Answer given by Mr Verheugen on behalf of the Commission

(31 July 2001)

The Commission would like to clarify that it was the Slovenian government that presented the results of the study ‘Geophysical Research in the Surroundings of the Krško NPP’ at a meeting held in Ljubljana in late November 2000. This study had been funded from the nuclear safety programme of the PHARE financial assistance instrument.

The study considers that the feature identified along line KK-03-99 should be regarded as a potential hazard. The study recommended to improve the seismological network and to include a high-quality station in this area as the appropriate consequence of this finding.

In the meantime, the Slovenian government has declared that these recommendations of the study will be fully observed. Two additional high-quality seismic stations will be added to the existing seismological network in the area of Krško, at least one of them already in 2001.

The Commission will monitor the implementation of this measure by the Slovenian authorities and has been in contact with the Slovenian nuclear safety regulatory authority to discuss the possibility of providing support.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0639/01
by Theresa Villiers (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(6 March 2001)

Subject: Funding of text books

1. Please could the Commission confirm whether any EU funds have been used to fund the following textbooks:

   - Our Arabic Language Third Grade-Fifth Grade Part 2
   - Islamic Education Grades 3-9
   - Reader and Literary Texts Grades 4-8
   - Modern Arab History & Contemporary Problems
   - Palestinian National Education Third Grade
   - Islamic Culture Grades 5-8
   - Geography of the Arab

2. If so, which budget line was used to fund these projects?

3. Will the Commission please undertake to ensure that no EU funding is used to fund textbooks which contain anti-Semitic statements?

Examples of such language, included in the above textbooks includes:

   - ‘In many cases these Jews acted according to their known cunning and deceit and they incite wars’ Islamic education, 9th grade, p. 78.
   - ‘What can we do to rescue Jerusalem and to liberate it from the thieving enemy?’ Reader and Literary Texts, 8th grade, p. 99.
   - ‘I learn from this lesson: I believe that Jews are the enemies of the Prophets and the believers.’ Islamic education, 4th grade, Part one, p. 67.
Answer given by Mr Patten on behalf of the Commission

(15 May 2001)

The Commission rejects any attempt to use the educational system as a vehicle to promote intolerance and to hinder the efforts achieved so far by the different parties committed with peace in the Middle East. In this context, it is particularly regrettable that school children may be exposed to intolerance and mutual incomprehension in any of the parties involved in the conflict.

The Commission has always focused its assistance to promote a culture of peace, tolerance and human rights in the Middle East. In this regard, Article 2 of the Community-Palestinian Interim Association Agreement clearly states that mutual co-operation between the Parties has to be based on the respect of democratic principles and fundamental human rights as set out in the universal declaration on human rights, which guides their internal and international policy ….

None of the projects in support of the Palestinian Authority financed by the Commission have supported the production or distribution of school textbooks. Assistance to the educational system has focused mainly on infrastructure, equipment for schools and libraries and direct assistance for current school expenses (salaries, dining rooms, etc. …).

No request has ever been made by the Palestinian Authority to finance curricula and textbooks. When a request for assistance is submitted to the Commission, an assessment is made on whether the proposal falls under the scope of the Community strategy and principles in that particular policy area. On that basis the Commission decides whether or not to fund the relevant project. In addition, the Commission through the relevant mechanisms established under the MEDA regulations is fully involved in the programming, preparation, implementation and monitoring of assistance projects to the Middle East Peace Process in general, and to the Palestinian Authority in particular.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0649/01

by Raffaele Costa (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(6 March 2001)

Subject: Building of a thermoelectric power station and a disposal plant for toxic and dangerous waste

The company ‘Sir Industriale’, part of the Edison group, has announced its intention to convert a former industrial plant, in the municipality of Casei Gerola (LA), into a thermoelectric power station and a disposal plant for toxic and dangerous waste.

To be precise, it intends to build a co-generation combined cycle power station running on natural gas and to build connected plants (for the production of fine chemical intermediates, technical gases and organic carboxylic acids).

Citizens are protesting because the announcement was only made at the last minute, shortly before the deadline for the conference provided for by the law for the purposes of discussing any possible objections to the project, despite the fact that the Casei municipality had been aware of the project for months. Furthermore, it would appear that conversion work inside the plant has been under way for some time already.

Can the Commission say what the European authorities intend to do about the fact that the citizens of Casei were notified of the project too late?

In addition, has the Commission proposed, or does it intend to propose, appropriate legal measures aimed at defending and protecting public health against growing threats from both old and new forms of pollution?