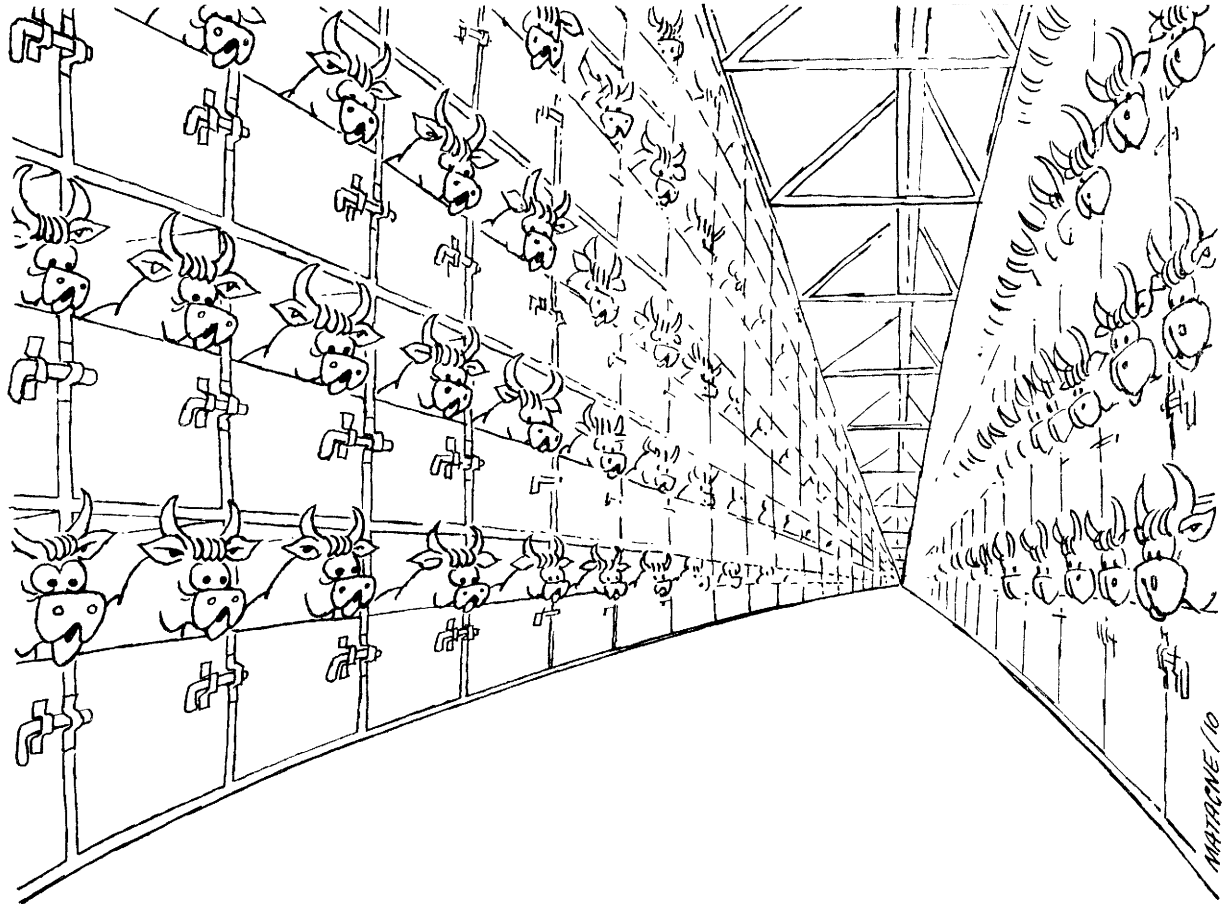


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europa day by day

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Agriculture - when a surplus is not a surplus. (See page 3)

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++ AGRICULTURE WHEN A SURPLUS IS NOT A SURPLUS

Faced with surplus of many agricultural products, Europeans can never be sure if the cause is a natural catastrophe such as drought or flood, or whether it is due to a policy mistake. In ANNEX 1 Euroforum gives a bit of background on two well-known problems - beef and milk.

++ ECONOMY - SILVER LINING STILL CLOUDY

It is essential for Member States to coordinate economic policies they are pursuing for the European Community to become a reality and not remain just a pipe-dream. In ANNEX 2 Euroforum describes the progress achieved in 1976 and what can be expected in 1977.

++ ENVIRONMENT ROUND-UP FOR 1976

Euroforum presents action in the field of environment in 1976 from the Tenth General Report recently published by the European Commission on Community activity, in ANNEX 3

++ TOXIC WASTE

Following recommendations from the European Parliament, the European Commission has modified its draft directive on toxic and dangerous wastes (see Euroforum No. 30/76). The Commission has strengthened safety measures concerning the storage and transport of toxic wastes by calling for the compulsory removal of such wastes by specialised firms. The proposals call for a strict control of storage sites by Member States, a precise estimation of the operational costs of elimination, and in cases of emergency, immediate and obligatory intervention by the authorities.

The Parliament demanded that the protection of animal health be mentioned alongside human health as one of the essential objectives.

++ FRAGILE STEEL INDUSTRY

Steel production targets adopted by the European Commission for the second quarter of this year aim at a production level of 32.7 million tonnes crude steel to cover expected consumption of 30 million tonnes. Exports will be limited to six million tonnes and imports to 2.5 million tonnes. The Commission has decided to extend the anti-crisis plan for the iron and steel industries, in force since January 1, until the end of the first half of the year. The plan is based on a voluntary agreement by firms in the industries not to compete in an anarchic manner and to respect delivery quotas on the domestic market. Positive reactions from iron and steel firms at the beginning of March cover around 90 % of production.

The Commission was forced to take this decision in view of difficulties on the iron and steel market at the beginning of this year. Community firms are running at 60 % capacity and new orders for

iron and steel (20.1 million tonnes) hardly exceed those for the summer of 1975, at the height of the recession.

++ CEREAL IMPORTS NECESSARY

The European Community had to import an average 5 - 10 % of its cereal needs from 1973 - 1975. But production varies from country to country. There is a constant surplus of cereals in France, for example, equivalent to more than 50 % of domestic consumption. While Denmark is completely self-sufficient, the Netherlands has to import 75 % of its domestic needs. There are also marked differences according to the kind of cereal. There is enough wheat in the Community to feed the population, but it has to import about 45 % of its maize requirements used mainly in animal feed. Humans only consume 24 % of the cereals used by the Community. Animals take the "lion's share" with 60 %, the rest being divided between seed, shrinkage, and non-food industries.

++ NOISE AT WORK

A Community action programme for safety, hygiene and protection of health at work is currently being drawn up to evaluate the risk to workers' health by chemical, biological and physical agents including noise. The results of research currently in progress will probably be available at the end of 1978. A question to the Commission from Mr Seefeld of the European Parliament noted that in all highly industrialised countries, noise at work had resulted in an alarming rise in cases of impaired hearing and deafness. "If effective measures aren't taken soon" said Mr. Seefeld, "The amount of cases of incapacity to work as a result of impaired hearing caused by noise at work will be, in a few years, as numerous as those resulting from all other work conditions put together."

++ THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK IN 1976

Financing by the European Investment Bank (EIB) rose in 1976 to 1,273.3 million units of account (1 ua = about 1.1 US dollar) compared with 1,006.5 million ua in 1975.

Loans and guarantees given by the EIB to bodies within the European Community have exceeded the billion ua level for the first time. They rose to 1,086 million, compared with 917.5 million ua in 1975. The distribution by country was the following :

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u> (in million ua)
Belgium	1	17.9
Denmark	3	9.1
Germany	3	110.8
France	3	60.1
Ireland	3	57.4
Italy	34	382.6
Netherlands	2	30.4
United Kingdom	24	417.6
	<hr/> 73	<hr/> 1,086.0

++ THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

From Finland to Lesotho and Rumania to Macao the European Community is now linked with 104 countries far and near by 121 commercial agreements.

++ THE BUNDESALLEE OF BERLIN

The new premises of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training have been opened in Berlin by Henk Vredeling, Commission Vice-President responsible for employment and social affairs along with Klaus Schuetz, Mayor of Berlin, and Jean Degimbe, the Commission's Director-General of Social Affairs and President of the centre's administrative board. The Berlin Senate contributed substantial financial help to the building of the Centre at 22 Bundesallee, 1000 Berlin 31.

The Centre is designed to help the European Commission promote vocational and continued training by coordinating selective documentation and contributing to the development and coordination of research. It is intended to promote and push initiatives which facilitate a concerted approach to the problems of vocational training and be a meeting place for people dealing with such training.

To carry out its aims efficiently, the Centre is establishing contacts with specialised bodies private and public as well as national and international, with public administrations and training institutions and employers and workers' organisations.

++ NINE HEADS UNDER ONE ROOF

For the first time, the Nine countries of the Community will be represented together in one large pavilion at the Malta International Fair from July 1-15. Each country will have its own trade promotion stand in addition to an information stand for the European Community.

++ POSTERS FOR EUROPE

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, 238 posters have been selected from 685 gathered in 15 countries to take part in an exhibition in Venice from May 2 - 9. "Manifesti per l'Europa" (Posters for Europe) is the brainchild of the CISCE (Centro d'informazione e studi sulla Comunità Europea) in collaboration with the Information Services of the European Commission. Through the posters, the exhibition will trace the road taken by the Community during the last twenty years.

++ MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

The place of milk in human civilisation ; science and the crisis of civilisation ; the chronobiology and the maladies of civilisation - a few of themes to be dealt with in Luxembourg from September 15-18 at the Congress "Man and his Environment" organised by S.I.R.M.C.E. (International Society for Research into the Maladies of Civilisation and the Environment) - 5 rue du Sceptre, 1040 Brussels.

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AGRICULTURE - WHEN A SURPLUS IS NOT A SURPLUS

Mention food and the average European will frown. The older ones remember the hardships of the wartime days, the younger ones think of the starving millions in the third world. And the voluntary destruction of surplus foodstocks is automatically condemned out of hand by public opinion when mountains of old cars and out of date household equipment are sent to the breakers with hardly a murmur. Faced with surplus agricultural products the average European can never be sure if the cause is natural catastrophe as inevitable as drought or flood, or whether it is due to a mistake in policy which should not be repeated.

There are stocks and stocks

Food reserves have a two-fold function : to ensure a continuous supply to the consumer as well as maintaining stable prices. In 1973, for instance, certain regions in Southern Italy ran short of corn and virtual crisis emerged. Peace was restored by a transfer of 200,000 tonnes of reserves from France, Belgium and Germany. In 1976 Italy once more received large transfers of corn and also powdered milk and beef.

A food stock and even a slight surplus is a healthy situation. There is no risk of shortage. All quantities in storage should not therefore be seen as surpluses. A surplus arises when the foodstuff in storage cannot be absorbed by the market without considerable financial loss.

The risk of loss varies greatly from one agricultural product to another. Corn can be kept in silos for long periods and without great difficulty. Fruit and vegetables, however, cannot. Beef and even butter can of course be put into cold storage, but even this leads to a certain loss.

Beef mountain that was

The beef sector is interesting as an example of a market in surplus. A surplus first appeared in 1974, grew in 1975 and remained at a relatively high level during 1976 as shown in the table below.

	<u>Bovine stocks</u> <u>(in million animals)</u>	<u>Beef production</u>
1971	71.81	5.85
1972	74.82	5.29
1973	78.86	5.36
1974	79.33	6.48
1975	77.46	6.6
1976	76.90	6.28
1977	77.05	6.18

To explain this phenomenon one must look at the beef production cycle. This cycle of rearing and finally slaughtering for beef takes about 6 years. These cycles do, however, differ from one country to another, though they have become aligned somewhat under the influence of the common market. The natural cycle can have a dangerous impact in either periods of surplus or shortage depending on how the market is managed by the authorities and how the farmers behave. A surplus which is usually a temporary market one can become structural problem. The Community was relatively suddenly

confronted for the first time and in a very brutal way with a surplus of considerable size. The measures necessary to regulate the market had not been taken quickly enough.

Now all we can do is try and learn from this costly experience to avoid further market surpluses and prevent them from becoming structural surpluses. A finer management policy is now possible by introducing the most appropriate intervention measures and premium systems and also by finding a balance - though it be precarious - between the beef and milk sectors.

Milk products

The size of Europe's milk herd is on the decrease. The number of milking cows in the Community has slid from 26 million in 1969 to 25 million by the end of 1976. But the yield per cow has been rising through improved techniques and feedstuffs and has risen from 3,300 kg milk per cow in 1969 to more than 3,700 kg in 1976. The quality of the herd has increased and the quality of the yield has also benefitted from the use of high nutrient feeds.

Though the cows are now producing more, the European consumers are not drinking any more. Farmers are delivering more and more milk to the dairies as they are guaranteed a fixed price by the Council of Ministers. But milk does not keep. This is why the intervention measures of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) only cover two basic milk products : the fats which produce our butter, and the proteins which are the basis of our powdered milk. For this reason imbalances in the supply and demand for milk show up primarily in a growth in butter or powdered milk stocks. The main causes of the surpluses in this sector are however principally structural.

To deal with this problem the European Commission proposed in July 1976 an action programme for the progressive establishment of equilibrium in the milk market. The Commission proposed to cut back production by offering premiums for 'non-delivery' of milk, and for reconverting production towards beef, together with a programme for slaughtering sick cows. In addition, the Commission proposed stopping investment in the milk sector and suspending national and Community financial aid. The Commission also proposed making producers pay a share of the cost of dealing with the surplus, taxing vegetable fats to reduce its competitiveness against butter, and finally investigating additional markets for milk products.

The proposals are still being discussed in the Council of Agricultural Ministers together with the milk prices for the 1977-78 marketing year. Finn-Olav Gundelach, Commission vice-President in charge of agriculture, has recently emphasised once more to the European Parliament the urgent nature of the decisions which have to be taken. The measures have to be implemented as soon as possible since it will be a long time before they have any impact on the structural problem. To get rid of this structural problem and return to a simple market problem will require not only a certain amount of clairvoyance but also a lot of political courage and perseverance.

ECONOMY : SILVER LINING STILL CLOUDY

Despite the efforts of Member States to improve economic policy coordination and to observe the economic policy guidelines laid down by the Council, 1976 did not show any particularly marked progress in achieving convergence in the economies of the Community.

While it is true that in most of the Member States, the upward movement of the economies was vigorous during the first part of the year - partly because of measures to stimulate activity adopted jointly in 1975 - it is also true that the lull in the summer was longer than had been expected originally, so that doubts arose once again as to whether the factors contributing to expansion were of a lasting nature. The period of weakness, which was quite marked, was partly a technical adjustment to the original phase in the cycle which was very strong, but it was also the result of diverging trends between the Member States. In some countries for example, the balance of payments deteriorated rapidly, while at the same time, the shrinking of surpluses in Germany and in the Netherlands came to a halt in 1976.

Similarly, those responsible for economic policy failed to bring cost and price trends sufficiently under control. Denmark, France, and Italy were compelled to alter their original economic policies from the beginning of the second half of the year onwards, i.e. to pursue a restrictive course in respect of overall management, while at the same time other countries, such as the United Kingdom, were forced to gradually reinforce their stabilisation policies. The results of this policy of curbing domestic demand on inflationary tendencies are only gradually becoming apparent.

All in all, each of the Member States made some progress in 1976 towards reducing inflation rates, compared with 1975, as they also did with regard to the reduction of nominal wage costs per unit of output. It is a pity that divergences in cost and price trends as between the Member States were not reduced more substantially in 1976 and that they even grew more marked in the second half of the year. Divergent trends led to a further and substantial change - in comparison with 1975 - in the exchange rates of the three currencies floating independently. A number of adjustments in exchange rate relationships also had to be made in October within the Community intervention system.

In 1976, annual average growth of the gross domestic product, in real terms, ranged from 5.5 % to 3 % - with the exception of the United Kingdom, where it was 1 %. These relatively high rates are seen, however, to be less satisfactory if the performance of the economies over the course of the year is considered, or if the trend through several years is the criterion chosen. Since 1974, the year in which the crisis began, the real gross domestic product of the Community has increased overall by a little less than 4 %, i.e. at a rate slightly higher than 1 % per year. It is therefore not surprising that the numbers of unemployed have steadily increased, even in 1976 (except in the Federal Republic of Germany).

A few glimmers

Economic developments over the last few months underline the need to apply strictly, and even to tighten further, the guidelines for economic policy which were laid down for the Community and, in particular, for the various Member States in the last Annual Report.

Those member countries with balance of payments deficits will still not have, in 1977, any appreciable degree of freedom in the conduct of their economic policy. The size of their balance of payments deficits and their continued high rates of inflation force them to pursue their stabilisation programmes, even if the necessary period of adjustment proves to be longer than at first thought. A long-lasting success, of a type to instil confidence, in restoring price stability and reducing balance of payments disequilibria is a pre-condition for strong growth and an improvement in the employment situation during the next few years.

In the absence of a vigorous recovery in foreign demand, the efforts of the deficit countries will be in vain and can only lead to heavy losses as far as growth and employment are concerned. The task of the surplus countries in the adjustment process, therefore, will be to underpin the upturn in economic activity by increasing their domestic demand and their imports. In particular, this must be the priority objective of the Federal Republic of Germany which should not rely too heavily on exogenous growth factors arising from third countries, but should contribute to the expansion of total demand within the Community itself. The Federal Republic of Germany accounts for almost 25 % of intra-Community trade and, therefore, its importance as a trading partner in the Community is greater than that of the United States and Japan together within the OECD area (20 %).

At international level, it is in the Community's interest that the import capacity of the developing countries should be increased in a reasonable manner. Conversely, the Community, which is the leading trading group in the world, must firmly oppose any moves towards protectionism with regard to trade. It will be able to escape these dangers within the Member States so much the easier when a real financial solidarity is established.

The lowering of inflation rates can only be achieved gradually, and should be supported by coherent budgetary, monetary and incomes policies. The same is true for the return to a high level of employment, which is currently an essential priority objective common to all industrialised countries. The policy to combat unemployment must at least be based on the following three factors :

- an employment policy which encourages job-creating investment and which would be complemented by traditional policy instruments (assistance to increase mobility, training and professional re-adjustment) and selective measures ;
- a growth rate in incomes which is consistent with reducing inflation
- an industrial policy which encourages the reorganisation of our economies rather than the maintenance of jobs at any price in industries which are no longer competitive.

ENVIRONMENT : 1976 ROUND UP

The European Commission has recently published its Tenth General Report which covers Community activity during 1976. From this document Euroforum presents the section dealing with environmental policy.

Improvement and protection of the environment

Main developments

On 9 December the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission, approved a Resolution on the continuation and implementation of a European Community policy and action programme on the environment for the period 1977 to 1981. This programme aims at ensuring that the policy followed since November 1973 is continued, and lays special emphasis on measures for setting up the machinery for preventive action. The non-damaging use and rational management of space, the environment and natural resources receive special attention and, as regards the reduction of pollution, priority is given to measures against water pollution. There have also been new developments in the campaign against noise.

In 1976 the Commission's activities were devoted to implementing the 1973 action programme and to carrying through a number of specific measures called for by the Council.

The Commission has laid before the Council the texts of directives, resolutions and recommendations concerned with pollution of the aquatic and atmospheric environments, waste treatment, the economic aspects of anti-nuisance measures and environmental protection. Much of the action taken was in an international context.

Activities

Prevention and reduction of pollution

Two directives were adopted in 1976 : the Directive of 6 April on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls and polychlorinated terphenyls, and the Directive of 4 May on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community.

On 9 December the Council adopted two decisions concerned mainly with the protection of waters, one concluding a convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and a protocol on the prevention of the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft, the other concluding a convention on the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution.

The Council has examined the proposal for a directive on the quality of water intended for human consumption. The proposal is to be amended as regards certain technical points and will be laid before the Council again in six months' time.

The Council has examined the various aspects of two proposals for directives, one concerning the reduction of water pollution from paper pulp factories and the other concerning waste from the titanium dioxide industry.

The Commission has continued its work of formulating quality objectives depending on the various uses and functions of the waters in question. Two proposals for directives have been transmitted to the Council on the quality of waters suitable for freshwater fish and on water quality in shellfish-breeding areas. The Commission has also begun work on quality objectives of water for agricultural use, on methods of measurement and sampling frequencies in respect of surface waters intended for the abstraction of drinking water, on freshwater flora and fauna, and on the protection of groundwater against certain dangerous substances. Furthermore, work was begun in July to implement the Directive of 4 May 1976, mainly with a view to fixing limit values and quality objectives for substances on the black list. As a result of this work a list has been drawn up of those substances on which priority action should be taken, namely mercury, cadmium, aldrin, dieldrin and endrin.

Work continued on assessing the environmental impact of thermal discharges on water and the environment in general, but the results will not be known before the end of 1977.

Lastly, the Commission sent to the Council on 12 January 1976 a proposal for a directive on the dumping of wastes at sea. On 4 May it presented a proposal for a Council decision introducing joint procedures for the exchange of information on the quality of surface freshwater in the Community.

In the fight against atmospheric pollution the proposal for a directive on the use of fuel oils, which is designed to reduce sulphur emissions, has been discussed in the Council ; this had been transmitted to the Council on 30 December 1975.

Following the Council's adoption of a directive on biological screening of the population for lead, the Commission is hoping that Member States will make a special effort to align their points of view on the subject of the lead content of petrol. It also hopes that the proposed directive of December 1973, amended at Parliament's request in 1975, will soon be adopted.

As regards the objective assessment of the dangers of pollution for human health and the environment, the Commission sent to the Council on 25 February a proposal for a resolution concerning the determination of criteria, and a proposal for a directive concerning health protection standards, for sulphur dioxide and suspended particulate matter in urban atmospheres. On 24 June the Commission also presented an interim report on the risks to human health from pollution by some persistent organo-chlorine compounds.

On 26 April the Commission laid a proposal for a directive before the Council on the limitation of aircraft noise on which Parliament delivered an opinion in July.

On the question of waste the Commission transmitted to the Council on 28 July 1976 a proposal for a directive on toxic and dangerous wastes. This provides for a system of authorization prior to the disposal of wastes and measures to promote waste recycling and processing. The Commission also set up a Waste Management Committee on 21 April to advise on the policies and measures to be taken to prevent the

generation of waste or to ensure its safe recycling and disposal.

The accident which occurred at Seveso in July 1976 demonstrated that not only must the marketing or use of certain dangerous substances be regulated or even banned as provided in the Council Directives of 27 June 1967 and 27 July 1976, but action must also be taken at the manufacturing stage. As far as dangerous substances are concerned, three proposals for directives have been laid before the Council - one relating to the marketing of EEC-approved plant protection products, another banning the marketing and use of certain pesticides, and the third amending for the sixth time the Directive of 27 June 1967 on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.

This last proposal requires that, before any new substance is placed on the market, a study shall be made of its effects on man and the environment. A file containing the results must be prepared by whoever manufactures or markets the product. The file must be notified to the Member State concerned and to the Commission. This proposal, which also lays down the conditions under which the file may be examined, represents an important step forward in the fight against pollution from chemicals.

With regard to manufacturing processes, the Commission is currently studying the measures to be taken with a view to preventing accidental pollution, which is always possible despite the strict rules in force.

In 1976 the Council adopted two decisions to ensure the continuity of environmental research both at the JRC's Ispra Establishment and by means of contracts.

Finally, with regard to the economic aspects of the campaign against pollution, the Commission, with the help of national experts, has continued working out the details of the application of the 'polluter pays' principle. The commission is preparing a recommendation to the Council on the methods for assessing the costs of anti-pollution measures to enable the data used in the Member States to be compared.

Improvement of the environment

The Commission has actively continued its work on the classification of the Community territory on the basis of its environmental characteristics.

The protection of birds in general and migratory birds in particular - a matter to which Parliament and the general public attach great importance - is the subject of a proposal for a directive transmitted to the Council on 20 December. The proposal sets out to harmonize national legislation to guarantee increased protection for wild species.

Following the creation in May 1975 of a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions based in Dublin, the Council, on a proposal from the Commission adopted :

- on 1 June a Regulation on the financial provisions applying to the Foundation
- on 29 June a Regulation on the conditions of employment staff ;

- on 20 September a Decision setting up the Committee of Experts of the Foundation.

Activities at international level

The Community, represented by the Commission, participated in the work on the protection of the Rhine carried out at the ministerial conferences held in Paris on 1 and 2 April and in Berne on 25 May and at the fortieth plenary session of the International Rhine Commission held in Luxembourg on 6 and 7 July. During the negotiations it became clear that Community participation in the administration of the Convention, i.e. in the International Commission, was indispensable. A draft additional agreement to the Berne agreement of 29 April 1963 was drawn up and approved at the Luxembourg meeting. The Community signed the convention in Bonn on 3 December and the Council approved it on 9 December.

From 2 to 16 February the Commission took part in the negotiations held at the intergovernmental meeting in Barcelona which adopted a convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and a protocol on the prevention of the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft. The Community signed the convention on 13 September.

On 23 December the Commission sent to the Council a proposal for a decision authorizing the Commission to open negotiations with a view to the Community's accession to the Washington Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna.

The Commission attended as an observer the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement in Vancouver in June. The Commission also took part in the preparatory work for the United Nations Water Conference, which is to be held in Argentina in March 1977.

Furthermore, within the framework of the Euro-Arab Dialogue, the Commission provides the chairman for a specialized group (European side) on the marine environment and coastal zone development. The work of the group should lead to projects involving cooperation with the Arab countries.

Information agreement of 5 March 1973

The Commission regularly receives notification from Member States of draft laws, regulations and administrative provisions in accordance with the information agreement with the environment of 5 March 1973. In four years more than 160 texts have been sent to the Commission and the Member States.

In 1976 the Commission received forty notifications, including twenty-nine texts of laws or regulations, seven draft laws and four international agreements.

As a number of these texts had reached a very advanced stage when they were presented to the Commission, the Commission considered it neither possible nor advisable to ask the Member States concerned to postpone the adoption of the proposed measures. The Commission therefore applied the provisions of Articles 2 and 3 of the agreement in only one case, concerning aircraft noise.

Finally, a set of thirteen volumes has been published on the laws and practices of pollution control in each of the Member States of the Community.

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