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(Information)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTION No 594/76

by Mr Dondelinger

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 November 1976)

Subject: The Hague Convention of 2 October 1973 on the recognition of decisions relating to maintenance obligations (divorce)

The Hague Convention on the recognition and enforcement of judgments relating to maintenance obligations was drawn up in October 1972 by the XIIth session of The Hague Conference on Private International Law. This Convention, known as a 'recognition Convention' was opened for signature by the Member States on 2 October 1973 and has so far been signed by nine countries: the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia and Turkey.

This Convention aims at extending to all those entitled to receive alimony the simplified arrangements for the enforcement of foreign judgments introduced specifically for children by The Hague Convention of 15 April 1958 (ratified by France on 26 May 1966), which it is scheduled to replace in the signatory countries.

Now that the latter Convention has been ratified by 16 countries, it has appeared necessary, for social and humanitarian reasons, to extend the benefits of the protection system set up on behalf of minors to those adults entitled to alimony.

1. Why have Belgium, Denmark and Ireland not yet signed the new Convention?

2. Does not the Commission think it would therefore be necessary for the Community of the Nine to propose harmonizing the Member States' civil law as regards fundamental rights?

3. If so, would it approach the Member States of the Community which have not yet signed The Hague Convention?

Answer

(7 February 1977)

1. The Brussels Convention of 27 September 1968 on jurisdiction and the enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters covers, *inter alia*, the maintenance obligations covered by the Hague Convention of 2 October 1973. The former Convention is in force as between the six original Member States of the Community. The Convention under which the new Member States will accede to the Brussels Convention will probably be ready for signature at the beginning of 1978.

2. The Brussels Convention of 27 September 1968 has the following advantages over the Hague Convention:

(a) it covers all maintenance obligations, including those arising under a contract;

(b) it applies to all judgments given in a contracting State which are enforceable therein, even if they may still form the subject of proceedings in the State of origin;

(c) it applies automatically to enforceable orders relating to payment of maintenance;

(d) it has introduced a uniform, extremely rapid, and, most important, *ex parte,* procedure for the enforcement of foreign judgments. There is in principle no provision under this procedure for any verification of the jurisdiction of the court of the State in which judgment was given, since that court is already bound directly by the provisions of the Convention that relates to jurisdiction.

3 and 4. Although Article 57 of the Brussels Convention provides that the Hague Convention in principle takes precedence, Article 23 of the Hague Convention permits recourse to another convention or to national law in order to obtain recognition or enforcement of a judgment relating to maintenance obligations. The Brussels Convention will therefore be accorded greater significance within the Community than the Hague Convention.

5. Belgium and Denmark are preparing to sign and ratify the Hague Convention. Ireland intends to do so in due course. This Convention is of less importance in the case of Ireland in so far as most of the judgments in question, recognition of which is sought, involve relations between Ireland and the United Kingdom, which are bound by a bilateral convention.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 580/76
by Mr Ansart
to the Council of the European Communities
(4 November 1976)

Subject: Puerto Rico Summit Meeting and the right of Member States to self-determination

In reply to the oral question by Mr Bordu (question No 13, Doc. 344/76) (1) on the decisions taken at Puerto Rico, particularly by France, Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany, concerning Italy and the question of Communist participation in the Government, Mr Scarascia-Mugnozza, Vice-President of the Commission said in his answer that:

> 'At a more general level, I would point out that we have particular respect for one fundamental principle — that of respecting the decisions taken by the citizens of each country when they are called upon to vote, in other words to express their political opinion. I would also point out that our Community has its own rules for examining all requests made by Member States.'

Is the Council prepared to support this position, which respects the vital democratic principle of the right of peoples to self-determination?

(1) Debates of the European Parliament, No 207 (October 1976), p. 82.

Answer
(9 February 1977)

In view of the fact that the Community as such did not attend the Puerto Rico Conference, the Council feels that it is not up to the Council to adopt a position on the attitude that certain participants may have adopted there.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 603/76
by Mr Carpentier
to the Council of the European Communities
(12 November 1976)

Subject: Review of the Staff Regulations

Does the Council expect its reply to a previous Written Question (1) on the review of the Staff Regulations to be taken seriously, when the European Parliament delivered its opinion more than two years ago, after spending several months preparing it?

Does the Council not feel that the work of the group of experts dealing with this matter could be

(1) Written Question No 288/76, OJ No C 251, 25. 10. 1976, p. 10.

speeded up? It is clear that these experts are showing some contempt for the work of Parliament, which is difficult to countenance. Does the Council share their attitude?

Moreover, is the Council fully convinced that the competence of these experts leaves nothing to be desired? Is it aware that on one occasion when this group of experts was discussing the sickness insurance arrangements of officials of the Communities, one of them was under the impression that they were reviewing the sickness insurance scheme of his own country?

Does the Council feel that such occurrences — however rare — are likely to cast doubts on the bona fides of this group of experts?

Is the Council not able to say when the experts are likely to complete their work?

Does it plan to report in writing to the European Parliament on the progress made by the group of experts?

Answer

(9 February 1977)

The Council can only repeat that the delay in examining the proposal on the review of the Staff Regulations is attributable solely to priority work which has had to be done in the meantime. It should be noted that the order of priority for this work has always been fixed with the full agreement of the Commission.

Moreover, the rate of progress of the Working Party on Staff Regulations depends largely on the speed with which the Commission can supply the required information (statistics, cost estimates, comparisons, etc.).

With regard to the work on the Staff Regulations done by the Working Party on Staff Regulations during the last three months, the Heads of Administration of all the institutions agreed to recommend the following order of priorities:

— adjustment of daily subsistence allowances for officials on mission,

— the secretarial allowance,

— annual review of salaries (1976),

— review of the Staff Regulations.

Since a Council Decision of 21 December 1976 has gone a considerable way to settling the first three points the proceedings of the Working Party on Staff Regulations concerning the review of the Staff Regulations will continue at an accelerated pace, with a view to concluding them in the near future.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 637/76

by Mr Waltmans

to the Council of the European Communities

(24 November 1976)

Subject: Harmonization of conditions of carriage for international sea transport

Will the Council prepare a proposal to hold a conference between the countries who are signatories to the Helsinki Agreement on the harmonization of conditions of carriage for international sea transport?

Answer

(9 February 1977)

The harmonization of conditions of carriage for international sea transport is not explicitly referred to in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference. The only reference to sea transport in that Act concerns security arrangements.

The Council accordingly does not intend to take steps along the lines mentioned by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 653/76
by Mr Cousté
to the Council of the European Communities
(1 December 1976)

Subject: Insurance other than life assurance and freedom to provide services

Article 15 of the proposal for a second Council Directive relating to direct insurance other than life assurance and freedom to provide services, submitted by the Commission on 30 December 1975 [1], stipulates that the Directive shall apply automatically to agencies and branches established within the Community and belonging to undertakings whose head office is outside the Community.

This provision takes no account of the fact that some third countries are extremely reluctant to authorize Community undertakings to carry on business in their territory.

This being so, does not the Council think that, once the second Directive has been adopted, its benefits should be enjoyed only by undertakings whose head office is situated in countries which have signed with the Community an agreement on reciprocity in respect of insurance and freedom to provide services?

(1) OJ No C 32, 12. 2. 1976, p. 2.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 655/76
by Mr Cousté
to the Council of the European Communities
(1 December 1976)

Subject: Proposal for a Directive on the coordination of the provisions relating to insurance other than life assurance

Within the framework of the proposal for a second Directive on the coordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to direct insurance other than life assurance and laying down provisions to facilitate the effective exercise of freedom to provide services, submitted to the Council by the Commission on 30 December 1975, does the Council envisage providing for arrangements to enable Member States to apply the Directive without causing a serious disruption of the insurance market of each Member State — a market which in France, for instance, has an appreciable annual turnover and provides employment for 150 000 persons?

Does the Council intend to ask the Commission to draw up new proposals to supplement the provisions of Article 13 of the proposal for a second Directive in order to safeguard national channels for the investment of savings, of which insurance undertakings receive a large share?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 657/76
by Mr Cousté
to the Council of the European Communities
(1 December 1976)

Subject: Proposal for a Directive relating to direct insurance other than life assurance

In its proposal of 30 December 1975 for a second Directive on direct insurance other than life assurance and freedom to provide services, the Commission decided against adopting the main provisions of French law which provide particularly effective safeguards for the consumer.

The system currently applied in France empowers the public authorities to exercise control over and, in appropriate cases, to take action in respect of the tariffs applied and the clauses in the contracts proposed to the public. Thus, in the case of tariffs, steps may be taken to combat dumping or to prevent undertakings in a dominant position from setting excessively high rates. In the case of contracts, the public authorities may intervene to prevent misleading, obscure or unfair contracts from being proposed to the public. They may act to have unsatisfactory contracts altered and may even make the use of standard clauses obligatory in the interests of insured persons. None of these measures is liable to obstruct the exercise of freedom to provide services.

Does not the Council find it regrettable that, in this particular instance, the proposal for a second Directive will entail a loss of legal protection for French consumers? How does it propose to make good this loss?

Does not the Council consider that, besides being unrealistic because of the practical difficulties involved, the proposal has above all introduced an element of risk by making it possible to combine within one and the same contract provisions drawn from different national legal systems?

Joint answer

(9 February 1977)

On 22 January 1976 the Council consulted the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 57 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, on a Commission proposal for a second Directive on the coordination of laws, regulations and administrative provisions relating to direct insurance other than life assurance and laying down provisions to facilitate the effective exercise of freedom to provide services.

Since the European Parliament has not yet delivered its opinion on this proposal the Council has not yet begun work on the matter. It therefore feels unable to adopt a position regarding Questions Nos 653/76, 655/76 and 657/76 put by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 661/76

by Mr Evans

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 January 1977)

Subject: Loans by the European Investment Bank

What was the total amount of money in units of account loaned by the European Investment Bank to the regions of the Community which qualify for aid from the European Regional Development Fund?

How much was loaned, in total, to each qualified region in each country?

What was the total amount of money in units of account loaned by the European Investment Bank to the regions of the Community which do not qualify for aid from the ERDF?

How much was loaned, in total, to each unqualified region in each country?

Supplementary answer

(7 February 1977)

Further to its answer of 22 December 1976 [1], the Commission is now able to inform the Honourable Member of the results of its research.

1. Regions which may receive aid from the European Regional Development Fund are defined in Article 3 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 724/75 of 18 March 1975 [2] by reference to the aided areas established by Member States in applying their systems of regional aids and in which State aids are granted which qualify for Fund assistance.

   The EIB's fields of activity are laid down by the EEC Treaty, which (Article 130 (a) and (b)) refers to the financing of 'projects for developing less developed regions' and 'projects for modernizing or converting undertakings or for developing fresh activities . . .'. On the basis of these criteria, the Bank vets each project in turn to establish whether it qualifies for aid. For this purpose, the Bank refers to all available information on the economic situation in the regions and takes into account the national regional aid schemes.

   Consequently, although defined in different texts, the regions which qualify for aid from the ERDF and those in which the EIB grants for projects of regional interest are to a considerable extent the same.

2. Of the total amount of 4 919·5 million units of account granted between 1958 and 1975 as assistance by the EIB in the Community or in its direct interest, a sum of 3 751·5 million units of account went to projects that contributed to the development of less developed regions or to the creation of new jobs in regions with traditional industries, in accordance with indents (a) and (b) of Article 130 of the EEC Treaty.

   Table 1 below contains a breakdown of these operations by Member State and by region.

3. Other assistance granted by the EIB in the Community during the same period totalled 1 168 million units of account and went to projects of common interest to several Member States (transport infrastructures, energy supplies, etc.) or to projects concerning specific industries (modernization or conversion), in accordance with indents (b) and (c) of Article 130 of the EEC Treaty.

   A breakdown of this assistance by Member State and by region is given in Table 2 below. As the table shows, some of the finance in this second category also went to projects located in regions which qualify for regional aid.

(1) OJ No C 27, 3. 2. 1977, p. 27.
(2) OJ No L 110, 30. 4. 1975, p. 44.

TABLE 1

Regional breakdown of the financial assistance granted by the the EIB to projects of regional interest (indents (a) and (b) of Article 130 of the EEC Treaty) 1958—1975

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
BELGIUM			
Limbourg	1	6·0	0·2
Hainaut	2	20·8	0·5
Liège	2	30·4	0·8
Total Belgium	5	57·2	1·5
DENMARK			
Greenland	3	12·1	0·3
North Jutland	7	6·8	0·2
South Jutland	1	0·2	—
Lolland Island	1	2·1	0·1
Global loans	3	5·3 (1)	0·1
Total Denmark	15	26·5	0·7
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY			
Baden-Württemberg	2	0·5	—
Bayern	23	74·7	2·0
Berlin (West)	6	30·3	0·8
Hessen	16	6·9	0·2
Niedersachsen	29	40·8	1·1
Nordrhein-Westfalen	22	42·3	1·1
Rheinland-Pfalz	11	18·6	0·5
Saarland	8	45·6	1·2
Schleswig-Holstein	16	53·3	1·4
Projects involving more than one region			
Niedersachsen/Hessen	1	25·0	0·7
Rheinland-Pfalz/Saarland	1	21·9	0·6
Global loans			
Bayern	1	9·9 (1)	0·3
Schleswig-Holstein	1	— 0·3 (2)	—
Federal Republic of Germany	2	0·5 (2)	—
Total Federal Republic of Germany	139	370·0	9·9

(1) Proportion of global loans not yet allocated; the assistance already actually granted is included in the respective amounts indicated for the different regions.

(2) Global loans fully allocated; the amounts shown represent the differences arising from the fact that conversions between currencies and units of accounts were carried out first at the rates ruling on the dates when the global loan was signed and then — a change having occurred — when the allocation decisions were taken.

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
FRANCE			
Alsace	32	64·3	1·7
Aquitaine	13	50·7	1·3
Auvergne	5	28·4	0·8
Basse-Normandie	3	8·7	0·2
Bourgogne	3	2·3	0·1
Bretagne	41	78·1	2·1
Centre	2	0·7	—
Champagne-Ardennes	2	0·5	—
Franche-Comté	3	4·0	0·1
Languedoc-Roussillon	3	10·1	0·3
Limousin	9	18·5	0·5
Lorraine	28	54·3	1·4
Midi-Pyrénées	19	37·9	1·0
Nord	9	14·1	0·4
Pays de la Loire	21	17·4	0·5
Picardie	2	1·1	—
Poitou-Charentes	6	26·6	0·7
Provence-Côte d'Azur	7	99·9	2·7
Rhône-Alpes	9	8·2	0·2
Projects involving more than one region			
Picardie/Nord	1	12·6	0·3
Lorraine/Nord	1	16·2	0·4
Alsace/Bretagne	1	9·9	0·3
Pays de la Loire/Bretagne	2	34·4	0·9
Aquitaine/Midi-Pyrénées	1	16·2	0·4
Aquitaine/Poitou-Charentes	1	27·3	0·7
Midi-Pyrénées/Aquitaine	2	12·9	0·3
Midi-Pyrénées/Pays de la Loire	1	14·4	0·4
Languedoc-Roussillon/Provence	1	9·0	0·2
Provence/Rhône-Alpes	1	30·0	0·8
Provence/Languedoc-Roussillon	1	13·4	0·4
France	2	34·2	0·9
Global loans			
Alsace	1	— (2)	—
Bretagne	1	1·9 (1)	0·1
Lorraine	2	2·6 (1)	0·1
Pays de la Loire	2	4·7 (1)	0·1
France	4	20·3 (1)	0·5
Total France	242	785·9	21·0

(1) Proportion of global loans not yet allocated; the assistance already actually granted is included in the respective amounts indicated for the different regions.

(2) Global loans fully allocated; the amounts shown represent the differences arising from the fact that conversions between currencies and units of accounts were carried out first at the rates ruling on the dates when the global loan was signed and then — a change having occurred — when the allocation decisions were taken.

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
IRELAND	13	99·1	2·6
Global loans	2	7·6 (1)	0·2
Total Ireland	15	106·7	2·8
ITALY			
Northern Italy			
Piemonte	1	4·0	0·1
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	1	10·0	0·3
Projects involving more than one region			
Liguria/Toscana	2	31·8	0·8
Veneto/Trentino-Alto Adige	2	54·8	1·5
Total Northern Italy	6	100·6	2·7
Mezzogiorno			
Marche	7	11·9	0·3
Lazio	65	81·6	2·2
Campania	92	326·9	8·7
Abruzzi	32	73·2	1·9
Molise	4	28·9	0·8
Puglia	59	329·3	8·8
Basilicata	5	18·0	0·5
Calabria	17	137·9	3·7
Sicilia	39	193·4	5·2
Sardegna	57	226·7	6·0
Projects involving more than one region			
Marche/Abruzzi	1	16·4	0·4
Campania/Calabria	2	32·9	0·9
Campania/Basilicata	1	20·0	0·5
Abruzzi/Calabria	1	5·0	0·1
Abruzzi/Molise	2	34·8	0·9
Abruzzi/Campania	1	4·8	0·1
Molise/Puglia	1	25·0	0·7
Puglia/Basilicata	3	78·3	2·1
Puglia/Calabria	1	6·4	0·2
Calabria/Sicilia	2	36·0	1·0
Calabria/Basilicata	1	8·6	0·2

(1) Proportion of global loans not yet allocated; the assistance already actually granted is included in the respective amounts indicated for the different regions.

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
ITALY *(continued)*			
Global loans			
Mezzogiorno Continental	6	43·1 (1)	1·1
Sicilia	2	6·4 (1)	0·2
Sardegna	3	7·5 (1)	0·2
Total Mezzogiorno	404	1 752·9	46·7
Total Italy	410	1 853·5	49·4
LUXEMBOURG	1	4·0	0·1
NETHERLANDS			
Groningen	2	18·0	0·5
Noord-Brabant	1	13·8	0·4
Limburg	1	8·3	0·2
Total Netherlands	4	40·1	1·1
UNITED KINGDOM			
North	9	88·5	2·4
Yorkshire and Humberside	2	25·2	0·7
North-West	1	0·4	—
Wales	9	107·2	2·9
Scotland	33	164·2	4·4
Northern Ireland	2	5·0	0·1
Projects involving more than one region			
Scotland/North	4	85·3	2·3
United Kingdom	1	13·4	0·4
Global loans			
United Kingdom	2	18·2 (1)	0·5
Total United Kingdom	53	507·4	13·5
Total Member States	884	3 751·5	100·0

(1) Proportion of global loans not yet allocated; the assistance already actually granted is included in the respective amounts indicated for the different regions.

(2) Global loans fully allocated; the amounts shown represent the differences arising from the fact that conversions between currencies and units of accounts were carried out first at the rates ruling on the dates when the global loan was signed and then — a change having occurred — when the allocation decisions were taken.

TABLE 2

Regional breakdown of the financial assistance granted by the EIB for projects geared to objectives other than regional development indents (b) and (c) of Article 130 of the EEC Treaty) 1958—1975

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
BELGIUM			
Liège	1	16·1	1·4
Projects involving more than one region			
Belgium	2	20·8	1·9
Total Belgium	3	36·9	3·3
DENMARK			
South Jutland	1	3·6	0·3
Danish sector of the North Sea	1	6·1	0·6
Projects involving more than one region			
Denmark	1	7·8	0·7
Total Denmark	3	17·5	1·6
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY			
Baden-Württemberg	7	115·3	10·4
Bayern	1	19·9	1·8
Hessen	2	45·9	4·2
Niedersachsen	2	17·2	1·6
Nordrhein-Westfalen	2	29·3	2·6
Rheinland-Pfalz	1	16·5	1·5
Projects involving more than one region			
Bremen/Germany	1	5·5	0·5
Federal Republic of Germany	2	34·6	3·1
Total Federal Republic of Germany	18	284·2	25·7
FRANCE			
Alsace	1	16·2	1·5
Bourgogne	1	4·6	0·4
Champagne-Ardennes	1	16·0	1·5
Haute Normandie	2	8·1	0·7
Pays de la Loire	1	3·0	0·3
Provence-Côte d'Azur	3	13·7	1·2
Région Parisienne	1	15·3	1·4
Rhône-Alpes	10	148·4	13·4
Projects involving more than one region			
Champagne/Lorraine	1	31·8	2·9
Picardie/Nord	1	2·7	0·3
France	3	47·0	4·2
Total France	25	306·8	27·7

Regions	Total loans, guarantees and allocations from global loans		
	Number	Amount (million u.a.)	%
IRELAND	—	—	—
ITALY			
Northern Italy			
Piemonte	2	38·5	3·5
Valle d'Aosta	1	24·0	2·2
Liguria	4	74·4	6·7
Lombardia	2	44·5	4·0
Trentino-Alto Adige	2	29·0	2·6
Emilia-Romagna	2	44·5	4·0
Projects involving more than one region			
Piemonte/Liguria	2	49·2	4·5
Veneto/Trentino-Alto Adige	1	18·4	1·5
Central Italy			
Toscana	1	4·8	0·4
Total Northern and Central Italy	17	325·3	29·4
Projects involving more than one region			
Italy	3	52·1	4·7
Total Italy	20	377·4	34·1
LUXEMBOURG	2	5·0	0·5
NETHERLANDS			
Gelderland	1	2·8	0·2
Projects involving more than one region			
Netherlands	2	31·9	2·9
Total Netherlands	3	34·7	3·1
UNITED KINGDOM			
South-East	1	13·1	1·2
Scotland	1	19·5	1·8
Projects involving more than one region			
United Kingdom	1	11·2	1·0
Total United Kingdom	3	43·7	4·0
Total Member States	77	1 106·3	100·0
Outside the Community (1)	3	61·7	
Total	80	1 168·0	

(1) Operations carried out under the second subparagraph of Article 18 (1) of the Statute of the Bank, which stipulates that the Board of Governors may grant loans for investment projects to be carried out outside the Community (the projects in question are projects of common interest in the energy sector).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 682/76

by Kai Nyborg

to the Council of the European Communities

(6 December 1976)

Subject: Community fisheries policy

Does not the Council think that it would be reasonable to divide questions concerning common European Community waters into four categories?

1. External fisheries policy (Community fisheries policy in relation to third countries).

2. Community internal fisheries policy.

3. Exploitation of the sea ('sea-farming' by analogy with agricultural policy).

4. Exploitation of the seabed.

It is confusing to deal with two or more of these problems together.

Answer

(9 February 1977)

In organizing its internal work on fisheries the Council has so far always made a distinction between external and internal policy problems, as the Honourable Member would seem to wish. Nevertheless, for technical reasons (catch quotas) and on political grounds, it has tried to see that these two facets of the same policy are dealt with in as concerted a manner as possible.

'Sea-farming' cannot be separated from internal fisheries policy, which under the Treaty forms part of the common agricultural policy even though it involves some specific aspects.

Lastly, problems regarding exploitation of the seabed which do not come under the Community fisheries policy have so far been covered by continuous coordination between Member States' delegations at the Conference on the Law of the Sea.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 693/76

by Mr Jahn

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1976)

Subject: Implementation of the Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution

During the debate in the European Parliament's plenary sitting of 19 November 1976 [1] on Mr Willi Müller's report (Doc. 400/76) on the proposal for a Decision concluding a Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution, I asked Mr Simonet when the Commission expected to see the first results of the measures to be taken in implementation of the Convention.

(1) Debates of the European Parliament, No 209 (November 1976), p. 236.

Since my question was not dealt with, the Commission is now asked to give its answer in writing.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Commission the following questions in connection with this same subject:

1. Does the Commission realize that it will be a long time before the Convention can have any practical effect because:

   (a) the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine against Chemical Pollution must, pursuant to Article 5 (1), propose upper limits for the emission criteria for toxic substances (Annex I) to be fixed as part of the prior authorization procedure (Article 3),

   (b) these limits must be unanimously approved by the contracting parties,

   with the result that the Convention will remain a dead letter for the time being, due to the unworkability of the authorization procedure?

2. What does the Commission propose to do on behalf of the Community, as a contracting party, with a view to overcoming speedily the obstacles inherent in the Convention?

3. When may we expect the limits and the quality objectives (Article 6 (4) and (5) of the Convention) to be fixed?

4. How soon after the prior authorization system begins to function properly is it expected to be possible to determine any notable improvement in the quality of Rhine water?

Answer

(2 February 1977)

The Commission does realize that, for the reasons given by the Honourable Member in the first part of his question and because of the time required for completing ratification procedures by the national parliaments, it will be some time before the Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution has practical effect.

Consequently, the Commission is unable to tell the Honourable Member when the provisions introduced to implement the Convention will result in an improvement in the quality of the Rhine waters.

Nevertheless the Commission feels that the combined effect of the Community Environment Programme and of the Convention should reduce Rhine pollution.

For example, without waiting for this Convention to be implemented, the Commission has already started preparatory work on the fixing of limit values and quality objectives for five toxic substances (mercury, cadmium and three pesticides), pursuant to the Directive of 4 May 1976 on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community (1).

Furthermore, at Community level, implementation, by the Member States concerned, of the Directive of 16 June 1975 (2) concerning the quality required of surface water intended for the abstraction of drinking water and the Directive of 8 December 1975 (3) concerning the quality of bathing water should improve the quality of the Rhine waters. Adoption and implementation of other Directives which have been sent to the Council recently (quality of water capable of supporting fish life, exchange of information on the results of measures introduced) or which are being prepared (quality of agricultural and industrial water, protection of aquatic life in general) should also help to improve matters.

(1) Directive 76/464/EEC, OJ No L 129, 18. 5. 1976, p. 23.

(2) Directive 75/440/EEC, OJ No L 194, 25. 7. 1975, p. 26.

(3) Directive 76/160/EEC, OJ No L 31, 5. 2. 1976, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 712/76

by Mr Hougardy

to the Commission of the European Communities

(14 December 1976)

Subject: European University Institute in Florence

Can the Commission state why none of its Members attended the inauguration ceremony of the European University Institute in Florence, and why that institute has not been given the possibility of offering courses of study in technical subjects and applied science — which are highly important to the Community — possibly in collaboration with the Community Research Centre in Ispra?

Answer

(7 February 1976)

Since the inauguration ceremony of the European University Institute in Florence coincided with a plenary session of the European Parliament, the Commission gave preference to its obligations to Parliament. It was, moreover, represented in Florence by senior officials.

The question of the areas of study and research figured in various discussions over the years preceding the formation of the new Institute and the limitation, at the outset, to the fields of history and civilization, economics, law and political and social sciences, was envisaged as early as 1965 in the conclusions of the working party presided over by Mr Sattler [1]. However, Article 11.1 of the Convention setting up the Institute, which indicates the departments of which the Institute shall consist from its commencement, also provides that:

> 'Acting unanimously, the High Council, after consulting the Academic Council and in the light of experience, may alter this arrangement or set up new departements'.

(1) Parlement Européen, Direction Générale de la Documentation Parlementaire et de l'Information, L'Université Européenne', Recueil de Documents, Décembre 1967.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 716/76

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 December 1976)

Subject: Cosmetic products

The title of the Council Directive of 27 July 1976 [1] simply states that the Directive has as its purpose the approximation of the laws of the Member States 'relating to cosmetic products'.

The fourth recital of this Directive states that 'it is necessary to determine at Community level the Regulations which must be observed as regards the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products'.

Article 7 of this Directive states that 'Member States may not, for reasons related to the requirements laid down in this Directive and the Annexes thereto, refuse, prohibit or restrict the marketing of any cosmetic products which comply with the requirements of this Directive and the Annexes thereto'.

This being so, the Commission, whose duty it is to ensure that Community legislation is duly applied, is asked to answer the following questions:

(1) OJ No L 262, 27. 9. 1976, p. 169.

1. Are Member States still authorized to refuse, prohibit or restrict the marketing on their territory of a cosmetic product, even if this product conforms with all the specific requirements as regards its composition, labelling and packaging, as laid down in the Directive and the Annexes thereto?

2. If so, with what other requirements must a cosmetic product comply, or might it have to comply, in order to be assured of free movement within the Community? In particular, what requirements could a Member State impose on the basis of:

   (a) the 'general obligations' of the Member States deriving from Article 2 of the Directive. In particular, should Articles 2 and 12 be read cumulatively, or is Article 2 wider in scope, exceeding that laid down by the 'safeguard' clause in Article 12 [1]?

   (b) Community legislation (either existing or proposed) concerning the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products [2]?

   (c) national legislation, as yet not harmonized, concerning the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products [3]?

   (d) Community or national legislation not concerning the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products [3]?

3. In the light of the answers to questions 1 and 2, how would the Commission define the field of application of the Directive of 27 July 1976 relating to cosmetics [4]?

4. What are the precise meaning and function of Article 7 of this Directive and similar Articles in Community legislation relating to the 'approximation of laws'?

(1) Member States must comply with certain 'general obligations', deriving from Article 2 which reads: 'Cosmetic products put on the market within the Community must not be liable to cause damage to human health when they are applied under normal conditions of use'. Pursuant to Article 4 of the Directive, Member States shall specifically prohibit the marketing of cosmetic products containing certain substances and colouring agents listed in the Annexes; however, this is not to conflict with their general obligations ('without prejudice'). What would be the Commission's attitude, for example, if one of the Member States demanded that cosmetic products with a life of four or five years should be marked with a date-limit of guarantee?

(2) For example, in the case of prepackaged cosmetics, the Directive of 20 January 1976 relating to the making-up by weight or by volume of certain prepackaged products (OJ No L 46, 21. 2. 1976, p. 1).

(3) For example, legislation relating to the environment (such as biodegradability) applying equally to cosmetic products?

(4) Could it be stated, for example, that the Directive regulates those problems relating to the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products which directly affect the health of the individual user but not those concerning public health in general (such as the environment) and the consumer's economic interests (such as prepackaging)?

Answer

(9 February 1977)

1. A Member State will not for reasons related to the requirements of the Directive of 27 July 1976 be entitled to refuse, prohibit or restrict the marketing of a cosmetic product fulfilling the requirements of that Directive and its Annexes.

2. Article 2 of the Directive lays down the main requirement that cosmetics must not be liable to cause damage to health when they are applied under normal conditions of use. A product which conforms with the provisions of the subsequent Articles and the Annexes is presumed not to be injurious to health within the meaning of Article 2. However the detailed provisions reflect the state of knowledge at the time of adoption of the Directive and a Member State which ascertains from new information that a cosmetic product, even through conforming with these provisions, was harmful, must take appropriate action which could lead to the application of the procedure of Article 12.

The correct transposition of the Directive into the legislation of Member States will require the alignment of all national legislation on the composition, labelling and packaging of cosmetic products. However, cosmetic products may also be required to conform with certain other Community Directives. For example, shampoos and soaps would, under the terms of Article 1 of Directive 73/404/EEC [1], be required to have a certain degree of biodegradability, and cosmetic products which were prepackaged would have to conform with the requirements of the prepackaging Directive referred to by the Honourable Member.

3 and 4. The scope of the Directive is defined in the Directive itself particularly in Article 1, and Article 7 clearly applies only within this scope.

(1) OJ No L 347, 17. 12. 1973, p. 51.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 718/76

by Mr Hougardy

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 December 1976)

Subject: Natural gas reserves and the development of nuclear energy

According to Mr Wernher von Braun, natural gas reserves are such that expenditure on developing nuclear energy is no longer justifiable.

How does the Commission evaluate this statement?

Answer

(7 February 1977)

The Commission is not acquainted with the wording of Mr von Braun's statement referred to in the Honourable Member's question. This question does not state whether Mr von Braun's statement applies to the United States, Europe or the whole world.

The Community's reserves of natural gas represent only around 20 years' current production; they are much too low to cover expected consumption and must be supplemented by imports of natural gas from non-Community countries, which is proving difficult.

If there is no further growth of the Community nuclear energy sector between now and 1985, another 120 000 million m^3 of natural gas would have to be imported at that time to cope with the expected demand for electricity.

Such a rise in imports of natural gas is practically impossible to achieve and it would increase the insecurity of Community energy supplies.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 722/76

by Mr Caro

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 December 1976)

Subject: Article in '30 Jours d'Europe' on the Council of the European Communities

In the November issue (No 220) of this magazine, a comprehensive article is devoted to the Council of the European Communities.

The Commission is responsible for this magazine. Does it share the view expressed by the author of this article that the European Parliament plays only a marginal role in the Council's decision-making procedure.

In particular, were the budgetary powers of the European Parliament and consultation on proposals having important financial consequences deliberately and systematically omitted from this article in a Commission publication?

Answer

(7 February 1977)

The magazine '30 Jours d'Europe' is a European information magazine one of whose aims is to provide a forum in which differing opinions may be expressed. Its signed articles do not therefore necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

The Commission would like to take the opportunity of drawing the Honourable Member's attention to the 1976 issues of '30 Jours d'Europe' all of which gave space to the European Parliament and its activities, especially in articles by or interviews with the President or Members, and also to the special material on Parliament published in March, 10 000 copies of which were reprinted separately.

Moreover, the January 1977 issue devotes four-and-a-half pages to preparations for direct elections to Parliament.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 726/76

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(20 December 1976)

Subject: International textile trade

Will the Commission state what were the results of the position it adopted in Geneva with regard to what it referred to as 'a major review' of the multifibre textile agreement concerning the international textile trade.

Was it able to convince the other participants of the extremely grave consequences of the share of the Community market accounted for by imports from third countries, which in 1975 reached the following levels: cotton fibre 20 %; cotton cloth 40 %; discontinuous man-made fibres 24 %; men's shirts 54 %; ladies' tops and blouses 40 %; trousers 30 %; sweaters and pullovers 25 %; while the figures for 1976 do not yet reflect the growth in this phenomenon over 1975.

Answer

(7 February 1977)

The Commission did issue a statement on behalf of the Community — in the course of the major review carried out by the Textiles Committee, in Geneva, between 30 November and 10 December — on the operation of the Arrangement regarding International Trade in Textiles (also called the Multi-Fibre Arrangement or MFA).

In this statement the Commission drew attention, *inter alia,* to the difficulties which will be encountered by the Community's textile industry in the next two years: slump in production, very appreciable rise in imports of certain products, increased unemployment and short-time working.

In the initial discussions which were held at the same time on the future of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement, the Commission also underlined that the objectives of the MFA — which were still valid — had not been achieved in all fields. It pointed out in particular that the MFA had proved incapable — as far as the Community was concerned — of ensuring 'the orderly and equitable development of the textile trade and avoidance of disruptive effects in individual markets and on individual lines of production'. The Commission therefore expressed its support for the negotiation of a renewal of the MFA in which improvements could be made to the Arrangement in the light of the experience gained. The discussion will be resumed at the end of February or beginning of March.

As regards the rates quoted by the Honourable Member, which refer to the relationship noted in 1975 between the apparent consumption in the Community of the specific products mentioned and imports of these products from all non-member countries, the Commission did take pains to stress these figures as well as other factual data illustrating the state of the European textile industry. It should also perhaps be noted that the Community's textile imports from countries which are not parties to the Arrangement, or with which the Community has special relations account — in certain cases and in respect of certain products — for a sizeable and growing share of the Community market. Imports from countries participating in the MFA only make up, therefore, a large fraction of the Community's overall textile imports. Allowance must be made for this fact in the implementation of Community commercial policy in this sector.

Finally, the Commission would point out that the 13 bilateral voluntary restraint agreements concluded by the Community with some of its main suppliers, under the MFA have already helped — and will continue to help — to stabilize the trade in textiles with these countries.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 728/76

by Mr Normanton

to the Commission of the European Communities

(20 December 1976)

Subject: Job advertisements

Will the Commission list the newspapers and journals in which they have placed job advertisements since the signing of the Treaty of Accession in 1972, indicating the number of occasions each publication has been used for A, L/A, B, C and D job advertisements respectively?

Answer

(9 February 1977)

In order to give the Honourable Member a full reply, the Commission has had to investigate the matter thoroughly. It will not fail to send him the results as soon as possible.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 732/76

by Mr Aigner, Mr Artzinger, Mr Früh, Mr Klepsch, Mr Memmel, Mr Mursch, Mr Santer and Mr Schwörer

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 December 1976)

Subject: Difficulties experienced by long-distance haulage traffic at internal frontiers

The difficulties encountered by long-distance haulage traffic at European internal frontiers have increased rather than decreased in recent years. Delays of several hours are not exceptional.

What views has the Commission evolved and how does it intend to implement them, especially with a view to facilitating frontier crossings by long-distance drivers?

Answer

(10 February 1977)

1. In recent years the Commission has been informed of a number of complaints regarding difficulties encountered at several specific frontier crossing points.

These delays were mostly the result of strikes by Customs staff, or of temporary congestion due to traffic peaks at certain times of the year which the existing infrastructure and staff had difficulty in handling. Whenever the Commission has been informed of such difficulties, it has approached the competent authorities of the Member State concerned requesting them to take measures to restore a smooth traffic flow.

2. As a general principle, the Commission has always directed its efforts to the simplification and relaxation of traffic and to encouraging the provision of facilities for the completion inside the territory of the Member State concerned of formalities previously carried out at the frontier.

The Commission would recall that the Community transit system introduced under Regulation (EEC) No 542/69 of 18 March 1969 (1), and extended to Switzerland and Austria in 1974 (2), means that goods can be carried without any repeating of customs formalities when frontiers are crossed, experience having shown that in practice the system enables waiting time at frontier posts to be reduced to a minimum.

Along the same lines, the proposal for a Directive on the harmonization of procedures for the release of goods for free circulation, on which the European Parliament delivered a favourable opinion on 27 June 1974 (3), includes provisions which, if applied to the carriage of goods under Community transit procedure in conjunction with those of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1226/71 of 11 June 1971 (4), are designed to decongest frontier crossing points by encouraging the practice of conducting customs formalities after the goods have reached the consignee's domicile.

(1) OJ No L 77, 29. 3. 1969, p. 1.
(2) OJ No L 224, 13. 8. 1974, pp. 1 and 16.
(3) OJ No C 85, 18. 7. 1974, p. 24.
(4) OJ No L 129, 5. 6. 1971, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 734/76

by Mr Laban

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 December 1976)

Subject: Grubbing-up premiums for apple and pear orchards

1. Can the Commission give a breakdown by Member State of the number of applications for grubbing-up premiums for apple and pear orchards together with details of the surface areas concerned?

2. Does the Commission feel that this grubbing-up premium Regulation meets expectations and that it makes a positive contribution to the elimination of structural surpluses of these fruits?

3. If insufficient use is being made of this Regulation, what are the reasons and what measures is the Commission prepared to consider in this case?

Answer

(2 February 1977)

1. At present the Commission has but very fragmentary information on applications for grubbing premiums for apple and pear trees submitted in the various Member States.

2 and 3. This being so, the Commission cannot even give a provisional assessment of the effect of the grubbing premium arrangements. The Commission will not fail to give the Honourable Member a more complete reply as soon as all the information is available.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 738/76

by Mr Lagorce

to the Commission of the European Communities

(22 December 1976)

Subject: Producer prices of crude petroleum

Can the Commission state for each of the producer countries the producer price per barrel of crude petroleum?

Can it indicate the reasons for any disparities?

Can it confirm reports that the oil companies refuse to give any indication of production costs? If so, what means has it at its disposal to obtain the necessary information?

Does it believe that the attitude of the oil companies is likely to help or hinder the establishment of a common energy policy?

Answer

(14 February 1977)

The following table summarizes the market prices (fob port of embarkation) laid down by the producer countries per barrel of each of the main types of crude oil which make up the bulk of the Community's supplies:

Type	Price per barrel in $	
	31 December 1976	1 January 1977
Arabian Light 34° API	11·51	12·09
Iranian Light 34° API	11·62	12·81
Iraq Basrah 35° API	11·50	12·69
Kuwait 31° API	11·23	12·37
Qatar Marine 36° API	11·66	13·00
Libya Es Sider 37° API	12·40	13·74
Algeria Zarzaitine 41° API	13·05	14·25
Nigeria Forcados 31° API	13·07	14·08
Venezuela Tia Juana 31° API	12·35	13·54

The discrepancies observed in the market prices are the result of the differences which exist between the qualities of crude oil. They are designed to compensate for the savings in transport costs resulting from the privileged geographical position of some deposits. In some cases the conditions granted to the old concession-holders have not been finally settled and some minor discrepancies may still exist as regards the obtaining of crude oil.

It should also be pointed out that, since 1 January 1977, some disparities have become more pronounced as a result of the different price increases fixed by the producer countries. These increases have ranged from 5 % to 10 % depending on the individual case.

Hitherto, the Commission has been informed of the circumstances in which companies obtained the various qualities of crude oil through information published by the specialist press or communicated directly by the oil industry.

From the start of 1977, the Council Directive of 4 May 1976 (1) regarding a Community procedure for information and consultation on the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the Community will enable the Commission to be systematically informed about the costs and prices of crude oil from the various sources. In accordance with Article 9 of this Directive, the Commission will submit to the Council and to the European Parliament a report on the results of the implementation of this Directive.

The Commission has never encountered any difficulty in opening up the necessary dialogue with the industry in order to investigate the various aspects of the oil market. This was especially true of the study and development of the arrangements envisaged in the Council Directive regarding the transparency of oil costs and prices.

(1) OJ No L 140, 28. 5. 1976, p. 4.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 744/76

by Mr Durieux

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 January 1977)

Subject: EIB financing of information activities

Does the Commission feel that Article 130 of the Treaty of Rome authorizes the EIB to finance information activities which make up for a deficiency in the Community and involve the development of fresh activities called for by the progressive establishment of the Common Market which cannot be financed by the various means available in the individual Member States?

If so, can the Commission state if any requests for such financing have already been received by the EIB?

Answer

(15 February 1977)

Article 130 of the EEC Treaty authorizes the EIB to contribute to the 'financing of projects in all sectors of the economy' whether they are 'projects for developing less developed regions', 'projects for modernizing or converting undertakings or for developing fresh activities called for by the progressive establishment of the common market', or 'projects of common interest to several Member States'.

Such projects must, however, satisfy the criteria laid down in the EIB's Statute, which stipulates in particular:

— that the Bank shall grant loans 'for investment projects' (first subparagraph of Article 18 (1)),

— that it may grant loans only:

(a) where, in the case of projects carried out by undertakings in the production sector, interest and redemption payments are covered out of operating profits or, in other cases, either by a commitment entered into by the State in which the project is carried out or by some other means, and

(b) where the execution of the project contributes to an increase in economic productivity in general and promotes the attainment of the common market (second subparagraph of Article 20 (1)).

Given these criteria, the Bank has not as yet financed information activities as such.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 749/76

by Mr Dondelinger

to the Commission of the European Communities

(5 January 1977)

Subject: Massive imports from Japan

The Japanese Sankio Electric Company has just signed a number of contracts for the supply of air-conditioning systems to certain major European car manufacturers, i.e. Renault, Peugeot, Volvo and Fiat. Although it has already received orders for such equipment from American car manufacturers, this is the first time that orders have been received from Western European manufacturers.

Under these new contracts, Sankio Electric will export 180 000 air-conditioning systems in a single year. The Japanese company hopes that these new orders will raise its exports for the 1977 financial year (October 1976 — September 1977) to 700 000 air-conditioning systems, representing an increase of 40 % over the preceding financial year. Exports to Europe should therefore account for almost one quarter of its total exports in this sector.

1. In view of the current state of the balance of payments between the Community and this third country, does the Commission regard as normal the massive import from Japan of air-conditioning systems for cars?

2. Does the Commission not feel that, in all respects, there is a more urgent need to improve the safety of motor cars or to reduce the pollution they cause before devoting attention to air-conditioning them?

3. Does the Commission not feel that these imports are a prime example of the shortcomings and maladjustment of European industry caused by the absence of a Community industrial policy?

4. If so, will the Commission make representations both to European car manufacturers and the Japanese Government?

Answer

(7 February 1977)

The Commission does not at present have any precise information about the matters raised by the Honourable Member. It will not fail to seek information from the firms involved and make known its views to the Member about these transactions as soon as its investigations have been completed.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 753/76

by Mr Guerlin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1977)

Subject: Aid to the press

Can the Commission provide a breakdown of aid granted to the daily and weekly press, both national and regional, in each of the nine Community Member States?

Is it able to make an assessment of the scope of such aid in each of the Member States?

Answer

(10 February 1977)

As the Commission has already indicated in its answer to Written Question No 635/75 by Mr Normanton [1], subsidies to the newspaper industry in the Community take a number of forms.

In Italy and France the State intervenes to guarantee the industry cheap supplies of newsprint. In Italy this is done by means of a purchasing subsidy; in France the same object is achieved by price equalization.

In other countries, notably Belgium and the Netherlands, the industry received a direct annual subsidy.

In most Member States the industry enjoys reduced postal rates, tax concessions in the form of low, or in some cases zero, rates of VAT, and preferential treatment in the matter of telecommunications.

In the United Kingdom the Government has made a loan available to a newspaper cooperative in Scotland under Section 7 of the Industry Act.

Subsidies, including those listed above, are largely confined to dailies though periodicals also benefit to a limited extent.

More generally, the Commission considers that the criteria for applying Article 92 (1) of the EEC Treaty are not met where aid to the press is concerned, since newspapers published in different Member States have widely differing cultural content and cannot be said to be in competition. They are also usually published in different languages. Subsidies to the newspaper industry therefore come essentially under the authority of the Member States, in so far as their terms of application do not distort competition in other sectors such as the newsprint manufacturing industry.

(1) OJ No C 37, 18. 2. 1976, p. 14.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 756/76

by Mr Martens

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1977)

Subject: Milk prices for 1975/76

Can the Commission state, for each Member State:

1. The average net milk price per kg/37 paid by dairy factories to milk suppliers, whether in the 1975 calendar year or in the milk year 1 April 1975 to 31 March 1976.

   How might possible price differences be explained?

2. The highest and lowest prices paid by individual dairy factories.

   Have the cooperative dairy factories, on average, paid better prices than the others? How might any price differences between factories be explained?

Answer

(2 February 1977)

1. Figures available to the Commission show that the following average prices were paid by dairy factories to milk suppliers in the 1975 calendar year:

(in u.a./100 kg)

Federal Republic of Germany	15·37	3·7 % fat, ex-farm
France	13·50	3·7 % fat, ex-farm
Italy	16·69	natural fat content, free at dairy
Netherlands	14·21	3·7 % fat, ex-farm
Belgium	13·40	3·7 % fat, ex-farm
Luxembourg	13·64	3·7 % fat, ex-farm
United Kingdom	12·08	3·7 % fat
Ireland	11·32	natural fat content
Denmark	13·33	3·7 % fat, ex-farm

The price differences can be explained by:

— the conversion of national currencies into units of account at representative rates, which may differ from the actual rates of exchange for the currencies concerned,

— the fact that the price harmonization arising from the accession of new Member States has not yet been completed,

— the varying price policies which are still practised by individual Member States in the drinking-milk sector,

— the supply and demand structure on the milk market in the various regions of the Community.

2. The Commission has no information on the prices actually paid by individual dairies to milk suppliers.

Generally speaking, the legal form of a dairy does not affect the producer price for milk. However, the fiscal legislation of individual Member States often places cooperative dairy factories at an advantage.

Price differences between factories can as a rule be explained by regional differences in the milk production structure and the related milk yield (milk density). The way in which milk is used, the degree of rationalization and the location of the dairy in question also play an important role.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 757/76

by Mr Glinne

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 January 1977)

Subject: Violation of the Treaties of Paris and Rome by Belgium

The educational and boarding fees for foreign pupils and students pursuing technical and university studies whose parents reside outside Belgium have been subsequently increased. This increase, which was decided on unilaterally by Belgium [1], also affects EEC nationals.

Does not the Commission feel that Belgium has acted contrary to its international obligations and, in particular, to Article 57 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community? If so, could the Commission please make the appropriate observations to the Belgian Government?

[1] Ministerial circular of 9 August 1976.

Answer

(21 January 1977)

The Commission has already expressed its opinion on the Ministerial circular of 9 August 1976 in its answer to Written Question No 566/76 by Mr Pisoni [1], to which the Honourable Member is kindly asked to refer.

[1] OJ No C 35, 11. 2. 1977, p. 7.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 765/76

by Mr Pisoni, Mr Pucci and Mr Ligios

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 January 1977)

Subject: Petrol savings

Does the Commission intend to take steps to ensure that in Community driving schools, in addition to the usual matters taught, candidates for driving licences are given instruction in how to save petrol by driving carefully and by carrying out adequate and regular engine maintenance?

Answer

(9 February 1977)

As part of the Community programme on the rational utilization of energy [1], the Commission has instructed a group of experts to investigate the possibilities of reducing the energy consumption of motor vehicles.

[1] Doc. COM(74) 1950, final/2.

The Group's work has resulted in the drafting of an initial recommendation, No 76/494/EEC (1), which the Council adopted on 4 May 1976, on the rational use, through better driving habits, of energy consumed by road vehicles.

In the recital and in paragraphs 1 to 5, this recommendation sets out certain general guidelines whilst leaving it to the Member States to take the most effective domestic measures.

The specific point mentioned by the Honourable Members comes under this type of action, and the Commission hopes that the idea will be acted upon in the Member States.

(1) OJ No L 140, 28. 5. 1976, p. 14.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 767/76

by Mr Pisoni, Mr Ligios, Mr Pucci and Mr Vernaschi

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 January 1977)

Subject: Forecasting earthquakes

The recent serious geological disturbances which have ravaged various areas of the globe, with particularly disastrous consequences in China, Italy and Turkey, have made the possibility of forecasting earthquakes a matter of great urgency.

Science already seems capable of giving prior indications with some degree of reliability, since special scientific equipment can often detect warning signs of earthquakes.

If human lives are to be saved and material losses limited, it is vital to be able to anticipate the outbreak of these cataclysms. In view of this fact, does not the Commission feel that it would be advisable to set up a European research institute that would be provided with the resources to tackle the problem of forecasting seismic disturbances and would in turn set up a European network of monitoring stations?

Answer

(10 February 1977)

Important as it may be for the saving of lives and property, reliable prediction of time, magnitude and location of earthquakes is not possible, even in well-instrumented areas, in the present state of scientific understanding of precursory phenomena and means of detection of changes of ground behaviour.

In collaboration with experts in the field the Commission is in the process of examining the problems involved in forecasting of seismic events, with particular emphasis on developing more sensitive monitoring instruments.

At this preliminary stage of the investigation the Commission is not in a position to judge the advisability of setting up a European research institute to tackle the problem of earthquake forecasting.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 774/76

by Mr Martens

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 January 1977)

Subject: Margarine prices in the Member States of the European Communities

Based on European Community statistics:

— the price of standard quality margarine in the Netherlands fell from 97·02 units of account per 100 kg in 1974 to 80·80 units of account in 1975. In Belgium, on the other hand, it rose in the same period from 88·91 units of account to 104·20 units of account,

— the following prices are recorded for June 1976: 73·38 units of account in the Netherlands, 95·80 units of account in Belgium and 146·14 units of account in Denmark.

During the agriculture debate in the European Parliament on 13 December 1976 I asked the Commission to explain these price discrepancies at a time when trade in vegetable oils and fats has been completely liberalized.

I realize that the Commission could not give an immediate answer, and I hope therefore to get a detailed answer to this written question.

Answer

(15 February 1977)

The Honorable Member is correct in stating that trade in vegetable oils and fats is completely liberalized, but that margarine prices, and even their evolution, can vary considerably between Member States.

1. The difference in price evolution in 1974 and 1975 between Belgium and the Netherlands arises from the fact that in both countries prices are controlled; in Belgium, price increases are permitted on the basis of current prices of raw materials, whereas in the Netherlands such increases are based on the replacement costs of such raw materials. Since the industry must cover itself for several months in advance, the increase in price, and the following decline, took place in the Netherlands several months before the same process occurred in Belgium. The trend was therefore the same, but there was a time lag between the two Member States in question.

2. The Commission would point out that the vegetable and marine oils and fats represent only 25—40 % of the final value of margarine, the remainder comprising mainly labour costs, tax rates, and retail margin.

   Other elements which explain price differences between Member States include:

   — consumer habits and national legislation, which impose the use of different ingredients, at varying prices, in the final product, also the proportions of individual oils and fats used may differ according to the country concerned,

   — levels of output and consumption: where these are high, economics of scale are achieved,

   — disparate consumption/distribution patterns — costs are higher in areas where consumption per head is low,

   — promotion costs, which vary according to the level of penetration of margarine on the national markets.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 845/76

by Mr Waltmans and Mr Albers

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 January 1977)

Subject: Skiing holidays for pupils at the European Schools

Is it true that the European Institutions subsidize skiing holidays for pupils of the European Schools?

Answer

(14 February 1977)

The Honourable Members are informed that the European Schools do not organize skiing holidays. The syllabus includes a week of classes at a ski resort for the fourth primary class, and, except for the maximum education allowance provided for in Article 3 of Annex VII of the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Communities and conditions of employment of other servants the cost of this week is borne entirely by the parents.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 849/76

by Mr Dondelinger

to the Commission of the European Communities

(31 January 1977)

Subject: Security service

In the new breakdown of responsibilities within the new Commission, no reference is made to the security service which, in the previous Commission, was directly responsible to Mr Ortoli.

1. Has the Commission decided to abolish its security service?

2. If so, on what grounds?

3. Is there any connection between this exclusion from the Commissioners' various responsibilities of the very concept of a security service and the recent 'witch-hunt' within the Commission?

Answer

(10 February 1977)

The Commission Decision of 7 January 1977 concerning the allocation of Members' duties stated that the President is responsible for the security Office.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 851/76

by Mr Normanton

to the Commission of the European Communities

(31 January 1977)

Subject: Energy raw materials

Will the Commission tabulate the total 1976 value of all Community exports to and imports from states supplying the Community with one or more energy raw material?

Answer

(14 February 1977)

Detailed foreign trade statistics for 1976 are not yet available for any Member State, although some Member States will publish their foreign trade figures within a few weeks. Community statistics will not be available earlier than May 1977.

The Honourable Member will receive a complete answer to his question as soon as the statistics are available.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 852/76

by Mr Normanton

to the Commission of the European Communities

(31 January 1977)

Subject: Imports of energy raw materials

Will the Commission tabulate the cost (in units of account) of imports during 1976 by each Member State for each of the following:

I. petroleum and refined products,

II. natural gas,

III. coal and coking coal,

IV. uranium ore and enriched uranium.

Answer

(14 February 1977)

Detailed foreign trade statistics for 1976 are not yet available for any Member State, although some Member States will publish their foreign trade figures within a few weeks. Community statistics will not be available earlier than May 1977.

The Honourable Member will receive a complete answer to his question as soon as the statistics are available.

CORRIGENDA

Corrigendum to the answer to Written Question No 547/76 by Mr Gibbons

(Official Journal of the Europeen Communities, No C 23 of 31 January 1977)

Page 15, first paragraph, fourth line; fourth paragraph, second line; last paragraph, last line:

for: 'Republic of Ireland',

read: 'Ireland'.

Corrigendum to the answer to Written Question No 598/76 by Mr Cousté

(Official Journal of the European Communities, No C 23 of 31 January 1977)

Page 23, first paragraph; eighth, ninth and tenth lines:

for: '.... with an apple crop 8 % below average (6 750 000 tonnes in 1971 compared with 6 200 000 tonnes in 1975) and a very large stone fruit crop (peaches in ....',

read: '.... with an apple crop about 9 % below average (6 800 000 tonnes on average in 1971/75 compared with 6 200 000 tonnes in 1976) and a very large stone fruit crop (peaches in ....'.