

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members: Blokland, Bonde, Holmes and Saint-Josse,

on behalf of the Group for a Europe of Democracies and Diversities

on the College of Commissioners and their programme

B5-0063/99**Resolution on the College of Commissioners and their programme**The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 201, 214 and 215 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to the hearings of the Commissioners-Designate of 30 August to 7 September 1999,
 - having regard to the European Council's decision of 19 July 1999,
 - having regard to the Commission decision of 16 March 1999,
- A. having regard to the unanimous decision of the Commissioners to resign en bloc following the submission of the report of the Committee of Independent Experts on the allegations of fraud, mismanagement and nepotism, the verdict of which it had accepted and which ascertained the institution's irresponsibility and malfunctioning,
- B. having regard to the recommendations made in the first report of the Committee of Independent Experts on the need for an urgent and thorough reform of the Commission, as the only way of achieving a real change of fundamental attitude in the Commission and making the workings of the European Union's institutions more democratic and transparent,
- C. whereas, despite the fact that the majority of nominee Commissioners proved their mastery of the issues and a sincere determination to work hard, respect for the principle of 'absolute transparency' was sometimes flouted by incomplete or inadequate written and oral answers,
- D. whereas the Treaty on European Union demands that Commissioners who resign or a censured Commission should be replaced for the rest of their term of office and that it is up to the President-designate to respect the letter and spirit of the Treaty,
1. Cannot accept the reappointment of four Commissioners from the former Commission who were supported unfailingly and unreservedly until they resigned, even when President Santer declared on 11 January 1999, in the plenary debate on the motion of censure, as regards alleged cases of fraud: 'I agree with you: we have to practise zero tolerance here. Good is not enough, we need to be above reproach. We have to learn all the lessons which the experience of the last few months has taught us, also as regards transparency vis-à-vis the European Parliament' without ever denouncing the malfunction to the general public or parliamentary representatives;
 2. Disapproves in particular of the fact that it is precisely a member of the former Commission who has been made responsible for carrying out the essential reform of the Commission when the Committee of Experts in paragraph 9.2.2. of its first report highlighted 'a heavy responsibility for both the Commissioners individually and the Commission as a whole';

3. Acknowledges the experience and competence of the vast majority of the nominee Commissioners, even though it does not agree with the main points of the ultra-liberal policy guidelines and the centralist vision of the construction of the Community;
4. Is concerned at the many reservations expressed during the hearings, although they were not always mentioned in the letters from the committee chairmen, about certain new nominee Commissioners, and thus instructs its Committee on Budgetary Control to continue its investigations into all the allegations made at the hearings before the European Parliament and to report on them to the European Parliament before 1 December 1999;
5. Requests that the agendas and minutes of Commission meetings be forwarded to Parliament at the same time as they are forwarded to the Commissioners; requests that immediately after the Commission's weekly meetings, the decisions adopted by the College should be notified to the European Parliament, either in plenary or via the Conference of Presidents;
6. Insists that all the documents should be sent to Parliament insofar as they are communicated - officially or not - to any person who does not belong to the Commission department responsible for the dossier, be it an institution, a representation to the European Union, a public or private company, a journalist or any other person;
7. Demands that all internal documents on fraud should be made available to the chairmen of the Committees on Budgets and Budgetary Control on request;
8. Points out that the only grounds for complaint against Paul Van Boutenen is the fact that the official in question made confidential documents public on his own initiative by bringing them to the notice of a political group chairman in the European Parliament and requests therefore that any proceedings against him be suspended and that he be free to choose whether to take up his former post or carry out equivalent duties in another department;
9. Proposes that the Commission should adopt regulations to protect officials who pass on information which was wrongly concealed from those entitled to it by the direct or indirect hierarchical authority;
10. Deplores the fact that despite the desire for reform mentioned by Mr Prodi in his initial statements and the new powers regarding the membership of the Commission given him by the Treaty on European Union, he has not managed to put together a team with the credibility required to revolutionise a system which is so centralised and so remote that it has become uncontrollable;
11. Considers that the scant attention given by the President-designate to the reservations expressed by Members of Parliament indicates the absence of a change of fundamental attitude, which does not augur well for the use he will make of the opportunity of requesting the resignation of an individual Commissioner and that an obvious crisis or a total repudiation will still be needed in order to ensure the departure, on legitimate grounds, of a Commissioner, as was the case in the previous Commission;

12. Calls on the Heads of State and Government to initiate new talks with a view to submitting, at the European Council in Tampere on 15 and 16 October 1999, a new team of Commissioners who do not try to 'stop looking back' but learn lessons from the past in preparation for creating a democratic Europe for the next millennium;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Heads of State and Government of the Member States, the President-designate of the Commission, the Presidents of the parliaments of the Member States and the applicant countries and the chairman of the Committee of Independent Experts.