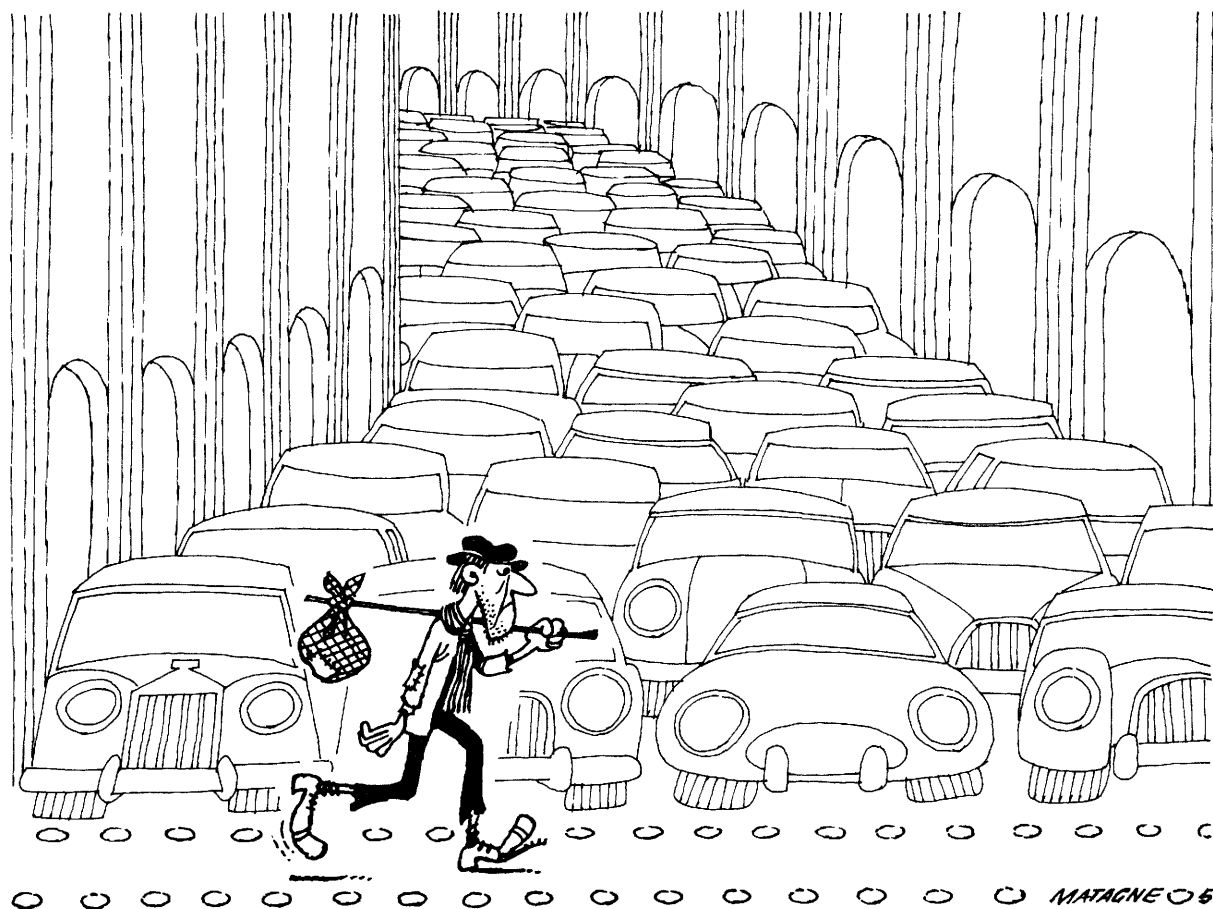


# eurotorum

## europa day by day

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No 5/77



Poverty : a priority stop for consumer society

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Editor & coordinator : Jean Pirlot

++ POVERTY : AN OPEN WOUND

Poverty is not incurable. But the symptoms and side-effects have to be fully understood before a cure can be found. The European Commission has promoted a number of projects in this direction. The ultimate aim is to create a community of equal Europeans.

See ANNEX 1.

++ EUROPE THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS PUBLIC

An average of seven out of ten people (69 %) are in favour of direct elections to the European Parliament. Only 14 % are against. The silent majority emerges in Euro-barometer No 6 of November 1976. The 9000 people interviewed had other interesting verdicts on the Europe of today as well as tomorrow. See ANNEX 2.

++ THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Annex 1 of Euroforum No 2 dated 11 January 1977 contained a typing error in the list of the Members of the new European Commission. Euroforum reproduces this list in ANNEX 3.

++ PRIORITIES FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The fight against unemployment, the protection of consumers, and the struggle towards economic convergence in the Community countries are the prior concerns of the European Commission during the next few months. This was agreed at one of the Jenkins Commission's first meetings held at the Chateau de Val Duchesse just outside Brussels. Does the location hold any significance ? More than twenty years ago the same building saw some of the most important discussions take place within its walls in the drafting of the Treaty of Rome.

++ OLD SOLDIERS BATTLE FOR EUROPE

A symbolic ceremony recently took place within the walls of the European Commission in Brussels. A former soldier of the German Wehrmacht was decorated with the French 'Chevalier of the Legion of Honour' cross by Officer of the Legion of Honour, Mr. Raymond Triboulet, who was first Under Prefect of Free France (at Bayeux) and a former minister under General de Gaulle, and is also an Officer of the Legion of Honour and a Commandeur du Merite of the Federal Republic of Germany. He presented the award to Mr H. Greffrath, assistant Secretary General of the European Confederation of ex-Servicemen and Secretary General of the German section for his work towards improving Franco-German relations and the unity of Europe.

The ceremony took place at the invitation of the European Commission's Information Services during a visit of the Executive Committee of the European Confederation of ex-Servicemen to Brussels.

++ THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AS SEEN BY INDUSTRY

The volume of orders on the books of Community industry is still insufficient, according to a survey carried out last December. Expected demand has deteriorated since May 1976, when it reached the high point during this period of economic recovery.

Pessimism is most noticeable in the consumer goods industry and seems to be directed at the home market, since foreign demand has stayed at roughly the same level. The survey shows a certain amount of swelling in stocks of finished goods, again mostly consumer goods.

Finally, the pressure on prices seems to be getting greater : in the consumer goods and investment goods sectors, industry bosses expect a more rapid rise in sales prices.

++ UPS AND DOWNS OF COMMUNITY CAR PRODUCTION

During the period 1963-1975 the annual production of private cars in the Community of the Nine has risen from 6.6 million in 1963 to 8.7 million in 1975, steadily increasing until 1973 (10.7 million) and falling off during the periods 1973/74 and 1974/75.

Export trends and registrations of private and commercial cars have followed a parallel development. In 1963, 2.8 million cars were exported from the Community and 4.8 million in 1975, the highest point being reached in 1973 with 5.7 million. During the same period, registrations have risen from 4.8 to 6.8 million, with a record of 7.9 million in 1973.

The most recent information for the year 1976 indicates that the production of private and commercial vehicles in the Community has grown by about 17 % compared with 1975, with an increase of 6 - 8 % for the United Kingdom and Italy, 15 - 17 % for France, and 20 - 22 % for Germany. Production for 1976 should be about the same level as 1971 (10.1 million).

Forecasts of exports of private and commercial cars for 1976 gives an estimated overall increase of 13 % compared with 1975, with a fall for the United Kingdom and rises of 3 - 5 % for Italy, 8 - 10 % for France and 28 - 30 % for Germany.

This data is taken from a statistical study of the world and Community car industry, recently published in the Quarterly Bulletin of Industrial Production (No 3/1976) of the Statistical Office of the European Communities.

++ AGRICULTURE 1976 IN THE COMMUNITY

The development of agriculture and agricultural markets during 1976 has been presented in an unique 450-page document only recently published. It includes a written commentary and searching statistical data on Community agriculture. The small format (16 cm x 23 cm) is very handy and makes a precious companion for anyone connected with or interested in agricultural problems. The report is available in the six official Community languages from the Office for Official

Publications of the European Communities, PO Box 1003, Luxembourg.

++ MORE INFORMATION ON MULTINATIONALS (cont.)

A Member of the European Parliament has asked whether the European Commission is prepared to forward a survey on multinational companies to the Parliament. Mr Van der Hek asks what are the conclusion drawn from the document, 'the first phase of an attempt to compile the first-ever world inventory of large, medium-sized and small multinationals'. (see Euroforum No 22/76, 13 July 1976)

In its replay to Mr Van der Hek, the Commission says that it will be forwarding the document to Parliament "at an early date".

The conclusions drawn by the Commission are that the main lesson it learned from this initial study was the difficulty involved in reaching "an objective and realistic" assessment of the world-wide phenomenon of the "multinationalisation of firms" due to the lack of comparable and regular information on the subject. On closer examination, the nature, size and activities of multinationals turn out to be much more diverse than would normally have been expected. The number and variety of multinational concerns, particularly those based in Europe, should not be underestimated.

The Commission adds that the approach it adopted in compiling the list, by way of experiment, gave rise to "both technical and psychological problems" when it came down to details. The Commission is therefore currently looking for new ways and methods of finding out more about the problems associated with multinationals, either through its own effort or by participating in the work carried out by other international organisations in this field such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris and the United Nations.

++ COMMUNITY AID TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL EFFICIENCY

More than 190 million units of account (1 ua = approx US \$ 1.1) have been granted by the European Commission through the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) for more than 600 projects designed to increase the efficiency of European Agriculture. The aid will benefit projects as diverse as the building of machinery for grading and stocking potatoes in County Donegal (Ireland), reafforestation in Lower Saxony, the construction of a vegetable packing centre in the province of Antwerp, the rationalisation of a Norresundby slaughterhouse in Denmark, planning a system of loading ships through harbour silos in Rouen (France), the construction of fishing boats in Catane (Italy), and the construction of a factory for making mushroom compost in Ottersum (the Netherlands).

++ ASBESTOS AND YOUR HEALTH

Too much asbestos in the air and in beverages such as wine is causing great concern throughout Europe. The European Commission has recently made an objective assessment of the risks to human health from the presence of asbestos in different environments and will shortly be sending a report on its findings to the Council of Ministers.

The Commission recognises the undeniable risk of cancer to the respiratory system from inhaling asbestos fibres. But it has not been proved that the risk to human health is increased if asbestos fibres are present in water, other beverages and food. As a result the Commission cannot justify banning the use of asbestos-based filters on the basis of data it currently has.

Asbestos basically presents the same scientific problem as the colourant amaranth : substitute materials are not sufficiently well researched, and in certain respects could be equally as dangerous from the point of view of health.

#### ++ ASSISTANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED EXECUTIVES

A pilot scheme financed by the European Social Fund to help unemployed executives could serve as a model for similar projects throughout the Community. Twenty out-of-work executives in the east of France will take an eight-month re-training course to raise their levels of expertise. Aged between 35 and 45 years, these executives will strengthen their competence in the field of production and management, as well as having the opportunity to learn a second profession with theory lessons and practical experience.

To boost its chances of success, the scheme will be backed by investigation of the region's industries to discover the managerial profile needed in terms expertise and training. Financial aid from the European Social Fund amounts to some 55,555 French francs (6,500 pounds). Other regions could benefit from the Fund if the scheme succeeds.

#### ++ THE BRITISH PRESS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Around 12,000 people working on British newspapers are in danger of being victimised by technological progress. During the next three years the European Social Fund will contribute about three million pounds towards the cost of professional retraining for these workers. A permanent Committee for the main national newspapers in Britain has been set up to implement a vast re-organisation of the British press. Its first task has been to work out a major plan for professional retraining to make the impact of technical progress, and new equipment used in the production of newspapers, more acceptable.

#### ++ THE DENTAL ART

The European Commission has proposed to the Council of Ministers setting up an Advisory Committee on the training of dental surgeons. In the context of the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other formal qualifications, it is important to ensure a comparably high standard of training, and it is thought that such a committee would assist.

++ DOOR TO DOOR SELLING (cont.)

Concerning the draft directive on door-to-door selling (see Euroforum No 2/77) sent by the European Commission to the Council of Ministers, it should be added that the directive does not apply to contracts where negotiations have taken place exclusively by letter. The contracts in question must contain certain information, notably the date of delivery of goods or the receipt of services.

++ A DONATION FROM JEAN MONNET TO THE PAUL FINET FOUNDATION

Jean Monnet, former President of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), has donated the Adolph Bentinck prize awarded him, to the Paul Finet Foundation.

Given in the memory of Baron Bentinck, former Dutch ambassador to Paris, the prize is awarded for services rendered by a person or foundation towards the European ideal, the cause of peace or the fight against fanaticism.

The Paul Finet Foundation has awarded 6,315 grants to 1,741 successful applicants, a grand total of 51,975,000 Belgian francs since its creation.

Paul Finet Study Scholarships are awarded to the orphans of workers employed in an ECSC industry who have died following an accident at work or occupational illness.

++ COMMUNITY AID TO UGANDA

In the struggle against malnutrition in Uganda, the European Commission has just awarded a non-repayable grant of 320,000 units of account (1 ua = approx. US \$ 1.1) through the European Development Fund to help Uganda's "Nutritional Rehabilitation Centres". The purpose of these centres, annexed to hospitals, dispensaries or health centres, is to vaccinate the population, promote health education in rural areas, control transmissible diseases and advise mothers in feeding children and on the choice of food.

++ COMPETITION POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The rules of competition are a concrete example of a common European policy - one that is defined and applied by the institutions of the European Community. Competition policy is explained in detail in a brochure setting out prohibited types of agreements and practices, concentrations and dominant positions, complete with a description of the role that public intervention plays within the framework of free competition.

'The Competition Policy of the European Community' is published by the European Documentation, educational series 1976/5 and can be bought from the Office of Official Publications of the European Community, PO Box 1003, Luxembourg.

## POVERTY : AN OPEN WOUND

Whether one turns a blind eye or not, the 'Marolles' area of Brussels is part and parcel of the European Community. Under the shadow of the imposing Palais de Justice, and not far from the luxurious shops of the Avenue Louise, sit the Marolles. An area of old tenement blocks divided by a few dark alleys where hardship has become a way of life.

Today, a Marolles General Action Committee with the financial help of the European Community struggles against the fatalism of some and the indifference of others. As in twenty other areas of Europe, the poverty there is being fought, its causes analysed, and its effects recorded. Poverty is not an incurable disease. But the symptoms and side effects have to be fully understood before a cure can be found. Such is the principal conclusion of a report by the European Commission recently put before the Council of Ministers on a programme of pilot projects to combat poverty.

### Mutual action

Pilot projects - fine words which evoke technocratic elegance. But when they are aimed at combatting poverty, reality is not quite the same. In the Marolles, only three kilometers from the glass and steel headquarters of the European Commission and just two steps from the house where Pierre Brueghel lived, preparations have been made for the inhabitants themselves to take the main responsibility for improving their lot. This involves reviving economic activity in the district, developing social and cultural activity, and finally making everyone feel part of a community capable of facing up to reality, hard though it be.

"It is necessary to progressively integrate a greater number of citizens into society" state the activists. "But this integration must not be only one-way : society must also change".

Though these words are addressed to society in Brussels, they could be applied to the whole of the European Community.

The European Commission, followed by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers, understands this. The very fact that the Community is financially supporting measures to combat poverty clearly indicates that the European Community needs to draw closer to its poorer members. Charity no longer provides the answer. The time has come for modesty from public authorities and some of the more out-of-date private foundations. The city boroughs, town planners, social workers and teachers must all examine their methods and discover what prevents the poor from fully participating in city life, what keeps them from rising above their role as "underprivileged".

The first priority - in the Marolles as in Glasgow - is to help the poor understand how to get employment, lodging, social security and education. Each problem must be examined and the solution discussed with those who are affected themselves, individually and collectively. Individually each person must find the means to come to terms with reality. Collectively, only solidarity can play an important part - not only in helping individual cases but in putting pressure on the social policy of public



authorities.

Isolated poverty

Meanwhile, there are still cases of those who do not have the relative 'luck' to live in a poor area or community. A study made in Germany on those who are delicately called 'of no fixed abode' is particularly revealing. Though precise calculations are difficult, in Germany alone there are between 50,000 and 100,000 male adults with nowhere to live. Curiously, women only account for around five per cent of people with no fixed address. The economic crisis has inevitably amplified this phenomenon, and though there were only 8,500 extra names added to the list in 1972, there was an increase of 13,000 cases in 1974.

The lower echelons of society are actually more vulnerable to losing their jobs and their homes. They are more exposed to life's difficulties. The solution is thus often to leave the surroundings. Illness, infirmity, depression, discouragement, anxiety and psychosis : the causes and the consequences are intermingled. Without a home, the needy person is out of the reach of institutions that can help, whether they be social security or employment offices, and too close for comfort to institutions such as the police or lodging centres.

For those of no fixed abode, social help, pure and simple, is necessarily ineffective in the long term. It is necessary to design a more flexible and mobile system to help people even while they are trying to escape. This is what a team in Tübingen, with financial help from the Community, are attempting. From their experience it may be possible to work out what needs to be done to help these people before the temptation to "leave everything" becomes too great.

Similar work is also being done in Denmark. Here, attempts are being made to create a protected environment for those who have not been able to adapt to society and who are not able to take advantage of the Danish social security system. Simple estimates show that such people number around 10,000 in Denmark - about 0.2 % of the population.

Those at the Kofoeds school carrying out this work wish to take some of these isolated people under their protection for a certain amount of time to re-establish their physical and psychological conditions so that they can bear the pressures of the outside world with more chance of success. Involved in the life of the institution itself, they would have more of a chance to recover confidence in themselves and break out of the vicious circle that drove them to solitude and isolation in the first place.

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EUROPE THROUGH THE EYES OF ITS PUBLIC

Just a few weeks after the decision to hold direct elections to the European Parliament was taken more than 9000 people aged more than 15 years were interviewed in the sixth "Euro-barometer" opinion poll.

Although the majority were in favour of direct elections, public opinion is still wavering in its attitude to the Common Market. The drop in the number of favourable opinions recorded last May has halted and a slight recovery was recorded this time. Fifty-five per cent of those interviewed felt that it was a "good thing", 13 % that it was a "bad thing", while 32 % were unsure or did not reply. The Danes and, to a lesser degree, the French, are still disillusioned.

Despite this, four in every ten people (41 %) felt that things would be worse if their country were not a member of the Community. Only Denmark and the United Kingdom had a majority taking the opposite view. If there were a referendum on Community membership tomorrow, two thirds of those interviewed (65 %) would vote "for". Only the Danes would vote "against".

The economic crisis has visibly increased the need for mutual assistance, solidarity between the member countries emerged as one of the major objectives of the Community. Three in four (76 %) of those interviewed feel that if one member country found itself in major economic difficulties, the others should come to its assistance. The highest proportion of "aye's" was recorded in Italy.

The idea of Community solidarity has gained considerable ground in Italy and the UK since 1973 (88-95 % in Italy, and 59-77 % in the UK).

There has been little change in attitudes to the unification of Europe since 1973 : four in ten (34 %) think it should be "speeded up", more than three in ten (34 %) would prefer to see it "continued as it is at present", and only one in ten (11 %) would like it to be "slowed down".

The idea of direct elections to the European Parliament has become more popular since the Governments reached agreement. An average seven in ten people (69 %) were in favour of the elections and only 14 % against. In all countries, Denmark and the United Kingdom included, the majority of those interviewed were in favour. About one in two people (48 %) viewed the election as "an event with important consequences", but 28 % considered it "an unimportant event" and 24 % did not reply.

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FOR OR AGAINST THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BY UNIVERSAL  
SUFFRAGE

(country by Country Change 1973 to 1976)<sup>(1)</sup>

	September 1973			November 1976			
	For	Against	No reply	For	Against	no reply	Total
Luxembourg	67 %	12 %	21 %	77%	9	14 %	100 %
Italy	74	12	24	77	8	15	100
W. Germany	69	12	19	76	10	14	100
Netherlands	62	16	22	74	11	15	100
Belgium	52	14	34	69	9	22	100
France	51	18	31	69	13	18	100
Ireland	45	31	24	63	14	23	100
United Kingdom (2)	33	49	18	57	22	21	100
Denmark	36	43	21	42	37	21	100
COMMUNITY (3)	54	23	23	69	14	17	100

- 1) The countries are listed in decreasing order of percentages 'For' in 1976
- 2) Not including Northern Ireland in 1973
- 3) Weighted average.

## THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Paying homage to the tenacity and courage of the preceding European Commission is how Roy Jenkins, new president of the European executive body, began his first public speech in his new post. Mr. Jenkins went on to underline that "Our constant aim must be to preserve the lot of the ordinary citizen throughout the Community and to make him or her feel that Europe is becoming a better place in which to live". Mentioning the growing divergencies in the economies of the Member States Mr. Jenkins stressed that it was necessary not to weaken the strong but to strengthen the weak.

The members of the new Commission are presented below together with the special responsibilities they will have :

Roy JENKINS (President) will take under his wing the General Secretariat and the Legal Service, as is customary for Presidents. On top of this he will take personal charge of the information services.

François-Xavier ORTOLI (Vice-president) will be looking after economic and financial affairs, credit and investment as well as the Community's statistical office.

Wilhelm HAFERKAMP (Vice-president) will be responsible for external relations.

Finn Olav GUNDELACH (Vice-president) will be taking charge of agriculture and fisheries.

Lorenzo NATALI (Vice-president) has special responsibility for negotiations concerning the enlargement of the European Community. In addition he will be looking after the protection of the environment, nuclear safety questions and last but not least he will be responsible for relations with governments and public opinion concerning the forthcoming direct elections to the European Parliament.

Henk VREDELING (Vice president) will deal with unemployment and social affairs and will have specific responsibility for the Tripartite conference that brings together governments and employer and trade union representatives.

Claude CHEYSSON will, as in the last Commission, be dealing with development policy.

Guido BRUNNER similarly carries on with "Research, Science and Education" as in the last Commission but will be taking on the 'energy' portfolio as well.

Raymond VOUEL will carry on dealing with competition policy.

Antonio GIOLITTI will find himself dealing with regional policy and will have the new job of coordinating the European Community's various funds (social, regional).

Richard BURKE will become special spokesman for the consumers in his capacity as Commissioner responsible for Consumer Affairs. He will also be in charge of transport policy and taxation matters as well as relations

with the European Parliament.

Vicomte Etienne DAVIGNON will take on industrial policy, including the field known as 'internal market' which includes harmonisation issues and the measures necessary to create a real "common market"

Christopher TUGENDHAT, will take on the tasks of the budget and financial control as well as certain fiscal matters. He will also be in charge of the European Commission's personnel and administration.

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#### PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

##### **BELGIUM**

1049 BRUSSELS  
Rue Archimède 73  
Tel. 735 00 40/735 80 40

##### **DENMARK**

1045 COPENHAGEN K  
4 Gammeltorv  
Postbox 144  
Tel. 14 41 40

##### **FRANCE**

75782 PARIS CEDEX 16  
61, rue des Belles-Feuilles  
Tel. 553 53 26

##### **GERMANY**

53 BONN  
Zitelmannstrasse 22  
Tel. 23 80 41

1 BERLIN 31  
Kurfürstendamm 102  
Tel. 886 40 28

##### **IRELAND**

DUBLIN 2  
29 Merrion Square  
Tel. 76 03 53

##### **ITALY**

00187 ROME  
Via Poli, 29  
Tel. 68 97 22 à 26

##### **LUXEMBOURG**

LUXEMBOURG  
Centre européen du Kirchberg  
Tel. 479 41

##### **NETHERLANDS**

THE HAGUE  
29, Lange Voorhout  
Tel. 070-46 93 26

##### **UNITED KINGDOM**

LONDON W8 4QQ  
20, Kensington Palace Gardens  
Tel. 727 8090

CARDIFF CF1 1WF  
4 Cathedral Road  
P.O. Box 15  
Tel. 371 631

EDINBURGH EH2 4PH  
7, Alva Street  
Tel. (031) 225.2058

##### **CHILE**

SANTIAGO 9  
Avenida Ricardo Lyon 1177  
Casilla 10093  
Tel. 25 05 55

##### **GREECE**

ATHENS 134  
Vassilisis Sofias 2  
Tel. 743 982/83/84

##### **JAPAN**

102 TOKYO  
Kowa 25 Building  
8-7 Sanbancho  
Chiyoda-Ku  
Tel. 239-0441

##### **SWITZERLAND**

1202 GENEVA  
37-39, rue de Vermont  
Tel. 34 97 50

##### **TURKEY**

ANKARA  
Kavaklidere  
13, Bogaz Sokak  
Tel. 27 61 45/46

##### **UNITED STATES**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037  
2100 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 707  
Tel. (202) 872-8350

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017  
245 East 47th Street  
1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza  
Tel. (212) 3713804