THE WAR IN IRAQ:
'EUROPE WAS A HOUSE DIVIDED'

Europe was a house divided. We had more Europeans on the streets protesting against the Iraq War than anything in my period in the European Parliament. But in spite of that, there were still many more who were not protesting, and I think the European Parliament some way accurately reflected this division. Each of the Groups proposed a resolution on the war in Iraq, some on balance accepting that what was there was now happily or unhappily inevitable, and others protesting it. No Group would compromise on its intrinsic views and the result was that we voted consecutively, Group by Group, on the resolutions and none found a majority. The Groups could not find the wisdom to produce a common text, and the result was in effect that the European Parliament consecutively voted down every available resolution and therefore voted for no resolution. I found myself in the unhappy position later that day or on the following day in a TV studio in Rome being asked to articulate the view of the European Parliament, and indeed I could talk in the terms I have talked to you, but specifically, now that the war had been declared, all I could report was that the Parliament was a house divided. The Council, the European Council, was a house divided. Europe was a house divided and a house divided has no influence.