Role of the Ombudsman

1994/2160(INI) - 14/07/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr NEWMAN (PSE, UK) the European Parliament considered that the appointment of an ombudsman would enable the rights of European citizens to be defended against cases of maladministration by the European institutions and Community bodies and would enhance relations between them and the European citizens. It was of the opinion that the Committee on Petitions and the ombudsman, Mr Jacob S·DERMAN (elected on 12 July 1995 by the European Assembly, Finnish nationality) together formed an effective system of defending citizens' interests, the task of the former being to investigate cases of maladministration and the purpose of the latter being to provide an appropriate response to any complaint and to reactions by citizens to resolutions of Parliament. It also emphasized the importance of establishing close cooperation between these two Community bodies. The European Parliament therefore undertook to support Mr S·DERMAN in his activities by considering his reports and taking steps on a case by case basis to protect the interests of the persons in question. The European Parliament called on all the Community institutions and bodies, in particular the Council and the Commission, to cooperate closely with the ombudsman by supplying him with the information and documents needed for the effective performance of his duties. It also called on the institutions to publish a joint statement setting out guiding principles for the number of staff employed by the ombudsman and their responsibilities. It stated in this respect that it was concerned by the fact that the 1995 budget provided that only staff dealing with enquiries would have the status of temporary staff, while other human resources would be provided by the Secretariat of the European Parliament. It therefore called for all the ombudsman's staff to be assigned to him for the duration of his term of office.