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REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Rules of  
Petition, Verification of Credentials and Immunities

on the election of committee vice-chairmen

Rapporteur: Mr L. VECCHI

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A Series: Reports - B Series: Motions for Resolutions, Oral Questions - C Series: Documents received from other Institutions (e.g. Consultations)

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|-----|---|------|---|
| *   | = Consultation procedure requiring a single reading | **II | = Cooperation procedure (second reading) which requires the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament for rejection or amendment |
| **I | = Cooperation procedure (first reading)             | ***  | = Parliamentary assent which requires the votes of a majority of the current Members of Parliament  |

At its sitting of 20 November 1989, the European Parliament referred the proposed amendment tabled by Mr Galle pursuant to Rule 132 of the Rules of Procedure (Doc. B 3-363/89) to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities. This amendment concerns the election of committee vice-chairmen.

At its meeting of 18-19 December 1989, the committee appointed Mr L. VECCHI rapporteur.

The committee considered the proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure at its meetings of 18-19 December 1989 and 31 January-1 February 1990.

The committee considered the draft report at its meeting of 26-27 April 1990.

At its meeting of 21/22 May 1990, the committee, after further consideration of the matter, adopted unanimously the proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure contained in the draft report together with the proposal for a decision.

The following took part in the vote: Galle, Chairman; Harrison, Vice-Chairman; Vecchi, rapporteur; Capucho, David, Prout, Salema, Stamoulis, Taradash.

Langer and Pereira were also present.

The report was tabled on 28 May 1990.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will appear on the draft agenda for the part-session at which it is to be considered.

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The Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities hereby submits to the European Parliament the following proposed amendment, together with a proposal for a decision and explanatory statement:

Text of the Rules of Procedure

Present text

Proposed amendments

Rule 115

Rule 115

**Committee Bureaus**

**Unchanged**

1. At the first committee meeting after the election of committee members pursuant to Rule 110, the committee shall elect a Bureau consisting of a chairman and one, two or three vice-chairmen.

1. At the first committee meeting after the election of committee members pursuant to Rule 110, the committee shall elect a Bureau consisting of a chairman and one, two or three vice-chairmen who shall be elected in separate ballots.

Paragraph 2 unchanged

Rule 123

Rule 123

Paragraphs 1-3 unchanged

4. Rules 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 69, 70, 79, 80, 82, 84(1), 86, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105 and 106 shall apply mutatis mutandis to committee meetings.

4. Rules 11, 12, 13, (~~delete: 14~~), 16, 17, 69, 70, 79, 80, 82, 84(1), 86, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105 and 106 shall apply mutatis mutandis to committee meetings.

Text in italics unchanged

A

PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION

amending Rules 115(1) and 123(4) of the Rules of Procedure on the election of committee vice-chairmen

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure (Doc B 3-363/89),
  - having regard to the need to elect committee vice-chairmen in a transparent manner,
  - having regard to Rule 132 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, the Verification of Credentials and Immunities (Doc. A 3-127/90),
1. Decides to incorporate the above amendment in its Rules of Procedure;
  2. Instructs its President to forward this decision to the Council and Commission of the European Communities for information.

B

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

In October 1989, Mr Galle tabled an amendment to Rules 115(1) and 123(4) of the European Parliament's Rules of Procedure concerning the procedure to be followed for the election of committee Bureaus and, in particular, the vice-chairmen.

This matter is currently governed by the above rules, which provide for the election 'en bloc', i.e. by a single ballot, of vice-chairmen (one, two or three), on the lines of the procedure followed in plenary for the election of Vice-Presidents of Parliament and members of the College of Quaestors.

In this type of election, the number of votes obtained by individual candidates determines the order of their election and decides who shall be first, second and third vice-chairmen.

However, in certain cases, at the start of the present Parliament, some committees adopted a different procedure, similar to the one which Mr Galle's amendment would introduce, i.e. they elected the three vice-chairmen by secret and separate ballots.

The problem is that at present Rule 115 makes no specific mention of the method of election; only Rule 123(4) refers, by analogy, to various rules governing plenary sittings, including Rule 14 on the election of Vice-Presidents of Parliament.

In the present Rules of Procedure, there are two main problems, of differing natures:

- the first is that there is a need to specify in Rule 115 the method of election to be followed (whatever that may be), in order to prevent the appearance in future of different procedures among the various committees and to avoid any disputes;
- the second is that, with the present method of election, the order of election of vice-chairmen depends not so much on the readiness of candidates actually to stand a specific post (first, second or third) but on the chance distribution of a few floating votes.

At its meeting of 1 February 1990, the Committee on the Rules of Procedure discussed this matter and expressed its broad agreement with the amendment to the above rules as put forward in Mr Galle's proposal.

The proposal is that, after the election of the chairman, the committee vice-chairmen shall be elected in separate ballots, i.e. one by one, beginning with the first, then proceeding to the second and third vice-chairmen.

It must be stressed that there is a substantial difference of importance between the order of election of committee vice-chairmen and Vice-Presidents of Parliament or Quaestors. For this reason, an amendment to the rules governing the former does not in itself constitute a precedent for the other two bodies.

In committee, in fact, there are no mechanisms for the rotation of posts; consequently, the chairman is always replaced by the first vice-chairman, and so on in 'hierarchical order'.

As far as the Vice-Presidents of Parliament are concerned, only the first Vice-President (Rule 17(2)) has a special role when the President's seat becomes vacant. Otherwise, all Vice-Presidents take turns occupying the chair during sittings of Parliament.

In the College of Quaestors, current practice is that there is a rotating presidency, based on alphabetical order (meeting of the College of Quaestors, July 1989).

The new method of election by separate ballot of committee vice-chairmen would not alter in substance the composition of the Bureaus but would have the advantage of establishing a specific link at elections between the candidate and the actual post occupied and would, at the same time, make it easier to ensure equal representation of political groups in the posts of first, second and third vice-chairmen on all parliamentary committees.

It should be pointed out that, with the new method, each MEP who is a member of a committee will be able to stand for more than one post as vice-chairman. Should he be elected to one such post, his candidacy for the remaining posts as vice-chairman will clearly lapse automatically.

Already, however, under Rule 115, if the number of candidates for the Bureau is equal to the number of posts, and if consequently, there is an agreement on the distribution of the posts, the election takes place by a show of hands or 'by acclamation', i.e. without any counting of the votes cast for the various candidates.

In the course of the debate two other matters were raised which the rapporteur, while appreciating them, did not consider should be included in this report. Firstly, the question of whether to amend the entire wording of Rule 123(4).

Secondly, the replacement in Rule 115 of the wording 'one, two or three' vice-chairmen by 'three'. This is primarily because, given the present network of cross-references in our Rules of Procedure, if this were done it would also be necessary to amend Rule 114 on subcommittees, which would exceed the rapporteur's brief.

PROPOSAL FOR AN AMENDMENT (Doc. B 3-363/89)

to the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament

tabled by Mr Galle

pursuant to Rule 132 of the Rules of Procedure

Rule 115(1) of the Rules of Procedure to read:

'At the first committee meeting after the election of committee members pursuant to Rule 110, the committee shall elect a Bureau consisting of a chairman and one, two or three vice-chairmen who shall be elected in separate ballots.'

In Rule 123(4) of the Rules of Procedure, delete the reference to Rule 14.



