

English edition

Information and Notices

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European Parliament

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I

(Information)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN QUESTIONS WITH ANSWER

WRITTEN QUESTION No 891/80

by Mr Penders

to the Council of the European Communities

(22 July 1980)

Subject: Prompt distribution of declarations, communiqués, speaking notes, etc., after important meetings

Will the Council ensure that Parliament receives the texts of declarations, communiqués, speaking notes, etc., as soon as possible after meetings of the seven leading Western industrialized countries and the Community?

Answer*(23 February 1981)*

The Council does not take part in the meetings of the seven leading Western industrialized countries. However, at its meeting on 21 and 22 November 1977, the Council decided that at such meetings its Presidency and the President of the Commission would be invited to take part in those sessions where subjects coming under Community jurisdiction were to be discussed.

The Council recognizes that it is useful for the European Parliament to receive public statements from meetings of the seven leading Western countries as soon as possible.

It should also be noted that on occasions in the past, the President of the Council has reported orally to the European Parliament on the outcome of such meetings.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1171/80

by Mr Damseaux

to the Council of the European Communities

(22 September 1980)

Subject: Geneva protocol banning the use of toxic chemical agents in war

The use of toxic chemical agents in war is prohibited under the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925. The USSR acceded to this international instrument on 5 April 1928. Like many other countries, including Belgium, the USSR made its accession subject to an *inter partes* proviso committing it only in respect of States that have signed and ratified the protocol or have acceded to it. Afghanistan, however, is not a party to the Geneva protocol.

Condemnation of the use of toxic chemical agents in war can, however, be considered as following from established custom and being incompatible with any *inter partes* proviso. Indeed, this interpretation can be used against any signatory to the Geneva protocol in that its preamble in effect confirms established custom by declaring that the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices has been justly condemned by the general opinion of the civilized world. It would therefore seem that the use of gas against Afghan patriots by invading Soviet troops constitutes a violation of an international convention.

Is the Council aware of these circumstances, and if so, what action has it taken to induce the Soviet invader to abandon its illegal tactics?

Answer⁽¹⁾

In reply to Mr Damseaux's question, the Presidency would refer to a statement made by the President-in-Office of the Nine to the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 17 October 1980:

'The Nine view with deep concern reports that chemical weapons have been used in armed conflicts. It is true that such reports have still to be verified. But, in view of the horror implied by the use of such weapons, the Nine believe that the international community must make every effort to clarify this matter. The Nine will support any realistic effort to this end.'

The report from the Disarmament Committee to the United Nations General Assembly (CD 139 of 9 August 1980) notes the imperative need for strict observance of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, especially with regard to controversial allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons. In this context, the need for appropriate international measures to establish the facts was stressed.

It must also be stressed that the Nine consider it important and urgent to prohibit the production of chemical weapons and that they approved Resolution 34/72 of the United Nations General Assembly recommending multilateral negotiations to draw up a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the production, storage and use of chemical weapons.

Within the Disarmament Committee at Geneva some Member States have already taken certain initiatives to this end.

Thus the Nine have on several occasions, in particular in the statement published after the European Council in Venice on 12 and 13 June 1980, already expressed their deep disquiet at the intensification of the military operations by Soviet

troops in Afghanistan and at the dramatic developments worsening the sufferings of the Afghan people.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1200/80

by Mr Seeler

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 October 1980)

Subject: Production and consumption of fishmeal

Some European countries — members of the European Community and non-members alike — catch large quantities of fish and process a very high percentage of these catches into fishmeal. Fish stocks in the North Atlantic, the North Sea and the Baltic are thereby endangered, as immature fish are also caught and processed.

1. How much fishmeal is used in the European Community?
2. What proportion of fishmeal production in the European Community is accounted for by Denmark?
3. Does the Commission see any possibility of reducing the consumption of fishmeal by substituting other suitable feeding stuffs, thereby reducing the Community's demand for imports and the quantities of fish to be processed into fishmeal, and thus reducing the pressure on fish stocks, especially of immature fish, in the North Atlantic, the North Sea and the Baltic?

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

1. The consumption of fishmeal within the Community, which was 1 404 000 tonnes in 1971, fell gradually to 785 000 tonnes in 1978.
2. Production of fishmeal in Denmark totalled about 248 000 tonnes in 1971 and at present is 273 000 tonnes. Community production was about 400 000 tonnes in 1970 and has risen slightly to 500 000 tonnes at present with Denmark's share dropping (62% in 1970 and 54.6% at present).

⁽¹⁾ This reply has been provided by the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation, within whose province the question came.

3. Fishmeal is used to improve the value of other types of protein of lesser value and is important in stock-farming because it enables the use of a number of feedingstuffs with a poorly balanced composition of amino-acids and low protein value.

A reduction in the use of fishmeal or a prohibition on its use would reduce the profitability of a number of types of livestock production since it would make for slower growth and a greater susceptibility to disease.

Fish oil for human consumption in the form of margarine is produced in connection with the manufacture of fishmeal. Production of fish oil for human consumption amounted in 1980 in Denmark to about 110 000 tonnes.

Current experiments by the chemical industry to find a substitute for fishmeal have not proved successful.

As regards the conservation of fish stocks in the North Atlantic, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, the Commission is aware that the first priority must be to conserve the stocks of fish used for human consumption and that it is the species of fish which are unsuitable for human consumption which must be used for fishmeal.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1203/80

by Mr Seefeld

to the Council of the European Communities

(6 October 1980)

Subject: Working methods of the Council

1. Does the Council share the view that
 - (a) it is the weakest link in the European Community and that
 - (b) its Secretary-General does not have the necessary powers?
2. Is the Council prepared to rationalize its procedures and, if so, how?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The Honourable Member will not be surprised to hear that the Council does not share his opinion.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1210/80

by Mrs Boserup

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 October 1980)

Subject: Opinion addressed to the Danish Government — Training for some road transport drivers

In an opinion dated 12 June 1980⁽¹⁾ with regard to the measures applied by the Danish Government to implement Council Directive 76/914/EEC of 16 December 1976⁽²⁾ on the minimum level of training for some road transport drivers the Commission criticizes the Danish Government for failing to comply with various provisions of the Directive in its ministerial implementing decree and draws attention to a number of deficiencies in that decree.

Is the Commission aware that the deficiencies to which it refers are in fact already covered by the general regulations governing the acquisition of driving licences in Denmark?

Will the Commission therefore concede that its criticism of the Danish Government is unjustified?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 172, 5. 7. 1980, p. 32.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 357, 29. 12. 1976, p. 36.

Answer given by Mr Burke
on behalf of the Commission

(17 February 1981)

It is true that certain of the lacunas mentioned by the Commission in its opinion of 12 June 1980, are already treated in the Danish Regulation No 144 of 15 April 1977 relating to the conditions for acquiring a driver's licence, a fact which was not brought to the attention of the Commission by the Danish Government when it consulted the Commission. However, the fact remains that some of the points mentioned in the annex to the Council Directive of 16 December 1976 do not appear in the abovenamed Regulation or, if they do, in an unsatisfactory way.

For that reason, the Commission considers that in general its opinion of 12 June 1980 is still valid, as far as these points are concerned.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1240/80**by Mr Karl Schön****to the Commission of the European Communities***(6 October 1980)*

Subject: Grants from the European Regional Development Fund for industry and services

In grants allocated to industrial and service undertakings under the ERDF the motor vehicle industry heads the list of economic sectors in the Community receiving grants (see Fifth Annual Report of the Fund, paragraph 50).

Under Article 5(c) and Article 13 of the Fund Regulation the Commission must examine the situation of the economic sector to which the undertaking to be financed belongs and the profitability of the investment. Under the specific Community measures projects in declining sectors of the economy are expressly considered unsuitable for funding.

1. What opportunities does the Commission see for growth in the Community motor vehicle industry in the medium and long term?
2. Does not the Commission consider it more suitable to concentrate its regional aid measures on those branches of industry the future growth of which is assured?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

The Commission would inform the Honourable Member that investment projects in the motor vehicle industry received around 9 % of the 2 488 million EUA granted by the European Regional Development Fund between its establishment in 1975 and the end of 1979. The motor vehicle industry's share of the total amount of assistance granted to projects in the industrial, service and craft sectors was 27 %.

On 11 November 1980, the Commission transmitted to Parliament a document describing the current situation in the motor vehicle industry, for use in the debate on the matter⁽¹⁾.

This debate provided an opportunity for making an appraisal of prospects in the industry and for examining the initial analysis made by the Commission.

⁽¹⁾ Doc. SEC(80) 1381.

The Commission had already produced some preliminary observations in its reply to Written Question No 1664/79 ⁽²⁾ by Mr Debré, to which the Honourable Member is asked to refer.

In accordance with the Regulation establishing the European Regional Development Fund⁽³⁾, the granting of assistance is decided upon by the Commission, which is to base itself in particular on the situation in the industry concerned and the importance of the investment but also on the relative severity of the economic imbalance in the region in which the investment is made and on its direct or indirect effect on employment. The objective therefore must be to achieve the best possible balance between these two aspects, even though it is not always easy at present to identify the branches of activity with undeniable growth potential. In the case of an industry like the motor vehicle industry which is in a state of flux and in which the criteria governing the choice of location are also constantly changing, action taken by the Fund must be geared to promoting in the regions facing the most acute problems the establishment or extension of production units best able to cope with present changes in technological and economic conditions.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 150, 18. 6. 1980, p. 21.

⁽³⁾ Regulation (EEC) No 724/75 of 18 March 1975, as amended by Regulation (EEC) No 214/79 (OJ No L 35, 9. 2. 1979, p. 1).

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1314/80**by Mrs Schleicher****to the Commission of the European Communities***(20 October 1980)*

Subject: Oil pollution of Community waters particularly in the channel

Pollution of waterways by oil is known to be caused not only by tanker accidents but also by the flushing of tanks and the discharge of waste oil at sea. The ban on these practices is in fact seldom observed and as yet there exist no facilities for surveillance on the high seas.

Does the Commission not consider it feasible — at least in a constricted area such as the English Channel which with the large volume of traffic that passes through it is one of the most important waterways in the world and therefore suffers from a high degree of oil pollution — to reduce oil pollution of the sea through constant air surveillance, so as to make it easier to identify offenders?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

Like the Honourable Member, the Commission feels that regular air surveillance of the English Channel could bring about a reduction in discharges of hydrocarbons by ships.

It remains, however, the province of the Member States directly concerned to organize such surveillance on a joint basis.

The French authorities have informed the Commission in this connection that:

- (i) there is air surveillance;
- (ii) breaches of rules on discharging waste oil at sea and flushing tanks have been followed up assiduously over the last year or so and heavy fines have been imposed;
- (iii) the procedures for ratifying the Marpol Convention and the Protocol to this Convention are now in progress.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1356/80

by Mrs Ewing

to the Council of the European Communities

(27 October 1980)

Subject: Greek fleet

What plans does the Council have to cope, on the entry of Greece, with the problem of the Greek fleet, in view of the fact that nearly half of the fleet is twenty years old, and between two and three times more accident-prone than the rest of the world's shipping, and also in view of the fact that many Greek ships never visit Greek ports, and spend their working lives carrying cargoes between third countries, often thousands of miles away?

Can the Council give an assurance that the proposed scrap and build programme, will not operate to the disadvantage of the fleets of other Member States?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

During the accession negotiations, the Greek Government stated that it could accept the Community legislation on shipping at present in force, without any transitional agreements being necessary, and that it could therefore comply with

this legislation from the date of its accession. This legislation includes three recommendations by the Council on the ratification by Member States of the 1973 Marpol Convention, the 1974 Solas Convention, their 1978 Protocols, ILO Convention No 147⁽¹⁾, the 1978 International Convention on standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers⁽²⁾ and the 1977 Torremolinos Convention for the safety of fishing vessels⁽³⁾. The Council has also taken measures with the aim of improving the safety of navigation, such as the Directive concerning minimum requirements for certain tankers entering or leaving ports⁽⁴⁾ and the Directive concerning pilotage of vessels by deep-sea pilots in the North Sea and the English Channel⁽⁵⁾.

Other measures are currently being prepared by the Council's subordinate bodies, with the participation of the Greek delegation.

Finally, the Council would like to point out that, according to the most recent statistics available, only 19% of Greek gross tonnage is more than 20 years old.

Also, although the Council held a policy debate in November 1979 on a Commission communication on a scheme to promote the scrapping and building of ocean-going ships, the Commission has not placed any formal proposal before it on this matter.

(1) Recommendation 78/584/EEC of 26 June 1978, OJ No L 194, 19. 7. 1978, p. 17.

(2) Recommendation 79/114/EEC of 21 December 1978, OJ No L 33, 8. 2. 1979, p. 31.

(3) Recommendation 80/907/EEC of 23 September 1980, OJ No L 259, 2. 10 1980, p. 29.

(4) Directive 79/116/EEC of 21 December 1978, OJ No L 33, 8. 2. 1979, p. 33, as amended by Directive 79/1034/EEC of 6 December 1979, OJ No L 315, 11. 12. 1979, p. 10.

(5) Directive 79/115/EEC of 21 December 1978, OJ No L 33, 8. 2. 1979, p. 32.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1360/80

by Mr Fanton

to the Commission of the European Communities

(27 October 1980)

Subject: The problem of translation

An article on the problem of translation in the 26 September 1980 edition of 'Euroforum' ends with the statement that (the committee) would also be

considering Community policy towards minority languages, and the possible use of an artificial language like Esperanto.

Was the Commission aware of the contents of this article before it was published? If not, will it indicate what steps it intends to take to avoid excesses of this kind appearing in future in an official publication of its Directorate-General for Information? If it was aware of the article can it state on what basis and what grounds the use of what General de Gaulle called 'volapuk intégré' is being considered?

**Answer given by Mr Jenkins
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission has no proposals to alter the Communities' linguistic regime. The statements contained in the Euroforum article, to which the Honourable Member has drawn attention, refer to a policy suggestion emanating from the European Parliament. They relate to the opinion of the Parliament's Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport on a motion for a resolution to set up a special committee to study the problems arising from multilingualism in the Community. As the Euroforum article pointed out, the Committee's opinion concluded that such a special committee should be established and should consider 'the possible use of Esperanto and other intellectually constructed languages.'

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1395/80

by Mr Albers

to the Commission of the European Communities

(6 November 1980)

Subject: Rhine-Main-Danube canal

1. Has the Commission taken note of the agreement which has been concluded between the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria allowing shipping bound for the North Sea to use the Rhine-Main-Danube canal currently under construction?

2. Does the Commission not agree that it would be in the interests of a common transport policy to negotiate an agreement between the European Community and Austria on freedom of passage through the Rhine-Main-Danube canal?

**Answer given by Mr Contogeorgis
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

1. The Commission has been informed that an agreement has been negotiated between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria concerning inland waterway transport operations.

Consultations have been started with the German authorities to discover and review the contents of the agreement.

2. The subject raises some delicate problems, especially of a legal nature. The abovementioned discussions should make it possible to discern certain of the broad lines.

More generally, in view of the fact that the common transport policy affects relations with certain non-member countries, the Commission has sent the Council a proposal for a Decision setting up an information and consultation procedure for relations and agreements with third countries in the field of transport by rail, road and inland waterway.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1420/80

by Mrs Ewing

to the Council of the European Communities

(6 November 1980)

Subject: Oban Radio Ship-to-Shore Station

Is the Council aware of the proposal to close Oban Radio Ship-to-Shore station in Argyll in my Euro-constituency, and of the fact that this station is international, providing communications for all ships off the West Coast of Scotland, including from time to time ships of most Member States, and in these circumstances will the Council use its good offices to ensure that this service, vital to the safety of ships and men of the EEC, does not close for lack of financial aid, as remote control has been proved to give inadequate safety cover?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The question put by the Honourable Member falls within the competence of the Member State concerned.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1428/80**by Mr Denis****to the Council of the European Communities***(6 November 1980)*

Subject: Embargo on EEC exports of agricultural products to the USSR

In view of the evident failure of the embargo imposed by the United States on its sales of cereals to the Soviet Union, does the Council not consider that it is time to revoke the parallel measures taken by the EEC which concern not only cereals, but also beef and veal, poultrymeat and butter, since to continue with these measures would only bring unnecessary harm to the commercial interests of the Member States of the EEC, given that other allies of the United States which compete with the EEC on the world cereal markets, such as Canada and Argentina, have recently concluded trade agreements with the Soviet Union?

Answer*(23 February 1981)*

Following the measures decided on by the United States regarding the supply of agricultural products to the USSR, the Council at its meeting on 15 January 1980 established the principle that Community supplies should not replace either directly or indirectly United States supplies to the Soviet market. The Council accordingly asked the Commission to take the necessary steps regarding cereals and products derived from cereals and to propose any other measures in respect of other agricultural products, while observing traditional patterns of trade.

The Commission has the responsibility of implementing the Council's decision as part of the management of the agricultural policy and provides the Council with regular and detailed information on how it is implementing the Council decision with regard to the Community's agricultural exports to the USSR. It also provides information about trends in the exports from significant third countries to the USSR.

Up to now the Council has not felt it necessary to reconsider its decision of 15 January.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1440/80**by Mrs Lizin****to the Foreign Ministers of the nine Member States of the European Community meeting in political cooperation***(6 November 1980)*

Subject: Sudanese frontier with Eritrea

Are the Ministers aware that the Sudan has decided to close its frontiers with the Eritrean area as part of its normalization of relations with the Ethiopian regime?

Do the Ministers not regard this action by the Sudan as a gesture of support for the Ethiopian dictatorship which must not be ignored? Do they intend to urge the Sudanese government to alter its position?

Answer*(23 February 1981)*

The Ten feel that the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and the Sudan derives from the fundamental principles of the OAU, whose worth they recognize. They hope that this normalization can contribute to a peaceful solution to the Eritrean crisis acceptable to all parties directly involved.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1470/80**by Mrs Vayssade****to the Commission of the European Communities***(12 November 1980)*

Subject: Implementation of the Directive on lead poisoning

The construction by General Motors of a lead battery factory at Sarreguemines has given rise to great anxiety amongst the population on both sides of the border.

The problem of screening the population for lead poisoning was the subject of a Directive adopted by the Council on 29 March 1977.

1. Can the Commission give an appraisal of how this Directive has been implemented in Alsace-Lorraine?
2. Have the arrangements and frequency of screening been adequate? Does the Commission not agree that these measures should be accompanied by regular monitoring of the lead content of the air?

3. What measures are taken to inform the population concerned about the dangers involved and what are the consequences of greater exposure of the population to the risk of lead poisoning?

**Answer given by Mr Richard Burke
on behalf of the Commission**

(23 January 1981)

We would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given by the Commission to Oral Question H 501/80⁽¹⁾ during Question Time at the December part-session of the European Parliament.

⁽¹⁾ Debates of the European Parliament, No 1-264 (December 1980) p. 28

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1482/80

by Mr Leonardi

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 November 1980)

Subject: Action on data processing

Is it true that the Land of Bavaria has issued criteria with which future legislation must comply in order that it can be handled by data processing equipment?

If so, what action is the Commission considering in order to extend such criteria to other member countries so as to favour the use of data processing techniques at Community level?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

The Commission is aware that several Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany have published guidelines for the drafting of legal and administrative regulations adapted to the requirements of data processing.

The first provisional set of guidelines was published by the Land of Bavaria, as the Honourable Member points out; this was done in 1969. It was followed by others: the Land of Lower Saxony (guidelines, 1970), the Government of Bremen (addendum to the rules of internal administrative procedure), and the land of

Hessen (guidelines, 1974). In addition, the Federal Government adopted on 29 November 1973 (GMBI No 30 of 11 December 1973, page 555 — Editions a —) a set of principles for the form and presentation of legal and administrative regulations to which automatic data processing could be applied.

The Commission is not at the present time aware of any similar arrangements in other Member States of the Community.

The aim in using data processing, which is gradually being introduced in the application of national legislation, is to achieve a degree of rationalization.

Such rationalization is in the first instance the responsibility of the national authorities, and the Commission is not for the moment considering any specific recommendations on the subject.

However, it is keeping track of developments in the situation and will ensure that any effects arising in the course of Community activities from the comparison of bodies of computerized legislation or the computerization of legislation will be studied and that, where necessary, efforts will be made to secure harmonization.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1493/80

by Lord O'Hagan

to the Council of the European Communities

(12 November 1980)

Subject: Attendance at Council meetings

1. Will the Council now list all the occasions on which the Rt. Hon. Anthony Wedgwood Benn M P attended meetings of the Council of Ministers?
2. Will the Council summarize all the decisions that were reached at each of those Councils?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The Council would remind the Honourable Member that after each Council meeting a press release is drawn up listing the representatives of the Member States who took part in the meeting and the decisions adopted. These press releases are forwarded to the European Parliament.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1500/80

by Mr Josselin and Mr Seefeld
to the Council of European Communities
(12 November 1980)

Subject: Observance of the Staff Regulations of the European Communities by the Member States — Council's answer

After several months of delay the Council has answered our Question No 445/80⁽¹⁾ in a totally inadequate and abstract way, since not a single line of its reply deals with the specific case behind this issue and its consequences. We therefore ask the Council again:

1. Is it true that the French national authorities refused permission for Commission officials to take part in an information meeting arranged for local representatives and organized by the appropriate authorities of the Departement of Côtes-du-Nord, on the problem of oil tanker accidents and pollution by hydrocarbons, on the pretext that the Commission should not form direct links with local authorities?
2. What reasons were given for the French authorities' treatment of the Commission and how do the Communities' institutions react when their work is flagrantly obstructed in this way?
3. How does the Council intend to ensure that such practices are not repeated in the future?
4. In connection with the answer to our Written Question No 445/80, has there been any pressure from one Member State on the Council which would explain the totally inadequate nature of the answer?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 251, 29. 9. 1980, p. 9

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The Council adopted the reply to Written Question No 445/80 put by the Honourable Members on its own responsibility and it confirms that reply.

The information requested in that question, as in the present one, concerns relations between the authorities of a Member State and the Commission and they alone are able to provide such information.

This is why the Council referred to and refers again to the relevant provisions of the Treaties.

The Council would draw the Honourable Members' attention to the fact that, under Article 155 EEC, it is for the Commission to ensure that the provisions of the Treaty and the measures taken by the institutions pursuant thereto are upheld.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1507/80

by Mr Cousté
to the Commission of the European Communities
(12 November 1980)

Subject: Measures to combat unemployment

Can the Commission state what measures have been taken in the Member States of the Community to combat unemployment (on the lines of the work experience contracts or national employment programmes in France); what results have such measures achieved; and are figures available for results in the first six months of 1980?

Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission

(18 February 1981)

Despite the inherent difficulties caused by the diversity of national measures and instruments, the Commission systematically collects information on measures concerning labour market policy in the Member States with a view, in particular, to the Preparation of the Report on Social Developments. This is a yearly publication and constitutes the fullest record as regards the chronological sequence of actions initiated by the Member States in their efforts to combat unemployment. A more detailed quarterly report was produced in 1979 but its publication has been temporarily suspended on account of staff shortages.

From time to time the Commission prepares reports on measures for specific categories adopted in response to certain contingencies, as was done in the case of measures for young people in 1977 when an item for this purpose was included in the Social Fund budget.

In 1980, the Commission drew up a report on vocational preparation measures adopted by the Member States to implement the Commission recommendation of 6 July 1978. The report contains a quantitative and qualitative review of these measures and will be published in the next few months.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1537/80

by Mr Coppieters

to the Commission of the European Communities

(17 November 1980)

Subject: Recruitment of unskilled and uninformed workers for the nuclear industry.

1. Is the Commission aware of press reports according to which a firm supplying labour for maintenance and cleaning at the Doel nuclear power station recruited down-and-outs ('daklozen') for work involving the risk of high doses of irradiation?
2. Has the Commission received, and if not, will it seek, a full report on this incident from Belgian authorities?
3. What legal or administrative measures exist, in the member countries or at Community level, to cover recruitment and working conditions of temporary labour used for work involving the risk of irradiation?
4. Does the Commission agree that there should be a formal obligation to inform such workers fully of the potential risks from irradiation before they are employed?
5. If no Euratom norms exist about this matter, will the Commission take urgent steps to establish and apply them?

**Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

1. No.
2. The Commission will in the light of this question consider making enquiries to the Belgian authorities.

3 to 5. The Commission confirms, as it did in its reply to Written Question No 918/80⁽¹⁾, that the Member States are obliged to comply with the Directive laying down the basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation⁽²⁾, Article 24 which states that exposed workers shall be 'informed of the health risks involved in their work, the precautions to be taken risks involved in their work, the precautions to be taken and the importance of complying with the technical and medical requirements and shall also be given appropriate training in the field of radiation protection.' This provision also applies to workers employed on a casual basis in nuclear power stations.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 295, 13. 11. 1980, p. 14.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 246, 24. 7. 1980, p. 1.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1540/80

by Mr von Wogau

to the Council of the European Communities

(20 November 1980)

Subject: Increasing the duty-free allowances for tourist traffic

1. Is the Council prepared to make a substantial increase in the duty-free allowances for tourist traffic and small packages by 1 January 1981 at the latest in accordance with the resolution adopted unanimously by the European Parliament on 18 April 1980?
2. Is the Council prepared in particular to increase the allowance as planned to 210 EUA initially, rising gradually over the next few years to 300 EUA?
3. Does the Council see any possibility of abolishing the special arrangements for Denmark and Ireland in the foreseeable future?
4. Is the Council also prepared to phase out the restrictions on the quantities of coffee, tea and wine which may be transported from one Member State to another in accordance with Parliament's resolution?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The Council held an exchange of views on the points raised by the Honourable Member at its meeting on

27 October 1980 without, however, coming to any decision. It plans to continue examining these matters at its next meeting on fiscal questions.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1560/80

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(20 November 1980)

Subject: Community health policy

1. Why have only two meetings of the Ministers of Health of the Nine been held (in 1977 and 1978)?
2. Why could not the draft communication on health costs at European Level be considered on the date fixed, and what new date has been set?
3. What progress has been made on the European health policy?

**Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

1. A third meeting of Ministers of Health, arranged for 14 and 15 December 1979, had to be postponed because the competent Minister from the host country was appointed Prime Minister of his country one week before the meeting was due to take place. Since then, there have been proposals to have the points on the agenda for that third informal meeting covered at a first formal Council of Ministers of Health.

2. The only Commission Communication on health costs was in the form of a study published as No 36 of the Social Policy Series — 1979 and entitled: 'The organization, financing and cost of health care in the European Community'.

3. A communication to the Council regarding certain aspects of health policy may be envisaged during 1981 in the light of the priorities being established by the new Commission. More details about this will be transmitted to the Honourable Member in due course.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1565/80

by Mrs Boserup

to the Commission of the European Communities

(20 November 1980)

Subject: Special report by the Court of Auditors, revenue from the co-responsibility levy

I should like clarification of an answer given by the Commission to the Court of Auditors which is contained in the latter's Special Report on various measures affecting the management of the EAGGF Guarantee Section (financial year 1978)⁽¹⁾. In Section II the Court of Auditors queries the practice of allocating the revenue from the co-responsibility levy by entering it in the budget as a negative appropriation.

The Commission's reply is that the level of expenditure on programmes financed from the co-responsibility levy were, for the first years of application, close to the level of the levy revenue, and that this therefore complied with the Financial Regulation (point 24).

As the Commission writes in point 23 that this system of co-responsibility 'should remain in force in order that more substantial use be made of it afterwards', and as, on top of the Gundelach plan of this spring, there have recently been rumours that the principle was to be extended to cereals and beef⁽²⁾, does the Commission intend to depart from the principle of allocating co-responsibility levy revenue (negative appropriations) and instead enter the substantially increased yield as general Community revenue?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 258, 6. 10. 1980.

⁽²⁾ cf. The Economist, 24. 10. 1980.

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

In its answers to the various Community bodies the Commission has always stressed the special nature of the co-responsibility levy in the milk sector, which is a financial contribution by producers to help reduce the cost to the Community of disposing of surpluses.

Regulation (EEC) No 1079/77 of 17 May 1977⁽¹⁾ on a co-responsibility levy in the milk and milk products sector states that the levy is to be considered as forming part of the measures to stabilize agricultural markets. This meant that the Commission had no alternative but to enter the revenue in the Budget as negative expenditure. In practice the levy accrues to the paying agencies, who use it to cover Community expenditure in the milk sector.

Since its introduction, the presentation of the levy in the Budget has increasingly tended towards separation from expenditure. For the 1981 Budget the Commission has proposed that it be entered at the end of the chapter on milk and milk products, thus enabling gross expenditure in the sector to be distinguished from net expenditure more easily.

Revenue from a possible extension of the co-responsibility levy to other sectors could not at the present time be deemed 'own resources' as such funds would not be covered by Article 2(a) of the Decision of 21 April 1970, which mentions only levies and duties on trade with non-member countries and levies in the sugar sector. For such revenue to rank as 'own resources' and be entered as such in the Community Budget, the Decision of 21 April 1970 would have to be amended, which would entail using the procedure provided for in Article 201 of the EEC Treaty.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 131, 26. 5. 1977, p. 6

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1576/80

by Mr Moreland

to the Council of the European Communities

(21 November 1980)

Subject: Centre for Industrial Development (CID)

In answer to Written Question 594/80⁽¹⁾ Commissioner Cheysson stated that this institution is answerable through the EEC-ACP Committee on Industrial Cooperation (CIC) to the Committee of Ambassadors.

1. Does the Council take full responsibility for the activities of the Centre in conjunction with the Lomé countries?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 206, 11. 8. 1980, p. 27.

2. How often does the Committee of Ambassadors meet to discuss the activities of CID?
3. Does the Committee lay down guidelines for the operation of CID?
4. Does the Committee request information on all advice given by CID. Can it comment on advice or assistance CID proposes to give before CID gives it?
5. In relation to Commissioner Cheysson's third answer to Question 594/80 (which states that the advice has largely been geared to medium sized undertakings) can an assurance be given that the CID has not given any encouragement to large-scale manufacture of ceramics in developing countries?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

1. Article 35 of the first Convention and Articles 78 and 81 of the second ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé provide that the ACP-EEC Centre for Industrial Development is supervised by the Committee on Industrial Cooperation. This Committee is a joint body responsible to the ACP-EEC Committee of Ambassadors and is composed of representatives of each Member State of the Community, of a Commission representative and a representative of the European Investment Bank and of representatives designated by the Working Party of the ACP States. Within its terms of reference, it states its position by common agreement between the ACP States on the one hand and the Community on the other, the latter's position being adopted within the Council.

2. To date, the ACP-EEC Committee on Industrial Cooperation, set up on 20 December 1976, has held 21 meetings. It has reported periodically to the Committee of Ambassadors and through it to the ACP-EEC Council of Ministers.

3. Apart from the provisions of the Convention, which lay down the objectives and define the functions of the Centre (Article 36 of the first Lomé Convention) and Articles 79 and 81 of the second Lomé Convention), the Centre has received guidelines from the ACP-EEC Committee on Industrial Cooperation providing that the economic viability of projects which the Centre helps promote constitutes the fundamental principle for their selection. The Centre must take account of the social benefit for the populations concerned and of the undertaking's profitability, one of the important aspects of which is the certainty of commercial

outlets. The problem of over-equipment, which could be harmful to all parties concerned and might jeopardize the successful outcome of projects, should be borne in mind.

4. The Centre is assisted by an Advisory Council, composed of persons with a wide experience in the industrial field, who are chosen from nationals of the States which are Party to the Convention of Lomé. Its task is to advise and assist the Centre in the programming and development of its industrial activities. It is consulted by the Director on all proposed operations and on important matters arising from the activities of the Centre. After having received the Council's opinion, the Director annually draws up a general report on the Centre's activities, a programme of work and a preliminary draft annual budget which he submits to the ACP-EEC Committee on Industrial Cooperation together with the Council's opinion. The Committee is thus able to ascertain, if required, whether the projects envisaged by the Centre conform to the guidelines given for its activities by common agreement between the Community and the ACP States and in accordance with the provisions in force.

5. Within this framework, the selection of projects is the Centre's responsibility and there is no provision limiting the CID's interventions to undertakings of a specific size or in a specific sector.

How many incidents, reported during 1980, have led the Commission to propose modifications to procedure within the Community?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission wishes to draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that responsibility for the supervision of nuclear installations rest entirely with the relevant licensing and inspection authorities in the Member States.

The incidents referred to by the Honourable Member are systematically notified by the operators to the competent authorities of their own countries; at present they need only be notified to the Commission if they give rise to significant exposure of the general public to radiation or if the circumstances so require. The Commission has received no official notification of the incidents referred to. It has, however, become aware of them from publications in the specialized press or, in the case of the incidents that occurred in the United Kingdom, from the 'News Releases' published by the Health and Safety Executive.

As regards the dissemination of this kind of information within the Community, the possibility is at present being explored of setting up a standardized system for the rapid circulation of information on abnormal events involving nuclear installations.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1602/80

by Mr Adam

to the Commission of the European Communities

(25 November 1980)

Subject: Safety of nuclear plant

Has the Commission received any information on the following recent incidents:

1. the release of process water at the nuclear processing plant at Cap de la Hague,
2. the release of sulphur-35 and tritium at the Trawsfynydd nuclear power station in Gwynedd,
3. chemical reactions in the stripped fuel cladding store in the old Magnox plant at Winscale?

Are the Commission satisfied with the speed with which information is passed amongst Member States?

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1605/80

by Sir Henry Plumb

to the Commission of the European Communities

(25 November 1980)

Subject: National aids in the Community agricultural sector

What attempts are being made by the Commission to update its file on national and regional aids granted throughout the Community to agriculture, forestry and fishing, since the latest figures recorded date back to 1974 — when most Member States had not fully implemented the 1972 socio-structural directives and transitional arrangements were still in operation in Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom?

While acknowledging the Commission's endeavours to investigate and to prevent the proliferation of

national aids in the agricultural sector, when does it intend to compile a current, comprehensive catalogue of this information — listing the statistics arranged by country and by better defined criteria?

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission confidentially forwarded to the Chairman of the Parliament's Committee on Agriculture:

- an inventory of existing State aids arranged country by country, in six languages;
- updating addenda to this list, as at 1979, in their original languages.

The Commission has already mentioned on a number of occasions the practical problems involved in processing this formidable quantity of information (over 3 000 pages just for one language).

This is one of the reasons why the Commission does not at the moment envisage compiling a catalogue of the aids classified according to different criteria. It considers furthermore that the inventories as drawn up by Member States, their presentation harmonized by the Commission, give a fairly full and clear view of current State aids to agriculture. It realizes, however, that the existence of many general aids without a breakdown by agricultural product makes it difficult to estimate the impact of financial support by product sector. Unfortunately, the Commission's departments responsible for the application of competition rules do not have enough staff to enable this problem to be tackled.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1631/80

by Mr Seefeld

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 December 1980)

Subject: Inconveniencing of Community citizens in Italy

Is the Commission of the European Communities aware that visitors to Italy are being obliged to act as accomplices of Italian tax fraud investigators in that they must retain and produce on demand bills relating not only as in the past to hotel and restaurant

visits but henceforth also to motor car repairs and spares, visits to the hairdresser, the purchase of jewels, furs and holidays gifts, and that if this rule is infringed, they are liable to a fine of DM 50 (to be increased to DM 100 in 1981)?

If so:

1. Do these measures comply with the provisions on freedom of movement enshrined in the Treaty of Rome?
2. Does the Commission intend to approach the Italian Government with a request that it put an end forthwith to this inconveniencing of Community citizens in Italy?

**Answer given by Mr Tugendhat
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

The Commission is aware of the inconvenience to Community citizens travelling as tourists in Italy caused by the measure referred to by the Honourable Member.

The Commission would point out, that the same inconvenience is borne by Italian taxpayers, and it does not consider that these provisions infringe either the principles of the EEC Treaty or the legislative acts based thereon. The investigation of tax evasion and the judicial and physical inspection procedures for this purpose are still the responsibility of the Member States alone.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1635/80

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 December 1980)

Subject: Across-the-board 2 % reduction in appropriations for agriculture

Does not the Commission feel that an across-the-board reduction of 2 % applying to all agricultural products and markets is absurd?

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

The Parliament took the initiative in proposing a 2 % across-the-board reduction, for the 1981 budget, in appropriations for the EAGGF Guarantee Section, to be counter-balanced by the introduction of a new

'provisional appropriations' heading for the Section. This proposal has been accepted by the Council. What Parliament wanted was that any additional expenditure would have to be financed by savings made on the EAGGF itself.

The Commission has expressed its agreement with Parliament's objective, which it fully shares.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1636/80

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(1 December 1980)

Subject: Regional Fund spending

Can the Commission state whether all the Member States have submitted their applications for the allocation of appropriations from the Regional Fund for 1980?

Have there been any delays and, if so, for what reasons?

**Answer given by Mr Giolitti
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

In 1980 the Commission received applications for ERDF aid from the Member States for a total amount exceeding that available under the Budget; some of the commitments must therefore be carried over the beginning of 1981.

For certain Member States with smaller quotas in relative terms, however, the appropriations for commitment have not been completely used up either because the States have not sent enough information or because some of their projects are not eligible for aid.

The Commission notes, moreover, that some Member States tend to make most of their applications in the second half of the year.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1644/80

by Ms Clwyd

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: Future production levels for the steel industry in the EEC

Would the Commission give an indication of future production levels for the steel industry in the EEC, comparing present outputs with envisaged targets for each member country?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

Production levels in the Community steel industry are expected to remain low in the first half of 1981, about 15 % below the first half of 1980. For the year 1981 as a whole, total production for the ten Member States is unlikely to be higher than for the nine Member States in 1980 and may well be lower.

Crude steel production levels in individual Member States have been as follows:

(million tonnes)

	1979	1980 (1)
Federal Republic of Germany	46.0	43.8
Italy	24.2	26.4
France	23.4	23.1
UK	21.5	11.4 (2)
Belgium	13.4	12.4
Netherlands	5.8	5.3
Luxembourg	5.0	4.6
Denmark	0.8	0.7
Ireland	0.1	—
	140.2	127.7

(1) Including estimates for December.

(2) Affected by the strike in the first quarter.

The Commission has not set targets for the steel production of individual countries. In the framework of the system of mandatory production quotas, which is due to terminate on 30 June 1981, the Commission sets for each company, and for each quarter, a production limit which is determined by the company's product structure and production levels during a past reference period and the uniform abatement published for that quarter.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1645/80**by Ms Clwyd****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 December 1980)*

Subject: Probable increases in coal production in the Community

Would the Commission give an estimate, for each Member State, of the probable increases in coal production over the next 10 years?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

According to the latest estimates, which are based on information supplied by the Member States, the Community will produce about 250 million tonnes (t = t) of coal in 1990. Distribution among the Member States in comparison with 1979 will be as follows:

<i>Million tonnes (t = t)</i>			
	1979	1990	Difference
Belgium	6.1	7.0	+ 1.2
Federal Republic of Germany	93.3	97.3	+ 4
France ⁽¹⁾	18.6	12.5	- 6.1
United Kingdom	120.6	127.3—137.6	+ 6.7 + 17
Italy	0	1.7	+ 1.7
Ireland	0.1	0.1	—
	238.7	245.9—256.2	

⁽¹⁾ Provisional figures.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1647/80**by Ms Clwyd****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 December 1980)*

Subject: Grants to the CEGB in the UK for coal burning

Has the Community made any grants to the CEGB in the UK for the expansion of coal burning capacity?

**Answer given by Mr Ortoli
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

The Community has not made any grants to the CEGB in the UK for the expansion of coal burning capacity.

CEGB have however been granted a loan under Article 54 paragraph 2 of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community for their coal burning power station at Drax.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1648/80**by Mr Glinne and Mr Dido****to the Commission of the European Communities***(4 December 1980)*

Subject: Position of migrant workers in Belgium with regard to the application of the Laws of 16 June 1960 and 17 July 1963

In answer to Written Question No 1584/79⁽¹⁾ by Mr Dido, the Commission stated that it had brought an action in the Court of Justice⁽²⁾ against the Kingdom of Belgium, since it held that the Kingdom of Belgium was in breach of Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71⁽³⁾, because of the non-application to migrant workers of the benefits provided for under the law of 16 June 1960. However, in Mr Dido's question, the Law of 17 July 1963 was also mentioned.

1. Can the Commission clarify the situation with regard to the implementation of the Law of 17 July 1963, and the extent to which it also may be in contravention of Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71, and if it is will it take the necessary steps?
2. Is the Commission aware that the Belgian authorities still insist upon individual cases being

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 126, 27. 5. 1980, p. 37.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 263, 18. 10. 1979, p. 10.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 149, 5. 7. 1971, p. 2.

taken to Court, to prove discrimination under the previous decision of the Court of Justice (31 March 1977) and what action does it propose to take to rectify this situation?

**Answer given by Mr Richard
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

1. The distinction made between Belgian nationals and nationals of the other Member States with respect to the indexation of benefits provided for in the law of 17 July 1963 does not reflect the spirit underlying the principle of non-discrimination embodied in the EEC Treaty.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to consider this as a formal infringement of the provisions of positive Community law in cases where the persons concerned have never been migrant workers in Belgium and who are members of a voluntary insurance scheme set up by Belgium for workers in employment outside the Member States and introduced by the law of 17 July 1963.

In the case of persons who were employed workers in Belgium before taking up an occupation in a non-member State, at which time they joined the scheme referred to in the law of 17 July 1973, the possibility cannot be excluded that Article 51 of the said law could be held to be in breach of Article 3 of Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71⁽¹⁾.

The Commission is not aware of any cases where persons in this situation have applied for the indexation of benefits and been refused by the competent Belgian authorities.

2. The Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the Commission's answer to Written Question No 1481/80 by Mr Cohen⁽²⁾ on the same subject.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 149 of 5. 7. 1971, p. 2.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 60, 19. 3. 1981.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1649/80

by Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: Selective application of social security charges

On 12 November an Italian newspaper was informed by the Foreign Trade Minister that it had been proposed that the Government should adopt a selective approach to the imposition of social security charges as a means of compelling Italian industries to switch to other forms of production.

The Minister pointed out that the proposal was made in the light of the need to make short-term economic policy decisions consistent with the basic economic policy objective, which is to direct Italian industry towards types of production more in keeping with the role the country must assume in the new international division of labour. Given the reasoning behind this proposal, does the Commission consider that it conforms to the principles of the Treaty of Rome?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

In its Decision of 15 September 1980 (80/932/EEC) concerning the partial taking-over by the State of employer's contributions to sickness insurance schemes in Italy, published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* No L 264 of 8 October 1980, page 28, the Commission indicated that it was not opposed in principle to the State taking over certain social security contributions in Italy, as long as the scheme was applied uniformly to the whole of industry. Only then would the scheme be sufficiently general in nature to be considered not as an 'aid' but as a 'general economic measure'.

Accordingly, the introduction of a selective scheme for charging social security contributions to general taxation, favouring certain firms or industries in Italy, would have to be regarded as an aid to such firms or industries, such aid falling within the terms of Article 92 *et seq.* of the EEC Treaty.

The above considerations reflect the present state of Community case law in this matter and do not prejudice the Commission's final position regarding any new measures which the Italian Government might decide on in this area and which it would have to notify in accordance with Article 93 (3) of the EEC Treaty.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1667/80

by Mr Turcat

to the Council of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: Progress of automation and its implications for employment

Does the Council share the view of the International Labour Organization that the introduction of

integrated electronic micro-circuits is liable to increase unemployment in the years to come because the process of automation will thereby be accelerated? Is this not an excessively pessimistic view?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

The Standing Committee on Employment devoted its meeting on 26 February 1980 to a detailed discussion of the employment problems posed by the latest phase of technological developments in micro-electronics.

In the conclusions drawn by the Chairman — who was the President-in-Office of the Council — after the Committee's discussions, it was stated that the introduction of micro-electronics under way in production of goods and in services would inevitably entail significant and complex changes in the pattern of employment, but the nature and scope of these changes could not yet be adequately foreseen or defined. The Committee noted that the impact of the new technology on employment would centre on quantitative aspects (number of jobs removed and newly created) and qualitative aspects (nature and structure of professional qualifications, working conditions, quality of life, etc.). It may, however, be deduced from the whole of the discussion that the Standing Committee on Employment had an open attitude towards the introduction and development of the new technology and mentioned a number of positive effects it would have on employment.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1678/80

by Miss Quin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: Glass imports from Eastern Europe into the United Kingdom

Is the Commission aware that large quantities of East European glass are being imported into the United Kingdom, particularly pharmaceutical glassware? Are other Community countries similarly affected? Does the Commission propose any action with regard to such imports?

**Answer given by Mr Haferkamp
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission is aware that large quantities of glass, particularly laboratory glassware, are being imported into the United Kingdom.

Relatively speaking, the quantities imported into the Community as a whole are even greater. The Commission is forwarding two tables on the subject direct to the Honourable Member and to the Secretariat of the European Parliament.

The Commission has been informed from time to time of certain problems in the glass sector of one or other of the Member States, particularly in connection with the prices applied by State-trading countries, which appear to be appreciably lower than those on the Community market and those of products from non-member countries generally.

However, neither the Member States nor the industries concerned have asked the Commission to adopt commercial policy measures to prevent any harmful effects arising from the quantities of products imported (in most cases glass is liberalized in all Member States) or the prices applied by supplier countries. On the basis of the information at present available to it, the Commission does not consider action to be necessary.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1686/80

by Mrs Pruvot

to the Council of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: Situation of the car industry in Ile-de-France

The 1973 recession and the successive increases in the price of oil have forced the European car industry to make major efforts to adapt production to the requirements of the market.

Furthermore, the situation has deteriorated in the last few years, notably because of the substantial increase in imports from Japan and other third countries, whose share of the domestic market of certain Community countries is as high as 30%. Since the

beginning of the year, production in France has fallen by 2.8% and the number of registered vehicles by 3.6%.

This is having a serious effect on the labour market, particularly in Ile-de-France because of the number of factories located there.

In view of this situation:

1. Are the Regional Fund and the European Investment Bank prepared to adopt Community financial instruments that will allow specific measures to be implemented in the car industry in Ile-de-France?
2. Has the Commission made provision in the Social Fund programmes for measures that will help establish a programme of vocational training for young people, with a view to implementing a farsighted employment policy?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

In reply to point 1 of the question, the Council points out that the Community has the ERDF at its disposal, the basic rules of which are adopted by the Council on a proposal from the Commission. At present the major proportion of that Fund's financial means is spent on measures to support the Member States' regional policy activities. Hence, the Community would only be likely to intervene if the region referred to by the Honourable Member were eligible for national aid. In addition, specific Community action may be decided on by the Council, in accordance with the same procedure. To date the Council has not received any Commission proposals concerning that region.

The Council is not involved in the procedure for the granting of EIB loans.

Point 2 of the question falls within the competence of the Commission of the European Communities.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1691/80

by Mr Vernimmen

to the Commission of the European Communities

(4 December 1980)

Subject: The crisis plan for steel — international context

The steel crisis we are facing at the moment is a crisis of international proportions. While Europe is an important producer of steel, it is certainly not the only one.

Restructuring measures in Europe will have no chance of success unless other important world steel producers are prepared to make equivalent efforts.

Can the Commission state:

1. Whether it has set its proposed crisis measures in an international context?
2. What measures, if any, are to be taken by other major world steel producers?
3. What guarantees are there that these measures will in fact be implemented?
4. Whether it will propose import restrictions to accompany the production restrictions in the EEC?

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The measures taken by the Commission to contain the effects of the crisis in the steel sector are all in conformity with the 1977 consensus and the ground rules establishing the OECD steel Committee.

The total package of measures has always included external measures in counterpart to the internal measures.

The steel industries, and national authorities, of certain non-member countries have also, in the context of the world steel market situation, taken appropriate measures.

Vis-à-vis the Community, the major non-member country suppliers of steel to the EC have for several years made arrangements with the Commission on iron and steel trade. Discussions are in train for a renewal of these arrangements in 1981.

Finally, it is worth noting that recently Community imports have in fact been falling at least as fast as Community production.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1695/80

by Mr de Lipkowski

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Setback to Community tax harmonization

Why has the Commission not put pressure on the Member States to achieve a greater degree of tax

harmonization, particularly as regards the basis of assessment for VAT, excise duties and company taxation?

**Answer given by Mr Tugendhat
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission has never relaxed its efforts to ensure progress on tax harmonization, which is an essential condition for achieving many objectives laid down in the EEC Treaty and for strengthening the Community.

It is in the turnover tax area that its efforts have produced the most significant results. As early as 1967, the Council, acting on a Commission proposal, adopted the common system of value added tax ⁽¹⁾; in 1977, it similarly adopted the Sixth Directive ⁽²⁾, which established a uniform basis of assessment for VAT, this being a necessary condition for ensuring the full implementation of the Community's own resources system. Since then, the Commission has sent the Council a number of proposals for Directives aimed at completing harmonization of the rules on the basis of assessment.

In the field of excise duties, the decisions taken so far are confined to cigarettes. As regards the other excise duties which the Commission proposes should be harmonized (i. e. excise duties on spirits, beer, wine and mineral oils), the Council has not yet taken any decision on the proposals which have been before it since 1972 and 1973 respectively. During recent years, first priority in this area has been given to the harmonization of excise duties on alcoholic beverages, discussion of this question having been revived in 1977 by a Commission communication to the Council. The Commission hopes that the Council will in the near future be able to determine the basic guidelines for such harmonization.

As regards company taxation, the Commission laid a proposal for a Directive concerning the harmonization of systems of company taxation and of withholding taxes on dividends ⁽³⁾ before the Council on 1 August 1975. The Council has not yet begun examination of this proposal, since Parliament has still to deliver its opinion.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 71, 14. 4. 1967, p. 1301.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 145, 13. 6. 1977, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 253, 5. 11. 1975, p. 2.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1697/80

by Mr de Lipkowski

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Reasons for the trade deficit with China

How does the Commission explain the Community's trade deficit with China?

**Answer given by Mr Haferkamp
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

From time to time, the Community has a deficit in its bilateral trade with China; it happened last in 1977 and most recently in the first half of 1980. The main causes of such occasional deficits are the periodic downturns in the Chinese investment cycle, and consequent decline in imports from the Community as well as from other trading partners of steel, investment goods and equipment.

In addition, China in the first half of 1980 continued to increase its exports at the same rate as in 1979. The result was a slight deficit in the first half of 1980 in the Community.

The current process of 'readjustment' of economic plans in China will continue, according to the Chinese authorities, during 1981, and even for a year or two beyond. However, the Commission has been assured that the decline of imports from the Community into China in the first half of 1980 was only a temporary phenomenon.

In the meantime, the Honourable Member will recall that Community-China trade doubled in both directions between 1975 and 1979.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1707/80

by Mrs von Alemann

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Driving school tuition in border areas

Driving schools and driving school instructors in border areas are prevented by national laws from

giving their pupils first-hand experience of the traffic conditions in the neighbouring country. Yet it is these very people who drive in the neighbouring country for private or business purposes after obtaining a driving licence.

1. Is the Commission prepared to try to secure authorization for driving school instructors to give their pupils living in border areas practical experience of the traffic conditions in the neighbouring country in the interests of improving road safety?
2. Will the Commission therefore also take steps to secure the mutual recognition of the qualifications of approved driving school instructors?

**Answer given by Mr Contogeorgis
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

1. On 4 December 1980, the Council adopted the first Directive on the introduction of a Community driving licence. This Directive provides, among other things, that, in a second stage, the Council will harmonize to a greater extent the provisions relating to examinations to be taken by drivers. The Commission is of the opinion that it should be possible to examine the problems to which the Honourable Member is referring at Community level in this second stage.

Meanwhile, it is up to the Member States' governments to make bilateral arrangements with a view to improving traffic conditions in border areas.

2. The Commission is not planning to submit any proposals for Directives specifically designed to secure the mutual recognition of the qualifications of approved driving school instructors in the foreseeable future.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1714/80

by Mr Enright

to the Council of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Social security cover for self-employed and non-employed persons in the EEC

1. When are the Commission's proposals to amend the Regulation on the application of social

security schemes to employed persons and their families moving within the Community, submitted to the Council in 1978, likely to be considered by the Council?

2. Does the Council recognize the injustice caused to self-employed and non-employed persons by the current Regulation which is limited to the employed and their dependants?
3. What are the particular reasons for delay in adopting the amended Regulation?

Answer

(23 February 1981)

At its meeting on 27 November 1980 the Council examined the Commission proposal in this connection and reached general agreement, subject to finalization of the text of the Regulation which will apply to self-employed persons and of a statement on medical cover for 'non-employed' insured persons during a temporary stay in another Member State. Work on the finalization of both these texts is proceeding apace to enable the Council to carry out formal adoption of all the rules as soon as possible.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1721/80

by Mrs Roudy

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Gynaecology in France

Hitherto, medical science in France has included a branch devoted solely to gynaecology (covering the early detection and treatment of breast diseases, the study and treatment of infertility, the menopause, contraception, sexology, genetics, in short, every stage of a woman's life except for childbirth) and quite separate from obstetrics.

In other countries, gynaecology is always regarded as being linked with obstetrics.

One of the objectives of the Treaty of Rome is the approximation of the laws of the Member States in line with what is deemed to be the most progressive national legislation.

Nonetheless, France, interpreting the concept of approximation in a very individualistic manner, may well delete gynaecology from the list of specialisms recognized in France. Indeed, on 22 September 1980 the Conseil National de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche approved a list of specialisms which totally omitted gynaecology.

1. Can the Commission indicate the position which France adopted on this matter when it forwarded a list of specialisms recognized in France?
2. Does not the Commission think that gynaecology, as distinct from obstetrics, should be maintained, since it has provided a large number of women with substantial help in solving their problems?
3. Does it not also feel that such a specialism, although it may happily exist alongside obstetrics and gynaecological surgery, requires special and independent training given by highly qualified teaching staff?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

1. On 16 June 1975 the Council adopted two Directives designed to facilitate freedom of movement for doctors ⁽¹⁾.

One of these Directives (75/363/EEC) is designed in particular to coordinate the requirements for specialized training for doctors in the Member States: to this end, it lays down quantitative criteria (minimum period of training) and qualitative criteria (full-time theoretical and practical training under the supervision of the competent authorities, etc.) for each speciality, and in particular for gynaecology and obstetrics.

The other Directive, (75/362/EEC) contains a list of the titles of the specialist qualifications which, in the view of the Member States, fulfil the qualitative and quantitative training requirements set out in the abovementioned Directive (75/363/EEC) and which should therefore be accorded mutual recognition.

When the list of specialities was drawn up, France made no mention of 'gynécologie médicale' as it did not feel that this specialist field met the conditions required in the coordination Directive (75/363/EEC).

At the time France requested that the title 'obstétrique et gynécologie médicale' be placed under the generic heading of 'gynécologie — obstétrique' and this is the title that appears in the Directives. However, it has since requested that the title 'gynaecology — obstetrics' be entered in place of the original title. This change will be made in the context of a proposal for amendments to the 1975 Directives to be made in the near future.

2 and 3. The system set up by these Directives in no way prohibits the Member States from abolishing an existing speciality, even where it appears in the Directives. There is therefore nothing to prevent the Member States from abolishing a specialist field not included in the Directives.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1723/80

by Mrs Le Roux

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Barriers raised by the United Kingdom against imports of dairy products from other Member States.

Although it benefits from preferential arrangements for importing New Zealand butter and is increasing its exports of dairy products to the Community, the United Kingdom continues to raise unfair barriers against the importation of dairy products from other Member States.

What is the Commission doing to ensure that the United Kingdom abolishes these barriers?

If the United Kingdom refuses to abolish them, should not the Commission take retaliatory measures?

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

The only dairy product for which the United Kingdom has at present controls which, in effect, can

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 167, 30. 6. 1975, p. 14 and 17.

prevent import into the whole of its territory is liquid milk. Fresh and UHT treated cream cannot be imported into Northern Ireland.

While, in the absence of common hygiene, quality and marketing rules for liquid milk, Member States can operate measures designed to protect the health of people and of animals, the Commission considers that the requirement that imports of UHT milk and cream undergo UHT treatment a second time within the United Kingdom is not justified on health grounds. The Commission has, therefore, initiated the infringement procedure laid down in Article 169 of the EEC Treaty against the United Kingdom.

The aim of this infringement procedure is to secure the observation by the United Kingdom of its Community obligations in respect of free circulation of liquid milk. Retaliatory measures of the kind envisaged by the Honourable Member are prohibited by the EEC Treaty.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1724/80

by Mr Pranchère

to the Commission of the European Communities

(10 December 1980)

Subject: Utilization of the revenue raised by the co-responsibility levy

The revenue raised by the co-responsibility levy imposed on milk producers is utilized in various ways after consultation with the 'Co-responsibility Group'

Regulation (EEC) No 2936/79⁽¹⁾ concerns the improvement of the quality of milk within the Community.

Could the Commission indicate:

- France's share under the 1980/81 programme,
- which authority is responsible for the application of this Regulation in France, and
- the amount allocated to it?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 334, 28. 12. 1979, p. 16.

**Answer given by Mr Dalsager
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

France's share under Regulation (EEC) No 2936/79 in respect of measures initiated on 31 March 1980 and to be completed before 31 March 1982 is 1 884 418 ECU.

Under the terms of Article 3 (3) of Regulation (EEC) No 2936/79 the authority responsible in France is FORMA (Fonds d'orientation et de régularisation des marchés agricoles).

The total amount allocated for the Community as a whole is about 10 845 000 ECU.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1745/80

by Ms Clwyd

to the Commission of the European Communities

(23 December 1980)

Subject: Results of energy saving project in Italy

Further to my Written Question No 1034/80⁽¹⁾ I would ask if the one energy saving project financed by the Commission in Italy has yielded any results that could be beneficial to glass growers?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 288, 6. 11. 1980, p. 24.

**Answer given by Mr Davignon
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

In reply to the Honourable Member's question, the Commission can state that the contract concluded with ENEL provides in particular for a demonstration project involving four glasshouses near the Tavazzano power station in the province of Milan. Building is almost complete, the demonstration period will last until 1984 and the final evaluation of the results should be completed sometime between September 1984 and August 1985. Interim half-year reports will enable the Commission to follow developments.

As is clear from the above timetable, the Commission is not able at present to come to a conclusion about this matter; as with all other projects, however, it will see that, once available, the results are made known

as widely as possible, so that any promising techniques may be applied throughout the Community with all possible speed.

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1749/80

by Miss Quin

to the Commission of the European Communities

(23 December 1980)

Subject: Dock charges

Has the Commission made a study of dock charges in the Member States and can it affirm that some Member States subsidize such charges?

**Answer given by Mr Contogeorgis
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission has not made a study of dock charges in the Member States and is therefore not in a position to say whether some Member States subsidize such charges.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1754/80

by Mr Balfe

to the Commission of the European Communities

(23 December 1980)

Subject: Lotteries promoted outside Great Britain

A constituent of mine, Miss E. Spencer, of South London, has received material printed in English inviting her to buy tickets in a lottery promoted by the Bavarian State Government.

This lottery, like all lotteries promoted outside Great Britain, is unlawful in Great Britain under the provisions of the Lotteries and Amusements Act, 1976.

What steps can the Commission take to prevent these tickets being sent through the post to constituents of mine, who do not wish to receive them?

Since the subject of the question falls outside the Community's competence, it would seem to be an appropriate matter for the British authorities to raise with their German counterparts via diplomatic channels.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1776/80

by Mr Notenboom

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 January 1981)

Subject: Replacement of financial contributions from the Member States by the Community's own resources

1. When did the Commission submit the report or when will it submit the report on the implementation of Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 2891/77 of 19 December 1977 'implementing the Decision of 21 April 1970 on the replacement of financial contributions from Member States by the Communities' own resources' ⁽¹⁾ as prescribed in Article 22 of the Regulation and as requested by the European Parliament in paragraph 4 of its resolutions on the subject? ⁽²⁾

2. Has the Commission proposed amendments to the text or will it table these in the light of experience?

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 336, 27. 12. 1977, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 6, 9. 1. 1978, p. 26.

**Answer given by Mr Tugendhat
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

1. The main aim of Article 22 of Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 2891/77 of 19 December 1977 ⁽¹⁾ is to allow for an assessment of the effects of the new provisions relating to VAT own resources. The delay in implementing the Sixth Council Directive 77/388/EEC on a uniform basis of assessment for VAT ⁽²⁾ — the system which it legislated for was not applied until 1 January 1979 in

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 336, 27. 12. 1977, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 145, 13. 6. 1977, p. 1.

six Member States — made it impossible to report on the operation of the new rules by the date laid down in that Regulation. Furthermore, the actual VAT base for 1979 was notified to the Commission, pursuant to Article 10 of Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 2892/77 ⁽¹⁾, only in July 1980; the Commission's verifications will not be completed until May 1981.

2. The Commission will therefore be unable to present its report until the first half of 1981; it will attach any appropriate proposals for amending the Regulations.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No L 336, 27. 12. 1977, p. 8.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1802/80

by Mr Megahy

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 January 1981)

Subject: Closing of airports due to inclement weather

Can the Commission supply details of the average number of days over the last 10 years during which the following airports have been closed due to inclement weather?

Luxembourg
Brussels
Strasbourg
Frankfurt

**Answer given by Mr Contogeorgis
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

The Commission does not possess the information requested by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1803/80

by Mr Colla

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 January 1981)

Subject: Competition and small and medium-sized undertakings in the building industry

With regard to small and medium-sized undertakings in the building industry, can the Commission list the agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices which have been the subject of

1. a decision pursuant to Article 85 (1) or (3) of the EEC Treaty;
2. proceedings pursuant to these provisions.

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

1. The Commission has taken the following Decisions:

- 22 October 1964 DECA (negative clearance) ⁽¹⁾
- 18 June 1969 Christians/Nielsen (negative clearance) ⁽²⁾.

The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to its 'Notice concerning agreements, decisions and concerted practices in the field of cooperation between undertakings' ⁽³⁾, in which the Commission stated that it regarded agreements whose sole purpose was the formation of temporary associations of labour for the joint performance of orders, where the participating firms were not in competition with each other for the services in question or were unable to carry out the orders on an individual basis, as not being restraints of competition. In so far as this is the case and where the agreements are of minor importance ⁽⁴⁾, there is no need for the Commission to initiate proceedings under Article 85 of the EEC Treaty.

2. As regards current proceedings involving small and medium-sized undertakings in the building industry, the Commission cannot give details until it has reached a final decision in each case.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 173, 31. 10. 1964, p. 2761.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 165, 5. 7. 1969, p. 12.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 75, 29. 7. 1968, p. 3. OJ No C 84, 28. 8. 1968 (corrigendum), p. 14.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 64, 2. 6. 1970, p. 1; OJ No C 313, 29. 12. 1977 (Commission notices), p. 3.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1808/80

by Mr Cousté

to the Commission of the European Communities

(12 January 1981)

Subject: Outcome of the Washington Conference between the Commission of the European Communities and the United States

Can the Commission say what was the outcome of the discussions which took place on 17 and

18 November in Washington between the Commission and the United States, in particular with regard to

- economic and trade matters: the motor vehicle industry, code of conduct for multinationals, export credits, enlargement of the Community, steel, etc ...
- energy questions: oil supplies, the situation in the Middle East, ministerial meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, next world economic summit, etc ...

Can the Commission also say when and how the decisions taken on these questions in Washington will be implemented in practice?

**Answer given by Mr Harferkamp
on behalf of the Commission**

(17 February 1981)

The Honourable Member should be aware that the twice-yearly high level consultations between the Commission and the United States administration are not and have never been constituted as an instrument for arriving at formally agreed decisions, but as a vehicle for the discussion of a wide range of topics primarily but not exclusively concerning economic and commercial policy. This has been the case since the informal agreement in 1970 to hold consultations on a regular basis.

The discussions of 17 and 18 November 1980 included, among other matters a general review of the economic situation, the problems of world trade in automobiles, EC-US trade in steel, penetration by the US of the European petrochemical and synthetic fibres markets, and the implementation of the codes agreed in the MTN (it was agreed in general terms that both sides would maintain their opposition to the threat of protectionism). Topics in the energy sector included the situation in the world oil market, long-term supply prospects for coal, natural gas and synthetic fuels, and the prospects for the International Energy Agency ministerial meeting. Discussion of export credits policy focussed on the preparations for the meetings in the OECD in Paris on 26 to 28 November and 17 to 29 December. An exchange of views on developments and prospects relating to the enlargement of the Community also took place.

While the character of these meetings means that discussion resulting in operational decisions is the

exception rather than the rule, useful information and sound indications of the position of the United States in several areas of mutual interest are obtained.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1822/80

by Mr Davern

to the Commission of the European Communities

(13 January 1981)

Subject: Agricultural machinery market

1. Can the Commission provide details of the value of the market in agricultural machinery in each Member State?
2. Can the Commission give details of the level of imports of agricultural machinery from third countries for each of the Member States?
3. Will the Commission undertake a Community study aimed at identifying agricultural machinery that is at present being imported from third countries but which could be constructed in the Member States, thereby helping our balance of payments problems and creating new jobs?

**Answer given by Mr Narjes
on behalf of the Commission**

(18 February 1981)

1 and 2. The Commission is sending two tables concerning the information requested directly to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat of the European Parliament.

3. The Commission has started up talks with representatives of the agricultural machinery trade in order to assess likely future developments in the sector and its ability to adapt to the new conditions of competition. The statistics available show that intra-Community trade is predominant in the trade of each Member State and that the balance of trade with non-member countries shows a large surplus. In view of this state of affairs, it may be concluded that the

Community is in a position to satisfy all requirements concerning agricultural machinery, which is why the Commission is not at present planning to embark on a study of the kind advocated by the Honourable Member.

WRITTEN QUESTION No 1854/80

by Mr Fanton

to the Commission of the European Communities

(19 January 1981)

Subject: Respect for the rights of the Assembly

Rule 45 of the Rules of Procedure of our Assembly lays down the procedure to be followed with regard to questions with request for written answer that may be put by Members of the Assembly to the Commission, the Council or to the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation.

Although no deadline is imposed on the authorities concerned, paragraph 3 of the abovementioned rule does indicate that the questions will be published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* where the time taken by the authorities to reply appears excessive and even reprehensible.

Experience has shown that these provisions are totally inadequate and do not allow members of the Assembly to exercise the right of control conferred on them by their election.

The Commission has not seen fit to answer the following questions within the specified time-limits and would seem, therefore, to need a reminder, as it has evidently forgotten about them.

1. Question No 1427/80

'Subject: Imports of French apples into West Germany

Can the Commission say what colour apples must be in order to be acceptable for importation by West Germany, given that most of the apples available on European markets at present are green, indicating that their ripeness cannot be judged by their colour?

What measures does it intend to take to resolve this Franco-German disagreement?

The Commissions' silence is tantamount to a refusal to reply to a specific and topical question. Its attitude is made all the more unacceptable by the fact that a report on this matter, with which the Commission is perfectly familiar, is currently before the Assembly.

2. Question No 1361/80

'Subject: Respect for multi-lingualism

At a meeting of the Committee on Energy held at Ispra on 2 and 3 October an information folder was distributed to the participants: the six main documents in the folder were available only in English (apart from one which had been translated into Italian), including the two contributions from the Commissioner responsible for energy matters — the preface to a 62-page brochure entitled 'Joint Research Centre' and an article published in a periodical called 'Science News'.

The embarrassed replies given by those responsible when questioned on this matter were all the less convincing as, during the committee's subsequent visit to the Centre, the participants found that all the explanatory display boards for visitors carried texts in English alone (except for one model of the Super Sara project where the captions had been translated into Italian).

It would appear, therefore, that those responsible for the Centre have adopted a systematic approach which is all the more difficult to understand as the majority of visitors are Italian-speaking or of Italian nationality and as, according to information obtained on the spot, all the documents given to them are in English.

We thus have a situation where a European Research Centre, situated in Italy with staff who are mainly Italian-speaking or of Italian nationality, is ignoring without any justification the principles of that minimum of multi-lingualism which should be the norm in the Community.

The Commission cannot regard this situation as acceptable. Instructions must therefore be given as soon as possible to ensure that the principles of multi-lingualism are observed at Ispra as indeed in all institutions of the Community.

Will the Commission indicate the precise nature and contents of the instructions which it must issue on this matter?

The reason for the Commission's silence is abundantly clear: there has been criticism of the Commissioner responsible for energy matters, and the Commission was hoping, once he was replaced, to be able to absolve itself of responsibility.

3. Question No 1360/80

'Subject: The problem of translation

An article on the problem of translation in the 26 September 1980 edition of 'Euroforum' ends with the statement that (the committee) would also be considering Community policy towards minority languages, and the possible use of an artificial language like Esperanto.

Was the Commission aware of the contents of this article before it was published? If not, will it indicate what steps it intends to take to avoid excesses of this kind appearing in future in an official publication of its Directorate-General for Information? If it was aware of the article can it state on what basis and what grounds the use of what General de Gaulle called 'volapuk intégré' is being considered?

By announcing the closure of the publication in question the Commission hopes to avoid its responsibilities. It would have been preferable if it had shouldered them.

4. Question No 1467/80

'Subject: Foreign aspects of the Davignon steel plan

Can the Commission confirm information to the effect that Spain has already reached the limit which it had accepted for its deliveries of steel to the Community in 1980?

It is plain that the Commission has refused to reply in the hope that the developments in European policy for the steel industry would allow it to shirk its weighty responsibilities.

These four examples demonstrate the Commission's determination to do its utmost to avoid answering questions put by parliamentarians as soon as they raise a problem of any kind.

When does the Commission intend to answer these four questions, which ought not to require much

more reflection, in view of the excessive and unacceptable period of time that has elapsed since they were published?

When the new Commission takes office, what does it intend to do to put a stop to the unacceptable practices it has been using for many years and to respect the rights of the Members of the European Parliament?

**Answer given by Mr Andriessen
on behalf of the Commission**

(19 February 1981)

The conclusions drawn by the Honourable Member from the Commission's delay in answering certain questions are misguided. His interpretation of the delay in the four cases which he cites is excessive and unfounded.

The Commission has already had several occasions to describe the great effort it makes to answer Written Questions as quickly as it can, bearing in mind that the number of questions has risen substantially since 17 July 1979. It has also stressed the administrative and other constraints which it must cope with when preparing answers; it is not always possible to comply with the deadlines appointed by Parliament's Rules of Procedure. The Honourable Member is referred in particular to the Commission's answer to Written Question No 835/80 by Mr. Diligent⁽¹⁾, which describes the problems involved in having all the answers translated.

The Commission is, and always has been, at pains to respect the rights of the European Parliament and its Members.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 295, 13. 11. 1980, p. 9.