

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1981 - 1982

1 April 1981

DOCUMENT 1-70/81

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-632/79) for a Decision/introducing a Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products

Rapporteur: Mrs L. SEIBEL-EMMERLING

12.2

By letter of 21 December 1979 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Decision introducing a Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products.

On 14 January 1980 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection.

On 25 January 1980 the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection appointed Mrs SEIBEL-EMMERLING rapporteur. It considered the proposal for a decision at its meetings of 23 June 1980 and 19 March 1981. At the latter meeting it considered and rejected Mrs SEIBEL-EMMERLING's draft report, adopting in its place, by 14 votes to 6 with 2 abstentions, a motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Lentz-Cornette in the form of amendments (PE 67.926/Am.5-6).

Present: Mr Collins, chairman; Mr Alber, vice-chairman; Mrs Weber, vice-chairman; Mr Adam (deputizing for Mr O'Connell), Mr Combe, Mr Forth, Mr Ghergo (deputizing for Mr Johnson), Miss Hooper, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mrs Lentz-Cornette, Mr Mertens, Mr Muntingh, Mr Michel (deputizing for Mrs Maij-Weggen), Mr Peponis (deputizing for Mrs Roudy), Mr Rogers (deputizing for Mrs Seibel-Emmerling), Mrs Schleicher, Mrs Scrivener, Mr Sherlock, Mrs Spaak, Mrs Squarcialupi, Mr Verroken and Mr Visas.

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
A. MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION	5
B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	6

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection 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 proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a Decision introducing a Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-632/79),
 - having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council for a Decision introducing a Community system of information on accidents involving certain products² and the opinion of the European Parliament of 27.4.1979³,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (Doc 1-70/81).
1. Recommends the Commission withdraw its proposal;
 2. Leaves it to the discretion of the Commission whether to submit an improved proposal.

¹OJ No. C 321/79, 22.12.1979, p. 7

²OJ No. C 252/78, 24.10.1978, p. 2

³OJ No. C 127/79, 21.5.1979 , p. 71

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. The Commission takes the view that a system for the rapid exchange of information between the Member States on dangers arising from the use of consumer products is necessary to protect and inform consumers. Despite lengthy discussions, the majority of the committee does not share this view. A majority of the committee is of the opinion that the mass media (press, radio, television) offer a much better means of disseminating the necessary information than national and Community administrative bodies.¹

2. However, the arguments put forward by the Commission were not entirely dismissed by this majority and found the support of the rapporteur and a minority in committee. It is left to the discretion of the Commission to submit a new proposal should new facts come to light on the dangers arising from the use of consumer products and the trans-frontier exchange of information. In such a case, however, the Commission should first be required to demonstrate the need to introduce a Community information system.

3. As far as the detailed provisions of the proposal for a decision were concerned, the committee took the view that these were inadequate in their present form. In particular, the committee criticized the following points:

- The proposal did not specify which administrative bodies would be responsible either at national or Community level.
- The proposal excludes without further explanation all products for professional use and thus would not apply to products intended for both professional and private use.
- The proposal dealt solely with the problem of the exchange of information and made no reference to the possible recall of goods from the Community market.
- The proposal does not provide for extension to third countries; there is no provision for third countries to which Community goods are exported to receive the same information as the Member States of the European Community.

The committee takes the view that any new proposal from the Commission should include the above points.

¹ The rapporteur and a minority of the committee strongly contest this assumption. They therefore support the Commission proposal in principle but do not rule out criticism of individual provisions (see paragraph 3)