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office as a Minister in the Government of the Italian Republic is incompatible with the office of Member of the European Parliament.

I have received a similar message from Mr Nino Martinazzoli, Minister for Defence in the Italian Government. I shall therefore inform the Member States concerned of the incompatibility of the offices held by these three Members to enable those authorities to inform the European Parliament of their deliberations on this matter without delay.

PANNELLA (NI). — *(FK)* Mr President, I would like to point out that the messages you have just read to us confirm a very serious aspect of these elections, at least in Italy. Several political leaders went to the voters announcing that they were going to be members of the European Parliament. They knew that this was not true and were thus deceiving their voters. I have to say this because it seems regrettable to me that voters, particularly Italian ones, did not know for whom they were really voting. We shall thus have among us colleagues for whom the voters did not vote.

PRESIDENT. — I note your point, but it is not a point of order.¹

2. Address by the Oldest Member

PRESIDENT. — *(FR)* Honourable Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, an artist who has created works he feels to be important cannot be content to know that he has the heavy burden, and indeed the honour, of talking to you on this solemn occasion not because of them, but because of this birth certificate and to his insolent good health — for which I apologize. It takes more than great age or youth to give you talent, even in politics. And I am not a politician. So if I talk politics, it will be briefly, as I shall try and keep — here, in what my colleagues in the profession would call a *première* or a final rehearsal — to my own field of culture and the performing arts.

Some people will possibly be thinking that I'm going to put on a film show and lower the tone of the debate. My immediate response to that is that the cinema is no lowerer. It improves debates, all of them.

First of all, as a show business professional, I noticed, just as anybody might, the minimal interest that the citizens of Europe, more than half of them, have shown in this Europe of yours. The public is sulking. It's turning its nose up and shying away from something, as the horse-riders say, which ought not rightly be a fence. We are here thanks to the will of some ... but to the indifference of others. And one of my fellow countrymen isn't in the least bothered by it — Jacques Delors. Now no one would doubt Mr Delors' competence. But he himself has just revealed a shortcoming that I knew nothing about — to his mind, the fact that more than

half the people of Europe don't care about Europe is no slight on European democracy. And to back up this nice little idea, he hits us with a sledgehammer of an argument which seems to have silenced our happy little analysts.

Look to the USA, says Mr Delors — and I quote — which is undeniably a democracy although the president and all the administration are elected by less than half the American voters. According to him, this means that the American Government is only elected — seriously — by less than half a minority.

Democracy, I have been told, means power by the people. One may well ask whether that particular majority isn't seriously beginning to wonder about the decisions of the greatest number being necessarily the best. Anyhow, it's not democracy when one voter out of two couldn't care less about the democracy itself. America observes — indeed it advertises — democracy, but a democracy in which so few people are concerned doesn't take me in. Other forces hold the power — the real power, that is — and this democracy is nothing more than an incontestable pretext but perhaps at my age I might be allowed to contest it.

Nevertheless, I can still admire and try to understand the terrific show they put on for us. When you go to a country which is a vassal of the United States — and God knows there are plenty of them — and there is a good chance of the genuinely democratic election of certain 'progressives' threatening the real American power, this great democracy has no hesitation, as we have seen, in getting the CIA to have the undesirable leader assassinated and a dictator put in his place, even if he has to be dropped or betrayed if it turns out not to be in its interests.

One may even wonder what would happen to the United States if all the Americans did start going to the polls and put, say, an Allende in the White House and a majority of Allendists in the Senate and Congress. America's real masters had no hesitation in having Kennedy assassinated for far less. People say, and they may be right, that the Soviet Union is a military threat. Obviously, wherever there are soldiers, if you see what I mean, there are threats. But — and this is what I wanted to say — as far as I know, the threat to our culture, our cultures, dear fellow Europeans, is not coming from the Soviet Union but from the United States, alas! And it is a terrifying threat ...

(Mixed reactions)

... because, although nations can get over military defeat and get over it very well — just look at Japan — and they can get over economic defeat too, like the Germany of 1930, they never get over cultural defeat!

(Mixed reactions)

Obviously millions of European voters have decided to abstain for a host of reasons that professional orators will perhaps analyse better than I can. And this, at all events, means that none of the abstainers are taking the House seriously. But they are making a big mistake,

¹ *Formation of political groups — Agenda — Deadlines: see Minutes.*

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because our cultures are in a tight corner between the Red Army and the greenback dollar bill. Huge civilisations have disappeared entirely through apathy of this sort, through pernicious, deadly underestimation, through people being distracted and suicidally optimistic and, as usual, under the effect of a variety of things which keep them happy — when all that was needed was plain, strong vigilance. Plain, strong determination is all it takes to fight off a barbaric invasion. And today, ladies and gentlemen, such vigilance is your responsibility.

This warning will, I think, show you the importance I attach and the respect I have for the European institution — and of the hopes which we all have of it. Will there be a majority in this House to impose the vigilance we expect of it? Personally, I can only hope so — and hope so ardently.

Further food for thought. When an albeit properly informed public fails to come and see one of our films, the authors tend to think that the public is in the wrong.

But that is by no means certain. Here, I should like to quote Molière, our Molière, who said that anyone who makes himself understood has spoken well.

You have to assume that all our political leaders, however high up, have spoken badly because no one's really understood them, as the facts bear out. But I am only speaking here of the politicians on my patch.

How come that people who are normally incredibly persuasive — Valéry Giscard-d'Estaing, for example, and Jacques Chirac and Laurent Fabius — couldn't be bothered to make clear what their Europe entailed although they spread themselves generously as usual in all the columns of all the papers, and on all the radio and TV channels?

With only a little bit of irony, you could have put any speech in any mouth and no one would have noticed the difference — not even me and I'm a specialist. The same luke-warm air blew from everyone's lips. Hence the lassitude and the uneasy feeling in the long run. People don't like dangers they can't see. They don't like threats that are vague and diffuse. They felt, confusedly, that this Europe that was so difficult to explain masked something they couldn't, weren't able to see. If you say '*pain*' rather than '*bread*' or '*pan*' rather than '*pane*' or '*psomi*', you are conveying the rich tapestry of life which dazzles us with all the wonderful facets which reflect the cultural identity of each nation.

Replacing all these words with one word would be suicide — something of which even the humblest peoples are aware. It is very odd that throughout this Europe you are working on, one language, English, has become common currency, as it were by tacit agreement. I of course have nothing against the language that gave us Byron and Shelley and Bernard Shaw, but this initial phenomenon contains the seeds of a damaging effect and threats which hard press the unwary speakers of other languages, in spite of the fact that they seem to be attracted and tempted by the glass baubles of the

invader. At the tennis championships at Roland Garros, the winner of every match went into a little studio near the dressing rooms to give his impressions to a journalist. And whatever nationality the winners were, German, Swedish, Argentinian, Italian or even Chinese, they answered in English, all of them. And the commentators then translated it into French. Nothing is more dangerous or cause for greater concern. One translation distorts, but two ... well ...

Everybody knows that when you take photocopies of photocopies the quality suffers, as it does with sound recordings, the further you get from the original. And it is the original thoughts of the German champion or the Swedish, Argentinian, Italian or Russian champion which count. It is because a Dane uses the word '*roubreul*' that Denmark gave us Ibsen and Strindberg. It is because an Italian says '*pane*' that Italy gave us Dante and Pirandello and Spain gave us Cervantes.

It is this diversity of national cultures which gave rise to our splendid European culture. This English which is becoming entrenched — which is being entrenched — in European minds and shovelling every national treasure into the current press of this vague cooperative of yours will, I should cordially point out, unavoidably bring the original cultures to an end. And if, by some mischance, the Europeans are already prepared in their minds for this pass, for this downfall and for the ultimate disappearance of these cultures, then it will happen very fast. That, in a nutshell, is what I came to tell you today. You know that I am not keen on militarism. Quite the opposite, in fact. Yet my cultural honesty forces me to side with General de Gaulle — although he was for a Europe of sovereign States, not just his own, but other people's too. Without this concern, if by chance, because it was easier or because of some hypocritical form of subjugation, you gave in to this kind of cooperative which is lying in wait for us, all of the most prestigious sources of our miraculous cultural blends would turn sour.

And that is not all! I shall say more about the perplexity of the voters. The example I have chosen comes from a very dear friend, a Christian — although, there again, I am not keen on clericalism. Now, my friend says, look and see how Europe sees itself first and foremost. All those tradesmen! Doesn't it remind you of anything? I stop. No concern with anything spiritual or cultural. The triumph of the spirit of the merchant. I am an atheist and free of any metaphysical concerns and I was very touched, moved even, by the words of my Christian friend.

No one doubts that the Europe to come will be a Europe of tradesmen and goods and markets. No one would even think it was a nuisance if that was all it was ... although there may be some doubt as to the excellence of the transformation in view — and I mean the real improvements that we would be entitled to expect for the people, the citizens.

The citizen — the word which the human rights merchants forget most of the time. All it took for me to

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express this other fear, sometimes in the evening when by chance I was watching the television, was to hear France's boss of the bosses. This dithyrambic gentleman sang the praises of his cult of enterprise and suggested that economic considerations should hold sway over man. A wonderful moment! You should have heard him, beatifically exalting his unbounded admiration for Japan, which, he says, only gives its citizens one week's holiday a year! The ultimate in civilizations, the gentleman thought! He didn't yet dare sing the praises of certain countries which have 10-year-olds working clandestinely for a pittance, with no social security of any kind, but he wasn't far off it! And he wasn't far off admiring the workers in the underdeveloped countries who accept pathetically low wages either! Didn't one of Darty's bosses recently say that all French refrigerators were assembled in Hungary?

I am a man of culture, so I am used to unleashing demons on screen and stage. And these demons may have their influence. They may have a considerable hold over the planet. The demon Alceste, for example, the demon Tartuffe, the demon Figaro, the demons — dressed up even — of Marivaux, the demon Jacques le Fataliste and all of Voltaire's demons — who also engendered the French revolution which we are being told, rather noisily perhaps, all about at the moment. But we have been imprudent in these final years of the century, not by unleashing the most fearful of all demons, but by rehabilitating it.

Hitherto, that demon spread its pestilence, but it was a little bit ashamed of its own breath. It was a demon which struck at night and hugged the walls and its victims despised it. But now, its victims have been converted to its law. The demon I am talking about is the demon profit and what I mean by profit is lucre.

But there's no need to worry any more! It is to maintain the demon profit and keep it unscathed that you see all those doors and bits of wings and tails drop off planes in mid-air or passengers sucked out, parachute-less of course, 9000 metres up, because maintenance would cost too much and push up the running costs too far!

It is to maintain the demon profit that you see trains telescoping at 200 km an hour even at stations, with the maintenance staff cut down to kept the profit margin up.

And it is to maintain the demon profit that you see gigantic supertankers handled by a handful of hungry recruits from the Third World cynically opening their guts and spilling out thousands of tons of crude oil, provoking the absolute, irredeemable slaughter of birds and fish and plant life!

In India, an enormous chemical complex explodes, giving off fumes which kill and mutilate thousands of good people and you hear the bosses shamelessly say that the compensation they pay to the victims will cost even less than the safety devices which would have prevented the explosion! And the truth is that, at home in France, it is the French socialists who have rehabilitated profit!

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that, of all the religions that exist, it is faith in profit which leads most inexorably and most surely to the worst kind of fanaticism of all.

It was Montesquieu who said: put the economy at the top and the State is lost. This is something that our dear boss of bosses cares nothing about — and he cares nothing about Montesquieu either.

All the dangers I have listed would not be so fatal if they fell upon solid national tissue that was still able to generate the relevant antibodies and gain victory over death. That shows just how much fear and disgust I feel at the mondialist, internationalist and egalitarian theories. But this does not make me discriminate. On the contrary. I exclude nothing, because I am for the conservation of every sovereign State.

There are good people to tell us that even cultural consanguinity weakens and leads to degeneration that only inter-breeding can prevent by regenerating a culture. What these good people fail to say is that not all cross-breeding is good. Independently even of the intrinsic value of each cultural ingredient, some mixes are disastrous — for all the parties concerned!

There have been Christians in the Lebanon for 2000 years, but we are forced to admit that, after 13 centuries, living alongside the Moslems is still just as tragic and bloody as it was to begin with. This is something I deplore for both communities.

But what is the point of insisting when two centuries of experiment lead to the same bloody explosions because the two are obviously, blindingly incompatible?

Voltaire may have saved Christianity, but it took us 1800 years to come up with a Voltaire!

Islam, unless I am very much mistaken, is only in year 1300 of the Hegira and it will take it another 500 years to generate its Voltaire. But this Mohammed Ben Voltaire will get the same admiration and the same gratitude from me — and that is all the ill I wish to certain incompatible people!

At this point, I should like to talk to you almost confidentially, as if I were pulling up a chair to be closer to a friend so he could hear better. I should like to share with you the greatest adventure of my film career in the United States, at the very beginning of Hollywood, at the time the big studios were preparing for what they uncompromisingly called the forthcoming American invasion of Europe and the world.

I speak English fluently and they were no more wary about me than they would have been about a dog, one as dumb as an inanimate object. What had to be done to lay the foundations of this cinematographic invasion was to lay the basis for the dubbing of American films we know today. At that time, the American companies imported foreign directors to direct original — German, Spanish, French and Italian — versions of their films and I was one of them. So every one of these films meant another complete set of filming.

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The first great actor I had to direct was Buster Keaton. Let me tell you, by the way, that his likeness to Jacques Delors was incredible — the same sphinx's head and no cheekbones — although he was a great artiste. No need of any political jiggery-pokery for him to succeed. All it took was whisky. Buster Keaton is the only great and beautiful memory I brought back from the rat race of Hollywood where the pundits of MGM, where I was stagnating, used to talk with sovereign disdain of all the countries of Europe where they were aiming at a cultural take-over. They were particularly disdainful of France, which I found very flattering.

With the Germans, they said, we will always get on. Get over the odour of forget-me-nots and all you have to do is toss them a bit of logic, seriously, in an inspired voice. But as we saw, my German colleagues were not taken in.

And with the Italians, they went on, it will be even easier. The Italians don't believe in anything and they pretend everything.

But with the French, they said, it will be a fight. It will take just one pirouette to bring down Himalayas of logic. We shall have to rape them.

Between you and me, these insolent big shots didn't say 'rape'. It was something much nastier and particularly hurtful.

All these versions of films which had to be entirely filmed from beginning to end a second time cost the companies a fortune and were not, in their eyes, convincing enough.

And I was the one whom one fine day the big bosses of MGM got to make the world's first dubbed film. The first dubbed film, with an enormous amount of top-speed dialogue was called 'Dance fools, dance' and starred Joan Crawford and Clark Gable. So it was going to be done in French and sent off to Paris straight away to try out the effect. And, entitled 'La pente', it was a sensation. And not surprisingly!

So it now became possible to make all the under-developed of Europe swallow these ersatz films and get all the American actors to speak the language of the country that was going to be colonized. Clark Gable could make the Yugoslavs think he was Yugoslavian and the Poles he was Polish. Or German, Spanish, Portuguese or Italian.

In vain did we — with René Clair in the lead, Jacques Feyder, Duvivier *et al.* — object to this dreadful trickery. No one could see past the magic. And when I was asked to carry on, I lost no time in fleeing the country. I could feel the fearful, fatal effect it was going to have and I could sense the commotion that it would cause amongst the weary élite, as with painting and sculpture and great music. And lastly, without involving the élite, from whom alienation is always difficult and, above all, ruinous, I could sense the effect, a profoundly devastating direct mental effect, it could have on the people, on all peoples.

So I was one of the principal craftsmen, an involuntary one, of course, of this thing, this great invasion — and there were no colonists, no armies and not even a policeman. It was far stronger than that. For it turned out to be tougher than any gas, this imaginary cloud of euphoria which replaced the artillery on the screen — the trumps of Uncle Sam.

They are still there today, these happy tablets and they are stronger anaesthetics than ever they were. At this rate we will soon have François Villon, Rabelais, Molière, Racine, Diderot, Musset, Stendhal, Hugo, Anatole France and Goethe, Cervantes, Dante, Pirandello and Ibsen, plus, of course, Tolstoy, Dostoyevski and Uncle Vanya in orbit, all of them shattered into shards and scratchings for the benefit of Babbit. Farewell, ancient moons of a whole western culture, magic, proud, sumptuous ... lobotomized!

It is for me, the French film-maker, to remind you here, with such very regrettable associations, that you sit in the House under the emblem — one long known — of one of the most powerful transatlantic film companies, whose emblem, like yours, is the same crown of stars. And this American company it is which has just swallowed up the Time group for the modest sum of 12 billion — please excuse me, I mean of course 12 billion dollars!

Thought could have been given to this unhappy resemblance ... unless it was deliberate and premonitory!

And so, faced with all these threats, at a time when you are in an exceptionally strong position, with the possibility of resistance, far greater resistance than the army, for it is cultural resistance, the only signs amongst you are the signs of laxness, if you don't mind my saying so, which is contemptible and extremely disquieting!

The idea of you toying even for an instant with parapets, as Rimbaud put it, to protect our past brilliance, bringing in honourable quotas to safeguard our national creations, is confusing and, what is more, augurs ill for the future. We in this House are all heirs of legatees and it is therefore our duty to tolerate neither eclipse of nor attack on our cultural past or future. A Europe without these protective parapets would, let me warn you, be, in this case, no more than a joke. Look at the troubling apathy which is currently yours and there is no choice but to think that you will have put on a parody of a show whose outcome might yet appear uncertain, but which was, in fact, somewhat hypocritically arranged in advance. Failure to wield authority and prevent, as you could and still can, the wild unleashing of cultural hegemony, that certain precursor of all other economic, social and political hegemony, will lead to the suspicion that you had ulterior motives of a quite different kind.

A silent battle is being waged today, alas, by our society of French authors, who call it the battle of the quotas. In fact, you must admit that our society of playwrights is fighting for you, ladies and gentlemen, and it is fighting alone in the indecent campaign that is being waged

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amidst the perfidious manoeuvres of our power, hatched in the shadow of the castles!

On 24 May, a train load of — listen to this — 300 French writers and producers was allowed to leave Paris, with not even the smallest of officials to see them off, for Strasbourg, to humbly insist on a modest 60% quota of European works being maintained in the various media — our television, our radio and our cinemas.

And by the way, I should like to remind those who have forgotten their history — real history, that is — that this means 40% of foreign works, a percentage which, in fact, the German occupiers of our country were neither permitted nor allowed themselves! So, I repeat and I can prove, the percentage is more than reasonable and more than modest.

If you compare the size of the unreasonable, exaggerated foreign works quota which has been allowed, 40%, to the non-official quota (hypocritically kept under cover but fiercely applied and entirely unavoidable) in effect in the United States, which only accepts 2% of foreign works on its television channels and no more than 4% of foreign films are allowed in over any year (although American films account for more than 50% of national programmes in France), even the projected quota of 40:60 for the Europeans conjures up Sacha Guitry's horse and lark paté, with equal proportions of each, one horse to every one lark.

So, our 300 journeying authors arrived in Strasbourg and candidly made their claims. People listened to them very politely, very probably smiling the while, because they well knew that the decision ultimately to refuse even the smallest cultural quota had already been taken in Brussels, where the real decision-makers are, ages ago. And France was not the only one to be caught. All the countries of Europe were and I am not forgetting it.

Paris was already well aware of the refusal of any protection and any cultural quotas and had been for some time! Without warning anyone, at the same time as the expedition of 300 naive French creators set off, Paris — and this is where it hots up — despatched a fine missionary to protest to Brussels, with instructions — and I say instructions — to give up on everything to do with quotas. Appearances were kept up, but the trick was played none the less.

Of course, when it all came out — everything comes out in the end — the anger of the 300 knew no bounds. There were strong articles in the French press. If that is what Europe is all about, said Jean-Claude Carrère, Buñuel's colleague, then I don't want it!

The campaign is still going on, we are told. There will be discussions over the summer. A familiar thing — on the radio we have a Mr Dumas being very reassuring and telling us, without the shadow of a smile, that the structures are to be changed. Talk about changes in the structures — well, I know from experience that this kind of soothing talk is always trotted out, neatly dipped in flour, given time!

But you see, in all this I am being reasonable. I am not calling for the invaders to go, although they are invaders to whom I, as a Frenchman, owe nothing. I am being reasonable. All I want is for Shylock's teeth to be filed down a bit, so his vassals can nurture their talents properly and, as they like rather noisily to claim, freely. Let there be competition at least, loyal and not disloyal. Let the people at least have the opportunity to make comparisons and free choices. This is not protection. When it comes to culture, it is legitimate defence.

Some people in Europe go so far as to say that there is a majority of Europeans in agreement with the current dosage of American productions here. This is wishful thinking. If they were right, we should see a masterpiece of democracy, with democracy democratically consenting to disappear!

Henceforward, ladies and gentlemen, you, at all events, cannot say that you aren't *au fait* with the situation and I didn't warn you. And I should very much like to add one last warning. When Europe has said its last word, the world will not be far from breathing its last breath.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am a spiritual patriot. Some people laugh at me and call me the *Déroulède* of culture. But I should like to say, affectionately, culturally and Europeanly, that I have no enemies in Europe other than the spineless and the resigned, those who have given up or been brought or won over quite deliberately and those who are indifferent to their own demise.

I shall not waste your time or mine uttering eternal lamentations and wailings about crimes to humanity. What I should like to say is that any man in Europe, wherever he may be on the political spectrum, who stands up to the threat or to the fatality of his own disappearance is my brother. From this you will see, I think, that I have not come here today for the greater glory of some philosophical, social or political ideology.

I have to say that the political group which called me to its ranks did so precisely so I could jump to the defence of all cultures — without expecting any adherence to its own philosophy.

I should like to pay public tribute here to Jean-Marie Le Pen, who is gallingly and falsely accused — by professional defamers — of sectarianism and authoritarianism and fascism. He is the only one of our famous political leaders to have swept all our differences aside. And he has done so to enable me, on his behalf — and the service I have rendered, exclusively, to the cinema and French culture over the past 70 years are ample justification for this — to represent French culture in this House and defend all the cultures of this continent of ours against the new and imminent dangers that are lowering and — with you — closing in.

You will excuse my candour — but my confidence in this Assembly is, I am sorry to say, only relative.

I should like to end my speech with an appeal to others, to those who are and will be more concerned with the decisions you are to take — to our young people, who cannot be forgotten or dodged or avoided. And, to be

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frank, I have some scruples about talking about young people and particularly to them, about getting across to young people who are already jaded and for whom French is already double Dutch. Some people say that Marcel Carné's film *Les tricheurs* has aged. He himself agrees. Well, he's wrong! Young people don't even cheat any more, alas, and I understand them. Have we, the older generation, the right to admonish them and to preach? And, most important, have we the right to set ourselves up as an example? You only need to look at the world we are leaving them to feel more anguish than satisfaction on their behalf. It is a world in which the finest scientific advances inspire terror rather than joy! It is a world in which even the generous idea of Europe makes one out of every two Europeans run! The other day, a 50-year-old friend of mine who had just been made redundant after 35 years with the same firm told me, very distressed, that: 'The worst thing was going home and telling my two young sons and daughters. I had always told them that work meant dignity. And after 35 years of deliberate and even enthusiastic following of this fine idea, well, it was that which caused me the greatest humiliation anyone can have. How could I look the children in the face? Could I tell them to do what their father had done? If I had gone on with it. If I had persisted and reiterated my fine principles, they would quite rightly have despised me and thrown themselves on the first drug they came across'.

Is it possible to be beaten, hunted and humiliated to that extent and still go on preaching the ideas which led us to it? Sacking is a crime of peace which is every bit as serious as a crime of war. The greatest tenets of ethics, for all their beauty and all their joy, have usually served, above all, to mislead. And so they have become suspect.

That is why, as I said, I have some scruples in talking to young people, to young people of Europe. Yet there is something I should like to tell them, discreetly and affectionately, in the name of the most innocent feeling in the world, the instinct of preservation of what is essential and above all irrecuperable at the time it is being lost — the national cultural identity. Lose that and there is nothing left to lose. Or win. It becomes what our friend Diderot called a satyr, a humanoid of a kind that can still understand an order but is not able to analyse it.

Yes, I am speaking here of the instinct of preservation of all young people, if they still have it. No speeches, no sermons, no philosophy. Just one, simple wish, one which you may well find pathetic, but how symbolic it is. I solemnly call on all the young people of my country and of all countries to agree to a derogation from what has become for them, alas, a habit. I call on them, once, at least once, at drinking time, to abandon their coke and order in its place, shall we say, a little glass of French white wine, Alsace of course, Traminer or Riquewihr, and to hold it high, to look at it, golden and cloudless and to sniff the bouquet before they sip.

That's all. If, by some misfortune, they go back to coke after this experience, nothing and no one can help them.

It will have been the drink of the damned.

JACKSON, CAROLINE (ED). — After that speech I want to make clear, on my own behalf and, I suspect, on behalf of some of my colleagues in the European Democratic Group, that we stayed to hear Mr Autant-Lara out of the respect for Parliament, and out of respect for the right of free speech. I am afraid that we did not in the end stay out of respect for the content of his speech. I suspect that what Mr Autant-Lara has done is to draw attention to our need to change the rule about the rights of the *doyenne d'age* to give a speech at the opening of Parliament and to do more than simply to preside over the election of the next President.

(Applause)

PRESIDENT. — I note your point, Mrs Jackson.

DALSASS (PPE). — (DE) Mr President, I remained in the Chamber, but only out of democratic respect for Parliament. I listened to your nationalistic and anti-democratic tirades. You said: 'We require ..., we demand ...'. I must say that I, like many others, feel insulted should you have included me in what you said.

(Applause)

I feel insulted because I do not demand what you were demanding. I should therefore like to have it clarified that you said what you said in your own name and in the name of perhaps two or three others. The rest of us do not want to be included. I would like to have that made clear.

3. Election of President

PRESIDENT. — The next item is the election of the President of the European Parliament.

The following have been nominated as candidates in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure:

Mr Barón Crespo, Mrs Ewing, Mr Le Pen, Mrs Mota Santos, Mr Pannella and Mr von Wechmar.

Pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure, I shall now appoint four tellers: Mr Speciale, Mr Howell, Mrs Van Ouirve and Mr Hory.

(The sitting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. to enable ballot papers to be distributed and was resumed at 11 a.m.)

PRESIDENT. — I call Mr Langer on a point of order.

LANGER (V). — (DE) Many thanks, Mr President, for allowing me to raise a point of order in accordance with Rule 11 (2). I would like to inform Members that we nominate Maria Mota Santos as candidate for election as President because we feel it would be appropriate for