

Euroforum



Turkey begins to shape up on the horizon. See page 3.

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Turkey begins to shape up on the horizon

More than half a century after the father of modern Turkey, Kemal Ataturk, began the process of turning his country into a European nation, the current government in Ankara has indicated its desire to fulfil Turkey's long-standing ambition of taking its place as a member of the European Community.

This decision, reached swiftly by the new government of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, was announced in Brussels by the Turkish Foreign Minister, Hayrettin Erkmen, at a meeting with his counterparts from the Community last month.

Speaking to the press afterwards, Mr Erkmen also said that his government hoped to present its formal application for membership before the end of this year.

The eventual accession of Turkey would extend the boundaries of the Community to the Near East and the biblical land of Mount Ararat. It would also add an Islamic nation of more than 44 million citizens which has been referred to as the bridge between Asia and Europe and which has been quoted as a prime example of democracy in the developing world.

Both Community and Turkish leaders meeting in Brussels acknowledged that eventual Turkish membership would represent major economic, social and political challenges to both.

Turkish governments in recent years have repeatedly called on help from friends and allies as well as international institutions to combat an economic situation which has seen a previous economic 'miracle' of 7% annual growth turn into steadily worsening conditions.

During his speech to the Nine's Foreign Ministers attending a meeting of the Community-Turkey Association in Brussels, Mr Erkmen said that, while his country was firm in its intention to become a full member of the Community, it could only realise its ambition with the help of its friends to redress the economic situation there.

He also noted that Turkey is required to spend large amounts of its resources not only for its own but for the collective Western defence, which represents an additional burden to the weak economy of the country.

This economic obstacle is formidable for the Community, which is in the midst of a serious economic crisis of its own and also is required to assist three other Mediterranean countries—Greece, Spain and Portugal—to prepare for Community membership.

Another major difficulty in the process of integrating Turkey would be the presence of a large surplus labour force in the country which has already spilled over into the Community through some 700 000 Turkish migrant workers, most of them in Germany.

Another uncertainty revolves around the impact of Turkey's involvement in the complicated political rivalries in the Eastern Mediterranean. These have surfaced in repeated clashes between Turkey and Greece, which is scheduled to enter the Community next year. These two neighbours have had running disputes over the island of Cyprus, their rights in the Aegean and over other islands in the Mediterranean.

Despite these obvious stumbling blocks, both sides expressed their willingness 'to ensure that the association develops with a view to facilitating the accession of Turkey to the Community at a later date, 'to quote from the communique issued following last month's Brussels meeting. Both also noted that the relationship between Turkey and the Community dated back to 1963 when Turkey became an associate of the Community.

At that time, the President of the European Commission, Walter Hallstein already remarked that 'Turkey is part of Europe', and the so-called Ankara Agreement signed then clearly visualised the establishment of ever closer bonds between the two parties to provide for the transition towards free trade and eventual membership for Turkey. Theoretically, after a 22-year transitional period, a customs union would have been set up between the two and Turkey was to be ready to join the Community.

Despite growing trade and substantial amounts of Community financial aid to Turkey, it nevertheless became clear as the years passed that the ambitious aims of the Ankara Agreement were difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Both sides agreed that the planned elimination of Turkey's tariffs against Community shipments to keep pace with the accompanying liberalization by the Community of its treatment of Turkish exports would leave Turkey's fledgling industries highly vulnerable to stiff competition from the more robust Community industries.

Negotiations and consultations over the years resulted in adjustment of this transition and in increasing quantities of Community funds for Turkey. But the period also found Turkey's balance of trade with the Community slip badly into heavier and heavier deficits. Three quarters of Turkey's exports are agricultural goods or raw materials and only one quarter manufactured goods, although the percentage has been growing as industrialization develops.

It was this worsening economic and trade situation that caused a slowing down of the process and an eventual freezing of the customs dismantling by Turkey several months ago. The Demirel Government which took office following elections in 1979 carried out a thorough review of the situation and took the decision to reactivate this process early this year.

It is expected that the next phase of relations will once again have to include substantial amounts of Community financial aid. The previous Turkish Government had evaluated the country's needs at some \$10 billion from all sources, including aid from other nations, from commercial bank credit and from international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund.

These complex and delicate problems will have to be at the heart of the forthcoming discussions. A further obstacle to Turkey becoming the 13th Member State of the Community still remains the diversity of Turkish political and public opinion.

This country, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia Minor, still retains a diversity of elements and almost as many opinions about which road to take in the future. These political differences within the country have in recent years erupted into a troubling pattern of violence which has made the process of taking national decisions difficult.

It is this climate of difficulty that negotiators from Turkey and the European Community will have to work to overcome. The next step should be the actual presentation of Turkey's request for membership. This will in turn have to be examined in full detail, as were the demands of other applicant countries, by Community authorities. Assuming that the political desire expressed by both sides in the past to have Turkey become a Community member is reaffirmed, only then will the expected years of negotiations begin.

At the end of this complicated process, Turkey would join a new enlarged Community that includes peoples as diverse as the Eskimoes of frozen Greenland and the descendants of the Hittites from the plains of Anatolia.

Jenkins plots course for the Community in the Eighties

A picture of major advance last year for the Community and for European integration, against a backdrop of grim economic challenges on the horizon in the year ahead, was painted by Commission President Roy Jenkins when he delivered his fourth annual address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on February 12.

Mr Jenkins took the opportunity in presenting the Commission's 1980 work programme not only to dwell on the Community's achievements in 1979 but also to spell out the threats to the Community's future development.

First, the good news. The past year has seen a number of significant triumphs, notably the introduction of the European Monetary System, which Mr Jenkins said had established itself 'gradually and unspectacularly'. He

described it as an 'important landmark' in the Community's life and looked forward to its development.

He could also point to the conclusion of the negotiations with Greece which have paved the way for its membership of the Community next January. This enlargement of the Community, said Mr Jenkins, 'emphasises the underlying vitality of the Community and the attraction which it holds for the reborn democracies of Europe'.

The President also cited the conclusion of the Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations and the renewal of the Lomé Convention with 60 developing countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

As well, there was the Community's participation in positive international cooperation in the energy field and, above all, the first direct elections to the European Parliament, 'bringing a new and powerful democratic dimension to our affairs'.

Mr Jenkins said he wanted to underline these achievements because 'the essential vitality of the Community can sometimes be obscured by the dust of short-term problems and difficulties', and he reminded his audience that 'there remains a deep reserve of invention, imagination and sustained cohesion which can be brought to bear in the common interests of Europe'.

Nevertheless, the picture he painted for the immediate future was a bleak one, with Europe facing no less than the break-up of the established economic and social order on which its post-war prosperity was built.

The President said that the warning bells had been sounding for a decade with the collapse of monetary stability and, subsequently, the rise in oil prices which he described as the main catalyst of our current woes.

He warned: 'It is now certain that if we do not change our ways while there is still time—and 1980 could be almost our last opportunity—our society will risk dislocation and eventual collapse'.

He pointed to a likely fall in economic growth this year from 3.3% to 2% or even lower; to an expected unemployment rate well above 6%; to inflation that could reach 11.5%; and to the current account deficit on external trade more than doubling to \$20 000 million under the impact of last year's 65% increase in oil prices.

Mr Jenkins said that the essential question for 1980 and the years ahead to which we had to find an answer was

how we could adapt ourselves to the new economic realities.

A vital component in this survival strategy will be how we respond to the continuing energy crisis. Mr Jenkins said that conservation should be the cornerstone of the Community policy and he pointed to potential savings of up to 35% in transport, industry and agriculture, and up to 50% in the housing and services sectors on the basis of current available technology. He believed that we could knock 20% off our imported oil bill by 1990.

Mr Jenkins also urged more investment in developing native resources and finding new sources of energy, and greater investment in R & D.

He acknowledged that energy development could not be divorced from the need to protect the environment, but he contended that there had been a somewhat unfair focusing on the dangers of nuclear power. He pointed out that there were also hazards involved in the exploitation of coal, in the continued high consumption of hydrocarbons, and in the use of wind, wave and solar power.

As part of the Community effort to come to grips with the energy crisis, Mr Jenkins said that the Commission was looking at the possibility of an energy tax and he informed the House that during his recent visit to Washington to meet President Carter and members of his administration he found that similar ideas were under consideration there.

The President then turned his attention to the challenge of the new electronic technology which he said would be the ultimate test of success or failure for Community industry in its efforts to adapt.

He pointed out that jobs were already disappearing in traditional industries that in some cases could eventually reach a level of 70% and he said he believed that if a Community strategy could be worked out quickly many new jobs could be created and there would be other important benefits for society.

Mr Jenkins reminded his audience that in a world of increasing interdependence the Community could not act or solve its problems alone. There was a need for fair competition and genuine cooperation between nations. He pointed to the Community's role in the world economic summits of leading industrialized countries, and in the North/South dialogue between these countries, the oil-producers and the developing countries.

He said that it was essential that the Community spoke with one voice in order to help achieve greater international economic stability, a better balance between energy supply and demand, and a steady growth in the economies of the poorer countries.

On unemployment, the President urged that the Community's workforce be kept better informed and taught to appreciate the fundamental changes taking place in the labour market. He said there would be need for more mobility of labour and better training, as well as more industrial investment and reorganization.

Mr Jenkins then addressed himself to the thorny question of the Community budget, which was rejected last December by the Parliament after a dispute with the Council of Ministers. Mr Jenkins urged a rapid end to this dispute and called for a concerted effort to tackle major problems such as the cost of the common agricultural policy, particularly surpluses, and reducing the prosperity gap between different Community Member States.

On the Institutions, Mr Jenkins said that in the wake of the Three Wise Men report on the functioning of the Community as a whole and of the Spierenburg Report on the workings of the Commission in particular, the Commission would be preparing a number of proposals for streamlining its own operations.

Mr Jenkins concluded by saying that, following the events in Afghanistan, tension in the world was perhaps closer to danger point than at any time over the past two decades, and he warned that the Community could not hope to cope with this tension and to play a useful role in reducing it unless it showed solidarity.

In a thinly-veiled reference to the non-observance by some Member States of Community rules, he said that this solidarity depended on respect for the rule of law, which could not be bargained with or flouted for purposes of narrow national self-interest.

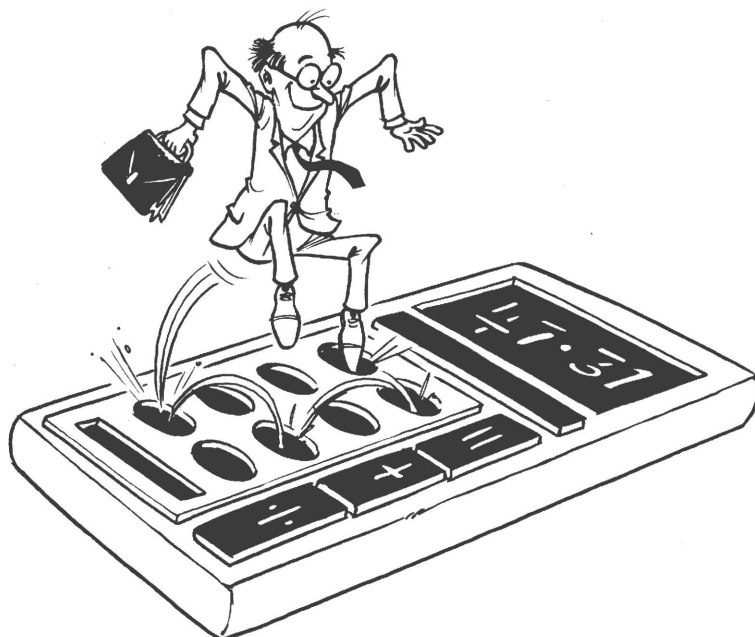
'It is the rock on which the Community stands,' he added.

IN BRIEF

Weighty figures

Crude steel production in the Community rose by 5.6% last year to 140 million tonnes. All Member States with the exception of Italy boosted production.

BUDGET



Commission presents new 1980 proposals to Parliament

Following the decision by the European Parliament last December to reject the 1980 draft Community budget, the European Commission has presented new proposals for this year, incorporating a £535 million cut in estimated agricultural spending and a £227 million increase in regional, social and Third World development policies.

These new proposals were presented to the Parliament at its February plenary session by Budget Commissioner Christopher Tugendhat.

'I hope it will be the basis on which the two arms of the budgetary authority can resolve their difference', he said, referring to the clash between the Parliament and the Council of Ministers over the rejection of the budget last year.

Mr Tugendhat pointed out that if the proposals are adopted, the share of Community expenditure devoted to agriculture spending will fall from 67% last year to 63% in 1980. This will be mainly due to the additional levy being placed on excess milk production.

But he warned that failure to adopt the budget by 1 April would cost the Community £6.5 million a week in lost revenue.

The Commission has once again proposed that the Community's borrowing and lending operations should be included in the budget. This would give the Parliament greater control over their use.

But while favouring a similar status for the European Development Fund, through which the Community helps a number of developing countries, the Commission has decided this should wait for the time being. Finance is currently provided for this purpose by Member States according to a special national key.

In line with the Parliament's wishes, the Commission has decided to increase non compulsory expenditure—i.e., spending which was not foreseen in the Treaty of Rome—by £227 million.

For example, it has reiterated its suggestion that £780 million be allocated to the Regional Fund to help schemes in the Community's less developed regions.

Spending under the Social Fund to encourage job creation schemes and retraining projects to fight unemployment is being put a £605 million. The Commission is also proposing that Community funds should be made available to mitigate the social hardships caused by the reorganization of the Community's steel industry.

The total cost of the measures being proposed by the Commission is £106 000 million. This is significantly lower—£975 million—than its original estimates for 1980 Community spending, announced last year.

ENERGY

Brunner outlines his thinking on oil tax

The European Commission is considering proposing that a modest tax be levied on oil in order to encourage the Community to move towards other forms of energy.

The reasons for this are not hard to see and were outlined to the European Parliament in February by Energy Commissioner Guido Brunner. He told MEPs that oil prices had risen 110% last year alone.

In 1973 oil imports cost the Community \$15 000 million. In 1976, this had risen to \$50 000 million and, even if there are no more increases, the cost this year will be \$100 000 million, he said.

A tax on oil—whether applied to imports, domestic production or consumption, or even to a combination of all three—would both reduce demand for oil and provide an important additional source of finance for investment in energy-saving and alternative forms of energy production in Member States.

Even a modest £ 1.30 per tonne would yield around £ 600 million, which could be used to encourage various energy investment projects in the Community, Mr Brunner indicated. The immediate impact on prices was likely to be limited as consumer prices would rise by only 0.5%.

Mr Brunner elaborated on the kinds of projects which could be supported with the revenue from the tax. There was, for example, a need for considerable investment in the technology to produce oil and gas from coal. Better use could also be made of insulation techniques. Investments of this kind would have the added value of creating many thousands of new jobs.

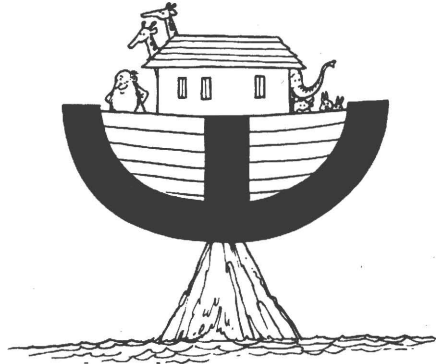
Commission experts estimate that some £ 260 000 million will be needed in the 1980s—equivalent to about 2% of GDP—for energy investments.

For flood victims

The European Commission is giving emergency aid worth £ 520 000 to help the province of Messina in Sicily to overcome recent storm and flood damage.

COMMUNITY FUNDS

Giving a helping hand to victims of catastrophes



In a matter of hours or even minutes a violent storm, an earthquake, floods, blizzards or cyclones can destroy the lives and livelihoods of thousands of people. Whether it's a tiny village or a big city that's affected, for the people who live there it's a disaster. At times like this it's only natural that we should want to get whatever help we can to the people who need it—and get it there as fast as possible.

The European Community has given humanitarian aid of this sort to disaster victims all over the world, and since 1977, special allocations have also been made in its budget to cope with catastrophes which occur in Community countries. So far, more than £ 6 million have been spent in this way.

In such cases, it is important to respond rapidly to requests for aid. For this reason, the Member State Governments have given full responsibility for managing the disaster fund to the European Commission which gets the money as quickly as possible to the competent national authorities.

Priority is given to helping victims as directly as possible—in the interests of speed and of reducing red tape—and protecting them from any repetition of the catastrophe in the future.

The aid given since the system was set up in 1977 covers all sorts of catastrophes. Victims of earthquakes which struck Baden Württemberg in Germany in 1978 and Umbria in Italy last year received Community aid of just under £ 1 million. Last summer,

Cyclone David devastated the French overseas departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique (regarded as part of the Community): aid to them totalled £ 650 000.

After floods hit Tuscany in Italy in August 1977, one of the most pressing needs was to repair roads and the banks of canals and mountain streams. Another urgent task was to help owners of forest land to replant trees.

Then two months later floods hit Italy again, this time in Val d'Aosta, Piedmont, Liguria and Lombardy. The people in some of these places had suffered repeated flooding, and in the disaster-struck village of Ovada, 700 homes were damaged. There was more to come: the following summer floods cut the Domodossola-Locarno railway which serves a large number of frontier workers.

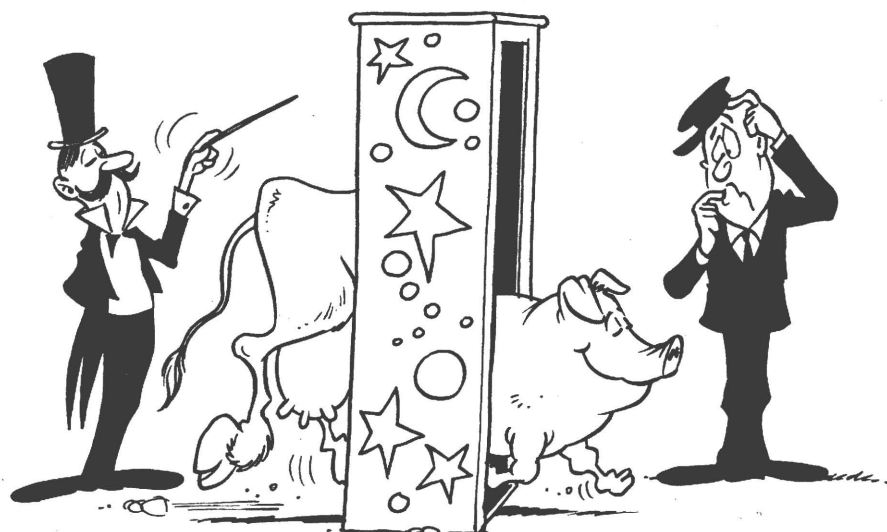
In all three cases the Community was able to supply aid totalling just under £ 2 million to reconstruct houses, dams, water intakes and railways, and reinforce riverbeds and river banks, and so help protect people from being threatened in this way again.

Similarly, £ 1.3 million went to France to help people repair damage caused by the storms and floods of the summer and winter of 1977, and £ 325 000 went to Baden-Württemberg after floods there in May 1978.

When the Amoco Cadiz was wrecked off the coast of Brittany in March 1978, both the environment and the local fishermen suffered a catastrophe from which it may take them decades to recover from. Here again, the Community was able to offer aid amounting to £ 325 000.

Farmers in the United Kingdom suffered heavy losses with their animals in the disastrous winter of 1977-78. Community aid of around £ 1.2 million was able to contribute to a special fund helping them to re-stock their farms, as well as supplementing national aid and subsidising local authorities in repair work.

The most recent allocation of aid was granted last December to Scotland and the Orkney and Shetland Islands: around £ 325 000. Another area where aid from the European Community may help people to overcome a disaster and start leading normal lives again.



Constant battle to plug all loopholes against defrauders

Most of us are aware that the European Community's Common Agricultural Policy is a complicated animal. This is due not only to complex regulations designed to cope with the unpredictable nature of the industry itself but, more recently, because of modifying regulations necessary to adjust trade arrangements to currency fluctuations.

Thus, in an attempt to preserve the 'common' nature of the CAP, we have seen a proliferation of monetary compensatory amounts and 'green' currencies which need constant readjusting and are therefore very difficult to manage.

The complexity of these systems has, additionally, prompted certain unscrupulous individuals to probe for lucrative loopholes with as much ingenuity as was employed originally in devising the systems themselves.

This has resulted over the last five audited years in the Community—and ultimately the taxpayer—being swindled out of around £ 17 million. Only about one-third has been recovered.

While this amount may not appear large when compared with overall spending on agriculture from the Community's Farm Fund (around £ 10 billion last year), it is nevertheless a problem which the European Commission, and the Member State Governments devote a considerable amount of time and energy to combating.

The Member States have a general duty of supervising and implementing spending from the Farm Fund. They are given advance funds by the Commission and make financial returns to it after the money has been disbursed.

They have a duty to notify to the Commission cases of irregularity they have discovered, as well as details of new types of frauds. They carry out inquiries and help in recovering sums wrongly paid. There is also a mechanism for cooperation and an exchange of information between the Member States. The Commission's main role is one of coordination of all these efforts.

However, this system functions imperfectly. In its recently-published report on the spending of the Community budget in 1978, the Court of Auditors, which is responsible for vetting the financial activities of all the Community institutions, was critical on a number of points.

It felt that the Commission had insufficient knowledge of the national control systems because the information supplied by the Member States was often inadequate or out-of-date and requests by the Commission for additional information often received little response. The Court also found that cooperation and exchange of information could be improved.

This same problem was highlighted some time ago by the Commission's own Financial Controller, Carlo Facini when he spoke to the European Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee. He pointed out that in one case of fraud which affected more than one Member State it took not months but years before the various authorities were able to put together all the pieces in the puzzle and to trap the persons responsible.

The Court also pointed out major discrepancies between Member States. For example, in 1978 one country accounted for more than half of 74 notified cases, the majority of which concerned overland smuggling, and in 117 other cases two countries accounted for 79% of the total.

The beef and veal sectors are responsible for two-thirds of all the cases reported in value terms. The majority of the frauds involve manipulation of monetary compensatory amounts which means that most of the loopholes are being found in trade between Member States or with non-Community countries.

Mr. Facini pointed out that some of the most flagrant frauds actually originated outside the Community. He warned: 'There are a number of convenient no-man's-land zones between frontiers from which defrauders can operate. Under these circumstances, it is obvious that the rules of a Community in which there is inadequate cooperation between isolationist national authorities can easily be evaded.'

While one-third of the money is eventually recovered, the Community as such lacks powers in the penal sector and the perpetrator of the fraud often goes unpunished, frequently suffering no greater penalty than being excluded from future Community financial aid.

The Commission has submitted a draft treaty to the Council of Ministers which is designed to provide universally-accepted protection for

Community financial interests in the same way as national finances are protected by national penalties.

The Commission is working constantly to plug the loopholes and a special committee of inquiry which examined in detail all frauds which had come to light recently completed its work and several gaps have been detected and closed off.

Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement. Although frauds in 1978 were only one-third of the 1977 level and half of the 1976 figure, this was largely the reflection of a few spectacular cases in the two earlier years—18 cases involving a total of more than £6 million.

And, even though the 1978 figure was the lowest for five years, it still involved £2 million worth of frauds, only one-third of which has been recovered!

Options for the CAP: how to reconcile the irreconcilable

High priority must be given to bringing balance to agricultural markets; producers must bear the cost for disposing of surplus products; available resources should be concentrated on poorer farms and less developed regions; and farmers' incomes should be guaranteed through structural policy and moderate price increases.

These four themes form part of the European Commission's overall strategy in reforming Common Agricultural Policy, and it is against this background that the Commission's recently-published farm price proposals for 1980 should be seen, Agricultural Commissioner Finn Olav Gundelach told members of the European Parliament at its February session.

A series of tight constraints—milk and sugar supply outstripping demand, and the possibility of the Community's income shortly reaching its limit—pointed towards the continuation of a rigorous price policy, he said. Yet, on the other hand, real agricultural incomes have slipped back in the last 12 months as costs have escalated.

'That is why we have had to reconcile the unreconcilable?' he told the Parliament. 'If you look at the market situation alone you will be forced to refuse price increases. If you look at the budget in isolation, you will even ask for a reduction in prices. But if you look in isolation at the income need of our 8 million farmers and their families, then you

will be forced to ask for substantial price increases'.

The Commission is limiting to 1.5% its proposed rise in milk prices, as each year there are 15 million tonnes of milk for which there is no market. Similarly, sugar is being kept to a 1.5% increase as domestic production outstrips demand by 2.6 million tonnes.

Beef, where there are about 330 000 tonnes in intervention stores is also being limited to 1.5%. For most other products, the proposed rises are between 3 and 3.5%. The effect on consumers of this year's price package would be negligible, said Mr Gundelach. It would add little more than 0.1% to household expenditure in a full year.

But the Commission has saved its toughest measures for the dairy sector. 'It is a real illness' said Mr Gundelach. 'In the past, we have tried to cure it with a variety of medicines costing more and more money. Today we must face up to the need for surgery'.

'The time for tinkering is over', he said, introducing his scheme for a supplementary tax on milk production, whereby farmers who raise their output will have to pay the cost of its disposal.

This would mean a tax of around £11.7 per 100 litres of milk which would have to be paid by farmers who fail to cut their 1979 production level by 1% this year. But Mr Gundelach warned that this rate of tax is not a magic figure and would vary depending on the volume of surplus production.

However, concessions are being offered to some of the poorest farmers in the Community. The Commission is prepared to exempt farmers in less favoured areas of the Community from having to pay the basic 1.5% milk tax on the first 60 000 litres they produce.

The effect of the price proposals, which Mr Gundelach stressed should be assessed along with measures both to modernise farms, —which were announced last year—and to cut spending on surplus products (released in November 1979), is that expenditure in 1980 would be about £520 million less than originally forecast.

In addition, if the nine Farm Ministers adopt the package, agricultural expenditure this year will be £9 million below last year's level of £6700 million. Previously, it had risen at an average annual rate of 17% in the late 1970s.

TRADE

Setting sail for the land of rising prospects

Europe's young businessmen and women are once again being given an opportunity to learn more about the Japanese market, at the same time as promoting European exports and gaining first-hand experience of the Japanese way of life.

For the second successive year, the European Commission is offering aspiring executives an 18-month scholarship in Japan to give them a chance to understand Japanese economic, political and social life and to strengthen trade links.

One of the purposes of the scheme is to try to help the Community close its trade gap with Japan which rose above \$6000 million in 1978. The scheme, which operated for the first time last year, will involve 20 chosen candidates. They will spend a year following language courses, and the remaining six months working in Japanese firms. Seminars and visits will be arranged to help complete their picture of everyday Japan. The successful candidates will stay in Tokyo, although trips to other major cities, especially Osaka, are envisaged.

The Commission will choose candidates from among university graduates (or those with equivalent professional qualifications) with at least two years experience in industry or commerce, and a marked interest in international trade relations. They must be aged between 25 and 38, and speak two languages, one of which must be English.

The Commission gives each individual a grant of 500 000 yen (£943 pounds) per month plus travel and insurance costs. The scholarship is also open to a number of candidates sponsored and financed by their firms.

Applications, should be made by letter before April 1, to the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate General for External Relations, Division I-B-2, 200 rue de la Loi, BRUSSELS.

Trade unionists call for bigger role in decision-making

The right of workers to take industrial action and make decisions affecting the business they work in are regarded by trades unionists as basic to the development of industrial democracy. To find out how workers fare in Western Europe, a series of enquiries has been launched by the European Trade Union Institute—the research, information and education branch of the European Trade Union Confederation (which represents 40 million workers from 18 Western European countries, including all members of the European Community).

The first report has just been published, covering some of the most basic of all trade union rights—the right of workers and their representatives to meet at their place of work, and the right to disclosure of information—in 15 countries (8 of them in the Community).

The report found that facilities and standards vary widely, and trade union representatives face many problems in trying to operate effectively. Changes are taking place too slowly in some countries regarding the right to meet and discuss matters with other employees and have access to management at all levels. As a result there are big differences in the state of industrial relations from one firm to another.

More minimum standards are needed, the Institute feels, especially in smaller firms, where up to two-thirds of the workforce in some Western European countries is employed. The position of the shop steward also differs widely—in some countries he or she has no legal support whatsoever. Governments should guarantee them better minimum working facilities.

Holding meetings, especially during working hours, is almost impossible in a number of firms. At the moment, here is little if any legal support for collective bargaining meetings, for instance, though these might offer a practical and effective way of solving problems or conflicts as they arise. The report recommends that laws or collective agreements should guarantee this sort of meeting.



Works councils and other joint management-employee bodies come in for a lot of criticism, and the whole system needs reviewing, says the report. Trade union representation at board level has spread throughout Western Europe over the past 10 years, but better practical facilities for discussion before and after meetings, and access to information and experts, are needed.

Trade unionists would like the right to influence decision-making much earlier than at present. Some countries already have laws giving employees the right to be involved in health and safety problems right from the start. This needs to be extended to areas like early planning of investment, rationalisation, recruitment, redesign of the work programme, training and so on.

All trade unionists place a very high priority on the disclosure of information. Some countries, Italy in particular, have made considerable efforts in the last few years to improve the supply of information. European trade unionists point out that this is necessary for more effective and meaningful participation in things like collective bargaining, works councils, board meetings, health and safety committees and so on.

The report ends with a plea for more cooperation among the unions themselves. In some countries several unions are represented at the same firm, but as demands on trade unions become more complex and sophisticated—areas like work organization, job protection, and investment bargain-

ing, for instance—unions are going to need to co-operate more at a local level. Efficiency, like charity it seems, begins at home!

THE REGIONS

New grants boost Fund spending to £1.7 billion

The first grants for 1980 from the European Regional Fund, totalling £105 million have been announced. The money will help finance 257 investment projects in the industrial, services and infrastructure sectors in the UK, Germany, Italy and Luxembourg.

This brings total grants from the Fund to £1700 million since it was set up in 1975. All nine Member States have benefited.

Figures issued recently by the European Commission, which administers the Fund, show that grants to date are expected to result in the creation of almost 300 000 jobs in the industrial and services sectors.

In addition, a large number of jobs are created in infrastructure projects. While these are largely temporary, they can often last over a number of years. They can also result in a substantial number of more permanent jobs for maintenance workers.



Commission seeks to boost food aid programme

Red beans for Nicaragua, rice for Kampuchea, white maize for Zambia and butteroil for India—these were only some of the items which the European Community supplied last year under its food aid programme.

Begun in 1968, when some 300 000 tonnes of cereals were shared out between six developing countries and two international relief agencies, food aid has become a key element in the Community's programme of development co-operation.

Last year, 720 000 tonnes of cereals, 150 000 tonnes of skimmed milk powder and 45 000 tonnes of butteroil were divided among some 40 countries and half a dozen relief agencies, including UNICEF.

The total cost to the Community can be estimated at more than £325 million (on the basis of 1979/80 agricultural prices). To this must be added the transportation costs, which are borne by the Community.

For 1980 the European Commission has proposed that the quantity of cereals be increased to 1 135 000 tonnes and of butteroil to 65 000 tonnes, as the level of food aid would otherwise remain virtually unchanged for the fifth successive year.

It has pointed out that import requirements of developing countries

for cereals alone have risen from an estimated 63 million tonnes in 1976 to 82 million tonnes this year.

The Commission wants the Member State governments to treat food aid as an integral part of Community development policy. It would like to see food aid linked more directly to development projects through multi-annual programming; to be able to use it as a means of helping developing countries to build up security stocks and to have the option of buying foodstuffs on world markets, and especially in neighbouring developing countries, when necessary.

The Commission tried, in fact, to operate the 1979 food aid programme along these lines. India, for example, was allocated 31 000 tonnes of skimmed milk powder and 12 700 tonnes of butteroil as part of the Community's ongoing support for the country's ambitious, 7-year programme to raise milk production, known as Operation Milk Flood II.

The rice urgently needed to feed the boat people fleeing from Vietnam and to ward off the threat of famine in Kampuchea was purchased on the World market. White maize for Zambia was ordered in Kenya, although the bombing of road and rail routes rendered delivery impossible.

As these examples suggest, Community food aid goes mainly to the poorest and most needy countries—those with a per capita GNP of less than \$325 and/or balance of payments problems. But these criteria are applied flexibly,

so that Lebanon, for example, is entitled to food aid because of continuing hostilities and refugee problems.

Considerable amounts of food aid are channelled through the major international relief agencies. They include the World Food Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the U.N. Relief and Welfare Agency (UNRWA) which is helping Palestinian refugees. A new convention is currently being negotiated with UNRWA.

The Community is a party to the Food Aid Convention, concluded within the framework of the International Wheat Agreement. A new Convention is expected to come into operation this July. The Community meanwhile has indicated its readiness to increase its annual contribution to 1 650 000 tonnes (as against 1 287 000 tonnes at present).

Operating a food aid programme involving deliveries of over 900 000 tonnes a year on average inevitably poses problems. Those relating to transportation, for example, range from control over costs to the kind of shipping permitted to carry Community food aid.

The European Commission carries out regular checks on the utilization of Community aid. It also helps governments in developing countries meet the goals they have set themselves. Food aid clearly is no longer just a means of running down agricultural surpluses.

IN BRIEF

Changes in exchanges

Community exports to the ACP countries fell in the first half of last year and imports from these countries grew. There was a trade surplus in the ACP's favour for the first time since 1977 amounting to just over £1 000 million.

Near its target

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development—the World Bank—has reached 80% of its \$5300 million borrowing target for this year. The money is onlent for Third World development.



The rising cost of democracy at work in the Community

In the last issue of *Euroforum* we published a light-hearted look at the contrasting contributions members of the European Parliament from the different Member States have been making to debates in the chamber since it was directly-elected last June.

But there is another aspect of the House's activity in which parliamentarians can achieve longevity—or brevity, if they choose, namely, written questions which they can submit to the Commission.

Frequently, the questions are often longer than the replies. But, just as frequently, it generally takes a good deal longer to prepare an answer than it does to draft a question. And this is the root of the problem.

Written questions to the Commission—and to the Council of Ministers which is a much less frequently consulted source of information—are a useful way for a parliamentarian to extract facts and figures or to divine Community policy.

Questions can range from narrow-based issues of direct interest to a member's own constituency—such as the grants available for farm drainage or Community help for a crisis-hit textile firm—to the Community's attitude to developments in Afghanistan or the siting of the Olympic Games.

All of this is a perfectly legitimate part of a parliamentarian's work and, in

accordance with the Treaty of Rome and the rules of procedure agreed between the different Community Institutions, the Commission and the Council have a duty to answer questions as best they can.

However, the brunt of this duty falls on the Commission, largely because it is the repository of most Community information and because of its honest broker role of acting purely in the Community, as opposed to the national interest.

In the days before the Parliament was directly-elected, the Commission was able to cope reasonably well. However, since last July when the new Parliament held its first sitting there has been a flood of oral and written questions.

Because of pressure of time, many oral questions cannot be dealt with during one of the Parliament's monthly sessions and they have to be converted into written questions, particularly if the question demands a very detailed reply.

As an indication of this quizzical explosion, the number of questions posed in the last six months of 1979 was almost three times higher than in the same period the previous year—1002 instead of 393.

Not only does the work involved take up a great deal of Commission officials' time; it also costs a great deal of money.

It has been estimated that, in civil servants' time spent, it costs around £415 on average to answer each question. In addition, every question

and every reply has to be printed in the Community's Official Journal and this adds another £45 per question to the bill.

This is not counting the cost of the time involved for the Parliament's own staff, nor does it include the overheads of the two Institutions.

On this basis alone, the tot for the last six months of 1979 comes to a whopping £675 000. But that's the cost of democracy!

HEALTH

Parliamentarians urge Community action to combat drug-taking

The European Community is being urged to take effective action to combat the increasing traffic in drugs and to use every means possible to fight drug dependency on cigarettes and alcohol.

An Italian member of the European Parliament, Mrs Vera Squarcialupi, wants the Commission to table measures to end drug abuse, which she says 'is leading to a worrying increase in the number of deaths'.

She also wants a review of international legislation on soft drugs in order to harmonise legislation to take account of the new situation.

In a wide ranging debate at the Parliament's February session, British conservative member William Newton Dunn referred to the dangers of glue sniffing and the various detrimental effects of soft drugs like marijuana.

He highlighted the lack of action which the Community has so far taken by pointing out that the EEC paid only \$540 000 in 1979 to the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse control.

Right of recourse

Prompted by a question from a member of the European Parliament, the European Commission has pointed out that Community citizens have a right to petition the Parliament or any of its individual members. The Parliament can at its discretion pass on such a petition to the Commission or the Council of Ministers.



NEWS AT A GLANCE

Freedom of the city

European Commission President Roy Jenkins and three of his predecessors in office—François Xavier Ortoli, Franco Maria Malfatti and Sicco Mansholt were recently made honorary citizens of Brussels, where the Commission has its headquarters.

New link

The Community plans to negotiate a trade and economic cooperation agreement with Brazil. This will replace the present trade agreement which has been in force since 1974.

Aid for Afghans

The Council of Ministers has approved Commission proposals to give emergency aid worth £ 6.5 million to help Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The package also includes food aid in the form of 12 000 tonnes of cereals, 300 tonnes of milk powder and 1000 tonnes of sugar.

Extending link

The Council of Ministers has decided to sign a transitional protocol between the Community and Cyprus which mainly provides for the extension of the first stage of the association with the Mediterranean island until the end of this year.

More humane

The Community should avoid the appearance of being only an economic entity and instead show that it is aiming at a model society that guarantees fundamental human rights for all, Industry Commissioner Etienne Davignon said recently. He urged that the Community as a unit should adhere to existing European conventions on human rights.

Cleaner air

The European Parliament has given its approval for the Community to conclude formally the recently-agreed Geneva Convention on the prevention of long-distance cross-frontier pollution.

Bonn call

The problem of the UK's contribution to the Community's budget was one of the main items on the agenda when Commission President Roy Jenkins visited Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in Bonn recently. They also discussed preparations for the March European Council meeting in Brussels, as well as covering the energy and general economic situations, the Middle East and Asia.

Some improvement

Industrial production in the Community in November was 4.2% up on the corresponding month of the previous year.

Closer links

A new dimension in cooperation between the Community and a state-trading country has been created with the establishment of a joint commission between the Community and Romania. A new trade pact is expected to be signed by the two soon.

Up to the Russians

The Nine's Foreign Ministers have declared that it is the responsibility of the Soviet government to create the conditions that would allow all countries to participate in the Olympic Games in Moscow.

Taking a lead

British Airways has announced plans to introduce special low budget flights, beginning with the London-Paris route. The European Commission recently issued a strategy for fare cuts which it hopes all European airlines will follow.

Support for Sakharov

The European Parliament has condemned the treatment of the Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov and has called on the nine Community governments to put pressure on their national Olympic Committees not to send athletes to the Olympic Games in Moscow this summer.

Boycott urged

The European Parliament has condemned the dictatorial regime in Guatemala and has called on the Nine governments to begin a diplomatic boycott of the Central American state.

Session dispute

The Luxembourg government has protested strongly against a decision by the bureau of the European Parliament to hold its plenary sessions in the second half of this year in Strasbourg. Before last June's elections, sessions

Tapping the oceans

Increased cooperation between industrialized and developing countries in harnessing the resources of oceans, rivers, lakes and lagoons: that is the aim of 'Oceanexpo' which will be held in Bordeaux on March 4-8. Commissioner Claude Cheysson, who is responsible for policy towards the developing countries, will attend. Further information can be obtained from Technoexpo, 8 rue de la Mochodière, Paris 75002. Tel. 742.9256.

Tackling the CAP

The European Parliament is to hold a special session on March 24-26 to discuss the Commission's 1980 farm price proposals in detail. The usual March session will run from the 10th to the 14th.

Safety standards

Talks have been taking place to establish agreed nuclear safeguards in the use of uranium which Australia sells to the Community's nuclear industries. Australia is a key supplier.

Single seat

The European People's Party has followed the Socialist Group in the European Parliament in calling for a single seat for the Community's institutions.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Retired folk

Sir,

I find that in general the subjects you deal with in *Euroforum* are both varied and interesting, but I don't recall ever reading in your Social Affairs section anything to do with people living in retirement.

I would like to point out that this is a subject which has never figured in comparative studies of the social situation in the different Member States of the Community. Yet the provision of pensions for retired people could be a problem in view of demographic developments which have seen a lowering in the retirement age.

I hope that in one of your forthcoming issues you will devote an article to this problem.

Robert Cappa,
Secretary-General,
Force-Ouvrière,
60 rue Vergniaud,
75640 Paris.

Wrong balance

Sir,

I receive *Euroforum* regularly and I would like to congratulate you on the way it is written, in a simple and coherent way. I appreciate, in particular, the new Readers' Column which encourages a dialogue between the 'centre' and the 'periphery'—between Community institutions and Community citizens.

Since I follow particularly the development of the 'Common Agricultural Policy', I would like to say something about the article on 'Agriculture' published in *Euroforum* 19/79 (7/12/79).

It concerns the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, particularly the matter of surpluses. My opinion is that Community action focuses more on prices, products and markets (guarantee), than on agricultural structures (guidance). This reduces the desire to work on the land and promotes the breaking up of agricultural production unities—a familiar pattern in the case of Italy.

If, instead, EAGGF intervention focused on structures, the farmer would be forced to choose the kind of production which is more suited to the type of land and its fertility level. In this way I believe he could finally contribute to the creation of an efficient agricultural industry, which is the aim of both Community directives and national laws, without being continuously protected and defended by price support mechanisms.

After a while, it would be possible, if not to eliminate the surpluses, which weigh heavily on the Community budget, at least to reduce them, and at the same time the principles of free competition would be observed in a system based on the genuine supply and demand of agricultural products.

Dr. Gino Flisi
Via Angera 9
Milano - Italy

Tax on petrol

Sir,

In your edition of the 18th January I think you wrongly give the impression that the Irish motorist in terms of some of his European colleagues is so much better off when it comes to the ticklish matter of Government taxes.

In your Consumers section you say that the most lenient of all is the Irish Government which 'snaps up only 43%'. I wonder if perhaps you are considering only the question of duty which per gallon is 43.41p and omitting to consider the VAT which on top of this can range from 10.80 to 11.13p per gallon, depending on grade.

On a percentage basis, therefore, depending on the brand and grade selected, a motorist in Ireland is paying at the moment, anything from 44.08% to 45.05% of the cost of

this gallon to the State in taxes. By no means is he the least heavily taxed.

Mr R. O'Donohue,
Manager,
The Automobile Association,
23 Suffolk St.,
Dublin 2,
Ireland.

The American Challenge

Sir,

Your article 'The Computer: how Europe can match its competitors' in the 'Focus' section of *Euroforum* of October 19, 1979, starts by a quote from the French journalist and politician J.J. Servan-Schreiber 'The American Challenge'. And the author of this article goes on to say that this will be replaced over the next ten years by 'The Technological Challenge'.

I feel that the author of this article correctly touches upon the point of the technological challenge. Also, his plea for strong pan-European developments in advanced computer technology are very much to the point.

In the January issue of our Journal we published an article entitled: 'Microcomputers: the European Challenge to the United States', written by Philip Hughes, one of Europe's leading authorities in computer software. In his analysis of the factors that were beneficial to the leading position of the USA in the microcomputer business, Mr Hughes arrives at one of his main conclusions: the pattern is now shifting in Europe's favour.

J.C. van Eybergen,
Manager,
Euromicro Journal,
P.O. Box 103,
1000 AC Amsterdam,
The Netherlands.

Comecon

Sir,

You published an article in *Euroforum* 1/1980 on Comecon. In your list of Comecon members you omitted Vietnam which has been a member since June, 1978.

Françoise Barry,
Director of studies and documentation
on the USSR, China and Eastern
Europe,
La Documentation Française,
29-31 quai Voltaire,
75007 Paris.

PUBLICATIONS

'EEC Brief' is a two-volume loose-leaf handbook of Community law, practice and policy for the academic, business, professional and public sectors prepared by Belfast solicitor Gregg Myles, who is a specialist in Community law. The first volume describes the Community's legal order, outlines the role of the different institutions and the Funds, and deals with the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital, as well as with company law. The second volume covers other main policy areas. The briefs are designed for expansion and updating and a third volume is currently in preparation. The price for the three volumes, total 550 pages, is £ 15 plus £ 5 postage. From Locksley Press, 101 Locksley Park, Belfast BT10 OAT.

'State of the environment, second report 1979', Commission of the European Communities. Price: £ 4.75. Catalogue number: CB-24-78-152-EN-C.

'The Consumer in Europe', by Michael Shanks. European Cooperation Fund, rue de la Concorde 60, 1050 Brussels. Price: 50 FB.

'25 Years of European Community External Relations', European Documentation 4/79, Commission of the European Communities. Price: £ 0.50. Catalogue Number: CB-NC-79-004-EN-C.

'Accession of the Communities to the European Convention on Human Rights', Commission Memorandum, Supplement 2/79 of the Bulletin of the European Communities, Commission of the European Communities. Price: £ 0.50. Catalogue Number: CB-NF-79-002-EN-C.

'Annual report on the development cooperation policies of the Community and its Member States 1977-1978', Commission of the European Communities. Price: £ 1.60. Catalogue Number: CB-25-78-736-EN-C.

'Regional Development Atlas 1979', Commission of the European Communities. Price: £ 0.80. Catalogue Number: CB-25-78-582-6A-C.

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Grants for research into European integration 1980-1981

In order to encourage university research in the field of European integration, the Commission of the European Communities will award in July 1980:

15 RESEARCH GRANTS OF A MAXIMUM OF FB 180 000 (approximately £2 770)

CONDITIONS:

1. The awards will be given to young university teachers at the start of their career who, individually or as a team, are doing research work on European integration.
2. Applications should be submitted in duplicate and contain:
 - a 5-10 page typed description of the research project;
 - an estimate of costs;
 - a completed application form (*);
 - a curriculum vitae;
 - a certificate from the institution, confirming the position currently held by the applicant.
 These papers are not returned to applicants.
3. Applicants should not be over 40 years of age.
4. Awards are not renewable.
5. The maximum award is FB 180 000, paid as follows:
 - 1st half — at the commencement of the research
 - 2nd half — on receipt of the typed text referred to in paragraph 8.
6. Award holders who do not complete their research must reimburse the amount they have received.
7. Employees of the institutions of the European Communities as well as their spouses and children are not eligible to apply.
8. The work must be drawn up in one of the official languages of the European Communities. The final text must be type-written and submitted in duplicate before 1st October 1981.
9. The Commission of the European Communities may assist with the costs of publishing the work up to a maximum of FB 30 000.
10. The awards will be made by the 15th July 1980 at the latest.
11. Applications must be submitted by the 31st March 1980 to:

Commission of the European Communities
 University Information
 200 rue de la Loi
 1049 Brussels (Belgium)
 Tel. 735 00 40, 735 80 40 or 736 60 00

(*) Application forms can be obtained from the above address or from the Offices of press and information of the European Communities listed on our back cover.

FOCUS

Can work be a less dangerous occupation?

Work can be a dangerous place. At Flixborough in the United Kingdom escaping gases caused a fire which killed and injured more than 120 people. That was in 1974. Two years later in Italy more than 5000 people and many thousands of animals living around Seveso were exposed to dioxane gas. No-one knows yet what the long-term effects may be.

These are major accidents with dramatic consequences, both for men and the environment. But work can be dangerous in less dramatic ways too. Modern developments in industrial society mean people have to work with potentially dangerous machinery or handle poisonous or inflammable substances. Sometimes there are long-term dangers to health which we don't fully understand.

It's many years now since coal miners discovered they got lung disease from inhaling coal dust. Now their drilling equipment is fitted with special devices providing jets of water which stop the dust flying around in the air, and the atmosphere in most mines is now relatively dust-free.

Ensuring the health and safety of its workforce is an economic and humanitarian necessity for all Member States of the Community and, since June 1978, the European Commission has been

conducting an action programme on Health and Safety at Work, covering the physical and social interests of more than 100 million workers.

The programme concentrates on four main areas—research, protection, prevention and monitoring. Since laws and regulations are likely to differ from country to country, it's important to establish agreed ways of assessing statistics and risks, setting limits, terms of reference, ways of monitoring, and so on.

There are certain areas where direct action can be taken to protect people and prevent accidents. For instance, workers obviously need to be informed about any risks they run from the machinery or substances with which they work. If they are newly-recruited, or if they are migrant workers they may need special information.

One way of informing is to put up warning notices and make information leaflets available, covering subjects like pesticides and herbicides, asbestos, arsenic, mercury and lead, stating clearly what the risks of injury, cancer or other illnesses are, and what can be done.

Workers also need to be adequately protected from these risks wherever possible, for instance by establishing and harmonising limits to the amount of exposure they get to harmful substances, or setting noise and vibration level limits for building site, agricultural and other equipment.

Accidents could perhaps be prevented if factories and equipment were designed ergonomically with the needs

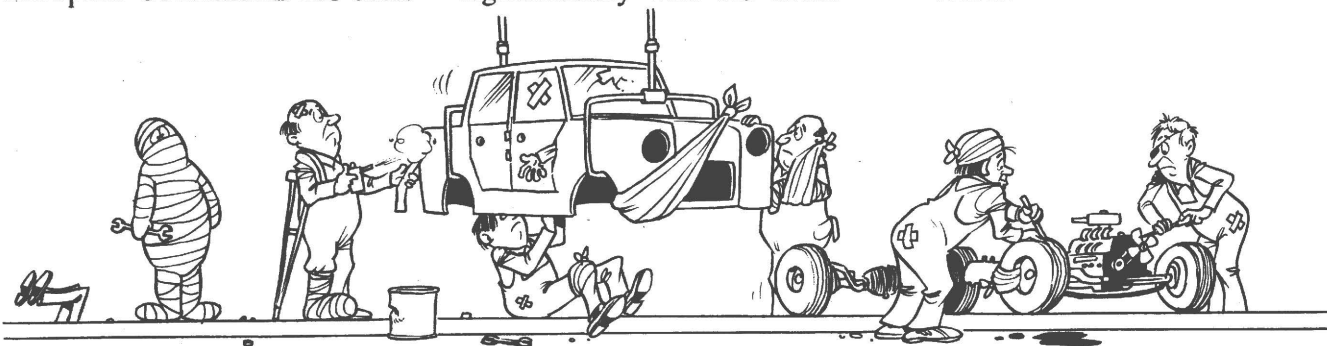
and capabilities of the worker in mind, and if the effectiveness of safety measures could be improved. To make sure that protective and preventive measures are being effectively carried out, regular monitoring and inspection is needed.

Work has already begun in many of these fields. Since it is essential to encourage workers and management to take part in decisions and initiatives, an Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection has been set up. A framework research programme is to be elaborated in 1981, and statistical work on accidents in the coal and steel industries has been done.

So have numerous studies; into the construction industry, terminology in national regulations, cancer causing substances, accident prevention, ergonomics, occupational medical services, and what is called 'toxicovigilance systems'—which should give an early warning of new or previously unknown hazards to safety and health at work.

Community legislation has been proposed on protecting workers at risk from chemical, physical and biological substances, and—with accidents like Flixborough and Seveso in mind—on the risk of major accidents in certain industrial activities. Specific proposals are also likely to be put forward on certain substances like lead and asbestos.

Work of this sort at a Community level should help in achieving better and more harmonised protection of the safety and health of all our workers.



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