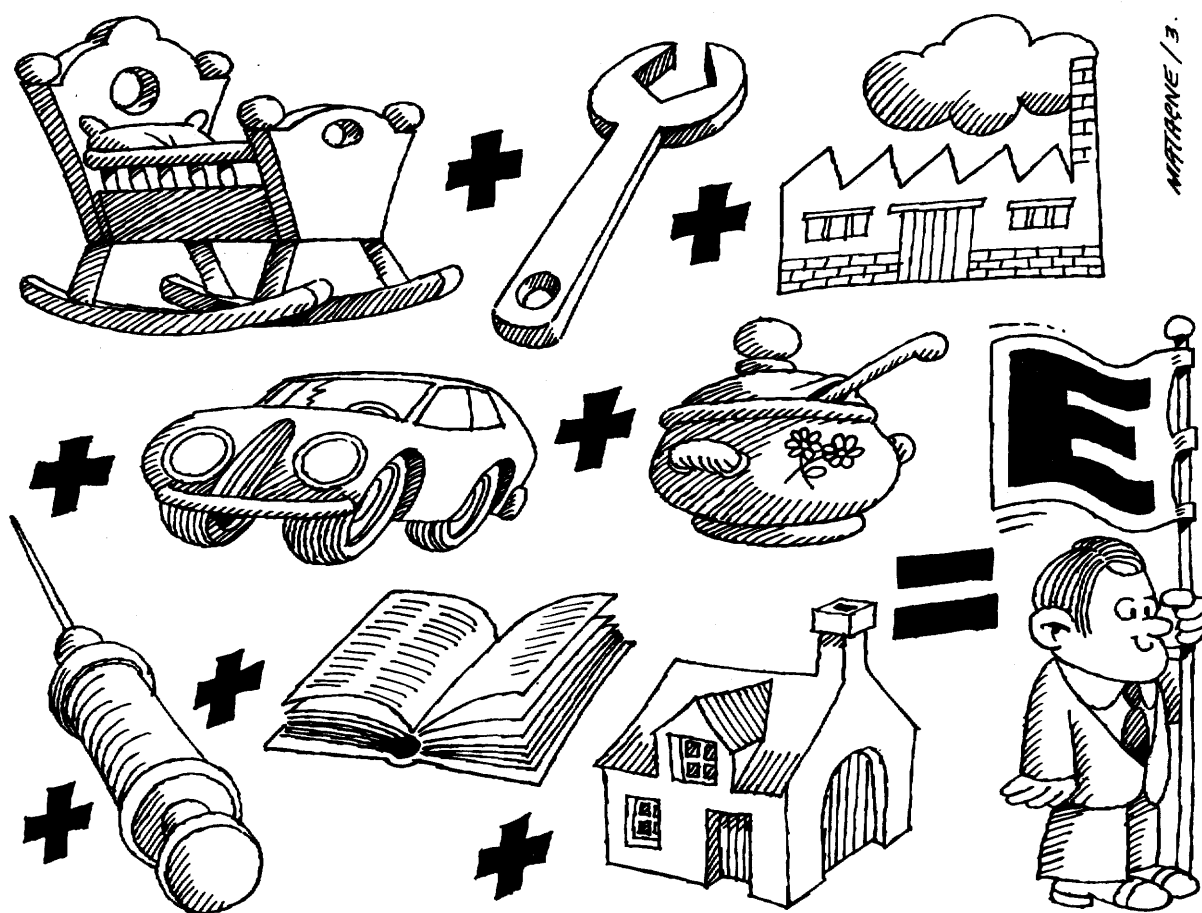


Brussels, 31 January 1978

N° 4/78



A fascinating, multifarious creature has been discovered in the Community (see page 3).

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++ "COMMUNITY MAN" IN FIGURES

The European Community is not just a question of directives and technical, abstract debates, but concerns 260 million people whose life styles, living conditions and leisure activities vary according to where they live. A new work has just been published by the Community's Statistical Office which could open the way to a clearer understanding of how people really live in other Community countries.

The document entitled "Social Indicators" 1960-1975, and the image of "Community man" which emerges, is presented in Annex 1.

++ NUCLEAR HEARINGS : HEALTH AND WEALTH

The second session of nuclear hearings organised by the European Commission took place 24-26 January 1978 in Brussels. The main interest was the consequences for health safety and the environment in the various energy options.

Though conclusions at this early stage are difficult to draw, in Annex 2, Euroforum discusses the implications of points raised during the session.

++ UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOLUTIONS

The number of jobless in the Community at the end of December 1977 stood at just over six million - 5.7% of the working population. In comparison to the previous month, there was a reduction in the level of unemployment in France, Belgium and the UK. Other countries saw an increase. For the Community as a whole, unemployment was higher in 1977 than the year before. Unemployment now seems to be affecting women as much as men. Between December '76 and December '77, the net increase was 6.8% for men and 15.4% for women (women amount to about 36% of the working population).

Young people have been particularly hard hit by unemployment. The incentives given to employers to take on extra workers and reduce the dole queues are not necessarily going to help young workers. The European Commission takes the view that such financial assistance can be an efficient way of achieving a limited objective, i.e. creating jobs for a specific category of workers, to encourage vocational training within industry. They cannot however create jobs for a large number of workers and if such aid is being given to create jobs for certain categories of workers, the jobs will probably be created at the expense of other unsupported groups.

It is difficult to assess at this stage whether lowering the age of retirement is any solution at all. In Belgium, the early retirements which took place between 30 March 1976 and 30 June 1977 produced jobs for 13,500 people under 30 years. Too few countries have tried this yet to be able to give a fair assessment of its effectiveness.

++ UNDERGROUND WATER POLLUTION

The European Commission has just sent the Council of Ministers a draft directive dealing with the proper means of reducing or eliminating the pollution of underground waters by dangerous wastes. The directive is based on the principles of the Community's Environmental Action Programme.

Whether its hydrocarbons, nitrates or other toxic substances, the cases of underground waters being contaminated are increasing. Not only do these waters harbour biological life, they are an important part of the Community's reserve of drinking water. With river pollution - the work of unscrupulous factories or transporters - it is obvious that the water is undrinkable when dead fish float on the surface. But when an ingenious polluter has the idea of dumping the toxic wastes directly underground, such contamination will only become evident the day we have to rely on our underground lakes to supply our drinking water. Then it will be too late.

On average, 70% of the Community's drinking water reserves are underground. The figures for individual countries are as follows:

Italy	93%
Germany	71%
Belgium	71%
Luxembourg	70%
Netherlands	64%
France	50%
U.K.	31%
Ireland	14%

These underground reserves are also a useful balancing factor in times of drought. In addition, the filtering properties of the soil give the water a certain amount of protection against certain other types of pollution, and makes the water even purer.

On the other hand, the underground waters are less able to change and break down other substances which enter it. The purification of water from underground sources can be consequently much more expensive.

Current legislation in force in Member States of the Community is somewhat limited and varies widely between countries. Community measures are consequently required. Certain measures have already been taken to prevent the pollution of the general aquatic environment (May '76). But the Council of Ministers postponed the more delicate problem of underground waters and requested the Commission to draw up a specific proposal on the subject.

The Commission's draft has two classifications of pollutants likely to be dumped in our underground waters. The first list contains substances which are highly toxic, bioaccumulable and persistent, e.g. hydrocarbons, mercury, carcinogenic substances, etc. The second list includes the less toxic substances - biocides, cyanides, fluorides and some twenty metals.

A second distinction has been made between direct and indirect wastes. Direct wastes enter undiluted through channels or pools and their polluting force remains intact. Indirect wastes filter through soil and rock before entering the underground waters and their toxicity is slightly reduced.

Under the proposed directive, all direct wastes from list one are completely banned. Indirect wastes from list one and direct wastes from list two may be dumped subject to authorisation, but the requirements are less detailed.

In all cases, authorisations will not be given until the hydrogeological state of the receiving zone has been analysed, to eliminate any risks.

The proposal will now be examined by the European Parliament and by the Economic and Social Committee. The Council of Ministers will have the final responsibility of deciding for or against.

**++ MORE WORK, LESS PAY**

The working week in the European Community is calculated by the number of hours and overtime usually worked (hours lost through illness or accident are not included in the calculation).

The average working week for the whole of industry in December 1975 and December 1976 was:

	<u>Dec '75</u>	<u>Dec '76</u>
Germany	40.9	42.3
France	42.4	42.2
Italy	41.5	41.5
Netherlands	40.8	41.2
Belgium	37.1	38.5
Luxembourg	40.9	40.3
United Kingdom	41.8	42.2

The value of the gross hourly wage can be seen from the second table covering October 1975 to October 1976. The gross payment is the remuneration given by employers in each country before tax and other payments are deducted.

October 1975 is taken as the base period (= 100) and the increase by October 1976 was as follows :

Germany	103.4
France	99.5
Italy	n.a.
Netherlands	101
Belgium	103.8
Luxembourg	98.5
United Kingdom	101

The negative changes between 1975 and 1976 are due to the inclusion of workers who were on short time or whose work had been suspended.

The figures are taken from Volume 2 - 1977, of Eurostat which can be obtained from the Office for Official Publications, P.O. Box 1003, Luxembourg, price BF 360 or equivalent.

**++ BEEF PRICES**

Representatives of the European Bureau of Consumer Organisations were received on 23 January by Mr. Dalsager, Danish President of the Council of Agricultural Ministers. Whilst approving the relative moderation in agricultural price

increases proposed by the European Commission, the consumer representatives expressed their disapproval at the proposal to raise the price of products which are currently in surplus, (milk, sugar, wine, cereals and beef). They stated their principal concern which was to see that the basic principles of the common agricultural policy laid out in the Treaty of Rome were honoured, including those that ensure reasonable prices for consumers.

++ TRADE UNION INSTITUTE

In January 1974, the European Commission and the Council stated their intention of helping trade union organisations participate in the work of the European Community, and setting up training and information services for such organisations. In particular, they envisaged setting up a European Trade Union Institute. The preparatory work for such as Institute has since been undertaken by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and by the European Commission, who provided part of the finance.

Following a proposal from Mr. Henk Vredeling, the European Commission has just approved a draft convention between the Commission and the European Trade Union Institute. The triple task of this Institute - research, training and informing workers and workers' organisations - is intended to develop European awareness, and also to improve living conditions in the European Community. The Commission has proposed to grant the Institute a credit of 500,000 ECU for 1978.

According to the proposal drawn up by the ETUC, the Institute will be open to trade unions from all eighteen member countries of the ETUC. The Institute will be set up at the beginning of February and the convention signed.

++ PARLIAMENT : URGENCY FOR ENVIRONMENT

The European Parliament has sharply criticised the lack of urgency shown by the Community's Council of Ministers towards environmental protection. The list of proposals drawn up by the European Commission not yet approved by the Council amounts to two-thirds of the objectives outlined in the first environmental action programme. The Council has not yet pronounced judgement on directives covering important areas such as the lead content of petrol (proposed in 1973) the International Convention for the Protection of International Water Courses against Pollution (1974), the dumping of wastes in the sea (1976), etc. etc. The Parliament has also demanded that proposals be drawn up as soon as possible concerning the use of pesticides, the recycling of wastes, harmonisation of the "polluter pays" regulation. The economic crisis cannot be used as a pretext for delaying the solutions to environmental problems.

++ SOCIAL FUND : PILOT PROJECTS

A series of six pilot projects financed by the European Social Fund commenced last Autumn in four Community countries: United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy and France.

The cost of the projects is some 233,000 units of account (one u.a. = + 1.2 U.S. dollars) and their objective is to examine for the European institutions which areas should be selected for future intervention by the European Social Fund. These pilot projects have various objectives : integrating women into qualified jobs usually reserved for men, the training of executives for either creating cooperative enterprises or economically viable craft industries, or to engender the industrial recovery of backward regions, etc.

++ LIVE WIRE UNDER THE CHANNEL

The channel tunnel may seem to have now sunk in the deep without trace, but plans are still afoot to link the UK to France, this time with an electric cable.

The aim is to expand on a scheme which has already proved its worth. An electric cable was installed under the channel in the early sixties and, during the icy winter of 1962-63, demonstrated its usefulness as the UK bought French electricity to keep going. This first cable however only has a capacity of 160 megawatts. The cable will now be replaced by four pairs of cables with a total power of 2,000 megawatts, placed on the bed of the channel linking Dungeness to Boulogne (60 km.). The job should be finished within four years.

Apart from the possibility of freak winters, why go to such trouble? The basic reasoning lies in the fact that the peak hours of electricity consumption are different in France than in the UK and the cables enable power to be shared as hourly consumption demands. It should help the two countries to export their power. The cable will of course be very useful in times of emergency : cold spells, black-outs or strikes. British miners fear that the cable is to be used as a strike breaker. The UK Government has replied that it will create more jobs for miners. But who is to pick up the £220 million bill for the scheme? The governments of the two countries have agreed to partially finance the new schemes and have sought a contribution from the European Community. The Community is in favour of financing such industrial investment projects, particularly in the energy field. It has sent a request to the Council of Ministers to be able to grant such a loan. The request, which was agreed in principle at the Summit of December 1977, is still being examined.



++ ENERGY EPISTLES

Oil crises, oil slicks, nuclear debates, new energies sources.... the headlines are full of energy and to add a little substance to the discussion, the European Commission has just published a compendium of energy documents. Under the title "the Community energy policy", the compendium which is complete up until the end of 1976, presents the complete synopsis of European law in the energy field (regulations, solutions, recommendations, etc.) The work can be obtained in all official Community languages from the Office of Official Publications, P.O. Box 1003, Luxembourg, price BF 225 or equivalent.

A second brochure published in 1977 is the "Permanent directory of energy information sources in the European Community". The work contains addresses of public administrations, research centres, professional organisations, companies involved with energy questions. This document is also available from the Office of Official Publications, priced BF 450 or equivalent.

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COMMUNITY MAN IN FIGURES

Ever wondered what life is like in the rest of the Community? Many people claim they "know" the Italians, the French, the Germans, etc. but even frequent visitors to these countries can scarcely know what life is really like, behind the shutters. Appearances and social reality can differ wildly and more often than not a visitor's view is in any case rather lop-sided. A new work has just been published by the Community's Statistical Office which could pave the way to a clearer understanding of how the people of Europe really live. The document entitled "Social Indicators" - 1960-1975, attempts a synthesis of the most important social statistics, through which emerges a fascinating portrait of the elements which are shaping the European Community.

Ireland for husbands

The country with the largest population has for a long time been West Germany, but things are changing. Whilst the top three in 1975 were Germany, the UK and then Italy, by 1990 the Italians are expected to overtake the rest of the field with 59 million, and Germany with 54.7 million will drop into third place behind the anticipated 59 million British.

An inside view of Europe

The main intention of the work which is the first of its kind, is to enable living conditions and social trends in the nine Community countries to be compared and to provide the necessary basis for Community decision-making in the social field.

Eight social areas have been examined : demography, employment, working conditions, standard of living, social protection, health, education and housing. The accent is more on people than institutions or organisations, and the results have been presented so as to permit clear comparisons of Community countries, and to highlight the trends.

This volume of social indicators is without doubt a useful tool for all those - politicians, journalists, trade unionists, employers, students, etc. - who wish to try and comprehend Europe's social background. The document can be obtained from the Community's Office for Official Publications, PO Box 1003, Luxembourg,, price : £8, FB 500, Dkr 85, DM 32, FF 68, Lire 11,900, Fl 34.

The figures reveal that Germany has the lowest rate of population increase with 0.48% for 1975-76 and, at the other end of the scale, the Irish have been expanding at an annual rate of 1.12% which is expected to increase to 1.3% in the years to come. Ireland is also upsetting one of the curious laws of nature whereby, normally, there are more women than men. The current population registers only 99 women for every 100 men, whereas in countries such as Germany, every hundred eligible men have to be shared amongst 106.9 women.

Ireland also leads the youth field : 31% of its population are less than 15 years old. The UK, Belgium and Germany, by contrast, lead the senior citizens league with 14% of their respective populations over 65 years old. Forecasts for 1990 indicate that this trend will be accentuated in Germany and Denmark.

#### European divorce rates

Is marriage on the way out in Europe? Certainly not in the UK and France, who now lead the European marriage stakes. The Germans, in particular, appear to be going off the idea, however, and the Danes are on the downward swing as well.

Though leading the field in marriages, the UK is only second to Denmark in its annual rate of divorce, and both are well ahead of the rest of the field.

Most illegitimate births are to be found in free-loving Denmark, with 217 per 1000 births, as against 24.4 for the prudent Dutch. The UK finds itself in second place with 90, closely followed by France (1976 figures).

In all Europe, the Belgians appear in the greatest hurry to get hitched. The average age of marriage is 24.4 for men and 22 for women (first marriage). The Italian temperament seems to encourage them to wait a little longer - men 28.6 years, women 24.8 on average.

Population density is greatest in Holland and Belgium (338 and 322 per square kilometer). But big city life seems most popular in Germany and almost 36% of the population is concentrated in agglomerations of more than one million people. The UK squeezes 31.4% of its people into the concrete jungles.

From school to the dole queue

In Belgium, it is not easy for women and young people to find work. In 1975, 54.5% of the total unemployed were women and 42.9% young people. Only 28% of women, however, are actually employed in Belgium, as against 41% in Denmark, where women also have a lower rate of unemployment (37.8%). Young people are even worse off in Italy where close to 60% of the jobless are aged between 14 and 24. Though the job outlook for young people is rather grim in most countries, the under twenty-fives in the UK and Denmark stand a better chance of finding work.

Who gets paid the most?

Unemployment aside, the best paid industrial workers are to be found in Belgium, then Italy, followed by Germany and the UK. Workers earn most, however, in Italy and France. The greatest differences between average male and average female wage-rates is to be found in Luxembourg.

On the trade union front, the number of paid up members is highest in Belgium and Denmark where more than 70% of the workers are unionised. Way down the league is France, where only 22 out of every hundred are members of a trade union. The UK ranks fifth with 50%. As regards industrial disputes, there is an enormous gulf between Italy where disputes caused more than 1,192 working days lost for every 1000 employees in 1976, and countries such as Germany (26 days lost) where strikes are the exception, not the rule. Holland recorded only 4 work days lost, and Luxembourg only managed one work day lost per 1000 employees.

The country with the shortest working week is Belgium (37 hours a week). Then longest is France (42.5 per week), though the normal working week is however the same from one end of the Community to the other - 40 hours per week.

The European gourmet

The largest wine drinkers in the Community are, not surprisingly, the French, though they are closely followed by the Italians. As for potatoes, the great chip-eating Belgians only manage second place behind the Irish who rate 127 kilos per inhabitant. Top of the vegetable league are the Italians with 155 kilos of vegetables per head. Greatest meat eaters are the Irish (101 kilo/head) closely followed by the French (99 kilo/head). The Irish, together with the British, are also the heaviest cigarette smokers in Europe and manage 3,340 cigarettes per man/year. When cigars and pipe tobacco are included, the Dutch emerge from the smokey haze with an unequalled 4.4 kilos per inhabitant.

Which is the most cultivated nation in Europe? Judging by the share of income spent on theatres, cultural activities, education, leisure, etc. the Danes appear the most refined with 23.8%, compared with a paltry 5.5% for the Belgians and Italians.

Health care absorbs more than 11% of the household budget in France - the highest level in the Community. Housing gobbles up 14% of the budget in the UK, and 12% in Denmark, whilst 44% of income in Ireland is spend on eating, drinking and smoking. The Italians spend 37%. As for clothing, the Danes appear the least extravagant, spending only 5.5% of their income whilst the Germans top the fashion league with 10.3%.

As for consumer durables, the Luxembourggeois have the most cars per hundred inhabitants, the British have the most television sets, and the Danes have the most telephones and freezers. The Dutch buy the most washing machines and refigirerators, and the Italians the most dishwashers.

#### The real cost of leisure

A fairer way of assessing relative costs and prices in Community countries is perhaps to compare them to the average hourly wage. An Italian, for instance, has to work for more than one hour to earn enough money to go to the cinema, (as against 18 minutes for a Luxembourger). A Londoner has to labour for 1 hour 29 minutes to afford to go to a soccer match (as against half an hour in Copenhagen).

In Paris, a mans suit is equal to 61.5 hours of work, and in Copenhagen, only 28.5 hours. 1,446 hours of toil in Rome will buy a new car but in Bonn, it will only cost 761 hours of sweat for the same car. A Belgian can buy a loaf of bread for 9 minutes work, an Italian needs 15 minutes. A Copenhagen hairdresser will demand payment equivalent to half an hour's work, and a Paris coiffeur will expect more than one and half hours labour. A packet of cigarettes is worth 9 minutes work in Brussels, but 20 minutes in London.

#### Social security

Social expenditure per person is highest in Germany, Denmark and Holland. Germany also offers almost 12 hospital beds per 1,000 people (against 5 in Belgium). The average period of hospitalisation is also longest in Germany (23 days) close behind the UK (22 days), whereas Ireland and Denmark are more impatient and only offer 12 days. The number of doctors per 100,000 people is highest in Italy (199), closely followed by Germany (193).

Curiously enough, when it comes to infant mortality, Germany and Italy still have a lot of progress to make. Fewest expectant mothers die during childbirth in Belgium and Denmark, whilst the lowest infant mortality rate is to the credit of the Dutch and Danish.

A morbid but interesting question is the way people die in different European countries. Cancer strikes most victims in Luxembourg, Belgium and Holland whilst heart attacks cause most deaths in the UK and Denmark. The figures confirm that cirrosis of the liver is the biggest killer in France and Italy. Suicides are three times greater in Denmark and Germany than in Holland, and nearly six times greater than in Ireland.

The legendary courtesy of the British driver is fortunately reflected in the UK's very low accident mortality rates. By contrast, car accidents in Italy and Luxembourg take a heavy toll.

The Danes appear the most interested in education, judging by public expenditure. Their 16% outlay is closely matched by that of the Dutch, whereas the Germans only manage 10%.

Compulsory schooling is by no means uniform throughout Europe. Danish children only start school at seven years, whilst British children begin compulsory education at five. The average starting age in Europe, however, is six and formal schooling finishes at 14 in Italy and Belgium, 14 or 15 in Germany, 15 years in Ireland, Holland and Luxembourg, and 16 years in Denmark, France and the UK.

#### Overcrowding the bathtubs

The most revealing insight into how Europeans really live can be found by looking at their homes.

In 1975, The French and the Belgians headed the building league. But despite the appearance of being a property haven, a closer look at living conditions in Belgium reveals that a relatively low percentage of Belgian homes have a bath or shower (54%), which is fewer than are to found in Ireland. 40% of Belgian homes also have the toilets located outside the home. Belgium and Ireland also have the highest percentage of homes built before 1945. Even ahead of the Danes, the British "home sweet home" is most frequently to be found with delights of bath or shower. The average number of rooms per home is less than four in Denmark, France and Italy, and above five in Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg. Overcrowding is worst in Italy where more than 3% of homes have an average

of three people per room. In the UK, Luxembourg and Belgium, living space is greatest with an average of one person per room for 90-92% of homes.

In Ireland, 69% of families own their own home, as do 62% of Belgians. For those who prefer to rent, take a close look at the UK and Belgium where rents have not even doubled since 1960, whilst in France and Denmark they have tripled. Building costs have also tripled in Denmark and Holland.

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NUCLEAR HEARINGS : HEALTH AND WEALTH

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The consequences of the energy alternatives for health, safety and the environment was the principal subject of the second session of nuclear hearings held by the European Commission, 24 to 26 January in Brussels.

One particularly lively topic for debate was the health effect of nuclear energy on workers in the industry and the general population. Though no agreement was reached on this point by the 600 participants, it was stressed that the problem has been a major concern of the European institutions since the creation of Euratom in 1958. Nuclear installations are regulated and controlled by a body of coherent and efficient measures which, up until the present, has ensured that nuclear installations are safer and less harmful to man and the environment than the majority of conventional sources of energy, and their safety record is better than the majority of other industries. Protection measures need to be continually improved, it was recognised, in relation to technical progress and scientific knowledge, to ensure this safety record is maintained.

Nuclear energy by itself does not induce violence, it was pointed out. A technological innovation is by itself neither good nor bad. This quality depends on the use to which it is put. In a world, however, where the risk of conflict is permanent and where groups or individuals increasingly choose terrorism in their political strategy, nuclear power simply adds one more potential weapon to their arsenal.

The atomic bomb is available to the majority of countries who wish it. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, together with safety regulations covering fissile materials which operate in Europe by way of Euratom and in the rest of the world through the International Atomic Energy Agency, make it more difficult for the remaining countries to "go nuclear". These measures do not prevent them obtaining nuclear facilities, just delay the day. The ban on building nuclear reprocessing factories in countries who do not yet have nuclear weapons has more or less the same effect.

It is now more difficult to imagine individuals or subversive groups being able to procure nuclear explosives - even rudimentary ones. Even without a bomb, terrorists could attempt to cause a catastrophic accident in a nuclear power station. The safety provisions which prevent disaster in the case of malfunction or careless operation, it was pointed out, also operate in the case of deliberate malfunction. The majority of safety systems cannot be disconnected whilst the reactor is in operation.



It is also conceivable that terrorists could obtain dangerous radioactive material and disperse it in the atmosphere of, for example, a large city. As with the bomb, this possibility is largely theoretical, given the degree of control over dangerous materials and the difficulty of dispersing radioactive substances "efficiently" enough to be able to harm a large number of people.

The policing and the measures necessary to ensure that nuclear techniques and materials are only put to peaceful uses, do raise a number of sensitive questions. These security measures imply an extension of police or para-police activity. Persons employed at nuclear installations have to be vetted before and during their period of employment to ensure they are psychologically sound and are not saboteurs, and also to ensure that no technological secrets are let out. Even the local population need to be monitored and are subject to special regulations. These various developments are areas in which nuclear energy can impose serious restrictions on the rights and freedom of the individual.

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Without being responsible in itself, nuclear energy risks aggravating certain dangers which could ultimately be disastrous. Though these dangers have frequently been over-exaggerated, they are however very real : proliferation of nuclear armaments, terrorism, the slide towards the police state, etc.

In this field, as in any other, if a development is regarded as useful but presents certain risks, there are two courses of action : abandoning the development and the benefits it could bring, or looking for ways of eliminating the possible dangers.

It would appear, however, that one of the principal motivations for certain individuals or groups in certain countries to want to use nuclear energy for violent ends resides in the flagrant inequality of living conditions between the social groups within these countries.

If, as its advocates maintain, the peaceful use of nuclear energy is to increase general well-being and thereby reduce inequalities, it could provide a partial antidote to the dangers inherent in its own development. Given

the international consequences of the risks and advantages of nuclear power, national authorities and institutions such as the European Community have to ensure that nuclear energy lives up to its positive expectations.

Dr. Guido Brunner, European Commissioner responsible for energy, who organised and chaired the hearings, declared that the discussions on nuclear energy should be continued in public between the various groups of opinion. The European Commission now has to reflect upon the most appropriate means of continuing these discussions.

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