

EPHREMIDIS

think it is unacceptable for such things to be said by responsible people like the President-in-Office, namely that in this phase which is opening up for the whole of Europe, we will exert pressure about such matters in such a country. That is the problem, and I ask the Minister not to withdraw, but to tidy up her answer, so that there will be no misunderstanding, from today, about tomorrow's debate on these issues.

CRESSON. — (FR) The problem which the honourable Member has just raised could refer to so many cases, because unfortunately infringements of human rights are numerous.

I think that we can say that all the same the Twelve have in all circumstances shown a unanimous determination to defend human rights. In the case of the countries of Eastern Europe, this unanimous determination might bear more fruit because of economic support and solidarity with its peoples.

I think we should welcome that. There is no overall response to this problem. We simply must continue to show political determination. The Twelve have shown this yet again in quite a determined manner.

PRESIDENT. — Question No 33 by Mr Cheysson (H-434/89)

Subject: Recognition of the identity and rights of the Armenian people

- How do the Ministers intend to respond to the calls for action expressed in the various resolutions of Parliament on the Armenian people?
- Should not the Ministers take account of the resolution of Parliament of 18 June 1987¹ calling for the creation of favourable conditions for the development of national identity and for the recognition of the rights of the Armenian people, especially:
- the protection of the Armenian architectural religious heritage in Turkey;
- acknowledgement by the Turkish Government of the genocide perpetrated against the Armenians in 1915-17 and the establishment of a political dialogue between Turkey and the representatives of Armenia?

CRESSON, *President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs*. — (FR) The resolution on the Armenian question adopted by the European Parliament on 18 June 1987 has not been discussed within the European Political Cooperation. However, the Twelve have constantly expressed their concern for the respect of the cultural rights of minorities. The decision at the end of 1988 by the Turkish government to open its Ottoman archives on the period concerned to researchers will also help to meet your concerns.

CHEYSSON (S). — (FR) The President-in-Office of Council has already replied to the supplementary questions I would have put when she answered an earlier question.

ELLIOTT (S). — That reply was quite helpful, but I wonder if it is completely recognized that unlike some minorities that have a home State to which they can relate, the Armenian community, many of whose members are scattered throughout the world and throughout many of the countries of the Community, feel a great sense of loss of any sort of genuine national identity?

We need to ensure that everything is done both to clarify the historical record on the genocide against the Armenian people and also to do what we can to ensure the cultural and linguistic integrity of the Armenian communities that exist in so many of our countries. I would hope that this matter could receive the deepest sympathy and consideration from the Council of Ministers.

CRESSON. — (FR) Parliament fully appreciates the extremely complex nature of this important issue and will understand that I reply in the terms agreed to by the Twelve.

ALAVANOS (CG). — (GR) I would like to ask the representative of Political Cooperation whether she could give a similar answer to the one she gave to the previous question, in other words whether during the negotiations and talks with the Turkish Government, as with the Soviet Government, it would be possible to raise the major issue of recognizing the genocide of Armenians and the establishment of Armenian Turkish dialogue, a demand expressed in some very grave decisions by the European Parliament.

CRESSON. — (FR) I can only stick to the reply agreed to by the Twelve.

PRESIDENT. — As the author is not present, Question No 34 will be answered in writing.¹

Question No 35 by Mr Lalor (H-326/89):

Subject: EC/China

In the light of Amnesty International's evidence that 'at least 1 300 civilians' died and thousands more were injured because Chinese troops 'fired indiscriminately into crowds in Beijing between 3 and 9 June' last, with further reports of 4 000 arrests and scores of executions, will the Foreign Ministers meeting in Political Cooperation state how they see relations developing with China in the coming months?

CRESSON, *President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs*. — (FR) The Twelve's

¹ OJ No C 190, 20.7.1987.

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.

CRESSON

policy on China was defined by the European Council in its statement on 27 June last, which recalled a series of measures adopted by the Community and its Member States towards this country. The Twelve are keeping a close eye on the situation and their attitude will be determined by the development of this situation, their aim being to see China resume its reforms and policy of openness. Of course, behind this formal language, everyone knows that our countries, and particularly the French presidency, have been extremely anxious at events in China. The views expressed here are those of the whole of the Council.

LALOR (RDE). — While the President-in-Office representing the Foreign Ministers did say in the most appropriate words that the situation was serious, I should like to ask her again if she does not agree that a little bit more ought to be done by the Twelve through its Foreign Ministers in EPC to bring home forcibly and eloquently to China that the conduct of their troops on the occasion referred to was not acceptable, particularly stressing the current widespread international reaction to government-generated brutality. Surely it should be possible for the Twelve's Foreign Ministers acting together to get across that message to China?

CRESSON. — (FR) Diplomatic pressure on China and measures taken indicate that the Chinese government apparently only hopes for one thing today: to return to the fold of the international community and find again the respectability it had lost. That means that efforts undertaken, even if inadequate, have had an influence on the Chinese government which has moved in the right direction.

CASSIDY (ED). — The President-in-Office will be aware that there is great anxiety among the population of Hong Kong following the events in Tiananmen Square in June. Will the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation give sympathetic consideration to the request of the Hong Kong Chinese for the right of abode in the European Community?

CRESSON. — (FR) Of course, the Council is extremely sensitive to the situation of the inhabitants of Hong Kong who quite legitimately were afraid at events in China. Diplomatic and economic pressure has been brought to bear on the Chinese government to make them return to action which is more in line with standards of international law.

WYNN (S). — That was not quite an answer to the question and I shall reiterate it. The people of Hong Kong live in fear because of what happened in Beijing in China. It is ironic that a student in Macao can come to any country within the Community to study but a student in Hong Kong cannot do that. The question to the Foreign Ministers is quite simple: What are we going to do to allay the fears of the Hong Kong Chinese and specifically will we seek to give citizenship to the Hong Kong Chinese, i.e. European citizenship?

CRESSON. — (FR) This debate was never held under the political cooperation of the Twelve, because the United Kingdom never requested it.

PRESIDENT. — The first part of Question Time is closed.¹

11. Commission statement on telecommunications services (continuation)

METTEN (D). — (NL) The most serious problem with the directive on the liberalization of telecommunication services is that Parliaments has not been consulted at all, and that apart from a few specialists in this House no one is actually in possession of this directive, and this makes any debate all the more difficult. The Commission has used Article 90 of the Treaty to enforce the liberalization of the telecommunication service; this article empowers the use of a management directive to enforce the rules on competition as laid down in the Treaty. Neither Council nor Parliament have to be consulted on this kind of directive. If what had been involved here had really only been an uncontroversial management problem, then my group would have had no trouble at all. But much more is at stake. Through this directive the Commission is trying to restrict the telecommunications monopoly in the Member States to the network and to liberalize the telephone and all other forms of telecommunication, in other words to expose them to free competition.

If any Member State abuses the telecommunications monopoly and users suffer as a result, then the Commission must be able to take action. But at the same time the Treaty also stipulates in Article 90, paragraph 2 that network managers must continue to be able to exercise their essential functions. The form of a monopoly is chosen not because the governments dislike the market so much but because it is only a monopoly form that can ensure that unprofitable areas are supplied at a reasonable price. The monopoly finances the unprofitable services from the profits of the cost-effective services. To expose the monopoly to competition would affect the profitability of the cost-effective services and jeopardize unprofitable services.

The Commission may well find the situation less dramatic because telephone services are still, albeit provisionally, part of the monopoly and telephone conversations still account for 90% of telecommunication traffic. But there are not two developments which make this argument untenable. In the first instance the non-telephone services are expanding at such a rate that they may well constitute an essential and in the long term even the major part of telecommunication traffic. If I can give you the example of my own country: at the moment normal telephone conversations account for only 75% and data traffic for 25% of telecommunication traffic. The growth percentage of data traffic is to be measured in units of ten, and of

¹ See Annex 'Question Time'.