

The Community has reserved all rights to resume the WTO panel procedure, or begin new procedures, if measures are taken against Community companies under Helms Burton or D'Amato as a result of waivers not being granted or continued.

(98/C 174/158)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3691/97
by Kirsi Piha (PPE) to the Commission
(19 November 1997)

Subject: Mad cow disease

Mad cow disease — BSE — has, as the Commission knows, been a sensitive issue which has raised strong feelings in the Member States. The European Parliament asked the Commission for a report on BSE and its progression and Mr Böge MEP has drafted a report for the Temporary Committee on BSE which will shortly be debated in Parliament. Now that most of the fuss has died down, a new case of BSE has been found in Belgium. The spread of the disease, the transport and sale of meat originating in another country has made people doubt the principle of freedom of competition. What does the Commission intend to do to ensure that the spread of BSE is halted?

Answer given by Mrs Bonino on behalf of the Commission

(9 January 1998)

The new case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) ascertained in Belgium confirms the need for sustained and, if necessary, increased vigilance in regard to the epizootic on the part of all concerned, starting with the Commission.

Hence the measures to combat BSE already introduced by the Commission will be maintained or adapted and, if necessary, strengthened. These measures mainly concern meat and bone meal for animal feed and veterinary inspection and control. The Commission is also working on a proposal concerning surveillance of TSE.

Other measures have been approved or are about to be adopted. They mainly concern research into transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), whereby the coordination work between the Member States, as well as funding, will be continued or intensified, and specified risk materials and meal intended for animal consumption, in respect of which the Commission will shortly be tabling new proposals on the control and inspection of the entire production chain. To this end, staff was already increased in 1997 and more will be recruited in 1998. Finally, measures to ensure the traceability of bovines will take effect on 1 January 1998.

Hence, as the Honourable Member can ascertain, the Commission in no way intends to relax its efforts in this area but, on the contrary, intends to reinforce them, not only in order to combat the spread of BSE but also to eradicate the epizootic as rapidly as possible.

(98/C 174/159)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3694/97
by Kirsi Piha (PPE) to the Commission
(19 November 1997)

Subject: Utilization of PHARE appropriations for Slovenia

The European Union aids the countries of Central and Eastern Europe through its PHARE programme. A great deal of aid has presumably been provided from this programme for the development of the countries which have applied for membership of the EU. Can the Commission provide details of the utilization of appropriations granted under PHARE in 1997 for Slovenia?