

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0588/04

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to the Commission

Subject: Appointment and promotion of senior Commission officials

According to official bulletins issued by the main trade unions representing staff at the Commission, the latter is planning to appoint both officials from the Commissioners' offices and political advisers to the President (be they internal or external to the Commission) to top posts within the directorates-general, thereby enabling them (through a misuse of the procedure referred to in Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations concerning external recruitment) to make a 'career jump' of a kind which is not possible under the normal promotion procedure laid down in the Staff Regulations. This would be injurious to the Commission's staff, who are required to follow the standard procedure.

Such a policy could also be seen as an attempt by the Commission President and the outgoing Commissioners to move - without justification - into new spheres of power within the Commission structure, in blatant disregard for the need for sufficient room to be left for the acceding countries and for the new Commission (which will assume office in November 2004) to be allowed to appoint the heads of its directorates-general itself. It should be borne in mind that the current Commission has already replaced 50 of the 60 or so directors-general and 140 of the 200-odd directors.

In the light of the above, will the Commission consider:

1. informing the staff and their representatives of the action it intends to take pursuant to Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations and - in any event - not applying that article for the benefit of Commissioner office staff and the President's political advisers?
2. not recruiting staff from outside until it has exhausted the possibility of recruiting from within its own ranks?
3. creating new posts for officials from the acceding countries, so as not to frustrate the legitimate expectations of officials who are already in service?