

## COT

Having said that, if the House is satisfied with the result of the vote, all well and good. We cannot be held responsible. We tried to find a solution. I cannot help it if Mr Herman does not understand French.

AGLIETTA (V). — (*IT*) Mr President, first of all I had the distinct impression that the bell did not sound before the vote.

Secondly, Mr President, I do not believe that the failure of the Socialist Group to adopt a clear stance on Maastricht, in the aftermath of the European Council, can be put right by means of a compromise reached in the Enlarged Bureau. I really do not think that Parliament can be deprived of its prerogative in this way.

CHANTERIE (PPE). — (*NL*) Mr President, on a point of order. Just now there was a problem with Mr Falconer and you as President made the correction. Mr Falconer did not have his voting card. At the time he did not vote. After the explanations of the vote, a number of colleagues did not come back into the Chamber in time. They were simply unable to take part in the vote.

*(Murmurs of dissent)*

We might perhaps consider Mr Cot's request and still reach an agreement between the groups, as it seems inconceivable to me that the European Parliament should be unable to state its position on the Maastricht Summit because a number of Members were outside the Chamber. In that sense, I am prepared to support Mr Cot's proposal for a short suspension and possibly a meeting of the Enlarged Bureau.

PRESIDENT. — Mr Chanterie, this is clearly a political problem rather than something to do with voting. The issue is a fundamental political one. I think the best thing to do is to suspend the sitting for half an hour to allow consultation.

## IN THE CHAIR: MR BARÓN CRESPO

*President*

*(The sitting was suspended at 7.25 p.m. and resumed at 8.00 p.m.)*

PRESIDENT. — Let me say first of all that Parliament, as a democratic institution and one which works under the public gaze in the limelight and with a public record of its proceedings, has an obligation to respect its own Rules of Procedure. This means that at this juncture Parliament cannot propose any change to the decisions it has taken.

Moreover, if I may say so, the President in his final official act before the assembly is clearly not inclined to violate the Rules of Procedure. I think it is fair to say, following this first debate, that Parliament has directly acknowledged and taken up a position on the initial

assessment by the President-in-Office of the Council and the President of the Commission. We have had an adequate debate and a number of issues have been raised. These issues have been noted. We cannot go into these matters in greater detail at the moment because the texts are not available. We have demonstrated our good will and we have welcomed the positive aspects for which we were partly responsible but — as Parliament has already said — the debate on the real issues will take place over the next few months, initially in the committees on the basis of our known views, then in the political groups where the debate has already begun and finally, in the plenary sitting. I would remind you that the President-in-Office of the Council said of the editing and harmonization of texts that this would take place at the beginning of February which means that Parliament will be able to follow carefully and with great attention the entire detailed drafting progress. Negotiations are not finished and there is a role for us here. It seems to me that we have the right and an opportunity to ask the Council to convene an institutional conference to look at these questions of detail. I believe that the President is justified in making a request to the Council Presidency for this.

I would also point out following the meeting last Friday with the presidents of the parliaments of the Member States in Brussels that there is another important date which the Members of the European Council should bear in mind. I am referring to the invitation by the Portuguese Presidency to attend a meeting in Lisbon in January to decide in which way, without the law being laid down by the Council, we can establish links between the national parliaments and the European Parliament to look into this question based on the Rome declaration.

Finally, I should like to say in what will be my final address to the House that I believe the European Parliament must actively prepare for the new responsibilities which it is to be given: those of development and monitoring on the basis of six different legislative procedures for cooperation and consultation with the Council, and of its work with the Commission, its way of working and method of operation. It should also do this for those policies which are decided upon between eleven Member States because we cannot accept a clause which excludes 81 Members of the Parliament. We were elected by universal suffrage and represent the people of the Community. It is important to note that we have new powers in relation to economic and monetary union and the development of a foreign security and defence policy. Nor are we going to give up the struggle for equal decision-making powers.

In relation to these points and as preparation for the next period of office where we should have a full Community system of parliamentary representation, I feel that careful study should be given to the entire procedure for appointing the Commission, European

## PRESIDENT

electoral law, the status of Members and the membership of the European Parliament.

Let me conclude by thanking you for your cooperation and patience with me as your President and if I have given any offence to anybody at any time I would apologize and say that we shall all continue to work for a European union based on true democracy.

*(Sustained applause)*

IN THE CHAIR: MR MARTIN

*Vice-President*

Report (Doc. A3-344/91) by Mrs Vayssade, on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Citizens' Rights, on the proposals from the Commission to the Council for five regulations (ECSC, EEC, EURATOM):

- I. amending the Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of those Communities in respect of detailed rules for adjusting remuneration of the European Communities (SEC (91) 2120 — C3-393/91): *adopted*
- II. amending the Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of those Communities of the European Communities (SEC (91) 2120 — C3-394/91): *adopted*
- III. amending the Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of those Communities of the European Communities (SEC (91) 2120 — C3-395/91): *adopted*
- IV. amending the Staff Regulations of officials and the conditions of employment of other servants of those Communities of the European Communities (SEC (91) 2120 — C3-396/91): *adopted*
- V. amending certain Council regulations introducing special and temporary measures to terminate the service of officials and temporary staff of the European Communities (SEC (91) 2120 — C3-397/91): *adopted*

VAYSSADE (S). — (FR) Mr President, paragraph 4 of the legislative resolution raises the specific question of

Council consultation with the presidents of the other institutions.

I would like this enquiry to be addressed directly to the Council, and I would like the President to establish contact to this effect so that we can obtain a swift response on the subject of staff negotiation procedures.

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GARCÍA ARIAS (S). — (ES) Mr President, since our last plenary, the debate and vote on my report on the European Energy Charter have been continually postponed. I would remind the House that this matter will be discussed at the intergovernmental conference taking place next Monday. It would be a pity if Parliament had not defined its position by then. I do not know if it is possible to put the report to the vote this evening. I would ask the House for the vote to be held now, or at the latest, first thing tomorrow morning.

PRESIDENT. — We will start tomorrow morning with urgencies and will then take the rest of the vote on the agenda so the vote on your report will take place tomorrow morning.

VISSER (S). — (NL) Mr President, we were due to vote this evening on my report on the allocation of slots at airports. As I understand it, we can put all the amendments to the vote immediately *en bloc*. That is the result of our discussions with the Commission. I would ask whether we cannot settle the matter this evening. Two votes will be enough. One vote for all the amendments together, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, and one vote on the legislative resolution. We can do that in one minute. We are in complete agreement with the Commission. Parliament's wishes have been followed almost completely in our discussions with the Commission. There are no material problems. So why not settle it this evening — in one minute it will all be over.

PRESIDENT. — I am very glad that there is no controversy, so there will be no problem getting it through tomorrow morning.

*(The sitting was closed at 8.20 p.m.)*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Speaking time — Membership of Parliament — Membership of committees — Agenda for next sitting: see Minutes.*