

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3661/01
by Michiel van Hulten (PSE)
to the Council

Subject: Derogatory comments made at the Laeken European Council

According to Reuters, the following exchange took place at the Laeken European Council:

Berlusconi: Parma is synonymous with good cuisine. The Finns don't even know what prosciutto is. I cannot accept this.

Schüssel: I am not satisfied. We got nothing.

Persson: This is no easy task. We had the problem during the Swedish presidency at Gothenburg. But it's strange that the IT agency should go to Spain.

Verhofstadt: The gastronomic attraction of a region is no argument for the allocation of an EU agency.

Chirac: How would it be if Sweden got an agency for training models, since you have such pretty women?

Berlusconi: I already accepted the (European arrest) warrant. My final word is (shouts) No!

Schröder: I love Parma, but you'll never get it if you argue like that.

Chirac: Lille is also a candidate. It lies in the heart of the (EU) political landscape.

Schüssel: The (EU) observatory on racism (in Vienna) has only 19 civil servants. Others have thousands.

Verhofstadt: That's it. (Closes summit).

Can the Council confirm that this exchange took place?

According to the Laeken Declaration, 'the European project also derives its legitimacy from democratic, transparent and efficient institutions.' In the light of events at Laeken, does the Council consider the European Council to be such an institution?

Will the Council recommend to the European Council that it should apologise to Europe's citizens for its conduct?