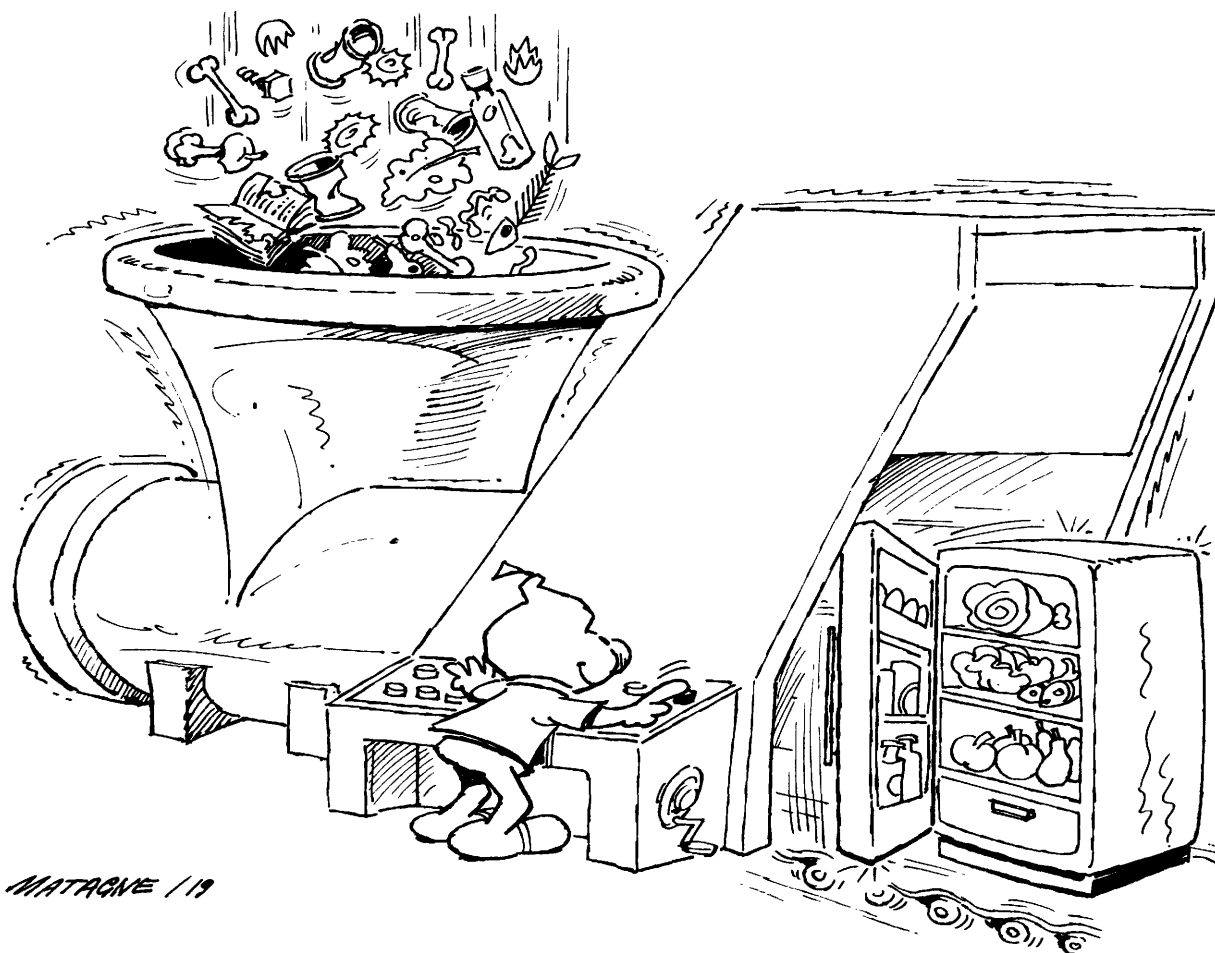


Brussels, 25 May 1976

No 21/76



MATAGNE / 19

In one year the European Community has thrown away one thousand five hundred million tonnes of waste. It is high time that wastage on this scale, and the resulting pollution, is stopped once and for all.

X/311/76-E

This bulletin is published by the

Commission of the European Communities  
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Further information is available from the Commission's press and information offices in the countries listed on the back page.

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**\*\* WASTE: THIS WASTAGE AND POLLUTION MUST STOP!**

Within the space of one year the European Community has thrown away one thousand five hundred million tonnes of waste. And this figure is increasing relentlessly at the rate of 5% per year.

In ANNEX 1 Euroforum explains how the European Commission intends to deal with the two-fold problem of pollution and wastage.

**\*\* ANIMAL MEDICATION: ITS IMPORTANCE FOR HUMANS**

You don't have to be a vet, a breeder or even a pet-owner to have an interest in medical products for animals: you just have to like pork chops or a leg of lamb.

In ANNEX 2 Euroforum shows the relevance and outlines the provisions of a Community directive on veterinary medical products.

**\*\* ECONOMIC SITUATION: THINGS ARE LOOKING UP!**

The upturn in world economic activity gathered momentum and became more widespread in the early months of this year. The European Community benefited too. Industrial production made further progress, the seasonally-adjusted index for February standing 8.5% above the low to which it dropped in the middle of last year. The upswing now seems to be firmly established as it has been sustained since last autumn. There are signs of revival in many industries, including motor vehicles, food, drink and tobacco, chemicals and even iron and steel. An improvement is also evident in the employment situation, although it is lagging behind the increase in industrial output. The number of wholly unemployed seems finally to be falling in some Member States, particularly Germany, although in March still some 4.3% of the Community's civilian labour force were out of work. Consumer prices in the Community continued to rise in March at about the same pace as in the two preceding months. In terms of annual rate the increase was some 12½% as against about 10% in the fourth quarter of last year. This new upsurge of inflation was largely due to the appreciable rise in the cost of living in Italy and various taxation measures in Denmark and Ireland. There was a further slight deterioration in the trade-balance deficit, with exports to non-member countries in the first quarter of 1976 rising less rapidly than imports. The recovery in trade between member countries which began towards the end of last summer continued at a rapid rate in the early months of this year. In general, the sharpest rises in imports were recorded in the countries where domestic activity has picked up most noticeably (Germany, France, Belgium, Ireland and Denmark).

**\*\* CONSUMERS, PARLIAMENTARIANS AND EUROPE**

At the instigation of Mr Cousté, Deputy for the Rhône and Vice-President of the European Parliament, a number of French and European parliamentarians met recently in Lyons for a teach-in on "Europe and the consumer". With Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the European Commission with special responsibility for consumer affairs, in the chair, the scene was set for a wide-ranging discussion on consumer protection. Mr E. Dary, who represents French consumer interests at meetings of government experts, described the preliminary consumer protection and information programme adopted by the Community in April 1975 as a "real charter". Mr Estingoy, Director-General of the Institut national français de la consommation (French National Consumers Institute), stressed the importance of steps to ensure that contracts are free from misleading clauses and presented in a more legible manner. In a few years' time French and European consumers may well cease to be prey to unintelligible terminology and other underhand tricks of presentation which can weight contracts so heavily against them.

**\*\* PREPARING FOR THE TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE**

The Tripartite Conference will probably take place in Brussels on 24 and 25 June. The third of its kind, it will bring together representatives of the public authorities and of both sides of industry. In preparation for this meeting Mr Haferkamp, Vice-President of the Commission, has recently been in contact with Mr Hinterscheid, the new General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and with Mr Provost, the Chairman, and Mr Sassen, the General Secretary, of the Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE). All the parties which will be conferring together at the Tripartite Conference are fully aware of the urgent need for a comprehensive strategy.

At the last Council of the Finance Ministers of the Community the European Commission announced that it would be preparing a paper giving details of what national measures had already been taken or were in preparation. The Council of Ministers for its part stressed the importance of the macro-economic measures to be taken to re-establish economic equilibrium but added that certain specific measures for the promotion of employment could be taken simultaneously, as was proposed in the European Commission's working document on a strategy for full employment (see Euroforum No 16/76).

**\*\* MOBILIZING EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY ON BEHALF OF FRIULI**

Barely a few hours after the disaster the ISPRA Joint Research Centre sent in a relief team with a doctor, firemen, and emergency equipment to help the inhabitants of the Friuli area. More was to follow. It was not long before the Community machinery was turning and a decision taken to make 550 million lire available immediately. Mr Ortoli, President of the European Commission, recently visited the disaster area where he had talks with numerous representatives of both central and local authorities. He assured all concerned that there was no risk of Community aid falling off once the immediate shock was over. The Commission is already investigating the different ways in which the Community can help the disaster victims both from the current budget and by raising additional funds. Possibilities include the suspension of customs duty on material to be used in rebuilding and assistance from the European Social Fund and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF).

**\*\* UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE COMMUNITY**

At the end of 1975 young people accounted for nearly 36% of the total number of unemployed in the Community. The economic crisis brought with it an increase in the proportion of young among the unemployed - a percentage which has always been high: for instance, at the end of 1973 31.11% of the total number of unemployed in the Community were under 25.

Young people will however have to wait longer than others to feel the benefits of the economic upswing as employers tend to re-engage the more experienced workers first. Some governments have therefore instituted special employment programmes for the young jobless and the Community, through the European Social Fund, is helping young unemployed people who are looking for their first job.

In the past month the Statistical Office of the European Communities has noted a reduction in absolute terms of the number of registered unemployed in the Community. This can be attributed partly to seasonal factors but there seems to be a distinct downward trend in Germany, France and the Netherlands, and a levelling-out is evident in the other Member States with the exception of Luxembourg.

**\*\* COMPRESSED AIR AEROSOLS?**

Could freon be replaced by nitrogen in aerosol containers? The idea is a particularly attractive one as the disadvantages of freon have often been pointed out. Ecologists are beginning to worry in particular about the ozone layer of the atmosphere, which they fear could be destroyed by certain photochemical decay products of freon. It would not be feasible however to do without aerosols completely. While for some products they are a needless extravagance others are more easily and more efficiently used in aerosol form. Nor would it be advisable to make the use of a single propellant gas such as nitrogen compulsory, as the gas chosen depends on the product to be sprayed and the solvent used.

The European Commission feels however that there is a need to standardize the volumes of aerosols and to improve their labelling by making it compulsory to state the exact quantity of the sprayable product and the propellant gas or liquid used. It intends to present a proposal on this topic to the Council of Ministers before the end of this year.

**\*\* 292 PAUL FINET SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Paul Finet Foundation has just awarded a further 292 scholarships totalling Bfrs 2 800 000. Since it was set up in 1965, the Foundation has awarded 5 608 grants, worth a total of Bfrs 46 072 800, to children of workers in an ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community) industry who died as a result of industrial injury or occupational disease, and 1 461 scholarship holders have been given the chance to complete their studies under the best possible conditions. For further information write to the

Secretariat of the Paul Finet Foundation, Commission of the European Communities, Bâtiment Jean Monnet, avenue Alcide de Gasperi, Luxembourg/Kirchberg, Luxembourg.

**\*\* NATURAL GAS: ENOUGH IN THE COMMUNITY FOR TWENTY YEARS**

The Community has guaranteed natural gas reserves for twenty to twenty-two years at least, and it is more than likely that they will last well into the next century.

Definitely recoverable reserves are estimated at some 4 000 million toe (tonnes oil equivalent), while total reserves are put at a minimum of 6 000 million toe. The discovery of new deposits means that the Community's production potential is on the up and up.

The 1985 targets calculated by the European Commission put total Community consumption at between 270 and 340 million toe. Of this the Community should be able to produce between 175 and 225 million toe, with the gap being bridged by imports amounting to something in the region of 95 to 115 million toe.

**\*\* CONSUMERS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

At its recent meeting in Brussels the Consumers' Consultative Committee urged the European Commission to make sure that the Council of Agriculture Ministers waits until the market has stabilized before reintroducing import levies on new potatoes.

The Committee took the opportunity of expressing the concern felt by consumers on issues of nuclear safety and called for further research into the effects and potential hazards of nuclear energy.

A decision was also taken to carry out an inquiry into pharmaceuticals and to investigate garage services, dry cleaning and laundries, and travel and tourism.

**\*\* WHAT PRICE TRANQUILLITY (contd.)**

Euroforum pointed out (No 17/76) that the British consumer can buy certain tranquillizers at something between a quarter and half the price paid by consumers elsewhere in the Community. To give our readers a fuller picture of the situation and a better understanding of the problems involved we reproduce below the European Commission's answer to a Written Question from Mr Glinne, a member of the European Parliament.

Information available to the Commission would indicate that wholesale prices for Valium and Librium at the end of 1975 were as shown below. The prices, which are approximate, relate to the most common presentations and exclude tax and discount (1 u.a. = Bfrs 48.65; Dkr 7.57; DM 3.22; Fl 3.35; FF 6.03; Lit 829.75; £0.53).

|                | <u>Valium</u><br>100 5-mg tablets | <u>Librium</u><br>50 10-mg capsules |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Belgium        | 3.10                              | 1.37                                |
| Denmark        | 3.06                              | 1.49                                |
| France         | 2.41                              | 1.01                                |
| Germany        | 3.78                              | 1.54                                |
| Italy          | 2.29                              | 1.21                                |
| Netherlands    | 2.61                              | 1.32                                |
| United Kingdom | 0.98                              | 0.49                                |

In the United Kingdom the price of Valium fell by almost 36% in 1972 following the grant of two compulsory licences. On 25 June 1973 a Government decision brought Valium and Librium prices 75% and 60% respectively below their 1970 level. Under an agreement recently reached between the authorities and the firm concerned in an attempt to settle the dispute provoked by this decision Valium and Librium prices were increased by 100% and 50% respectively on 17 December 1975. This latest price increase is reflected in the figures given above.

In Germany a Bundeskartellamt decision would bring the price of Valium down by 40% and that of Librium by 35%. The Berlin Kammergericht recently upheld this decision though it limited the price reduction to 28%. A further appeal, which would defer implementation of this decision, may be made to the Bundesgerichtshof.

Proceedings initiated in the Netherlands have prompted the firm concerned to withdraw small packs and replace them by packs of 2 000 or 5 000 capsules or tablets. The figures given above reflect the consequent drop in prices and for this reason are not directly comparable with the figures quoted for the other countries.

The persistence of price discrepancies can be attributed to a number of factors. Quite apart from action of the kind described above, differences in national marketing regulations and price legislation have an effect. Moreover, if national prices at two different points in time are expressed in terms of units of account for comparison purposes, the mere effect of changes in currency parities can make the discrepancies seem bigger than they are. In fact when Librium and Valium were first placed on the market in all Member States, in 1961 and 1966 respectively, prices were more or less the same throughout the Community. The sole exception was the Netherlands; prices there were higher but were not subsequently increased by the firm concerned.

The Commission is still examining the de facto and de jure aspects of the problems associated with tranquillizer prices and is obviously taking national proceedings, pending or otherwise, into account.

**\*\* REGIONAL AID**

The European Regional Development Fund is to help finance 398 investment projects in six Member States at a total cost of 138 million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.11). This brings total Community assistance to Community regions in difficulty to 460 million u.a. since October 1975.

Payments are made to the national governments in proportion to their expenditure on the projects in question. Under the rules of the Fund the governments are entitled to pass on the money to the investor or to treat it as partial reimbursement of their own expenditure. In the latter event the additional resources made available to them must be used for other regional development projects, so that the total regional development effort is increased accordingly.

**\*\* HOUSING FOR MIGRANT WORKERS**

The European Commission, with the help of a group of experts, is currently involved in a study of housing conditions for migrant workers in the different Community countries. In the light of its findings the Commission will then examine what further action should be taken under the Community action programme for migrant workers and their families (see Euroforum No 1/76).

This is not the first time the Commission has shown interest in this field. Under the seventh housing aid programme for workers in the coal and steel industries substantial sums were earmarked for two pilot schemes, one in the Ruhr and the other in Lorraine, designed to promote the integration of migrant families by providing them with suitable housing at a moderate rent.

WASTE: THIS WASTAGE AND POLLUTION MUST STOP!

In one year the European Community has thrown away one thousand five hundred million tonnes of waste including 90 million tonnes of household refuse, 115 million tonnes of industrial waste, 950 million tonnes of agricultural waste, 200 million tonnes of sewage sludge and 150 million tonnes of waste from the extractive industries. An this figure is increasing relentlessly at the rate of 5% per year. The European Commission's alarm at the two-fold problem of pollution and wastage is understandable.

Pollution

In certain Community countries the pollution levels recorded as a result of uncontrolled discharge and disposal of waste have already reached danger point. In some cases it is sufficiently serious to endanger public health but the most common effect is the scarring of recreation areas.

Most wastes contain substances which have a certain value, such as metals, glass, rubber and oil. In many of these cases the Community depends heavily on external supplies, importing for example 80 to 90% of its iron, tin and zinc and almost 60% of its paper and paper pulp. A more rational approach to the waste problem emphasizing the conservation angle would enable the Community to cut down on imports and guarantee security of supply by reducing external dependence.

Why should this be a Community problem?

All the Member States are clearly aware of the seriousness of the problem and have of their own accord taken steps to combat it. The most important parts of the recycling process are the collection, separation and treatment of waste, most of which is carried out at local or regional level. But there are a number of factors which, when combined, argue strongly in favour of joint action at Community level:

- the constantly rising cost of waste treatment and disposal will have a significant impact on industrial activity and as a result could affect both international trade and the smooth running of the common market;
- growing volumes of waste move from one Community country to another;
- pollution is often a multinational problem;
- the measures (in the form of tax concessions or regulations) which certain countries are planning to introduce in an attempt to encourage the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste, and the monitoring of certain products which are difficult to dispose of could well affect the operating of the common market.

What has the Community done so far?

In 1973 the Nine adopted a programme of environmental action for the prevention, disposal and recycling of wastes and residues.

The main aim was to assemble the technical data necessary to identify the substances causing most problems and the processes which exist to treat them.

Priority was given to the following categories of waste: waste oils and residues containing petroleum (lubricants, etc.); waste from the manufacture of titanium dioxide (the notorious red mud of the Mediterranean); toxic and dangerous waste; bulky ferrous scrap (cars, discarded household appliances); non-biodegradable packaging for consumer products; animal waste from slaughter-houses and breeding establishments.

Waste oils

In June 1975, as part of the above programme, the Nine adopted the first Directive on waste oils. It is estimated that the Community produces 2.5 million tonnes of waste oils each year. With effect from June 1977 the Directive bans any discharge of waste oils into water or any deposit harmful to the soil and recommends the organization of collection systems, under the authority and control of the Member States, to facilitate recycling.

A month later, in July 1975, the Nine adopted a Directive requiring Member States to introduce a series of clearly defined and coherent waste disposal measures, including a ban on the uncontrolled tipping and discharge of waste.

Governments are further required to take appropriate steps to encourage the prevention, recycling and processing of waste and the extraction of raw materials and energy from such waste.

#### Red mud

The dumping of titanium dioxide at sea or its discharge into estuaries will be strictly controlled if the Council of Ministers adopts the proposals presented to it by the Commission in July of last year.

Authorization to discharge waste will depend on the ecological characteristics of the areas used for the purpose.

By 1985 total pollution after treatment from titanium dioxide plants must be no more than 5% of the present level.

#### PCBs

Following a further series of measures recently adopted by the Nine the disposal of non-degradable, toxic chemicals known as "polychlorinated biphenyls" (PCBs) is from now on to be strictly controlled. This substance, commonly used in electrical transformers, will in future be extracted and regenerated or disposed of by authorized undertakings.

#### Prevention is better than cure

The restriction and control of waste discharge is certainly an effective short-term solution to the problem of environmental protection. However, ultimate victory in the fight against wastage and the campaign to conserve resources will be possible only if wastage is eliminated at source. Hence the move to encourage changes both in industrial processes and in consumer habits.

#### Committee on Waste Management

A decision has recently been taken by the European Commission to set up a Committee on Waste Management consisting of top-level national experts who will work alongside Commission experts in formulating and implementing an anti-wastage policy.

The main aim of this policy will be the recycling and the re-use of waste; experts will take part in a Community campaign to protect the environment against unsightly or potentially dangerous waste and to encourage the recovery of resources to help reduce the Community's dependence on raw material producers in non-member countries.

#### Cashing in on waste

A profitable and stable used materials market is essential if industry is to be persuaded to invest in recycling equipment and to modify production processes. The Commission's task in the years ahead will therefore be to create viable outlets for secondary raw materials.

As stated above most wastes contain substances with a potential value. For many years now both industry and local authorities have been making a considerable effort to recover such substances but have met with limited success owing to a combination of factors including:

- fluctuations in the demand for recycled substances, discouraging reclamation industries from launching investment and technological development programmes;
- the lack of economic data on the most efficient recycling processes for the materials in question and shortage of information on organizational costs and the social consequences of over-exploiting rare resources;



- . the difficulty involved in making reclamation processes economically viable. There are frequently far too many firms operating in a field where collection costs are basically proportional to the size of the undertaking;
- . inadequate and unreliable market outlets.

The Commission will examine each of these problems individually and carry out the necessary research to pave the way for future action.

#### The power of the consumer

One approach would be to make manufacturers more aware of the problem of wastage in production by involving consumers in anti-wastage campaigns. The Commission is planning to set up an independent body which would be responsible for issuing special environment labels for products meeting certain anti-wastage or anti-pollution standards. The object of the exercise would be to encourage the consumer to buy those products which are least difficult to dispose of, use least energy, contain least non-renewable raw materials and cause least pollution.

This would have to be a Community effort in order to obviate any distortion of intra-Community trade.

With the assistance of the Waste Management Committee and the Consumers' Consultative Committee the Commission will give careful thought to working out such a system and will present proposals to the Council of Ministers in due course.

#### Role of the Waste Management Committee

If recycling is to be encouraged and a market for secondary raw materials created, it is essential that an attempt be made to coordinate action at national level, to improve the flow of information to industry and to step up research in this field.

The Committee, made up of national experts, will draw up a series of opinions with regard to formulating a policy, including technical, economic, administrative and legal measures, to cut down waste production and encourage re-use and recycling.

The Commission will also be able to call on the subcommittee for research and development of the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST) set up in December to carry out analyses and study ways and means of preparing a research and development programme on primary and secondary raw materials.

#### Community research

Top priority in the campaign against wastage must at present be given to research. The Community will carry out much of this work, concentrating in particular on helping industry by:

- . studying how to make the secondary raw materials market more stable;
- . carrying out cost-benefit analyses for the different waste processing methods;
- . comparing the various organizational systems for waste recovery;
- . investigating which research and development sectors require support and coordination at Community level;
- . deciding what measures public authorities could take to improve outlets for certain secondary raw materials;
- . studying the possibility of using alternative substances instead of materials which are rare or likely to become rare;
- . encouraging industry to design and manufacture products with an eye to avoiding wastage and facilitating the recovery of raw materials.

The Commission will also investigate ways and means of improving the flow of information to industrialists on waste supply and demand in an attempt to set up what could be termed a "waste exchange".

ANIMAL MEDICATION: ITS IMPORTANCE FOR HUMANS

You don't have to be a vet, a breeder or even a pet-owner to have an interest in medical products for animals: you just have to like pork chops or a leg of lamb. The fact is that there is sometimes a danger of small doses of animal medicines being passed on to human beings through the food they eat.

The fact that the number of veterinary pharmaceutical preparations used in the Community is only a tenth of the number used in human medicine does not mean that animals fall ill less than humans do but simply that you don't find cows looking for pretty pink pills in fancy packaging. In fact the consumption of and hence the trade in animal medicines is considerable and they are subject in the same way as ordinary medicines to complex regulations. These vary from one Member State to another and their disparity is a source of great inconvenience to veterinary surgeons and breeders as well as to manufacturers. Some kind of order clearly needs to be established and this is what the European Commission's proposal is aimed at doing.

The Commission works from the principle that the requirements laid down for veterinary medicines should be no less stringent than those for pharmaceutical products intended for human use.

This is why wherever possible the rules applying to proprietary medicines for human use have been transposed to apply to their veterinary equivalents. Some special provisions have had to be incorporated, however, to take account particularly of the structural differences between the two markets. In some countries in order to limit packaging costs veterinary medicines are sold mainly as ready-made products and not as proprietary products. For the same reason international trade is mainly in pre-manufactured goods.

A special feature that has to be taken into account with veterinary medicines is the risk of residue formation in animal products. It must be borne in mind that eating food derived from animals to which medicines have been given could have harmful consequences for man. This raises questions of persistence of the product in the animal's body, route and duration of elimination, and the interval which must be observed between administration of the medicine and consumption of the animal product.

Strictly speaking this problem arises only in connection with animals intended to provide food, and less stringent standards could therefore have been fixed for medicines for pets, etc. The Commission preferred however to avoid any risk of fraud or misuse that might arise from the creation of two categories of veterinary medicines.

The nature of the problems involved has led the Commission to propose the adoption of two directives on veterinary medicines by the Council. The first deals with the approximation of national laws on veterinary medicines, and covers:

- (i) manufacturing and marketing;
- (ii) authorization by the competent authorities;
- (iii) rules on labelling, etc.;
- (iv) permissible colouring matters;
- (v) the setting up of a Committee for Veterinary Medicinal Products.

The second directive deals with standards and protocols applying to the testing of veterinary medicines and specifies inter alia:

- (i) the particulars of the medicine that the manufacturer is required to specify;
- (ii) various common principles to be observed in the carrying-out of tests.

Marketing authorization will initially be granted by the individual Member States for their own territories and the Commission is proposing a temporary system for the movement of veterinary medicines. A proposal for wholly free movement will follow at a later date.

Once adopted these directives will provide consumers with the same high standard of health protection in all the Community countries and will offer breeders greater assurance that they will be able to market their produce as it will naturally meet the appropriate health inspection standards. It will also give producers of veterinary medicines a Community-wide market for their products.