



Strasbourg, 16. April 2014

Dr. Inge Gräßle (EPP/CDU):

European Parliament showing red card to President Schulz

The European Parliament today only gave the green light to the discharge of the parliament's budget after including in the report heavy criticism of the conduct of its president Martin Schulz, who is the lead candidate of the European Socialist Party for the European elections. MEPs called on Schulz to lay down his office of parliament president in order not to confuse his role with that of candidate.

A large majority of 365 MEPs with only 190 against (82 abstentions) approved today's report on the discharge of the European Parliament budget, which contains the following article:

The President's political activities

49. Calls for detailed information on how the President, as a politically neutral figure, has kept his duties in office separate from his preparations to head the Socialists and Democrats' list in the European elections, in particular with regard to the staff in his cabinet and in Parliament's information offices and to travel expenses; is of the opinion that in connection with many of those activities, no distinction has been made between the two roles; calls for clear segregation of office holders' functions, following the Commission's approach, so that Union taxpayers do not have to pay for the election campaigns of European list leaders;

"Parliament is showing the red card to its own president. Martin Schulz must get off the pitch and lay down his office in order not to confuse the role of politically neutral parliament president with that of lead candidate of the European Socialist Party", the EPP Group's coordinator in the budgetary control committee of the European Parliament, Inge Gräßle MEP (EPP, Germany) said.

Gräßle called "outright censorship" the fact that Schulz in his capacity as president deleted an article of the discharge report critical of his own role. "The self-styled defender of parliamentary rights Martin Schulz has finally come out as a censor who deletes an article in a parliamentary report that is critical of his own conduct in office", she said.

The article deleted by Schulz, on which the plenary of the European Parliament was not allowed to vote, reads:

47. Criticises the fact that an OLAF Supervisory Committee report to Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control was not forwarded to it by the President but, rather, was held back for more than two months; criticises the fact that there was a three-month delay before Parliament's Administration forwarded witness summonses from a Belgian court to the three Members concerned; criticises the fact that the Committee on Budgetary Control was hampered in its work because a

hearing on the work of the Task Force for Greece was cancelled and a hearing on 'Governance – the European Commission as administrative authority' was held up for more than a year;

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