, Member of the Commission. — *(DE)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, the Commission would first like to thank Mr Nyborg and the Committee on Transport sincerely for the report on the increase in the Community quota for the carriage of goods between Member States. It also endorses the motion for a resolution.

The Commission very much regrets that, because of the small number of authorizations available, the Community quota can play no more than a very limited, too limited a role. For years Parliament and the Commission have together been trying, vainly, to persuade the Council to abandon its restrictive decision-making policy in this field and instead to give the Community quota priority over bilateral quotas. The Council's attitude becomes all the more incomprehensible when it is realized that the Community authorizations so far issued have been used to very good effect, that they permit trouble-free transport operations and so increase the productivity of transport undertakings. The Community quota also makes a decisive contribution to the strengthening of the internal market.

Despite this, the Council again decides on 15 December 1981 on a mere 5% increase in the Community quota for 1982, as against the 20% increase proposed by the Commission. Although it has only adopted a basic decision pending the receipt of Parliament's opinion, it is to be feared that the Council's final decision will be well below what Parliament and the Commission consider appropriate. For the 1982 Community quota the Commission has proposed a new distribution key with the aim of making the criteria governing the calculation and distribution of authorizations more objective.

Like any new instrument, this distribution key must be tried out in practice and improved. The Commission agrees with the Committee on Transport in this respect. Furthermore, the introduction of this new

Narjes

distribution key is partly to blame for the fact that the Commission was unable to present its proposal before 22 September 1981, thus delaying the consultation of Parliament. The Member States insisted on the Commission consulting numerous government experts and the transport sector before adopting the proposal. However, the experience it thus gained will enable the Commission to ensure that its proposals on the Community quota are submitted in good time in the future, that is to say, before the summer recess. To conclude, I should like to thank Mr Newton Dunn particularly for his reference to the links between a trouble-free liberal transport policy and the development of the internal market. I see this as a stimulus to remove barriers of all kinds.

(Applause)

President. — The debate is closed. We proceed to the vote.

(...)

I can now give the floor for explanations of vote.

Mr Harris. — Madam President, I was in two minds as to whether or not to vote for this report, because, like some of the previous speakers on this side of the House, I think the whole business is crazy and completely against the principles of the common market. Indeed, just half an hour before this debate started, I had a phone-call from a constituent — a road haulier — asking to come to see me tomorrow because he has had difficulties in getting a permit. This goes on all the time. It really is time we put an end to this business. Responsibility lies with this House, the whole of this House, the Commission and, above all, the Council of Ministers. We have to put a bomb under the Council of Ministers. I shall vote for the report now, because the House has passed, very wisely, the amendments of my colleague Mr Moreland, and I ask the other Members also to vote in favour.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

Mr Tyrrell. — The whole subject of the Community quota is merely an exercise in window-dressing. It is designed to distract attention from the lamentable failure of the Council to implement those provisions of the Treaty calling for a common transport policy.

(Cries of 'hear, hear!')

Furthermore, the basis of the Community quota is of dubious legality in itself, and I have great doubts whether this House should continue to support it at all. It contributes almost nothing to the free movement of goods within the Community but legitimizes the iniquitous bilateral system that has survived for so long. Road-hauliers who are hungry for permits under the quota system view the Community quota with utter contempt. They know that there is not the slightest chance of their getting their hands on one of those permits. Well, this is the last time that I personally will find myself able to go through this annual ritual of supporting a different Community quota as proposed by the Commission.

(Applause from the European Democratic Group)

(Parliament approved the draft regulation and adopted the resolution)¹

5. Adjournment of the session

President. — I declare the session of the European Parliament adjourned.

(The sitting closed at 11.45 a.m.)

¹ For items concerning motions for resolutions entered in the register under Rule 49, tabling of amendments, forwarding of resolutions adopted, and the dates for the next part-session, see the Minutes.

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