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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Transport

on the amendment to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-46/80) for a Regulation on support for projects of Community interest in transport infrastructure

Rapporteur: Mr A. BUTTAFUOCO



On 5 July 1976 the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a regulation on support for projects of Community interest in transport infrastructure. On 4 July 1977 the European Parliament delivered its opinion (OJ No. C 183, 1.8.1977) on the proposal on the basis of a report by Mr Nyborg (Doc. 185/77). The Council has not yet taken a decision.

On 18 February 1980 the Commission submitted an amended proposal (COM(80) 58 final), pursuant to the second paragraph of Article 149 of the EEC Treaty. On 21 March 1980 the Council forwarded the proposal to Parliament for its opinion.

The proposal was distributed as Working Document 1-46/80 and referred to the Committee on Transport on 25 March 1980.

On 25 April 1980 the Committee on Transport appointed Mr Buttafuoco rapporteur.

At its meeting of 30 May 1980 the Committee on Transport considered the proposal and adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement unanimously with two abstentions.

Present : Mr Seefeld, chairman; Miss Roberts, Mr de Keersmaecker, Mr Carossino, vice-chairmen; Mr Buttafuoco, rapporteur; Mr Janssen van Raay, Mr Albers, Mr Gabert, Mr Key, Mr Gatto (deputizing for Mr Craxi), Mr Klinkenborg, Mr Hutton (deputizing for Lord Harmar-Nicholls), Mr Moorhouse and Mr Herman (deputizing for Mr K-H. Hoffmann).

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The Committee on Transport hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement :

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the amendment to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation on support for projects of Community interest in transport infrastructure

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-46/80),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport (Doc. 1-218/80),
1. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to extend eligibility for Community transport infrastructure support to projects to be carried out on the territory of non-member states;
 2. Calls on the Commission and the Council, however, to include sea and air transport infrastructures in this programme and to amend the consultation procedure (Decision 78/174/EEC of 20.2.1978, OJ No. L 54, 25.2.1978) accordingly;
 3. Requests the Commission, therefore, to include in its proposal the amendments set out below;
 4. Approves the Commission's proposals, subject to these amendments.

¹ OJ No. C 89, 10.4.1980, p. 4

TEXT PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION OF
THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

AMENDED TEXT

Preamble

The Council of the European Communities,
Having regard to the Treaty setting up the European Economic Community and particularly Article 75 therein,
Having regard to the proposal of the Commission,
Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,
Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Recitals unchanged

Article 1

The Community, under the conditions laid down in the following articles, may grant its financial support for the execution of transport infrastructure projects of Community interest referred to in Article 1 of the Council Decision of 20 February 1978¹ setting up consultation procedure and establishing a Committee for Transport infrastructure.

The aim looked for is to give selective assistance for the undertaking of a limited number of important projects.

The projects likely to be financed fall particularly in the following groups :

- projects to be undertaken in the territory of a Member State the failure of which to be undertaken creates a bottleneck in Community traffic,
- cross-frontier projects which are not sufficiently viable to pass the threshold, based on available resources, where a Member State would be willing to intervene,
- projects having a socio-economic profitability at the national level which is insufficient to justify their undertaking but from the Community point of view, taking account of the Community's objectives, having a greater benefit,
- projects which facilitate the standardization of equipment and the synchronization of work on the Community communications network.

Articles 1a and 2 to 8 unchanged

Preamble

The Council of the European Communities,
Having regard to the Treaty setting up the European Economic Community and particularly Articles 75 and 84(2) therein,
rest unchanged

Article 1

The Community, under the conditions laid down in the following articles, may grant its financial support for the execution of transport infrastructure projects, including sea and air transport infrastructures, of Community interest referred to in Article 1 of the Council Decision of 20 February 1978 setting up consultation procedure and establishing a Committee for Transport infrastructure.

rest unchanged

¹ OJ No. L 54, 25.2.1978

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTIntroduction

1. Financial support for transport infrastructure projects could prove to be a costly undertaking and could lead to a considerable increase in the Community budget.
2. Nonetheless, this committee and its predecessors in the indirectly elected Parliament have strongly supported the Commission's proposals, in particular on the basis of two reports by Mr Nyborg (Doc. 377/76 and 185/77).
3. The reason for this support lies in the fact that a modern transport infrastructure is one of the cornerstones of our economy and our ability to compete throughout the world.
4. Looking at the European continent it is easy to see that some of the gaps and distortions in the transport network are due to the frontiers between the Member States. There is, therefore, wide scope for rationalization in this area. The Community can eliminate these transport barriers which, as Mr Mursch pointed out in his 1974 report (Doc. 215/74, Chapter I), are worse than customs barriers. Substantial rationalization can be achieved at relatively little cost. This clearly applies to transport links with third countries as well, since the Community is an open community. Fairness is also a factor where transport between Member States through transit countries is concerned, as is the need to prevent these countries from levying tolls on Community transit traffic.

Extension to third countries

5. All the Commission's amendments to its proposal are aimed at extending eligibility for support to transport infrastructure projects which, in the interest of the Community, must be carried out in non-member states.
6. These projects should enable the Community to help finance the construction of communication routes - e.g. Alpine tunnels - in Austria and Switzerland to provide better traffic links to and from Italy for the other Member States and, subsequently, communication route construction in Austria and Yugoslavia to make it easier for traffic from the other Member States to move to and from Greece. Other construction projects of this kind might also be undertaken in non-member states; those referred to above are only examples and do not represent a complete list.
7. To justify this extension the Commission has added a new recital and a new Article 1a to its proposal. In five places it has changed the words 'Member States' to 'States' in order to include non-member states. The addition of a new third paragraph to Article 6 is intended to provide the basis for collaboration with third countries; where appropriate the Commission will conclude agreements with the third countries concerned.
8. Your committee approves all the Commission's amendments to its proposal.

Extension to sea and air transport

9. The report presented to the European Parliament by Mr Nyborg on 4 July 1977 (Doc. 185/77) called for the extension of Community infrastructure measures to sea and air transport.

10. The Commission has not responded to this suggestion, probably because it saw little hope of its acceptance by the Council. However, since the Committee on Transport feels that the Council and Commission should be aware of Parliament's wishes, it has included this proposed amendment in the motion for a resolution which it is now presenting. Moreover, a similar request was also put forward in the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-53/80) presented to Parliament by Mr Carossino and others.

11. The terms of the Commission's proposal do not explicitly restrict it to railways, roads and inland waterways. Article 1 refers to the Council Decision of 20 February 1978 instituting a consultation procedure, which contains no explicit restriction to railways, roads or inland waterways. In both texts the restriction is implicit in the fact that the preamble only refers to Article 75, omitting any mention of Article 84(2), which provides for measures in the air transport sector.

12. Your committee therefore proposes that Article 84(2) should also be cited in the preamble as a basis for the proposal and that the Council Decision (78/174/EEC) of 20 February 1978 instituting a consultation procedure and setting up a committee in the field of transport infrastructure should be amended accordingly, since it is essential that a permanent consultation procedure should exist to provide the foundation for common support measures in the area of air and sea transport as well.