

Thursday, 20 February 1997

13. Racism and xenophobia

B4-0069, 0100, 0117, 0131 and 0136/97

Resolution on racism, xenophobia and the extreme right

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the conclusions of its Committee of Inquiry into Racism and Xenophobia,
 - having regard to the reports of the Advisory Committee on Racism and Xenophobia (the Kahn committee) drawn up for the meetings of the European Council in Essen, Cannes, Madrid and Florence, and the feasibility study submitted by the Advisory Committee with a view to establishing a European observatory for racism and xenophobia,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the rise of racism and xenophobia in Europe and, more particularly, its resolution of 30 January 1997 on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and the European Year against Racism (1997) ⁽¹⁾,
- A. whereas one of the principal *raison d'être* of the European Union is to oppose racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism; whereas that objective is embodied in the common principles subscribed to by the signatories and laid down in the preamble to the Treaty on European Union,
- B. whereas a number of recent events in various Member States of the European Union point to a worrying increase in racism, xenophobia and intolerance and the rising popularity of the extreme right,
- C. noting with particular concern the following facts:
- the letter bombs sent on Friday, 10 January 1997 to London from Malmo by a suspected extreme right-wing group;
 - the many attacks against asylum-seekers, foreigners and ethnic minorities which have been carried out in recent weeks, particularly in Germany, where, on 7 February 1997, a Vietnamese was attacked and injured, followed on 8 February 1997 by a Lebanese asylum-seeker and on 10 February 1997 by two Poles;
 - the collective expulsions which contravene the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
 - the death, on 8 February 1997 in Magdeburg, of a 17-year-old punk who was the victim of an attack prompted by intolerance;
 - the decisions taken by the Toulon Mayor's office, which is run by the Front National: the censorship of the writer Marek Halter; the destruction of the work of the sculptor René Guiffrey; the action taken against the group NTM and the sacking of Gérard Paquet, the Director of the Théâtre National de la Danse et de l'Image (TNDI) in Chateaufallon, which is a favoured target because it is open to all temporary creative forms and has helped to foster knowledge and the dissemination of foreign cultures,
- D. having regard to the electoral rise of the extreme right in France, which has just won its fourth victory in municipal elections,
- E. whereas the responses of certain EU governments to this rise in the popularity of the extreme right are likely to strengthen rather than combat racist and xenophobic thinking,
- F. having regard to the Debré bill, currently before the French Parliament, which further strengthens the 1993 'Pasqua laws' and which requires people to inform by making it compulsory for any individual to declare the departure of foreigners he or she has put up,
- G. whereas the German Federal Government has issued an order introducing a visa requirement for members of the families of immigrants from Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco and the states of the former Yugoslavia who are minors; whereas hundreds of thousands of children are affected,
- H. having regard to the extent of the protest movement aroused among various groups of French artists and intellectuals and other French citizens by the provisions of the Debré bill,

⁽¹⁾ Minutes of that sitting, Part II, Item I.

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1. Condemns in the strongest possible terms all acts of racism, xenophobia and intolerance committed on the territory of a Member State of the European Union and expresses its solidarity with the victims of racist attacks and their families;
 2. Deplores the upsurge of the extreme right and regrets the endorsement of its main arguments (tie-up between immigration and job insecurity) by certain democratic political parties;
 3. Affirms that merely to condemn on principle, however vigorously, all forms of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance is insufficient in itself and notes that there is an urgent need to tackle the underlying causes of the upsurge of racism in the Union, including the high unemployment rate, decaying urban fabric, petty crime, inadequate public amenities, etc.;
 4. Calls on the governments of the Union to abandon any policy likely to strengthen racial hatred and xenophobia, the French Government to withdraw the Debré bill and the German Government to repeal its order introducing a visa requirement for minors;
 5. Condemns all forms of cultural censorship and any attack on the freedom of expression and creation;
 6. Urges the one remaining government which has not yet done so to give its agreement to the establishment of a European observatory on racism, taking Article 235 of the EC Treaty as the legal basis;
 7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.
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