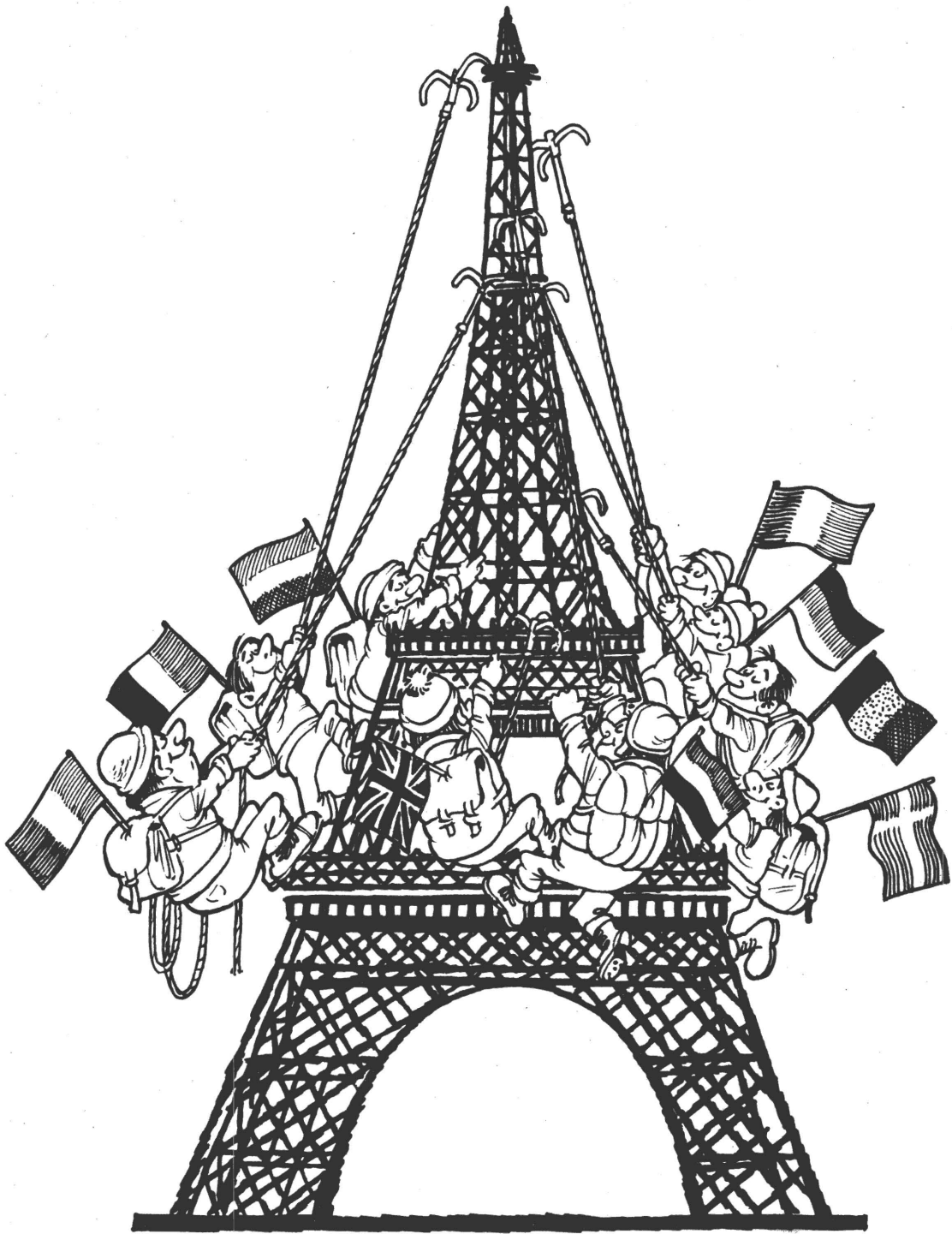


Euroforum



EMS: a 'Summit' achievement. See page 3.

Euroforum

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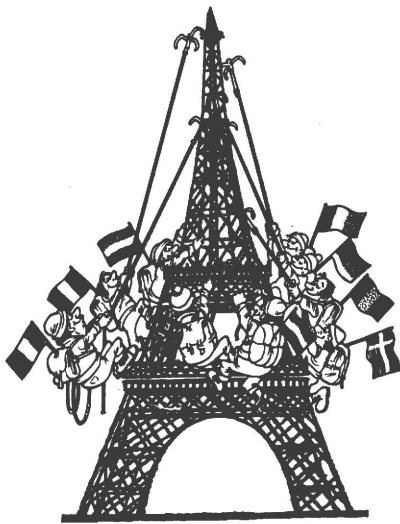
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EMS: a 'Summit' achievement

The European Community has taken a major step along the road towards one of its long-term goals, the creation of an economic and monetary union which could eventually lead to a single Community currency.

Eight of the nine Member States—the United Kingdom is the exception—have finally agreed to take part in a new European Monetary System (EMS) which will limit fluctuations between their currencies. It is expected that if exchange rates can be stabilized inflation can be brought under control. These two factors should in turn give businessmen more confidence to invest and expand, which would mean the creation of more jobs.

The new system went into operation on 13 March, the day after final agreement on its establishment was announced by the nine heads of government who held a twoday European Council meeting in Paris.

EMS had been agreed to at the last European Council meeting in Brussels in December but France subsequently delayed its introduction because it wanted it linked to reforms in the operation of the common agricultural policy.

How will the EMS work?

A European Currency Unit known as the ECU has been created. It is made up of a 'basket' of the Community

currencies. On the day in which EMS went into operation each participating country related its currency to the ECU in the same way as currencies used to fix their exchange rate in relation to the US dollar.

Seven of the EMS members have agreed to limit fluctuations in their currency to 2.25% above or below their agreed value in relation to the ECU. The exception is Italy which has adopted a 6% margin for the time being. A country can change its rate in consultation with its partners.

There is a presumption that a country whose currency diverges beyond the agreed limits will take the necessary steps to bring it back into line and for this reason can draw on an unlimited amount of very short-term credit from its partners.

To serve as a means of settlement between the eight governments, each have agreed to deposit 20% of their gold and 20% of their dollar reserves in a central fund of ECUs.

There will also be a total of 25 billion ECU (around £ 14 billion) available to countries which need short or medium-term support from their partners. In addition, in order to help the less-prosperous countries—Italy and Ireland—bridge the gap with their partners, there will be low-interest loans worth up to around £ 670 million a year for infrastructural investment.

The announcement of final agreement on the establishment of the new monetary system was the official highlight of the European Council, the 13th in a series which began in 1975 when the Nine's government leaders agreed to meet three times a year as the European Council instead of holding irregular 'summit' meetings.

It was accompanied by agreement that more would have to be done to bring the Member States' economies more into line with one another if the EMS is to be a success. The Nine's Finance Ministers and the European Commission have been asked to come up with ideas.

In view of the fact that their meeting took place in the shadow of the Iranian crisis, it was not surprising that the government leaders devoted a lot of time to the energy question and finally agreed to a 5% cutback in their oil consumption by the end of this year.

This will mean doing without 25 million tonnes, most of which would have been imported.

They also agreed to increase their efforts to substitute coal for oil where possible and to produce more electricity from nuclear power.

A serious picture of the bleak energy situation was painted for the 'summit' participants by the European Commission which reckons that last December's oil price rise announced by OPEC (the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) would probably raise the Community's oil bill this year by US \$ 5 000 million (around £ 2 500 million). It is also likely to increase inflation by around 0.45% and reduce economic growth about 0.4%. Each additional dollar in the price of a tonne of oil would, it is estimated, add a further US \$ 3 600 million (around £ 1 800 million) to the Community's import bill.

Faced by such scenario, the nine heads of government reaffirmed their determination to reduce their dependence on energy imports from outside the Community to less than 50% by 1985.

IN BRIEF

We all know how it feels to run out of cash on holiday. Or to send money from one country to another. Well aware of this, banks in seven of the nine Community Member States and in Switzerland have agreed to get together to iron out some of the problems. They will set up a council of senior bank executives who will study ways of cutting red tape. In particular, they will take their cue from the Eurocheque system which began 10 years ago and will see how it can be applied more flexibly to travellers' cheques, credit cards and 24-hour cash dispensers.

The contribution of new technology, particularly electronic-based information technology, to the Community's gross national product is expected to treble in this decade, according to Viscount Davignon, the Member of the Commission responsible for industry.

Cleaner living and conservation: can we persuade industry?

Our industrialized, consumer oriented society is geared to the manufacture and use of products ranging from toothpicks to tower cranes. We often fail to appreciate, however, that most products have an 'environmental impact' determined not only by the characteristics of the products themselves, but also by the way in which they are used and ultimately discarded.

Take, for example, wooden toothpicks. How many acres of forest have to be felled to satisfy Europe's annual demand for these? Would some other material be just as good and have less impact on our dwindling forest resources?

Or, to take another example, a well designed car may only consume as much material and energy in its manufacture as a competing model, but may last three times as long and thus rise to fewer car 'wrecks' to be disposed of.

Thus careful product planning can help to minimize the direct and indirect impact of products on the environment from the manufacturing right through to the disposal stage.

Influencing product impact

A report just published by the European Commission entitled 'Product Planning: the Relationship Between Product Characteristics and Environmental Impact' points out that the characteristics of products are primarily determined by manufacturers in the light of consumer demand, the nature of production possibilities and costs, the behaviour of competing firms and, in some cases, government regulations.

As a general rule producers can be expected to maximize their profits and will therefore select the design, raw materials, energy sources and production processes that will enable them to minimize costs. Similarly, producers will tend to improve the safety, reliability, maintainability and life of a product to the extent that this confers a market advantage.

But there is a limit to the efforts producers will be prepared to make to ensure the longevity of their products.



It is impossible to imagine, for example, that the manufacturers of golf balls would bother to develop an easily retrieved ball as this would soon put them out of business.

Planned obsolescence and disposable products have become characteristics of the manufacturing scene and contribute to the major problem of waste and its disposal.

Consumers and governments also influence product impact: the former through the way in which they exercise their choice (and the resulting way in which producers meet requirements), through the way in which they respond to changes in fashion and design features and through the way in which they use, maintain and discard products; the latter by laying down reliability, safety and recoverability requirements, or by setting environment protection rules and factory regulations that necessitate changes in product specifications.

More action needed

In the absence of government intervention, the report points out that product planning takes place through the market and that there are strong economic incentives for producers to produce the type of product demanded at a minimum economic cost which in some cases tends also to reduce their environmental impact.

But there are also instances when market forces in themselves may not take account of the effect of products on the environment. These arise because, for example, producers are not required to take account of the costs associated with the eventual dis-

posal of their products and there is therefore no incentive for them to take disposal or recovery problems into account at the planning stage. Nor do market forces take account of the use of scarce resources—the other side of the 'waste' coin. Often the scarcity of raw materials and energy, or the environmental impact of extraction processing, etc. is not fully reflected in the price the producer has to pay.

Consumers often do not have enough information to make a rational choice when purchasing new products and cannot therefore be certain to choose products with the least environmental impact.

These factors, the report points out, can result in a divergence between the results of market decisions about product characteristics and those that would occur if the social costs of environmental impact were fully taken into account. They may, the report concludes, thus provide a justification for official action to ensure changes in products that would further reduce their environmental impact.

At the Community level the report advocates the development of a product planning policy with priority being given to product groups that are important in terms of their impact on the Community's environment; those where there is practical scope for change in product characteristics to reduce this impact; and measures and product changes where there is evidence that environmental impact can be reduced through government action without causing serious economic and social dislocation or involving administrative or other costs.

Prevention, not cure, is next decade's watchword

It's much cheaper and more efficient to prevent pollution in the first place than to have to combat it after it has started its dirty business.

That's why authorities in Europe are planning new strategies for the 1980s that will see a second generation of environmental laws and controls. They are designed to take over in the footsteps of the piecemeal laws that governments throughout the world hastily erected against the spreading danger.

These are the findings of the latest 'State of the Environment Report' which will be issued by the European Commission in Brussels. This second such document is different from its predecessor of about two years ago, which was primarily a catalogue of environmental laws and actions taken by the European Community. The 1978 version is a more analytical work which reviews and forecasts trends in environmental protection.

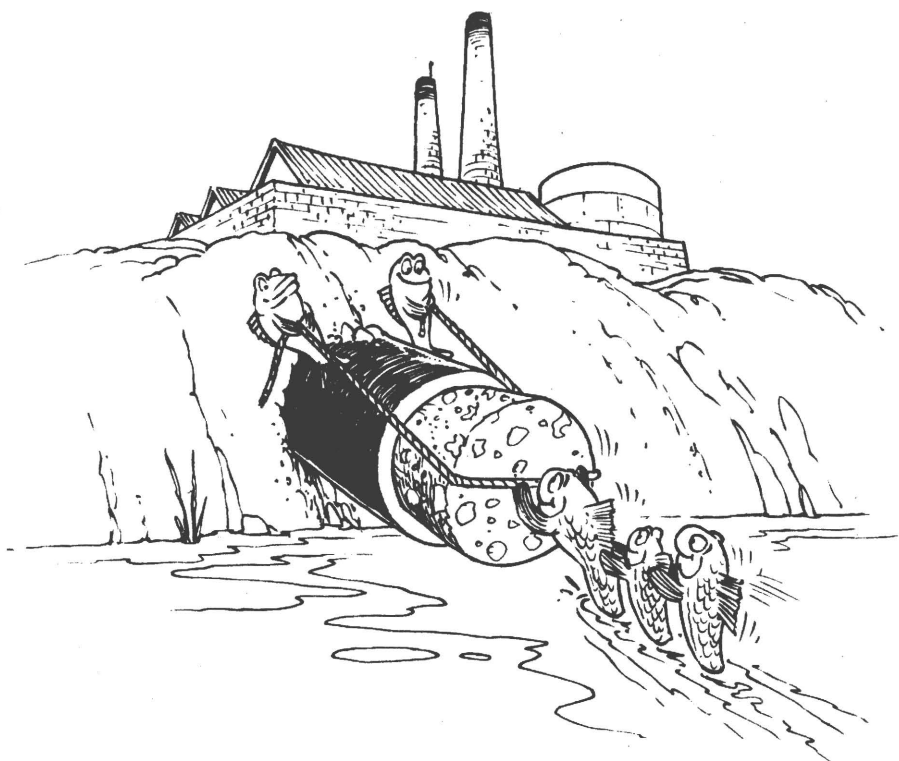
The report observes that environmental action in Europe and throughout the world did not really begin until after the 1972 United Nations conference on the subject in Stockholm. Since then, legislation has developed in various ways in the Community countries.

Some, like the United Kingdom and Denmark, have highly developed laws administered by a central agency. Others such as Germany and Italy, leave a lot of authority to Länder or regional administrations. In some countries, there are few laws and these are scattered in various Ministries.

Cleanliness of water supplies, according to the report, has had top priority in most countries in the Community and the results have been reasonably encouraging. It notes the vast improvement in the purity of the River Thames in England, but sadly notes the continuing plight of the heavily-polluted Rhine River that cuts through five European countries.

There have also been sporadic efforts to deal with air pollution, waste management and control, and international cooperation.

But the next decade, the report emphasizes, will need new mechanisms that will help prevent pollution from beginning and also involve the public



more in the process of what laws are needed and then enforcing them.

In this new generation of environmental protection laws, the European Commission foresees requiring an environmental impact assessment statement carefully evaluating the potential damage to the environment before a major industrial or construction project can go ahead.

To prevent dramatic environmental catastrophes like the one that occurred in Seveso, Italy, a few years ago, when a whole region was contaminated by the accidental release of a toxic chemical, the Commission also is planning strict safety requirements before and after construction of a plant.

Tests will also be required before potentially dangerous chemicals can be placed on the market or imported into the Community.

In addition, the Commission hopes that a trend started in the United States involving public and environmental groups in a more active way in the legal process will be followed in Europe. This would mean that the public or environmental groups could file court suits for damages or to block polluting projects before they start.

Another major public preoccupation—employment—was also addressed in the environment report. The report stressed that no evidence existed that environmental and pollution controls had been decisive in closing down

plants or affecting large numbers of jobs. To the contrary, it added, studies have indicated that the 'pollution control industry' could create a significant number of jobs.

What the Community will aim for in the coming decade, the report concluded, is 'a second generation of longer-term policies, aimed at promoting a qualitatively superior form of growth as a foundation for the future'.

IN BRIEF

Ireland has proportionately more road deaths than any other country in the European Community. A study carried out by the Belgian Kredietbank shows that in 1977 there were 95 deaths per 100 000 cars. Belgium wasn't far behind with 91. Drivers in the UK and the Netherlands, where the volume of traffic is similar to Belgium, were more careful. There were 64 Dutch deaths and only 46 British.

There are 10 700 people working for the European Commission, according to the most recent figures. This compares with around 10 million public servants employed by the Member States. Italians are the most numerous (2 588), followed by Belgians (2 474), Germans (1 699), French (1 438), British (826), Dutch (664), Luxembourgers (462), Danes (323) and Irish (158). Non-Community nationals number 90.

CONSUMERS



Some feel the pinch more than others

Once again the nine Member States have had a varied influence on the Community's consumer price index which is published monthly. Between December 1978 and January 1979 the index rose 1%, the sharpest increase since the 1.4% of April 1977. The period included the Christmas shopping season.

The increase was highest in the United Kingdom (1.5%), Germany (1.1%) and Italy (1.0%). It was lowest in Belgium, France and Luxembourg.

Over 1978 the consumer price index rose by a monthly average of 0.65%. The increase was highest in Italy and lowest in Germany.

Rise in Consumer Prices in 1978 (%)

Italy	11.8
France	10.0
United Kingdom	9.4
Denmark	6.7
Netherlands	4.3
Belgium	3.9
Luxembourg	3.8
FR of Germany	2.9

The other side of the CAP coin

As Agriculture Ministers of the Nine continue their wrangling over the level of farm prices in the Community in the coming year, consumers have been making their presence felt.

BEUC, the organization which represents national consumer associations, sent a delegation to meet the French Agriculture Minister, Mr Mehaignerie, who is currently chairing the farm talks, to press their case.

They pointed out to the Minister that one of the aims of the common agricultural policy was the provision of food to consumers at reasonable prices.

A BEUC spokesman said: 'In our view this aim has been totally ignored and the accent has been rather on high prices for food to consumers for which, as taxpayers, they also have to finance storage costs plus the export and even destruction of produce'.

BEUC called on the Council of Ministers to agree to a price freeze. It said that it was not opposed to the principle of direct income aids to compensate small farmers.

Tax-free shopping is in no danger, says Commission

One of the nicest things about arriving home a little dejected after a holiday or jaded after a business trip can be breaking open a bottle of duty-free booze or a flash of perfume.

Since the first duty-free shop for travellers was opened at Shannon Airport in Ireland a few decades ago millions have benefitted from this liberal interpretation of the tax laws.

The European Community has earned a justified reputation for making travel easier by cutting through red tape at frontier points and by enabling Community citizens to bring home more goods with them without having to pay duty when they arrive.

It was therefore something of a shock when rumours spread recently that the European Commission was planning to abolish duty-free shops on the grounds that they did not conform with Community law.

The Commission has now scotched these fears. It has said that it has no intention of proposing such a measure to the Council of Ministers which, in any case, would have the final say.

On the contrary, the Commission said that its priority was making it easier for Community citizens to travel and for goods to circulate more freely between the nine Member States. What's more, it hoped to contribute to even more enjoyable travel by proposing that duty-free allowances for travellers be increased further in the future.

The Council of Ministers recently agreed to a Commission proposal to increase the amount of goods on which duty has been paid which holiday-makers or businessmen can bring home with them without having to pay duty in their own country on their return. A similar increase was agreed to for small parcels received through the post.

IN BRIEF

The United States sells the Community around \$7 billion worth of agricultural produce each year, six times more than traffic in the opposite direction.

Major investment into safety of new power sources

With growing fears about the future supply and cost of oil there are renewed calls for the development of other forms of energy such as nuclear power. However if nuclear power is ever to be produced on a sufficiently large scale to replace oil then the public must be satisfied as to its safety.

The European Commission recently made proposals for two research programmes, one concerning the management of radioactive waste and the other plutonium safety, both of which are intended to satisfy some of the public's fears.

The Commission has proposed a 2nd programme lasting five years (1980-1984) and costing £ 35.5 million to handle radioactive waste. This is triple the amount of the present five-year programme and will be the largest multilateral effort of its kind in the world.

The proposed programme, which would be carried out indirectly by research centres in the nine Member States with the Community funding part of the cost, is in four parts:

- Processing and conditioning of radioactive waste.
- Storage and disposal of radioactive waste underground.
- Study of the various ways of handling radioactive waste.
- Study of the legal, administrative and financial aspects of waste management.

The new programme is a logical follow-up to the first but with more emphasis on low activity waste, the quality of conditioned waste and the setting up of tests projects.

The Member States have a common interest in the problem of radioactive waste. They each have dense populations to protect and are also conscious of the need to safeguard the environment. They all agree that the effective and safe handling of radioactive waste should be a public service and that commercial interests are therefore secondary.

The main problem of radioactive waste is how to treat and store it until it has become harmless. The most usual method is to immobilize the waste by covering it in insulating material.

The Commission's proposed plutonium fuel cycle programme also covers the period 1980-1984 and will cost £ 13.4 million.

The aim of the programme is to increase the safety of the use of plutonium as a nuclear fuel. The programme will study:

- Radiological effects of the plutonium cycle on man and the environment.
- Increasing safety of the production of nuclear fuel containing plutonium.
- Improved security in transporting and handling nuclear fuels containing plutonium.
- Projects to demonstrate the possibility of recycling plutonium in conventional and fast breeder reactors.
- Research into the security of light-water reactors using plutonium.

Brunner urges Nine once again towards a common policy

Europe may again be faced with a major energy crisis unless it can adopt a joint policy to cope with sudden shortages and long-term supply problems.

This is the consequence of a series of recent price increases by petroleum producing countries and the disruption of supplies due to the political upheavals in Iran.

The combined effect of the price increases and the interruption in supplies could mean additional expenses of US \$ 10 000 million for the nine European Community countries this year and a loss of something like one percentage point in the expected growth rate of the Community economies.

These calculations were made recently by the European Commissioner in charge of energy matters, Guido Brunner, who underlined that the recent decision by the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to increase oil prices by

14% in 1979 alone would result in an additional oil bill of US \$5 000 million for the Community.

These serious repercussions to the oil market developments are the reason the Commission urged the Community leaders meeting at the European Council 'summit' in Paris on 12 and 13 March to again look at the need for a joint Community plan of action.

It's not as if nothing had been done since the first 1973-74 energy crisis, however, the Community and its member governments have taken a number of steps to conserve energy, reduce their dependence on imported oil and develop domestic and alternative sources of energy. There has been a resulting overall reduction in energy consumption and of imports into the Community. But it is acknowledged that this drop came about largely because of the fortuitous find of oil in the North Sea and partly because of widespread slumps in the Community economies, which meant less need for oil.

The nine heads of Government and the Commission are both concerned that the recent price increases and disruptions will further depress the economic picture. During a period of already high unemployment, which has hit 6.5 million, such increases in oil prices could make the situation worse.

To seek relief, the Community countries need to lift their efforts at energy savings through national and Community programmes which have already been proposed. Energy Ministers have also been urged to approve financial aid to greater use of coal located inside the Community. Increased reliance on alternative sources of energy, ranging from solar and wind to nuclear power are also part of this programme.

But Community experts feel strongly that safety precautions need to be strengthened, concerning nuclear energy so that the public can be reassured. They have just proposed some £ 50 million in joint research programmes on radioactive waste and on plutonium fuels.

They also want to increase contacts and cooperation with the oil producing countries, in order to avoid misunderstandings and communications gaps in the future. That's why Commissioner Brunner recently visited Venezuela, the current OPEC president.

Hidden wealth of Europe's seas

Each year the oceans receive and absorb more than 100 000 billion megawatts from the sun, which is over a thousand times more energy than the total annual consumption of man.

A fraction of this solar energy, 2 400 billion megawatts per year can theoretically fuel photosynthesis in the oceans, giving a potential fish yield of about 900 million tonnes per year, compared with the present catch of about 70 million tonnes per year.

The oceans are also a huge storage place for chemicals; they are estimated to contain about 50 000 million megatons of mineral salts—for example, 16 000 million tonnes of aluminium and 4 800 million tonnes of copper, not to mention 7 million tonnes of gold.

The mass of the polymetallic nodules on the deep ocean floor is estimated to be between 1 000 and 3 000 million

tonnes, constituting large reserves of manganese, copper, nickel and cobalt.

Euroforum gleaned this and other fascinating information from a publication called 'Eurocean Report'. This is published quarterly by Eurocean, which groups 25 European companies who have come together to cooperate in marine research. Eurocean is based in the Villa Richard, rue de l'Abbaye, Monaco.

Honouring Edison a costly habit

Despite renewed calls to save energy due to the shortage of oil supplies following the Iranian crisis we are again starting to gobble up more energy. Electricity is a good example.

Last year the Community's consumption of electricity rose by 4.2% to 1 128 thousand million kWh. This compares with only a marginal increase in 1977. It is also higher than the 3% annual average increase since 1973.

The Irish, French and Danes recorded the highest increases in electricity consumption in 1978. The British recorded easily the lowest.

Demand was heaviest from home users and the service industries such as restaurants and hotels, which should be some consolation for Ireland which ranks tourism as one of its major industries. Industrial demand rose only slightly due to the shaky state of the economy.

Electricity Consumption January-November 1978

	kWh million	Increase over 1977 (%)
Ireland	9 010	7.2
France	207 189	6.9
Denmark	22 052	5.7
Netherlands	55 977	4.7
Belgium	43 335	4.5
Luxembourg	3 577	4.5
FR of Germany	322 518	4.4
Italy	160 794	4.4
United Kingdom	254 393	0.8

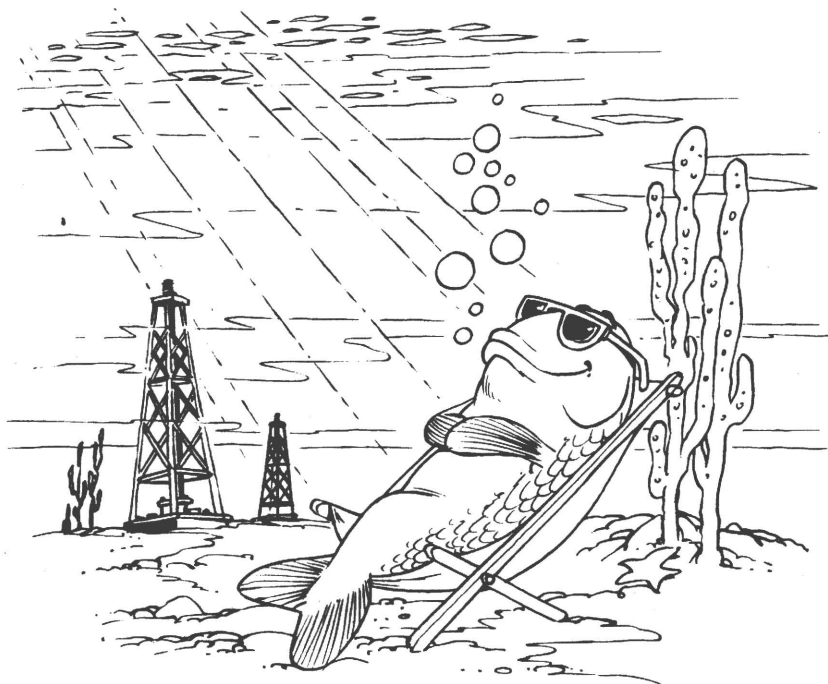
LIFESTYLE

Smokers happiest à la française

The best country for Europe's cigarette smokers is undoubtedly France. A packet of twenty costs only FF 2.30—the equivalent of 0.4 European units of account (EUA). At the other end of the scale is Denmark, where to buy a similar number you have to hand over Dkr 14 (2 EUA).

Cigarettes are also relatively expensive in Germany (DM 2.70 or 1 EUA) Belgium (BF 33 or 0.8 EUA) and the United Kingdom (55 pence or 0.8 EUA). The price of a puff is cheaper in Italy (Lir 600 or 0.5 EUA), Luxembourg (FLux 24 or 0.6 EUA) and Ireland (45 pence or 0.7 EUA).

It is widely known that a large share of the final selling price goes in taxes. But exactly how much? According to statistics recently released by the European Commission, excise duties and value added tax can account for as much as 87% of the cost to the consumer in Denmark or as little as 60% in Ireland and 62% in Luxembourg. The percentages in all other Member States are remarkably uniform, hovering between 69% in the Netherlands and 73% in Italy.



SOCIAL AFFAIRS



Year of the child: Community has a role to play

While it has sometimes been said that children should be seen and not heard, this year is the year for children to be both seen and heard.

Just as it does for many other causes from time to time, the United Nations has designated 1979 as the 'Year of the Child' to put emphasis on the need to tackle the special problems of children.

Child abuse, child labour and other injustices are luckily probably less prevalent in Europe than in other societies. But that doesn't mean special attention is not devoted to the remaining social ills of our children.

Children are almost always the indirect victims of the problems of their parents. In the same way, they are indirect (and sometimes direct) beneficiaries of a number of European Community programmes.

There are several examples in the Community's anti-poverty programme of pilot projects targeted at children. For instance, in Bristol in England there is a training workshop for unemployed school leavers. There is a special educational advisory service in Rheinland-Pfalz, and other such operations in other countries as well.

The European Social Fund also has dispensed funds for years for the children of migrant workers in the Community. The Community in recent months has begun to focus attention on the need to improve the problems of imbalance and discrimination in education and performance between boys and girls.

There are also programmes centered on easing the problems of young handicapped persons such as education to facilitate their integration into social and working life. A number of projects are designed to smooth the transition from school into the working world.

Children are also on the receiving end of some Community undertakings in the field of consumer and environmental protection education and of specific development and food aid programmes for developing countries.

And just last November in Brussels a special European Youth Forum was created to provide the Community institutions with an advisory consultative body on issues affecting the future of young people. It is a group bringing together not only youth associations of a social, cultural or general nature, but also youth organizations of many political hues.

The Commission will shortly publish an informative brochure which will describe in detail what the Community is doing to help children.

Going to work: a dangerous game

While work safety has improved considerably since the early hazards of the 19th century industrial revolution, the workplace can still be a dangerous zone for many of us.

Nearly 100 000 deaths and more than 12 million injuries are caused by accidents, most of them industrial, in the nine Member States each year. The cost in human terms is incalculable. In economic terms it has been put at upwards of £ 10 000 million) annually.

A high percentage of the European working population is still exposed to some danger at work and the cost to society of occupational accidents and disease is probably higher than is generally thought. There are now fewer coal-mine accidents, partly due to the European Coal and Steel Community's mine safety programme, but there are still dangers from the handling of asbestos and other toxic substances.

The European Community embarked in 1978 on an action programme on health and safety at the place of employment. Although this programme was just the basic outline of what the Community expected to do to improve working conditions, this is being followed up by new specific proposals.

The European Commission has just introduced a recommendation for a new law that would require the Member States to lay down specific limits to the exposure that workers handling certain products will face. For such products as asbestos, arsenic, cadmium, lead and chlorinated solvents, exposure limits would have to be established before 1982.

The proposed law would also require special monitoring and measuring of the level of these toxic products in the workplace, information to the workers on the potential risks and preventive measures and a level of medical supervision.

The law would also specify that any worker removed from his job because he had exceeded the normal approved exposure limit to a toxic substance, should not have his job or career jeopardized as a result.

While it would give the nine national governments a great deal of flexibility in determining the limits they would place on exposure, enactment of this proposed law would go a long way towards combating illness related to some of the most dangerous substances now handled in certain industries.

IN BRIEF

The volume of questions put by Members of the European Parliament to the Council of Ministers and the Commissions has increased by 73% in the past five years!

The steel industry may be in crisis but at least the orders are still coming in. Order books for 1978 were more than 6% fuller than the previous year. In 1977, production was 126 million tonnes, 4 1/2% up on 1976.

EMPLOYMENT

1978 increase in jobless less than rise in 1977

As the international economic crisis continued, just under six million people were unemployed in the European Community last year. While this represented a 4% increase on 1977 levels, it was considerably lower than the 9% rise registered from 1976 to 1977.

This overall figure, however, disguises highly divergent trends in the nine Member States. As the tables show, the number of registered unemployed last year fell by over 7% in Ireland and by almost 4% in Germany. Figures for the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are marginally below those for 1977.

Denmark, however, experienced the sharpest increase—just under 16%—and substantial rises were recorded in Italy (10%), which with over one and a half million registered as out of work had the highest absolute level of unem-

ployed in the Nine. In France the increase was 9% and in Belgium 8%.

It appears to be women rather than men that have been particularly hard hit by the increase in unemployment. While the overall Community rate was 5.6%, it was 5% for men and 6.4% for women. The situation was particularly serious in Belgium, where the unemployment rate for women was 14%, Italy 9%, France 7% and Denmark 7%.

The table below shows the evolution of unemployment in the Nine between 1974 and 1978.

	Registered unemployed (1 000's)		Women as % of registered unemployed		Registered unemployed as % of working population		Women unemployed as % of female working population	
	1974	1978	1974	1978	1974	1978	1974	1978
FR of Germany	582.5	992.9	44.3	50.8	2.2	3.9	2.6	5.1
France	497.7	1 166.9	52.9	52.7	2.3	5.3	3.2	7.3
Italy	997.2	1 512.2	36.0	41.2	4.8	7.1	6.1	9.0
Netherlands	134.9	205.6	20.9	33.7	2.9	4.3	2.2	5.1
Belgium	124.1	333.4	53.3	60.3	3.2	8.4	4.9	13.9
Luxembourg	0.058	1.166	61.4	43.5	0.0	0.8	0.1	1.2
United Kingdom	614.9	1 475.0	16.5	29.5	2.4	5.7	1.1	4.3
Ireland	70.4	100.8	18.8	20.6	6.3	8.9	4.3	6.5
Denmark	47.9	169.8	25.7	45.2	2.0	6.7	1.2	7.0
Eur 9	3 070	5 958	35.9*	42.7*	2.9*	5.6*	2.9*	6.4*

1978 figures are provisional

* Average

THE REGIONS

Giving a boost to employment

More than 250 000 people in the Nine owe their jobs partially to money paid out by the European Community's Regional Development Fund. Projects supported by the Fund in the industry and services sector helped create some 222 000 new jobs and helped keep open another 31 000 between 1975 and 1978 it is reckoned.

The European Commission, however, in supplying these statistics, recommends that they be treated with caution. The figures are supplied by the nine Member States when they submit applications for Fund assistance. As a result they are estimates of the number of jobs which it is thought the projects will create. No details are available of the number actually created.

INDUSTRY

Steel sales abroad are encouraging

Increased orders from third countries provide some comfort for the Community's troubled steel industry.

According to the latest figures released by the statistical office in Luxembourg steel production in the nine Member States rose by 6 million tonnes in 1978 to 132 million tonnes due primarily to a 11.5% increase in orders from third countries.

Exports rose by 21% during the period January - October 1978 compared with the same period the previous year. At the same time imports fell by 9%.

It is expected that the Community will achieve a steel trade surplus of 20 mil-

lion tonnes this year—the highest since 1974.

France, Germany and the United Kingdom all enjoyed healthy steel trade surpluses last year. The French exported 5.3 million tonnes to third countries in 1978 and imported only 926 000 tonnes. The Germans exported 8.6 million tonnes and imported 3.7 million tonnes. The British exported 2.4 million tonnes and imported 1.3 million tonnes.

IN BRIEF

The Commission has asked the Council of Ministers to approve a plan for a £10 million agricultural research and development programme.

There will be one vehicle for every 2.6 inhabitants in the Community by the year 2000, according to projections in a recent study carried out for the Commission.

REDUCING BARRIERS

Bon voyage!

In an effort to cut down on the formalities that lead to annoying delays for tourist coaches at national border crossings, 16 European countries are hard at work on relaxing present rules.

Representatives of the nine European Community countries and seven other neighbours made considerable progress at a recent meeting in Brussels on the subject. The Nine and their colleagues from Austria, Finland, Greece, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland belong to the European Conference of Ministers of Transport.

The group has been working for some time on liberalizing the rules for occasional international coach and bus service between the Community and non-Community States. Their last discussions led to solutions on most problems and they are expected to aim at completing the work at the next meeting or soon thereafter.



EDUCATION

Teachers' chance to return to school—European style

Every year a number of teachers, researchers and administrators in second-level schools and higher education institutions in the Community are given a chance by the European Commission to study in other Member States and learn more about their educational systems.

The provision of these study grants is part of the Community's action programme in the field of education which was adopted by the Council of Ministers in 1976.

Four schemes are currently being administered by the Commission's education department under the responsibility of Commissioner Guido Brunner. The Commission is now inviting applications for the academic year 1979-80 (closing date: 1 June, 1979).

The four schemes are set out in detail below.

- 59 grants have been awarded for visits of four to six weeks to study education systems in other Member States. Some 120 teachers, researchers and administrators have benefited from the scheme since its inception in 1977. For the coming academic year the maximum period for each visit will be reduced to four weeks to enable more grants to be made. The maximum grant for each visit is £ 1 000.
- 90 grants have been made for specialists in vocational education and guidance with particular reference to the linkage between education and employment. The grants are valued at approximately £ 670 each and permit study tours of not less than ten working days per visit.
- 200 grants of some £ 335 each, funded equally by the Commission and by national, regional or local authorities, have been awarded to local and regional

administrators catering for 11-19 year olds to enable them to make group study visits lasting about a week to other Member States. This list will be published later.

- 58 projects involving well over 100 institutions of higher education will be receiving Community grants this year for developing joint study programmes with partners in other Member States. Since the joint study programmes scheme began three years ago with the aim of fostering co-operation in higher education within the Community, some 90 projects and 170 institutions have been supported. The Commission provides grants of the order of £ 2 620 per programme. To be eligible for a grant under this scheme, joint programmes must have a minimum length of three months. A wide spectrum of subjects is covered and in some instances entire degree length courses have been developed.

TRADE

Chance to penetrate the mysteries of the Orient

The Mystique of the Orient is legendary, but for European exporters who are trying to penetrate the Japanese market it is very much a harsh reality. With a trade deficit with Japan of over £2 500 million the Community is highly concerned about the problem.

Apart from tariff and non-tariff trade barriers European businessmen are hindered by language and cultural problems. In addition they know little about how the Japanese market functions.

The European Commission is now trying to put this right by offering scholarships to young European executives to spend 18 months in Japan, starting September 1979.

The first 12 months will be spent on an intensive Japanese language course and the final 6 months in a Japanese firm gaining practical 'in house' experience.

Most of the stay will be spent in Tokyo though some time may also be spent in other major cities such as Osaka. There are 20 places available to candidates aged between 25 and 38 who are Community citizens. Final selection will be made by the Commission.

The applicants must have at least a university honours degree or an equivalent professional qualification. They must also have had at least two years working experience and be able to show their interest and ability in international trade. They should have a sound knowledge of English plus another Community language.

The scholarships are worth £19 000 each and cover living costs, insurance, transport and the courses.

Applications should be made by post and contain the candidate's curriculum vitae. They should be sent to the following address by 15 April 1979:

Commission of the European Communities,
Directorate General for External Relations,
Division I-B-2,
200, rue de la Loi,
B-1049 Brussels.

AGRICULTURE

What's happening down on the farm?

French cows are working overtime. In 1976 they gave a little under 31 million tonnes of milk, helping France to make more butter (half a million tonnes) and cheese (one million tonnes) than any of its Community partners.

However, for its size, Ireland emerges as Europe's largest producer. With three million people, the country provides over 4.5 million tonnes of milk a year.

Production is also high in Germany (22 million tonnes), while Britain, where advertisements constantly urge the public to drink more milk, is also high up the league of producers (17 million tonnes).

Both in terms of quantity and quality it is France, which has secured international renown for its many varieties, that dominates the Community's

cheese production. Indeed, they say the country has more different kinds of cheese than there are days in the year.

Although they may be less well known, German and Italian cheeses with 650 000 and 540 000 tonnes respectively per year, have a significant share of the Community market. Production in Britain is low (200 000 tonnes) despite the fame of its Cheddar and Stilton. But in Ireland, which has the highest consumption of milk products in the Community, only 50 000 tonnes of cheese are made per year.

Most of the Community's butter comes from Germany and France—some 550 000 tonnes apiece. Other northern countries also make a large amount in relation to the size of their populations: Netherlands (200 000 tonnes), Denmark (140 000 tonnes) and Ireland (100 000 tonnes). Britain, which still receives a lot of its butter from New Zealand, only produces 90 000 tonnes a year, while Italy churned out a low 70 000 tonnes.



Jenkins predicts key role for China in world leap-forward

'The Four Modernizations', the programme currently being undertaken by the People's Republic of China, could be the major world economic event of the next two decades, according to Roy Jenkins, President of the European Commission.

Such an economic reorganization by the 950 million Chinese, who form the largest single ethnic market in the world, could provide the 'historic impulse to growth' which the world economy so desperately needs, he feels.

Mr Jenkins was giving his first impressions of his recent trip to China during which he had long talks with the Chinese leaders, including Chairman Hua, Vice-Premiers Deng and Gu, Foreign Minister Huang and Foreign Trade Minister Li.

The trip was a follow-up to the signing last April by China and the Community of a framework trade agreement which is expected to provide a considerable boost to trade between the two.

Mr Jenkins said the Chinese were very conscious that the Community was the world's largest trading entity and that they were very anxious to increase the two-way trade flow. In 1977 the first nine months of last year the Community exported goods worth £ 680 million to China and imported goods valued at £ 450 million.

Mr Jenkins said that there were great opportunities for the Community to build up its share of the Chinese market and he predicted that this could amount to between £ 12 000 million and £ 15 000 million by 1975. Naturally, the Chinese expect to make some impact on the European market as well.

In order to promote this increase in trade, a Joint Committee envisaged in the framework agreement signed last April will meet at high official level in Peking in May. There will be a business week in Brussels in 1980 bringing together about 100 Chinese heads of purchasing and selling agencies and European businessmen.

The Chinese told Mr Jenkins that they planned to build a major trade centre in Peking with accommodation and facilities for visiting businessmen within the next two years. The Community may give the Chinese help in the scientific and technological fields, and the Community's Generalized System of Preferences, under which a large number of exports from developing countries are admitted into the Community at reduced tariffs, may be extended to China.

Mr Jenkins said that he was struck by the Chinese awareness of Community development. They were particularly impressed by the prospects for the European Monetary System which they regarded, he said, 'not merely as a positive element in the progress towards European unity but as a stabilizing factor in their trade with the Community'.

Not surprisingly, China's invasion of Vietnam figured in the discussions. Mr Jenkins said that events had moved on since his departure from Peking but while he was there the Chinese leaders' explanation to him of their action was that it was for a limited space of time, that they did not seek territorial gains and that the troops would be withdrawn.

Mr Jenkins responded by urging the need for caution, emphasizing that the unhappy country of Vietnam had already contributed enough to world instability in the past and he hoped it would not contribute more in the future.

He added that he felt the Chinese leaders were more influenced in their decision to attack Vietnam by the signature of the Soviet-Vietnam Treaty and by Soviet behaviour in South-East Asia than by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.

Reducing barriers Eur-ASEAN style

The recipe is simple, although the ingredients may not be readily available. Take several hundred top businessmen from a dozen different countries, add a generous helping of bankers and government officials and mix well together, preferably in the same hotel.

The immediate result should be a large number of close encounters of the profitable kind, leading to joint ventures, licensing and marketing arrangements and other forms of collaboration.

The recipe was recently tested by the European Commission in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, with very satisfactory results. The Commission has been trying hard to get Community manufacturing companies to team up with their counterparts in the five countries that make up the Association of Southeast Asian nations, or ASEAN (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand).

It believes that it is in Europe's interest to strengthen its economic ties with countries which are rich in natural resources, offer expanding markets for European goods and technology and, most important of all, positively welcome the chance to work more closely with the Nine.

Some two years ago the Commission and ASEAN governments co-sponsored the first EEC-ASEAN Conference on Industrial Cooperation in Brussels. It was not an unqualified success, so that the decision to organize a second conference was something of a gamble.

But the pessimists were proved wrong. The Conference was opened by Indonesia's President Suharto in the presence of nearly 800 participants, including six ASEAN ministers and Commission Vice-President, Wilhelm Haferkamp.

Over 300 companies, including 154 from Europe, were represented by their top people. They were joined by the chairmen and general managers of some 40 banks, including the 27 European banks which had joined the Commission in sponsoring the Conference.

On-the-spot surveys indicated that a fair amount of 'match-making' took place in Jakarta. No contracts were signed, but then no one expected that long-term business deals involving large sums would be concluded in the short space of three days.

The business deals promoted by the Conference will emerge gradually over the next 6 to 12 months; the banks in fact are already monitoring results of this kind.

But Jakarta achieved something more important: it opened the eyes of

numerous company directors and their bank managers to the opportunities which ASEAN offers for mutually profitable cooperation.

In an age of economic interdependence no country can hope to solve by itself its problems of unemployment and low growth rates. The Jakarta Conference was important precisely because it showed how, by pooling their resources, industrialized and developing countries can cooperate in raising the living standards of their people.

THIRD WORLD

Community help for refugees in South-East Asia

The European Commission is to make a contribution of £ 3.35 million to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) for the relief of refugees in South-East Asia.

This follows a visit to the Commission recently, reported in our last issue, of former Danish Prime Minister Poul Hartling, who is the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

The money, one fifth of which is being paid over immediately and the rest as soon as the budgetary arrangements can be made, will help the UNHCR meet some of its most urgent demands for assistance.

The Commission contribution will be used to help a total of 79 000 refugees — 30 000 from Laos, 47 000 from Vietnam, and 2 000 from Cambodia. Of these, 32 000 are now in Thailand, 36 000 in Malaysia and the other 11 000 distributed through a number of countries.

The overall programme for helping these refugees will be £ 24 million. It will provide them with shelter and medical care until they can move to their final destination.

For a number of years the Community and its Member States individually have contributed to financing UNHCR. In 1978, this contribution amounted to around 40% — £ 28 million out of a total of £ 71 million. Of this, the contribution of the Community as such was £ 7.2 million.

PUBLICATIONS

'The EEC in Crisis' sums up how one journalist views Community developments over the past three years. It is written by John Cooney, Brussels-based correspondent of the 'Irish Times'. It is published in paperback by the Dublin University Press, 17 Gilford Road, Dublin 4 at a price of £ 1.95. It can also be ordered from: I.P.A. Belgium S.A., rue Charles Martel 20, B-1040 Bruxelles.

'Twelfth General Report on the Activities of the European Communities' covers developments in 1978. Copies from the Office for Official Publications (see our back cover for address), price £ 3. Please quote catalogue number CB-25-78-574-EN-C.

'European Union' brings together the annual reports made by Community institutions on progress towards Union. Supplement 1/79 of the Bulletin of the European Communities. Office for Official Publications 50p, catalogue No CB-NF-79-001-EN-C.

'Cooperation between firms in the Community - franchising'. 'Studies series on Commerce and Distribution, 1978, No 5'. Office for Official Publications, £ 2. Catalogue No CB-NK-78-005-EN-C.

'Analysis of Vocational Preparation in the Member States of the European Community' £ 2. Catalogue No CB-25-78-186-EN-C. Office for Official Publications.

'Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics, 1974-77'. Eurostat series. Office for Official Publications £ 6.60. Catalogue No CA-24-78-912-6A-C.

'Vocational Training' is published four times a year by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in Berlin in collaboration with the British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education. Available from the Office for Official Publications, Catalogue No HX-AA-78-003-EN-C. Single copies cost £ 1.30. Annual subscription £ 4.

The secretariat of the European Parliament has just published a second 330-page edition of the handbook 'Europe Today' on the state of European integration. Like the first, it deals with the structure of the European Communities, the Common

Market, the common agricultural policy and the common economic and social policies, but is updated to 31 March 1977.

This handbook, which is intended as a source of reference for Members of the European Parliament and a reliable guide for candidates in direct elections, will also be most useful to all who are interested in European integration: politicians, journalists, university circles and professional organizations.

Available from the Office for Official Publications.
Price: £ 14.40.

IN BRIEF

In 1955, the Community's shipbuilding industry had 70% of the world market. In 1977 it was down to 20%. That's not all, Industry Commissioner told the European Parliament recently that he thought the crisis would not reach its climax until 1980-82. Last July the Commission estimated that it would cost £ 3 billion to reorganise the industry over the next five years.

The Commission is proposing a number of amendments to the Community Treaties to make it simpler to bring legal proceedings against anyone who infringes Community law.

A number of studies are currently being carried out in the Community to find better ways of tackling terrorism. This follows a resolution for joint action by the Nine Heads of Government at their European Council meeting last April. One of the aspects being examined is the abuse of diplomatic bags.

The European Investment Bank, the Community's long-term financing institution which makes low-interest loans for projects of Community interest, has agreed to two loans worth a total of £ 48.3 million for Northern Ireland. The money will be used to improve electricity services and roads. The new loans mark a significant stepping-up of the Bank's activity in Northern Ireland where the employment rate is 11.8% and 20% in some areas. The new projects should create 600 jobs a year between now and 1981.

FOCUS

All roads lead to the bank

While tunnels under rivers date back more than 4 000 years when the Babylonians built one under the Euphrates, the new one under the Thames at Dartford is a different breed.

The antique tunnel in the cradle of civilization was only for pedestrian traffic, while the modern version linking Kent and Essex Counties has a more up-to-date, and even futuristic, role to play.

It will not only help relieve the congestion and pollution near the earlier 1963 Dartford tunnel. It is also a major artery for traffic coming across the Channel through English ports—which may someday pour out of the proposed Channel tunnel still on the drawing boards.

And while the Babylonian builders got by with cheap slave labour, the new tunnels are a major financial commitment largely beyond the resources of many communities.

That's why this tunnel and other major European transport undertakings are increasingly getting financial help from such institutions as the European Investment Bank. The Bank, headquartered in Luxembourg, is a source of credit for such

important programmes throughout the Community.

It has financed a number of significant projects in the United Kingdom and Ireland since the two joined the Community in 1973.

For instance in 1978, a £ 10 million loan went to finance about half of the cost for seven projects connected with the Irish road system. One involves improvement of the motorway from Dublin to Cork by building a bridge across the Liffey in Dublin and for a bypass around Naas in County Kildare. Others are for the Dublin-Galway, Dublin-Enniskillen, Longford-Castlebar and Letterkenny-Strabane roads and another for a bypass of the new town of Tallaght in Dublin County.

Then back in 1977, another £ 13.1 million went about halfway towards paying the full cost of some 40 improvement or construction projects in the Irish network. These went for links with industrial and tourist centres.

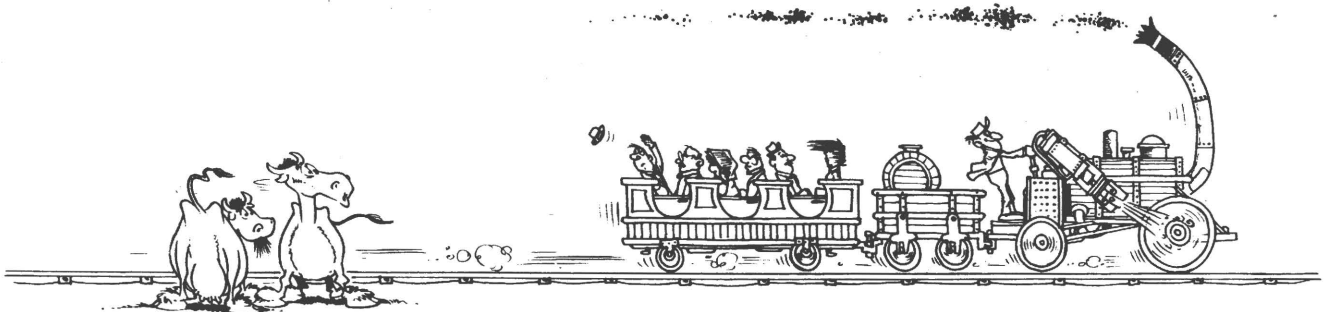
In the United Kingdom, funds have gone not only for bridges, tunnels and motorways, but also for railway improvements. Last year £ 36.9 million were earmarked for high-speed diesel trains that can use existing lines to travel 200 kilometres an hour on the London-Aberdeen run, thereby cutting the length of the journey from 9 hours to 7 hours and 20 minutes. The European Investment Bank had earlier

invested £ 7.2 million in 1977 for such high-speed trains and £ 11.6 million in 1976 for new-technology 'Advanced Passenger Trains' destined to serve the London-Glasgow line.

The other European Community countries have also benefitted from such transport loans from the European Investment Bank. At a recent count, the Bank had helped finance some 1 600 kilometres of roads in the Community, with Italy by far the largest recipient with some 1 100 kilometers of Bank-financed roads. In fact, all the Community countries, with the exception of Luxembourg and Germany, had received Bank finance.

The main emphasis in road projects has been to serve border regions with links from one country to another—which makes it a lot easier for motorists to streak from one Community country to another on holidays. But such connections also help generate trans-frontier trade and contacts. Another major goal has been to bridge underdeveloped regions of the Community with the more prosperous ones in order to stimulate economic interaction.

While the Bank's loans go for projects other than road-building, these are a main area of interest. And it stands to reason that if that long-awaited Channel tunnel ever is built to connect England with the Continent, the Bank will have something to do with it.



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