

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2758/03
by Werner Langen (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Entry into force of the motor vehicle block exemption regulation

The deadline for the changeover to the new motor vehicle block exemption regulation expires on 1 October 2003. Some vehicle manufacturers have terminated all dealer agreements and intend to conclude new contracts with their distributors. According to current information, the overwhelming majority of agreements have been drafted in such a way as to be diametrically opposed to the block exemption regulation. The objective was to liberalise the motor vehicle trade in order 'to strengthen the position of dealers and repair shops and allow them to develop their business to the benefit of customers' (Commission press release of 25 July 2003 - IP/03/1117). Statements issued by many dealer associations, however, show the opposite to be the case. Excessive regulations, standards and specifications are being used in an attempt to restrict competition and make a nonsense of liberalisation.

1. Is the Commission aware of the contents of the draft agreements of certain vehicle manufacturers and what is its view of developments in the dealer distribution systems in relation to the deadline of 1 October 2003?
2. What options does the Commission have to counter distorted developments which are contrary to the objectives of the new block exemption regulation?
3. What measures will the Commission take if it comes to the conclusion that the position of dealers and repair shops is not strengthened and business is not developed to the benefit of customers?
4. What further steps will the Commission take in regard to implementing and monitoring the measures implemented to achieve the objectives of the motor vehicle block exemption regulation? Is it also considering, if necessary, revoking the regulation and completely deregulating the distribution systems?