

[REDACTED]

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

[REDACTED]

PRESS RELEASE

7608/84 (Presse 101)

935th Council meeting
- Labour and Social Affairs -
Luxembourg, 7 June 1984
President: Mr Pierre BEREGOVOY
Minister for Social Security
and National Solidarity
of the French Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Michel HANSENNE
Minister for Labour
and Employment

Denmark:

Mrs Grethe FENGER MØLLER
Minister for Labour

Germany:

Mr Wolfgang VOGT
Parliamentary State Secretary
to the Federal Minister for
Labour and Social Security

Greece:

Mr Costas PAPANAYOTOU
General Secretary to
the Ministry for Labour

France:

Mr Pierre BEREGOVOY
Minister for Social Security
and National Solidarity

Ireland:

Mr Ruairi QUINN
Minister for Labour

Mrs Yvette ROUDY
Minister for Women's Rights

Mr Jack RALITE
Minister attached to the Minister
for Social Security and National
Solidarity, responsible for
employment

Italy:

Mr Gianni DE MICHELIS
Minister for Labour

Luxembourg:

Mr Jacques SANTER
Minister for Labour
and Social Security

Netherlands:

Mr J. de KONING
Minister for Employment
and Social Security

United Kingdom:

Mr Tom KING
Minister for Labour

Commission:

Mr Ivor RICHARD
Member

REDUCTION AND REORGANIZATION OF WORKING TIME

Following the Council's discussions on this item, the President noted that one delegation was unable to give its agreement and that unanimity which was required by the Treaty, on the draft Recommendation on the reduction and reorganization of working time prepared within the Council, could not be achieved at this meeting.

The President will apprise the Council of the outcome of the discussions at the European Council meeting scheduled for 25 and 26 June 1984.

MEDIUM-TERM SOCIAL ACTION

Following a discussion, most delegations were in favour of draft conclusions concerning a medium-term Community social action programme submitted by the Presidency. One delegation stood by a reservation on the draft, pending examination.

INFORMING AND CONSULTING EMPLOYEES OF UNDERTAKINGS WITH COMPLEX STRUCTURES, IN PARTICULAR TRANSNATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS

The Council noted a progress report on the proposal for a Directive on informing and consulting employees of undertakings with complex structures, in particular transnational undertakings.

Following a discussion during which the delegations and the Commission were able to clarify their position of principle with regard to this proposal, the President noted that discussions on the subject should continue apace.

CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES TO COMBATING
UNEMPLOYMENT

Following its Resolution of 12 July 1982 to combat unemployment and to the Commission communication entitled "Community action to combat unemployment - the contribution of local employment initiatives", the Council adopted the following Resolution in the official languages of the Community:

I. Aim

1. The Council notes the communication submitted by the Commission entitled "Community action to combat unemployment - the contribution of local employment initiatives".
2. It notes with interest the development of the phenomenon of local employment initiatives (LEIs); recognizes the contribution that these initiatives can make to the objectives of the fight against unemployment and the revival of economic activity by virtue of the possibilities they offer for the maintenance or creation of jobs, particularly in small undertakings, by encouraging the recovery of local economic and social situations.
3. It considers that the development of these initiatives should be supported and stimulated by the Member States' policies accompanied by specific measures at Community level.

II. General characteristics

1. The Council notes that local employment initiatives:

- are most often the result of action by individuals or groups of individuals who are either unemployed or threatened by unemployment, and are often supported by local promoters;
- are consequently implemented by persons who are not necessarily conversant with the management or administration of an undertaking and who have no personal capital of any significance;
- are particularly important for persons whose chances of integration or reintegration into the labour market are very slight;
- differ widely in their modes of organization;
- involve a wide variety of activities which are normally centred on local needs and adapted to local conditions;
- are often important in places suffering from serious unemployment or under-employment as a result of special development difficulties;
- often involve, especially at local and regional levels, co-operation by public authorities, both sides of industry and other parties, including youth organizations;
- have as their prime objective the creation of economically viable jobs;
- may rebuild confidence and produce skills, qualifications and capacity for enterprise.

2. Acknowledges that the contributions made by public authorities during the start-up period of LEIs to facilitate the creation of new jobs, while respecting the conditions of competition, are in general more than offset by the advantages which they offer in terms of job and income creation, the use of human and local resources and reductions in the cost of social benefits.
3. Considers that support provided at regional and local level, in particular to meet management and training needs, is especially important for the development and success of small, locally generated undertakings.
4. Recognizes the contribution that both sides of industry can make to facilitate the economic and social integration of LEIs.
5. Recognizes the usefulness of spreading the various current ideas, techniques and experience in the field of LEIs.

III. Action by the Member States

The Council invites Member States to adopt within the framework of their policies and practices the following policy guidelines for the promotion of local employment initiatives:

1. Take account, in their policies relating to employment creation, local and regional development and local labour market management, of the potential contribution of local employment initiatives to the fight against unemployment, the revival of local economies and the alleviation of social problems. Public recognition of LEIs with a view to promoting their development and encouraging others to follow the same path should be accompanied as necessary by appropriate legal provisions.

2. Promote the establishment of close communication between all those involved in encouraging employment creation, especially both sides of industry and public authorities, particularly at the level of the local labour market, in order to improve the level of co-operation and the transfer of useful experience.

3. Taking account of the responsibilities of, and possibilities open to, local and regional authorities, encourage the development of local support structures for LEIs by means of practical measures such as:
 - making available information and guidance on the existing potential for aid;

 - developing services - where appropriate, by means of aid for the creation of development agencies - which are capable of providing support to those seeking to launch LEIs, and of facilitating access to the various forms of aid available;

 - making available suitable premises for small undertakings and workshops, for example by encouraging the conversion of vacant buildings;

 - improving conditions and extending the possibilities for tendering for public contracts.

4. Ensure that measures to improve access for small and medium-scale undertakings to finance and to provide public financial support involve criteria, conditions, decision-making procedures and delivery systems which make it possible for LEIs to benefit from them.

5. Using existing possibilities for providing public support, encourage projects for the vocational and social integration and reintegration of particularly disadvantaged categories, in particular by adapting and simplifying the procedures for providing such support.

6. Examine possibilities for resorting to new methods of providing finance for LEIs, which are likely to make it easier to launch them (e.g. aid, during the period when their projects are being started up, to hitherto unemployed persons who have set up or are setting up LEIs, creation of special funds, or support for initiatives to attract local savings into such funds).

7. Examine the extent to which national legislation facilitates the creation of undertakings, including co-operatives and undertakings of a collective nature, and offers legal and financial provisions such as will encourage the creation of such undertakings.

8. As part of the commitment already entered into by the Member States to make increased efforts to promote and develop the supply of training facilities (¹), examine the extent to which training systems take account of the requirements of LEIs, paying particular attention to:
 - co-operation between the bodies concerned in order to remedy any lack of training or qualifications on the local labour market;

 - opportunities for access to training or qualifications at local level particularly in order to facilitate the employment of the least-skilled among the unemployed and to promote training, including management training for those responsible for LEIs;

 - the skills and qualifications of trainers and vocational guidance and placement officials.

IV. Action at Community level

1. The Council encourages the Commission to support action by the Member States mainly
 - through more systematic use of existing Community instruments for promoting LEIs;
 - through the promotion of LEIs by means of consultation and the exchange of information on a Community-wide basis;
 - through evaluation and research designed to provide a useful guide for future policies and action.

 2. The Commission is therefore invited in particular to:
 - (a) support, with the assistance of the European Social Fund, specific innovative projects aimed at facilitating the development of LEIs, particularly those directed towards:
 - the application or production of new technologies;
 - the use of under-exploited local resources;
 - the employment of particularly disadvantaged categories;
 - back-up measures for these initiatives, particularly the development of innovative training and support methods adapted to their needs,
- by providing for a continuous exchange of experiences resulting from these projects in order to assess their impact on employment;

(b) develop its programme of consultation and information transfer in **order** to facilitate the direct exchange of experiences at Community level, while co-ordinating it with the projects of the OECD's Co-operative Action Programme on Local Employment Initiatives;

(c) complement these actions by carrying out specific studies which help to guide and assess the action, such as:

- the most apt methods of providing finance for LEIs;
- legal and fiscal encouragement for the establishment and development of enterprises including co-operatives and other forms of collective enterprise;
- the types of product and services which LEIs provide and their impact on traditional transactions from the point of view of competition.

3. The Commission is requested to inform the Council periodically of progress made in the implementation of these actions.

4. Community financing for the action set out in this section will be decided on within the framework of the budgetary procedure and in accordance with the legal commitments entered into by the Council.

Community financing of the projects referred to in paragraph 2(a) will be in accordance with the financing capacity and rules of the European Social Fund.

ACTION TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG WOMEN

Further to the Commission communication on unemployment among women and in the light of the discussions of the Standing Committee on Employment on 22 November 1983, the Council adopted the following Resolution in the official languages of the Communities:

I. General objectives

1. The Council takes note of the Commission communication on unemployment amongst women in the Community.

2. It notes that unemployment amongst women is a worrying aspect of the general employment situation in the Community and can only be resolved satisfactorily within the framework of a general policy designed to achieve economic recovery and employment growth. Given the particular characteristics of female unemployment, it is also necessary to make specific efforts to remove the handicaps affecting the employment of women and to promote equal opportunities on the labour market in order to reduce gradually and significantly the rate of unemployment among women.

3. It emphasizes the principles which must underlie the measures to be promoted, namely:
 - the equal right of men and women to work and, by the same token, to acquire a personal income on equal terms and conditions, regardless of the economic situation;

- the extension of equal opportunities to men and women, in particular on the labour market, in the context of measures to stimulate economic recovery and to promote employment growth;
- the development of positive measures to correct de facto inequalities and thereby improve female employment prospects and promote the employment of both men and women;

II. Guidelines for action

1. The Council considers that the following guidelines for action in particular should be implemented or continued within the framework of national policies and practices:

(a) in respect of job creation and recruitment:

- ensure that the measures aimed at encouraging the recruitment of additional labour, especially young people, in the private sector, also ensure a more balanced representation of men and women, particularly in jobs in which women are under-represented and in skilled jobs;
- focus recruitment premiums, where they exist, on the people at the greatest disadvantage on the labour market, many of whom are women;
- adopt adequate measures to promote increased representation of women, in order to achieve a better balance in the industries of the future, especially the high technology industries;

- make efforts also in the public sector to promote equal opportunities which can serve as an example, particularly in those fields where new information technologies are being developed;
 - endeavour to ensure that initiatives aimed at the reduction and re-organization of working time make a positive contribution to the promotion of equal opportunities in the area of employment, by permitting, inter alia, greater flexibility in working hours;
 - ensure that voluntary part-time work does not lead to increased sexual segregation on the labour market;
 - enable women to have equal access to financial and other facilities available for the creation of businesses, particularly in the context of local initiatives to create employment, including those taken on a co-operative basis, which offer women worthwhile employment prospects and working conditions;
- (b) to promote, in the fields of education, vocational training and guidance, measures with a view to:
- giving women a wider choice of jobs to enable them to participate more equitably in growth sectors and in the industries of the future;
 - ensuring more appropriate qualifications for female workers particularly affected by industrial restructuring and innovation, for those from less-favoured areas, for unemployed women and women seeking to return to work;
 - promoting increased representation of women in training programmes in order to achieve a better balance in those sectors where they are under-represented, especially sectors connected with the introduction of new technologies;

(c) adopt the necessary measures to ensure that placement, guidance and counselling services are staffed with skilled personnel in adequate numbers in order to provide a service based on the necessary expertise in the special problems of unemployed women;

(d) improve quantitative and qualitative information on the situation of women on the labour market and the assessment of the impact of policies to combat unemployment on the employment of women in order to be able to monitor progress in the sexual desegregation of employment and identify female unemployment trends more accurately.

2. The Council stresses the importance it attaches to the positive contribution of the European Social Fund to the implementation of these guidelines for action.

3. The Council considers that the principles and guidelines set out above should apply to action undertaken at every level, also by encouraging, where possible, both sides of industry.

4. The Council stresses the importance of accompanying measures, especially regarding social infrastructure and means of encouraging greater sharing of responsibilities in the light of the general objective of improving female employment.

5. The Council asks the Member States to develop, where appropriate in co-operation with the Commission, information campaigns aimed at encouraging the change in attitudes needed to improve equality of opportunity in employment. The Council emphasizes the essential role played in this respect, and also as initiators of positive action, by national committees and bodies for the promotion of equal opportunities, which must be able to act as effectively as possible.

6. The Commission is requested to organize an annual exchange of information between Member States on measures taken under this Resolution to reduce unemployment among women, and on the means of monitoring, research and assessment.

7. The Council asks the Commission to report to it at regular intervals with a view to taking stock of progress accomplished not later than three years following the adoption of this Resolution.

EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF MIGRANT WORKERS

The Council noted a Commission report on the implementation of Directive 77/486/EEC on the education of children of migrant workers and the hope expressed by certain delegations that the Council would deal with the development of such implementation at a later meeting.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

The Council

- noting the Commission communication on technological change and social adjustment;
- taking into account both the discussions of the Standing Committee on Employment on this communication at its meeting on 10 May 1984 and the conclusions of the Council and of the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council, on this communication at their meeting on 4 June 1984, and without prejudice to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee, arrived at the following conclusions:

"The Council considers that a common strategy on the social impact of new technologies should be based on the following principles:

- The Council recognizes the unavoidable nature of the introduction of new technologies for the strengthening of competitiveness of European undertakings and restoring economic growth. It affirms the need for an overall Community response to the new industrial revolution. A macro-economic policy aimed at a stronger resumption of growth will facilitate the process of adjustment between sectors, as well as the occupational and geographical mobility of the labour force.
- It considers that it is necessary to this end to utilize the potential afforded by technological innovation and by the strengthening of investment in order to create the conditions for better employment and an improvement in working conditions. This means an acceptance of the necessary changes which could in due course make for the creation of new jobs. It is necessary, however, to master these changes in order to prevent the social equilibrium from being seriously undermined.

- The conditions for the success of these changes are the training and information of workers.

- The Council considers that education and training have a vital role to play in a Community strategy designed to reinforce the capacity for innovation and the competitive position of European undertakings. Investment, employment, labour and training policies form a whole. Although investment constitutes the primary condition for the success of this strategy, education and training have a decisive role to play here. It would serve as a reminder that a major initial step in this direction was taken with the adoption of a number of Resolutions affording the basis for Community action in this area designed to supplement and support action undertaken by the Member States themselves.

A particular effort must be made for the training and retraining of the categories of workers who are most affected by the employment crisis and by technological change. Initial and ongoing training together with retraining measures will make it possible to adapt the skills of workers to the requirements of new technologies. This should go hand in hand with forward labour management.

- The Council recognizes that technological transformations are greatly assisted if workers are fully involved; they and/or their representatives ought therefore to be informed and consulted beforehand with a view to arriving at arrangements.

Such information and consultation should be as exact and as full as possible and regularly accompany the implementation of technological options. To this end, the parties concerned should be able to benefit from expert advice.

- Since technological change has consequences for employment, the organization of work and production, these ought to form the subject of dialogue between labour and management. While the competitive position of undertakings should be preserved, particular attention should be paid to improved utilization of plant and equipment, to employment problems, to working conditions and safety at work, as well as to the length of working hours.

- The magnitude and the urgency of the effort to be undertaken make it more necessary than ever to mobilize all of Europe's economic and social strengths.

"The Council requests the Commission to develop ⁽¹⁾ on these bases and, where necessary, to initiate work in the following areas:

- (i) to define the principles of, and detailed arrangements for, forward labour management, in particular through the reinforcement of the means of observing and analysing new skilled personnel requirements;

- (ii) to identify and analyse, in conjunction with the Member States and both sides of industry, short and medium-term sectoral trends with a view to pinpointing in particular the prospects for the development of employment which may result from the introduction of new technologies;

⁽¹⁾ In the context of the implementation in particular of the Council Resolution on vocational training and new information technologies, the Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers for Education on the introduction of new information technologies in education, and the second programme on safety and health at work, and also in the utilization of the various Community financial instruments, and in particular in the application of the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund, 1984-1986.

- (iii) to extend action to familiarize people with new technologies, particularly within the educational system;
- (iv) to initiate or strengthen co-operation between industry and training institutions, in particular advanced training institutions, with a view to improving the provision of initial training and the imparting of new skills to those whose employment is affected by technological innovations;
- (v) to encourage, starting at the stage of conception and planning of technological innovations, the systematic taking into account of their ergonomic implications with a view to improving working conditions. It is also necessary to ensure the occupational and social integration of vulnerable categories of workers, in particular the handicapped;
- (vi) to examine the full implications of the impact of technological advance on the decentralization of production, including work performed at home and distance working;
- (vii) to elicit at Community level the principles common to the particular legislative and contractual instruments of the Member States concerning information, consultation and negotiation on the introduction of new technologies; to promote to this end the training of experts in technological innovation from workers' and employers' organizations;
- (viii) to implement measures for the promotion and dissemination of experience and to improve the utilization of the Community financial instruments - European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and European Innovation Loan - in such a way as to assist the implementation of an innovatory Community strategy calculated to respond to the social consequences of technological change."

VARIOUS DECISIONS

Revision of the ERDF Regulation

The Council adopted as a common position the text of the draft Regulation on the revision of the European Regional Development Fund.

This draft will be forwarded to the European Parliament with a view to the conciliation meeting on the subject between the two Institutions planned for 19 June.

Fisheries

Following the agreement of principle of 24 May on the amendment of TACs and quotas for North Sea herring and anglerfish from zone Vb, VI, VII and VIII, the Council adopted a Regulation amending for the second time Regulation (EEC) No 320/84 fixing, for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks occurring in the Community's fishing zone, provisional total allowable catches for 1984, the provisional share of these catches available to the Community, the allocation of that share between the Member States and the conditions under which the total allowable catches may be fished.

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities a Council Regulation amending for the second time Regulation (EEC) No 171/83 laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in respect of the minimum mesh size applicable to fishing in the North Sea.

Appointment

The Council appointed, on a proposal from the Italian Government, Dirigente Generale Dr Giuseppe CACOPARDI, Ministero del Lavoro, Gabinetto, as a member of the European Social Fund Committee, in place of Avv. Armando GALLO, member, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's period of office, i.e. until 23 May 1985.

Bruxelles, le 6 juin 1984

NOTE BIO (84) 210 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

=====
PREPARATION CONSEIL SOCIAL DU 7.6.1984 (Luxembourg)
(Robinson)

Le Conseil Social debutera ses travaux demain a 10.00 sous la presidence du ministre francais des affaires sociales, M. Pierre Beregovoy, et avec la participation de M. Ivor Richard, Commissaire responsable des Affaires Sociales.

Parmi les sujets qui seront discutes se trouvent ceux qui revetent peut-etre le plus d'actualite, a savoir, le projet de recommandation sur la duree et la reorganisation du travail, et l'impact social des changements technologiques.

Voici les sept points principaux a l'ordre du jour par ordre chronologique comme ils seront probablement traites :

1. Le Conseil devrait adopter une resolution sur la contribution a la creation d'emplois que les INITIATIVES LOCALES D'EMPLOI peuvent apporter. Un exemple de ces initiatives locales, sont des cooperatives ouvrieres, ou l'emploi total s'est accru de 250.000 depuis 5 ans. La resolution signale les possibilites de financement communautaire, notamment par le biais du Fonds Social, pour de telles initiatives.

2. Une resolution que le Conseil devrait adopter sur les actions visant a combattre LE CHOMAGE DES FEMMES. Voir la note P-104 de 1983. Il faut ajouter que M. Richard pourrait, a l'occasion de cette discussion, exprimer son inquietude sur la discrimination accrue a laquelle font face les femmes dans la situation economique actuelle.

3. REDUCTION ET REORGANISATION DU TEMPS DE TRAVAIL (RRTT) :

Vous vous souviendrez que la Commission a promis une recommandation a cet egard en septembre 1983 (COM (83) 543 et P-80). L'accord de la majorite des Etats membres a cette recommandation semble acquis. Demain, M. Richard soulignera l'apport que peut faire une reorganisation du travail, et sa reduction - dans des conditions bien precises - a la lutte contre le chomage, et l'importance qu'il y a pour tout gouvernement national de souscrire a un accord communautaire qui pourrait fournir un cadre politique pour la negociation, par exemple entre partenaires sociaux, sur la duree de travail.

./.

4. CHANGEMENT TECHNOLOGIQUE ET MUTATION SOCIALES :

Le document de base pour cette discussion est la communication COM (84) 6 approuvée par la Commission en janvier. Déjà lundi passé, les ministres de l'Éducation des Dix sont arrivés à un consensus sur l'importance d'un effort accru dans le domaine de l'éducation, et demain les Dix devraient sans doute arriver à un accord semblable sur la formation professionnelle - facteur clé, selon M. Richard, de la réponse européenne au défi compétitif international des nouvelles technologies.

5. Un échange de vues sur les perspectives de la POLITIQUE SOCIALE A MOYEN TERME.

6. DIRECTIVE VREDELING :

Rapport sur l'état des travaux.

7. EDUCATION DES ENFANTS DES TRAVAILLEURS MIGRANTS :

Le Conseil pourrait discuter le rapport sur la mise en application par les États membres de la Directive que le Conseil a adoptée à cet égard en juillet 1977 et qui est entrée en vigueur en 1981. M. Richard s'inquiète de la manière peu satisfaisante dont cette Directive a été appliquée par les Dix.

a suivre,

Amitiés,

P. CERF

COMEUR 16.15////



**N O T E BIO (84) NO 210 (SUITE 1)
AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX**

CC/ AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE DU PORTE PAROLE

CONSEIL AFFAIRES SOCIALES (J. ROBINSON)

**LE CONSEIL SOCIAL A DEBUT SES TRAVAUX CE MATIN A 10.00 HEURES
ET A CONCLU SA SESSION DE LA MATINEE A 13.15 HEURES.**

**ONT ETE ADOPTES DANS LA PREMIERE DEMI HEURE DEUX RESOLUTIONS
CONCERNANT RESPECTIVEMENT LES INITIATIVES LOCALES D'EMPLOI ET LA
LUTTE CONTRE LE CHOMAGE DES FEMMES (VOIR BIO PREPARATION).**

**PUIS LA DISCUSSION A COMMENCE SUR LE GROS MORCEAU DE CETTE SESSION
DU CONSEIL - LE PROJET DE RECOMMANDATION SUR LA REDUCTION ET LA
REORGANISATION DU TEMPS DE TRAVAIL. LE DEBAT SUR CETTE QUESTION, QUI
A ETE INTERROMPU APRES UNE HEURE ET DEMIE, REPRENDRA CET APRES- . MID
1**

**MAIS LES RESULTATS DE CE MATIN MONTRENT CLAIREMENT QUE LA RECOMMEN
DATION BENEFICIE DU SOUTIEN TRES CHALEUREUX DE LA GRANDE MAJORITE
DES DELEGATIONS; LA SEULE NE POUVANT PAS L'ACCEPTER ETANT CELLE
DU ROYAUME UNI. POUR LA COMMISSION; M. RICHARD A SOULIGNE L'IM
PORTANCE QUI AVAIT POUR LES DIX GOUVERNEMENTS DES ETATS MEMBRES
D'AVOIR UN CADRE POLITIQUE - CONSTITUE PAR LA RECOMMANDATION -
POUR FACILITER ET FAVORISER LES NEGOCIATIONS ENTRE PARTENAIRES
SOCIAUX DE LA REDUCTION ET DE LA REORGANISATION DU PLAN DE TRAVAIL.**

**LE CONSEIL S'EST ENSUITE; APRES L'INTERRUPTION DU DEBAT SUR LA DUREE
DU TRAVAIL; PENCHE SUR LES CONSEQUENCES SOCIALES DES NOUVELLES TECHNO
LOGIES; EN ADOPTANT DES CONCLUSIONS COMMUNES BASEES SUR LA COMMUNICA
TION DE LA COMMISSION (CON(84) 6) TRAITANT DE CES QUESTIONS. (**

(A SUIVRE) ...

AMITIES;

Bruxelles, le 8 juin 1984

Note Bio (84) 210 (suite 2 et fin) aux bureaux nationaux
cc/ aux membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

Conseil Affaires Sociales (J. Robinson)

Le Conseil a repris ces travaux un peu apres 15.00 heures pour les terminer vers 19.00 heures. Le point fort des discussions de l'apres midi comme de celles du matin etait la recommandation sur la reduction et la reorganisation du temps de travail (RRTT), sur laquelle un consensus tres large s'est degage - consensus qui sera replete dans un rapport que fera le President du Conseil Social au Conseil europeen de Fontainebleau les 25/26 juin.

Ce consensus a ete realise cependant en face de l'opposition totale du Royaume-Uni a cette recommandation mais avec l'accord tres clair de toutes les neuf autres delegations. Ces dernieres et le Commissaire Ivor Richard, auteur du projet sur la RRTT, ont tous insiste sur la contribution que peut faire la RRTT a la lutte contre le chomage, pourvu que cette reduction et cette reorganisation se fassent dans des conditions economiques bien precises, a savoir : le respect de la competitivite economique, et l'absence de toute augmentation des couts unitaires de main d'oeuvre. Pour M. Richard, la recommandation favorise la reussite des negociations collectives pour l'introduction de la RRTT en leur fournissant un cadre politique communement accepte au niveau europeen.

Les neuf delegations etaient non moins chaleureuses en approuvant la recommandation. Citons, par exemple, M. Wolfgang Vogt, Secretaire d'Etat allemand, pour qui la RRTT, mesure d'accompagnement de la croissance economique de la lutte contre le chomage, pourrait etre introduit non seulement en maintenant la productivite mais en l'accroissant. Pour la France, M. Ralite, ministre de l'emploi, soulignait le role que pourrait jouer la RRTT contre le chomage en signalant que le chomage lui-meme etait anti-productif et que donc le chomage minait la competitivite economique. Illustration fracassante de sa these : les 12,5 millions chomeurs communautaires coutaient au total 200 milliards de dollars aux Etats membres, soit 7 % du PIB. Toutes les autres delegations ont souligne l'importance de la RRTT, disant que la croissance economique a elle seule ne pourrait pas endiguer le chomage - sauf bien sur celle du Royaume-Uni qui, menee par le ministre Tom King, ne se lassait pas d'identifier la RRTT avec le declin inevitable de la competitivite industrielle europeenne. Pour lui, la RRTT equivaldrait a une diminution de l'emploi et non a une augmentation reelle.

Les autres points a l'ordre du jour

A part les points traites ce matin (voir Bio precedente), trois autres themes etaient discutes :

1. Les Dix ont approuve un document sur les perspectives d'action sociale a moyen terme, document que la Presidence francaise va envoyer au sommet de Fontainebleau et qui devrait constituer le volet social de la relance economique europeenne et a la declaration a cet egard que la Presidence semble vouloir voir en sortir.

2. Directive Vredeling: Les Dix ont eu un tour de table sur l'etat des travaux et sur les perspectives des negociations sur ce projet. En depit de l'opposition absolue du Royaume-Uni a toute legislation dans le domaine couvert par le projet de directive (l'information et la consultation des travailleurs dans les societes a suture complexe), les autres delegations, et notamment celle de l'Irlande qui va presider les travaux communautaires a partir du mois prochain, semblent decider de continuer leurs travaux sur cette question. A cet egard, M. Richard a note avec interet que le fait meme que les instances politiques discutent de ce projet a deja eu une incidence positive sur le comportement des entreprises: selon le Commissaire, des entreprises qui traditionnellement ne se montraient guere enthousiastes pour la pratique de l'information et la consultation, etaient maintenant plus favorablement disposees.

3. Finalement, le Conseil a eu un tres court echange de vues sur la mise en application de la directive de juillet 1977 sur la scolarisation des enfants des travailleurs migrants, directive qui est d'une importance evidente notamment pour l'Italie et la Grece.

Amities,

M. Santarelli - comeur////

