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own choice — because Parliament's credibility would be seriously damaged.

We must realize that, if we are desirous of solving the institutional problems of Europe — unfortunately the other reports on institutional matters have not yet been given — we must obviously solve the problem of the relationship with the other institutions. These other institutions are, essentially: the Council, which conditions our relations with the governments, our *auctores*, from whose sovereign decision derives the existence of our institution; the Commission, which has unfortunately shown great reserve in this matter, but which should probably have assumed more responsibility concerning this extremely delicate issue. We realize however that everyone has his problems, and the Commission must also deal with those we assigned to it in our mandate of 30 May.

This being the case, I will summarize the impressions I have received from this debate — in which I have been completely open, as if still in committee — in an attempt to include all the possible solutions. I heard the protests from Luxembourg. I feel obliged to say that no one is questioning Luxembourg's political merits; on the contrary, each of us wished to recognize the considerable advantages on the purely political level — as apart from the material one — that a city which has contributed so much to the construction of Europe must obviously possess. None of the members of the Political Affairs Committee suggested otherwise: Luxembourg will have its due. Moreover, the Grand Duchy already has the Court of Justice and the European Bank — this constitutes a very significant recognition of its function. Parliament has no intention of reducing Luxembourg's political and moral role; it simply wishes to have available the means to perform its tasks in a place where these means can be usefully exploited.

I myself was a member of the *ad hoc* Assembly, and I will never forget what Strasbourg has meant to us. I appeal particularly to our British colleagues, who joined the Community only later — and I am among those who fought most vigorously for their accession — and who perhaps have a more pragmatic viewpoint: someone who has lived through many battles and who was often in Strasbourg for European congresses or demonstrations cannot but be aware of the importance that city has had for those who have devoted themselves completely to the cause of the building of Europe.

It would be extremely serious if the European Parliament were to become a kind of arena where competitions would be held among the supporters of one city or another, turning this Chamber into a sort of Siena palio. I certainly do not advocate this, although I am among those who asserted from the beginning that a centre was needed where Members of Parliament could be truly at home, escaping from the 'uprooted' situation which is now their fate.

I believe it is necessary, therefore, to pool our forces in order to present to the governments — if only in interlocutory form — by means of an extended and thorough discussion in this Chamber, a picture of the situation as it really is, and of the feelings of the Members, in the hope that the governments will understand that the European Parliament wants to participate in the institutional question and contribute to its solution with the weight of its own experience.

I am not unhopeful that, with time, this result can be obtained; it will be necessary nonetheless to exercise a fundamental political virtue, patience.

President. — The debate is closed.

The motion for a resolution will be put to the vote at 5.30 p.m.

4. Institutional relations

President. — The next item is a joint debate on: a motion for a resolution, tabled by Mr Abens and others, on the setting up of an *ad hoc* committee to draw up proposals concerning the progress and development of the Community (Doc. 1-889/80/rev.);

the report by Mr Hänsch, drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on relations between the European Parliament and the Council of the European Communities (Doc. 1-216/81);

the report by Mr Diligent, drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on relations between the European Parliament and the national parliaments (Doc. 1-206/81);

the report by Mrs Baduel-Glorioso, drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on relations between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee (Doc. 1-226/81);

the report by Mr Van Miert, drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on the right of legislative initiative and the role of the European Parliament in the legislative process of the Community (Doc. 1-207/81); and

the report by Lady Elles, drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, on European political cooperation and the role of the European Parliament (Doc. 1-335/81).

I call Mr Spinelli.

Mr Spinelli. — (IT) Madam President, on behalf of 180 Members of differing political attitudes and national origins, I request this Assembly to approve the resolution entitled 'The creation of an *ad hoc*

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committee to present proposals on the state and the evolution of the Community.'

This request does not stem from an impulsive irritation occasioned by the difficulties now assailing the Community. It is no mere improvisation; the parliamentarians of the 'Crocodile Club' began to study its terms a full year ago, and during that year the discussion has extended far beyond the confines of the Club, provoking support, uncertainty, meditation, and investigation. Nor is our request premature, for exactly two years have now passed since the elected Parliament began its work, and each of us has had an opportunity to explore the possibilities offered by the European structures as they are today: their limits, the profound and growing contradiction between what the Community should be and what it is. Finally, this request is not overdue, for nearly three years still separate us from the next European elections: time enough to enable ourselves to face the electors' judgment without being obliged to admit to them that we have only expressed 789 opinions on a wide variety of issues, and that very little attention was paid to any of them. In such a case what would we deserve but indifference?

Now, as we prepare ourselves to vote upon this resolution, voices are being raised — and have been for some time — insistent and authoritative, proclaiming the need for new Community tasks: a much greater social commitment, a vigorous common policy to combat unemployment and inflation, a strong effort to fight hunger and encourage world development, a common monetary policy more uniform than that operative in the first phase of the EMS, the return to the project of a political union enabling us to contribute towards establishing world peace and to pursue the common foreign policy upon which our security should be based. And with this the list of tasks to be accomplished is by no means complete. It is not an awareness of the Community's new tasks that is lacking. What is lacking is the ability to deal with them effectively at the proper time; often it is impossible to deal with them at all using the Community institutions as they exist today.

At this moment, a crucial one for Europe and for our Assembly, this resolution calls upon us to decide whether we of the European Parliament, in the name of the peoples of the Community who elected us, are able to assume the responsibility of discussing, drawing up, voting upon, and presenting for ratification by the constitutional bodies of each Member State a draft treaty containing the outline of the Community's new tasks and the institutional reforms they imply. If Parliament lacks the courage to assume this political responsibility now — without losing too much time, without vacillating — the issue of the reform of the various treaties and conventions concerning European unification, an issue that cannot long be avoided, will of necessity be referred to others, to the diplomatic services of the Member States, who

will doubtless once again discover that intergovernmental cooperation is uncertain and almost completely unproductive. Parliament would be left with a futile role: that of expressing opinions and then complaining because the diplomats pay no attention to them.

If we do assume this responsibility, as I hope we will, we must do it in the knowledge that we are merely indicating the beginning of an initiative which will join all the others, be conducted like the others, and share their melancholy fate. In approving this resolution, we must be aware that we are starting a fresh new chapter in the life of our Assembly, that we are initiating an audacious political action which will be long, complex, and difficult, and which will not exempt us from pursuing our current activities, although it reaches far beyond them.

In order that this new chapter may bring success, we should first of all seek increasingly to involve the efforts of the entire Parliament. For this reason we request that a new parliamentary committee be created, a committee which, irrespective of its final appellation, will deal only with this issue. The committee will eventually present interim reports calling upon Parliament to decide among the existing options and to seek, through broad debates, the widest possible consensus, so that each of us may be fully aware of everything contained or implied in the project of reform when the final vote is taken.

In the second place, in order for this initiative to succeed it must be extended beyond the confines of this Chamber. There must be frequent meetings between the *ad hoc* committee and the Assembly to inform public opinion and to involve each political group and each of us as individuals. We parliamentarians, then, knowing that we will eventually be presenting a formal request to the Member States, will feel a political obligation to exert pressure on our parties and national parliaments to win their support for our proposal.

I am sure that in this Parliament there is a large majority in favour of the institutional strengthening of the Community, a majority which cuts across all national and political groups and which must find self-awareness through this effort. However, there are also those who oppose it. These Members as well must and shall have the opportunity to express their views through our procedure. For the first time the debate on Europe will no longer be restricted to a small minority; it will become instead a central theme of European political life. Our peoples will finally be able to decide, through methods of democratic participation and not through the initiative or obstructionism of one government or another, whether or not they will proceed with European unification.

I ask you to give the calendar of our initiative your careful consideration. If we begin work in the next few

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months with the least possible delay, the final draft of the reform programme will be ready in a year and a half or two years. In the course of the last year of our parliamentary mandate we will present the project to the Member States for ratification; it is inconceivable, however, that it will be ratified within the same year. The second European elections will therefore be above all an appeal to the voters not only to elect the Members of the European Parliament but also to make known to the national parliaments whether the popular will is favourable or unfavourable to the ratification of the treaty submitted to them by our Assembly. This, ladies and gentlemen, in its true dimension, is the democratic battle for the construction of Europe in which our resolution invites your participation.

Several amendments have been presented. Amendment number 3 by Mr Israel and Amendment number 10 by Mr Price are unacceptable, because they alter the very aim of the resolution. Mr Israel would postpone everything until after the next elections, and Mr Price replaces a reform to be ratified with a suggestion to be given to the Member States regarding their short or long-term policy. Except for these two amendments — and some others which will be included in broader ones or withdrawn — the changes proposed appear to me to be acceptable: in particular I favour the amendment proposed by the Christian Democratic Group and the minor amendments proposed by the Socialist Group.

When you vote on the resolution and the amendments, I beg you to remember that a project like this one demands the participation of all the great political families of our countries, and that each one must contribute its legitimate claims to the final agreement. Let us not, however, lose sight of our goal, the final synthesis to emerge from the present initial stage, where we must adopt a procedure which excludes no one and at the same time permits vigorous action. I appeal to you, therefore, to be wise and to have a sense of proportion, for only in this way can we be strong.

(Applause)

President. — I call the rapporteur.

Mr Hänsch, rapporteur. — *(DE)* Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, let us make it absolutely clear from the outset that the object of the report on relations between the European Parliament and the Council is to strengthen Parliament's influence over the Community's decisions. How else could a directly-elected Parliament think and act?

The achievement of the objectives set in this report would help the majority of the Members of this House to keep a promise they made during their campaigns for the votes of the citizens of Europe. We promised

the electors progressively to increase the influence and rights of the first directly-elected European Parliament. Let us take a first step in this direction by a large majority today. Let us take it with respect to the considerable number of reports on institutional questions now before us. I am happy to have been asked to deputize in this debate for Mr Van Miert, who is unable to be here this afternoon. I would therefore ask you to regard my comments as the presentation of his report as well as my own.

Our reports, ladies and gentlemen, show the governments a practical way of keeping the promise they made in 1974, when they undertook in Paris progressively to transfer new powers to Parliament, particularly in the legislative sphere. We wish to remind them of this undertaking, and we shall not cease to call on them to honour it.

I should like to refer to the essential point raised in this report, without getting bogged down in details. The report has several chapters. The first is devoted to efforts to improve the flow of information, the dialogue between Parliament and the Council. Parliament cannot effectively perform the tasks conferred on it by the Treaty — exercising control over the Commission and Council, stating its views on proposals for legislation and international agreements and also its newly acquired right to be involved in decisions on the Community's budget — if it is not properly informed about the work being done by the Council and Commission, about work planning, about the state of discussions and the progress made in deliberations on proposals for legislation. The Council is always a few steps ahead where information is concerned. It not only has better sources of information: it is also in an incomparably better position to know what stance its institutional adversary has adopted. We of the European Parliament meet, as it were, in the open market, and that is how it should be. The Council is invited to committee meetings and, under the Treaty, has the right to speak in Parliament. But Parliament has no access to the Council's discussions.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was once said that the Council is the only legislative body in the Western world that takes decisions behind closed doors. That is why we need a continuous dialogue with the Council and Commission. We have to admit that there have been some improvements in this area in recent years. But better use must be made of the existing channels. We therefore propose improvements with a view to achieving a genuine political debate, for example after the President of the Council has made his inaugural speech, to receiving more thorough answers to parliamentary questions and to improving the means Parliament has of exercising control and the dialogue between the Council and the committees of this House.