

Euroforum



Light at the end of the Chunnel? See page 3.

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Light at the end of the Chunnel?

The idea of building a tunnel under the Channel between the United Kingdom and France came from Napoleon as far back as 1802. The French and the British have been discussing its merits ever since.

The Duke of Wellington vetoed the first suggestion on the grounds that it could pave the way for a French cavalry charge. Subsequent objections have been somewhat less imaginative or dramatic but nonetheless have been almost as insurmountable as the Iron Duke's own defences in the field.

The nearest the project has come to fruition was in the last decade when 800 yards (about 700 metres) were actually dug on the British side before the British Government called a halt in 1975 in the light of alarming figures about the projected cost.

Now, 178 years after the emperor first floated his idea, the Chunnel looks like being resurrected as a viable possibility. This is due in no small part to the efforts and farsightedness of the European Commission and, in particular, of Transport Commissioner Richard Burke.

In a blueprint for revolutionizing Europe's transport network which he prepared and which was approved by the Commission last year, the Chunnel was one of the major infrastructure projects singled out as worthy of backing from Community funds.

A survey of the likely cost of different options—a single-track rail tunnel, a double-track rail tunnel, a road bridge and a road bridge plus a single-track rail tunnel—was commissioned, and the figures make interesting reading for any enterprising businessman who knows where to put his hands on the necessary finance.

Such an entrepreneurial initiative is, indeed, what may be needed. The United Kingdom's Transport Minister, Mr Norman Fowler, who commissioned his own feasibility study, has said that public funds would not be made available for the Chunnel project but that there was no reason why private risk capital could not play a part.

With the added incentive of Community finance—Mr Burke favours a Community commitment to meet 20% of the total cost—this capital could well be forthcoming. A number of consortia have already been formed and several projects have already been outlined.

Apart from the options mentioned above which were considered in the study prepared for the Commission, there have been others ranging from a bridge in the form of a giant tube suspended from towers to a submerged tube carrying rail and road traffic surfacing on artificial islands in mid-Channel for ventilation purposes.

Although British Rail and its French counterpart, SNCF, the partners in the last abortive attempt to get the project beyond the drawing-board stage, have been in constant contact, no official choice of the different options has been made. And, so far, the two governments are remaining largely in the wings.

However, Mr Fowler's statement in the House of Commons is taken as tacit support for the scheme, provided the cost does not come out of the pocket of the British taxpayer. Although the Chunnel could have massive commercial and social benefits for the United Kingdom, as well as France and other Community Member States, the project must be commercially viable if it is to attract private capital.

The Commission study shows that, whichever option were chosen, there would be a reasonable return on capital, but this varies enormously depending on the choice. The

projected financial return over 50 years ranges from 14% for a single-track rail tunnel to 7%-9% for a road bridge plus a single-track rail tunnel, depending on whether there is low or high economic growth.

There are wide variations, too, in the likely cost of the different links. The cheapest would be a single-track rail tunnel, at around £575 million and the most expensive a road bridge plus a single-track rail tunnel at £2800 million. A double-track rail tunnel would cost just over £1000 million and a road bridge £2200 million.

The Commission has not come down on the side of any one particular option. Mr Burke says that it is for the two governments to decide on the most suitable scheme. However, he points out that the single-tube rail tunnel proposed by British Rail and

CHUNNEL CHRONOLOGY

- 1802: First suggested by Napoleon. Plans produced by designer Matthieu.
- 1856: French engineer Thomé de Gamond produces plan for a seabed tunnel.
- 1866: British engineer William Low contributes plans.
- 1872: Channel Tunnel Company formed.
- 1883: Work abandoned after short stretch of tunnel is dug.
- 1924: New proposals rejected by meeting of all living British ex-Prime Ministers.
- 1930: House of Commons rejects tunnel proposals by 7 votes.
- 1964: British and French Governments agree to build tunnel.
- 1974: French Government ratifies treaty. British Government pulls out.

SNCF would be the least costly, would offer the highest rate of overall return and would cause the least disturbance and pollution.

'A commonsense solution which to me seems to merit attention is to look at the single-track tunnel as an interim solution,' he says. A second tunnel could always be built later on when the economic situation improves and more public funds become available.

Whatever the choice, one thing seems certain: there would be no shortage of custom. The British Rail/SNCF single-track rail link, for example, would cut the journey from London to Paris to 4½ hours. High-speed trains could make 120 crossings a day and could be capable of carrying 6 million passengers and 5.5 million tonnes of freight a year by 1988.

This is the date on which the Chunnel could become operational if the go-ahead is given this year. But how likely is it that a decision will be taken to enable work to start on the 23-mile link?

The Community's Transport Ministers have already had a first look at the Commission's blueprint for modernizing Europe's transport system to cope with the increased demand over the coming decades. They are due to meet again in June when Mr Burke is hoping for a decision on the whole package.

This envisages backing of £ 1000 million from Community funds for a wide variety of projects. These include improving rail links between major centres, better connections for peripheral regions, filling in 'missing links' and projects to overcome natural obstacles.

Among the latter are Alpine links between Germany and Italy, the Apennine crossings in Italy, linking the Italian mainland and Sicily by means of a bridge, and, of course, the Channel Tunnel. Once the green light is given for the package, money would come available to help finance the Chunnel project.

Even if it were not, however, the financial rate of return projected in the Commission study would still make it a worthwhile proposition for a business consortium, provided the two governments agree.

If not, the Chunnel will remain, in the words of one observer, 'the longest tunnel never built' and, each time fog descends over the Channel, the Continent will once again be isolated!

LIFESTYLE



Using everything except the pig's squeak

Pork consumption in the European Community may not, at first glance, be the most fascinating of subjects. But if eating habits are compared between one Community country and another, it helps to show an aspect of Europe's diversity.

A look at the figures for pigmeat consumption in the Community from 1973 to 1978 shows Germany striding ahead at a steady rate. While the average German was consuming 47.6 kg of pork in 1973, he is now putting away 55.7 kg of 'Bockwurst', 'Kalbwurst', 'Bierwurst' and 'Jagdwurst' not to mention other varieties of pork dishes.

Since we tend to associate 'Danish' with bacon, it probably comes as no surprise that Denmark is next on the list with a 1978 consumption figure of 45.7 kg per capita.

The jump in that figure, though, from 34.6 kg per capita in 1973 is certainly not matched in Belgium/Luxembourg, where the next highest figure has been relatively stable over that five-year span. They savour an annual 39.1 kg, particularly in the form of 'bloedpan'—their own speciality—which is black and white pudding with apple compote, as well as more orthodox dishes.

The Dutch consumed 38.2 kg of pork per head in 1978. The Dutch particularly like pork deep-fried in breadcrumbs with cheese and ham, and they are eating more and more of it, since they are now devouring 7.8 kg a head more than in 1973.

France took fifth place, having jumped from a consumption figure of 32.6 kg

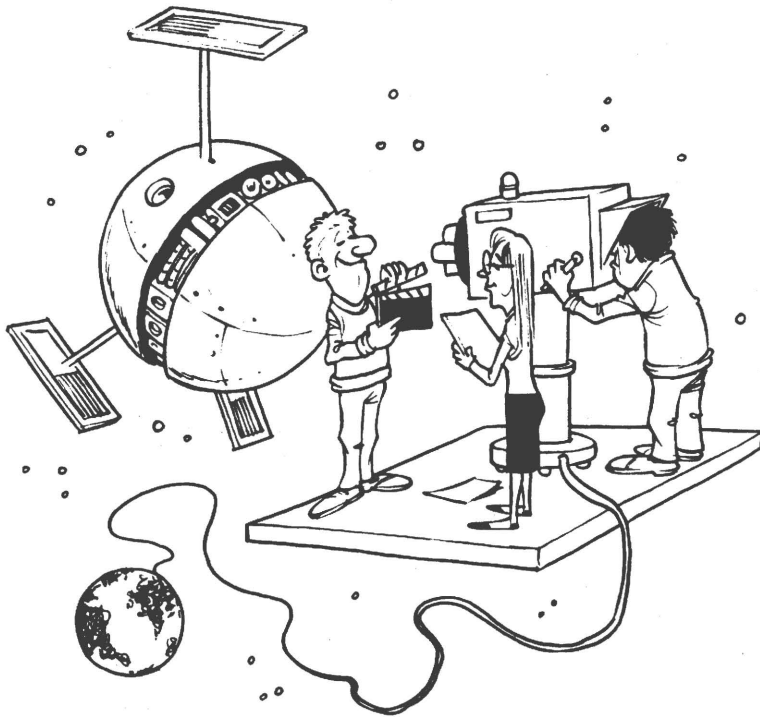
in 1973 to 37.2 kg per capita in 1978. The average French gourmet, in choosing his plat du jour, likes to cover the whole range from côtes de porc and jambonneau to saucissons and boudins.

Although bacon and eggs will probably never fall from grace as the typical breakfast in Ireland, and even though bacon and cabbage may always be intrinsically Irish, pork will probably continue to be regarded there as the Saturday rather than the Sunday choice after prestigious beef. The drop in Irish consumption figures per capita over the five-year span from 31.8 kg to 29.8 kg may confirm this.

Maybe the lack of variety in Ireland and the UK in presenting pork dishes explains why, even though many Britons would suffer withdrawal symptoms at the prospect of the disappearance of all kinds of pork steaks and chops with the obligatory apple sauce, the great majority would not swop the traditional Sunday roast of beef and Yorkshire Pudding for all of China's sweet and sour, for all of Germany's Wursts, or all of Italy's insaccati! The UK's appetite for pork dropped from 26.6 kg in 1973 to 25.4 kg in 1978.

The Italians seem to be the least keen on pork in any shape or form, although their consumption has risen over the five years from 15.8 kg in 1973 to 21.3 kg in 1978. In addition to the numerous varieties of sausage, covered by the term 'insaccati' there is, of course, Parma (ham) and the mortodella with spices, which hails from Bologna, as well as a whole range of other regional delights.

The Irish and British methods of presenting pork may appear even more ordinary when the Community is enlarged to admit such delicacies as Spanish chorizo (spiced sausage) and Portuguese chispe (pig's feet).



TV à la carte: Community-wide effort is needed

The recent adoption by the French and German Governments of a joint project to build direct television broadcasting satellites, to be launched by 1984, throws a new light on the European Commission's strategy on new information technologies submitted to the Dublin summit of the nine Heads of Government last November.

Technically, direct TV broadcasting by satellite is capable of providing the range of reception currently enjoyed by radio broadcasts, depending on the size of the satellite's 'footprint' (the geographical area it covers) and the suitability of the receiving aerial.

In the Dublin document, the Commission pointed, among other things, to a number of areas where the Community is directly concerned with direct television broadcasting by satellite.

Among these are the development of a Community-wide market for home TV aerials by introducing rules to standardize the interfaces between these aerials and the satellites (so that all homes equipped with these aerials could receive satellite beamed pictures).

In addition, the Commission has suggested the establishment of a joint approach on private and commercial TV in the Member States and accelerating the setting up of the necessary administrative framework for the joint operation of large space platforms by a number of Community Member States.

Although the Community has no concrete plans to launch its own direct TV satellite, it is concerned to ensure the most 'European' solution, and the Commission feels that the Franco-German project has prejudiced various options which could have been taken up at European level.

The Commission is particularly keen to see the industrial capacity for developing space broadcasting technology founded on as wide a Community base as possible, thus making it as competitive as it can be with American and Japanese industry.

Negotiations in these aspects are continuing with the European Space Agency, which includes a number of European countries in addition to the Community Member States. The ESA is already developing a heavy European space platform at the instigation of the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium and Switzerland.

The satellite (known as L-SAT) is now in the detailed design phase and will carry Italian-made direct TV broad-

casting equipment. The current timetable envisages the launch of L-SAT before the Franco-German satellite. (The ESA already has its own satellite launcher, called 'Ariane', operational. The maiden flight was successfully completed at the beginning of this year).

The Commission believes that full weight should be given to European efforts such as L-SAT. There is an additional reason for wanting a European approach: the need to avoid orbital traffic jams.

The developing countries are understood to be unhappy about the growing congestion in the geostationary orbit to the advantage of the industrialized countries. Europe will therefore be compelled to restrict the number of satellites which it operates for 'internal use', and to increase the useful load of those it does send up. Individual national satellites (such as the Franco-German project) are probably going to have to be restricted in favour of heavier L-SAT type platforms which can serve several countries simultaneously.

Avoiding 'overlaps' has obvious economic advantages, too, and this is where the Community is in an ideal position to play a coordinating role.

Weather forecasting: can it become a more exact science?

'Red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning; red sky at night, shepherd's delight' goes the old saying. But it's not just shepherds who are affected by the weather, as the droughts of 1976 and the disastrous blizzards early last year reminded us.

The need to understand and predict weather patterns—and ways in which man himself may be responsible—is a matter which concerns us all.

As part of the Community's 5-year Climatology Research Programme launched earlier this year, the European Commission has called for tenders from people or organizations who have proposals for research work aimed at gaining a deeper insight into the mechanism and behaviour of climate, its stability and variability.

The research will cover two main areas. Firstly, understanding climate, which includes studying and reconstructing past climate patterns to try to discover what caused them to change and develop, and the use of data to build up a climate model which can simulate and even predict the gradual changes in the weather system. The second research area is concerned with 'man/climate interactions'—such as the possible impact of weather on our basic resources, especially water and agriculture, and improving our ability to forecast floods, droughts, forest fires and other risks. Another important aspect is the impact of climate on our energy needs.

Research will also be concerned with man's own influence on climate, aerosols, for instance, and especially through polluting the atmosphere with carbon dioxide by burning fossil fuels. Related studies will assess the effect the release of all this energy may have on our weather patterns.

The emphasis of all the studies will be on aspects of particular European interest, and participation in the programme is by means of shared-cost contracts, with up to half the cost being covered by the European Commission.

Enter the era of the megabit

Stella is no longer just the name of a Belgian beer well-known elsewhere in Europe and other parts of the world. It is also the name of a new system that will eventually perform as a sort of stellar switchboard operator.

This new space-age communications aid is the result of link between a number of European organizations involved in different scientific activities. The European Space Agency (ESA) based in Paris, the Brussels-based European Commission and the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva all feel that their connection through Stella will help their separate activities and advance European scientific and technological capability.

The work to be performed by Stella will aim at the development of high-speed data transmission by satellite in Europe. The research will examine the different ways of quickly sending large amounts of electronic data from the CERN laboratories to a number of European laboratories through ESA's orbital test satellite.

This project is seeking to improve existing techniques which are already widely used by American space satellite operations in order to be ready to replace European ground computer interconnections when these become too crowded. Some of the improvements will be sought in the use of different frequencies and signals and the development of roof-top antennae. But another refinement will come through the use of ultra-high speed data transmitters which can communicate one million bits of information per second (one megabit) instead of the prevalent magnetic tape transmission systems now in use which can lead to long delays in processing.

The Stella programme will send information from the CERN facilities to laboratories in Desy, in Germany; Saclay, in France; Rutherford in the United Kingdom; Pisa, Italy; Dubin, Ireland and Graz, Austria.

Improving computer industry: all ideas welcome

The European Commission has invited proposals for research projects connected with the growth industry of the hour: data processing.

The projects concern what is known as 'software' (basically all programmes and processes fed into a computer which enable it to carry out a logical sequence of tasks) and applications in data processing. They will be eligible, if approved, for funding from a special Community financial support mechanism, part of its global multi-annual (1979-83) data processing research and development programme.

The sort of projects or studies that the Commission is looking for are those aimed at developing general software, such as the establishment of certain standards or norms: improved portability and conversion; greater efficiency of data processing systems and projects developing network management techniques or techniques for distributing data with a view to a wider use of Community standards.

In the applications field, the Commission has a number of specific types of project in mind:

- those of a transnational character (for instance, environmental monitoring; air, sea and land traffic control; international transport in general; customs control);

- those which use data processing to help to fulfil specific Community policy aims (e.g. the free movement of labour and capital, international communications, agricultural, regional, social, energy and environment policies);

- those which lead to obvious savings in public expenditure, either through common studies or joint development (e.g. health, medical or educational applications in more than one Member State);

- those which help to raise the competitiveness or productivity of economic sectors through, for example, computer-assisted design, process and industrial systems and automated administration.

The deadline for submitting project proposals is 1 June 1980.

INDUSTRY

Still motoring

In view of the energy crisis, Japanese competition and the general economic gloom, one might be forgiven for thinking that the Community's motor industry is in serious trouble.

Although certain firms, notably British Leyland, are experiencing more difficulties than others, the general picture in the industry is reasonably rosy.

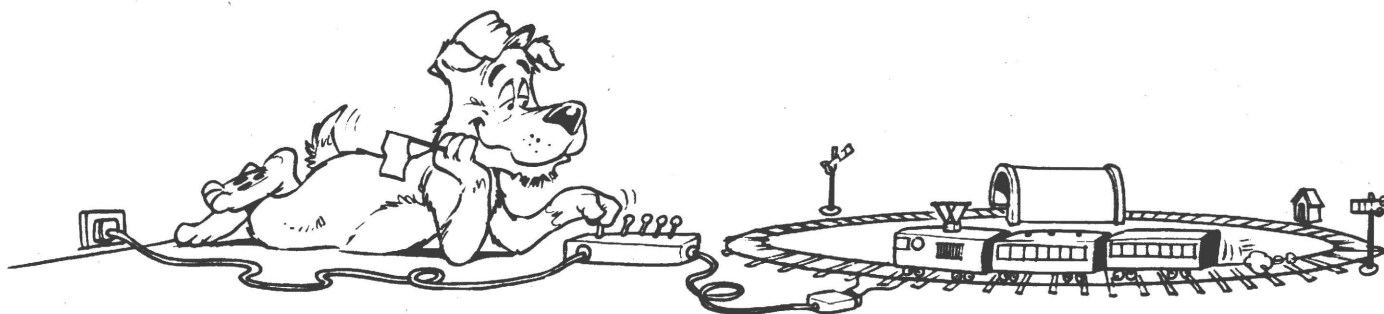
Statistics compiled by the European Commission indicate that the automobile sector accounts for between 5% and 8% of production, and between 8% and 12% of exports in the different Member States.

A more positive indicator is that employment in the industry rose in the last decade, in spite of the oil crisis—from 4.8% of total jobs in 1974 to 5.3% in 1978.

IN BRIEF

Turned down

At a time of controversy over the acceptance of gifts by public figures, the European Commission has announced that its 13 members abide by the principle of turning down such offers unless the value of the goods is purely nominal.



Are our railways in need of shock treatment?

Couldn't the European Community reduce its dependence on imported oil by increasing the proportion of electric-powered trains on its railway network, asked British Labour member of the European Parliament, Gordon Adam recently.

Yes, but... replied the European Commission. Yes... because, in an oil shortage, many electric trains would continue to run, since a number of the electricity stations that feed them use no oil. But... because the direct effect, in terms of how much oil currently consumed by diesel-powered trains would be saved by extending electrification is likely to be less impressive than this might imply.

The reasons are simple: the railways' share of oil consumption is small (only 8%) and, in addition, as the Commission pointed out, several Member States have already electrified stretches of track where the density of the traffic and direct economies justified the investment.

About 32% of the Community's 108 400 km of railway track are electrified, that is some 34 500 km. The 'best-connected' Member States are the Netherlands (with nearly 60% or 1 700 of its 2 800 km of track electrified), Italy (50% of its total of 16 000 km) and Luxembourg (half of whose 300 km of railway is electrified). France, which has the Community's

largest rail network, 34 500 km, uses electric trains on 27% (9 300 km) of its tracks.

Least keen on the 'current solution' are the British and the Danes. Just over 20% of the UK's 18 000 km of railway track are electrified, while only 5% of Denmark's 2 000 km are electric powered.

Although there is no specific Community programme to assist Member States in financing further electrification, both the UK and Denmark are said to be contemplating extending their use of electric trains.

One question remains, however, to be answered: does giving a train the electric shock treatment teach it to treat timetables with any more respect than its diesel counterparts?

Euratom loans help boost nuclear programmes

The European Atomic Energy Community (better known as Euratom) lent about £ 200 million last year to help improve nuclear-powered electricity production in France, Italy, Germany and Belgium, according to the European Commission's recently published 1979 report on Euratom's bond issue and lending activities.

The loans amounted to the maximum 20% of the total investment cost of each project, and were accompanied in each case by aid from the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Euratom raised the money through the issue of special bonds worth just over

£ 200 million in 1979. The issue of these Euratom bonds was first authorized by the Council of Ministers in 1977, and the funds collected are lent out to the electrical utilities in the Member States to contribute towards investments either in industrial scale nuclear power electricity production or in industrial fuel cycle installations.

At first the Council put a ceiling of £ 315 million on bond issues, but following early successes the ceiling was raised to £ 630 million.

Another increase could well be needed this year, both for further development of the type of investment currently being financed and for possible new areas such as uranium mining and transport of fissile materials. There has been an increase in requests to the Commission for Euratom financing which could use up larger amounts than those so far authorized by the Council of Ministers.

YOUTH

Community funds urged to promote freer travel

With so much talk of economics and trade, it's sometimes easy to forget that one important reason for the European Community's existence is to build a foundation for continued peace and cooperation in Europe. Working together with common aims can forge bonds of mutual understanding and friendship which reduce the possibility of another war.

But, for this to happen, people have got to feel involved with what is going on. Bearing in mind that the young people of today are the citizens of tomorrow, the European Community has already set up a European Youth Forum to involve young people in its decision-making processes. There is also an exchange programme for young workers, and other opportunities for contacts through cultural activities like the European Youth Orchestra.

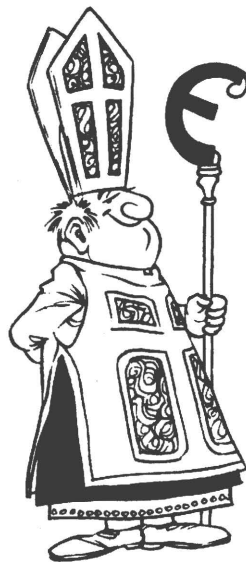
Convinced that these sort of personal contacts between young people from the Member States do much to improve mutual understanding and strengthen the links of friendship between the young people of these countries, members of the European People's Party at the European Parliament are proposing that a European Youth Foundation should be set up at Community level to encourage, promote and where necessary organize contacts and exchanges between young people.

Ventures like the Franco-German Youth Foundation and the Council of Europe's Youth Foundation (which promotes contacts between representatives of youth organizations among its Member States) have had a good deal of success, and the EPP's proposal foresees benefiting from the Franco-German experiences, as well as expanding the Council of Europe's approach to cover not just meetings of officials, but a broadly-based system of exchanges, backed by public funds, and institutionalized at Community level.

The sort of activities the group foresees include contacts and exchanges between schoolchildren, students and young workers, and training schemes for specialist young workers. Group travel and sporting and similar events are another possibility, along with leisure activities which promote knowledge of each other's languages. Other ways of improving mutual familiarity could include public relations activities, study tours, periods of study abroad, seminars and artistic activities.

Given the expense of trips abroad, these sorts of activities are beyond the limited financial resources of most young people, and the proposal therefore suggests Community help. As the proposal points out, mutual understanding between young people in the Member States represents a vital foundation for cooperation and peace in Europe, and in particular for the continued existence and development of the European Community.

SOCIAL POLICY



Churches displaying wider interest in the Community

What has God got to do with the European Community? Quite a lot, according to the Churches. They claim there are social and moral aspects to almost all Community activities these days, whether it's the problems of migrant workers or people living in poverty, unemployment, equality between the sexes or relations with the Third World.

To keep a finger on the pulse of Community affairs, several Church groups have, like many other charitable and non-governmental organizations, started commissions on European affairs, and opened offices in Brussels.

One of the most recent is the Commission of European Episcopal Conferences—Comece—set up by the Catholic bishops from the nine Community countries to coordinate the thinking and action of the Catholic hierarchies on matters of common religious, moral and social concern arising from the process of European integration.

The Commission President is a German, the Secretary-General is French and the Vice-Presidents are from Luxembourg and Ireland. The Secretariat is based in Brussels and will work closely with the independent Catholic European Study and Information Centre (OCIPE).

OCIPE has been keeping an eye on European affairs for the past 24 years, with offices in Strasbourg and Brussels.

It has the aim of informing and educating Christians about European problems and making Christian views known to the European institutions. It publishes a French and German periodical and takes part in and organizes conferences for a wide range of participants on issues like direct elections to the European Parliament, the renewal of the Lomé Convention, enlargement of the European Community to include Greece, Spain and Portugal, and the limits to economic growth.

Members of the Anglican and Protestant churches have also been taking a lively interest in Community affairs. The Commission of Churches to the European Communities brings together members of the British Council of Churches and the Church of England, the German Evangelical Church, the Federation of Protestant Churches in Belgium, and the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy, and the Dutch Reformed Churches.

Representatives meet regularly to discuss European problems, and one of the main activities is running an Ecumenical Centre for Church and Society in Brussels. This Centre aims to 'build up an overall perspective of a European society with a human face and to represent this perspective to those politically responsible'.

It acts as a clearing house for the exchange of information between Community institutions and the Churches in the Member States and publishes an Information Bulletin in four languages. At a more personal level, it organizes prayer meetings and other activities in the European Commission and tries to develop a consciousness of social and Third World problems amongst Community officials. It monitors international work being done in Brussels and coordinates working groups on social and economic problems affecting Europe and the outside world.

One of these is a Joint Task Force with the Catholics on development issues. This group is concerned particularly with Third World development and hopes to improve Europeans' knowledge about the issues involved. Through contacts with experts in developing countries, especially the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries linked to the Community through the Lomé Convention, it hopes Europe can avoid 'falling into the historic trap of

paternalistically deciding what is good for the rest of the world'.

During negotiations for renewal of the Lomé Convention last year, the group organized seminars for participants from Europe and the Third World on subjects like industrial cooperation, and produced critical position papers on the Convention which it distributed to government ministers, Community and ACP officials and Church leaders. The group also plans to have close contacts with the Development Commission of the European Parliament.

Another area of particular interest to the Churches is the welfare of migrant workers. The World Council of Churches supports a Churches Committee on Migrant Workers which is based in Brussels with the aim of keeping member Churches informed about migration in Europe and encouraging action to safeguard migrants' rights and try and solve their problems. As well as arranging seminars, the Committee has close contacts with Community officials, trade unions, employers' and migrant workers' associations, and has published a series of studies on different aspects of the problem.

In addition to these joint efforts, some individual sects have set up their own offices in Brussels to inform their members about what is going on and help to bring a spiritual influence to bear on Community affairs.

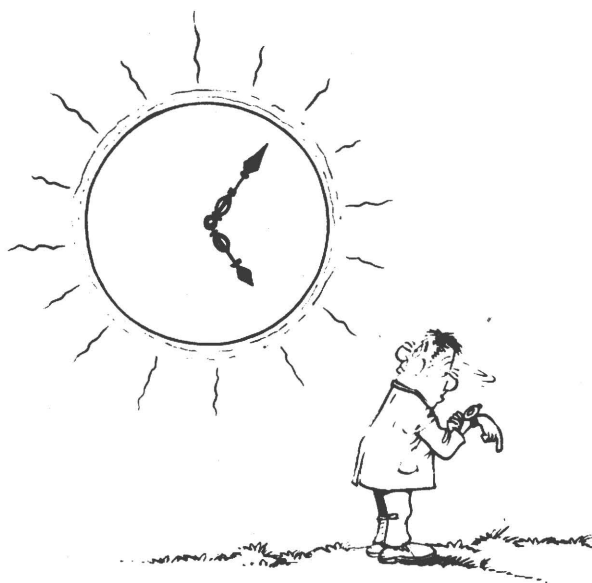
The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) for instance, with their tradition of pacifism and social concern, have recently established a Quaker Council for European Affairs and appointed two Quaker Representatives to Brussels who work closely with the other Churches, but also follow up their special interests and publish their own European newsletter.

What all these groups have in common is a recognition of the extent of the European Community's influence, both because of its wealth in world terms and its economic power. This influence extends not just into the everyday lives of Community citizens, but far beyond its boundaries. It can and must, say the Churches, be used for good.

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A sound tape on this subject is available to broadcasters. It was prepared by the European Commission's audio-visual division. Euroforum will be happy to pass on requests.

REDUCING BARRIERS



GMT, plus or minus, that is the question

In many ways, the nine Member States of the European Community can be regarded as a unified whole. In many other ways, they are still far from acting in a concerted manner.

One stark example of disunity lies in one of the most normal of present day functions, the way we set our clocks and watches and, consequently, the time we get up and go to bed.

For three brief weeks this year, the whole Community enjoyed the same time. This was as a result of the British and Irish putting on their clocks one hour on the weekend of 15-16 March which brought them into line with the other seven Member States.

However, on 6 April the rest followed suit, restoring the one-hour difference. For Germany and Denmark, 1980 is the first year of summer time.

The reason for changing clocks is to adjust to earlier or later sunrises and sunsets, which, given the geographical span of the Community, naturally vary from country to country.

Different time zones are unavoidable, but in a bid to reduce the confusion somewhat, the European Commission is asking the Member States at least to switch over to summer time on the same date next year.

This would be of particular benefit to international travellers and to the airlines, railways and shipping lines who have to fix schedules, as well as travel agents who arrange the bookings.

A standard European time would also make life easier for a broad range of businesses which have international dealings, (e.g. banks) because it would mean that they would all keep roughly the same office hours.

One advantage of summer time which should be easy to quantify is the potential saving of energy, since we can benefit from the extra light to save on electricity. However, the overall energy saving is not as much as one might think.

The European Commission was recently asked by a German Social Democratic member of the European Parliament, Erdmann Linde, to compute the saving. It came up with an overall figure of around 0.25% for the whole Community, although the figure would vary from country to country.

One reason for this puny saving is that although we might use less electricity during summer time we tend to use our cars more to take advantage of the long evenings!

Summer time may do little to help our balance of payments problems, but at least we have a better time for its duration.

TRADE

Expansion both inside Community and outside

Trade between the European Community Member States grew very significantly overall between January and September last year, according to the Community's statistical office EUROSTAT. Intra-Community trade expanded in current value terms by some 20% over the same period in 1978, to reach a total value of £99 000 million. In real terms, this growth rate is about 10%.

Germany was the strongest trading partner with imports worth £26 000 million and exports worth £27 000 million.

The largest increase in purchases from the Community countries was recorded by Ireland (nearly 32%), with the United Kingdom (+30%) and Italy (+29%) close behind. The latter two Member States also recorded a significant growth in sales to their Community partners, up by 26% and 28.5% respectively. One reason for higher British exports was increased sales of North Sea oil to Germany; the UK now supplies about 10% of Germany's total oil imports.

The Netherlands reported the healthiest trade surplus with Community partners during the first nine months of last year, some £2 800 million. This has been put down mainly to exports of oil products to the other Member States, and made up for a large Dutch deficit in trade with third countries brought about by crude oil imports.

Germany too had a good-looking trade surplus (around £1 250 million) as did Italy and Denmark (£620 million). Belgium managed to turn a deficit of close on £620 million in 1978 into a small surplus, but both the United Kingdom and Ireland reported widening deficits. The increased revenues flowing into the UK as North Sea oil flowed out, was offset by imports of industrial products.

Community trade with third countries also expanded over the same January to September period. Imports increased by 19.1% to reach a total value of £96 000 million, while

exports also rose by 11% to reach £87 000 million. Even taking price rises into account this still represents an increase in volume of 10% for imports and 8.6% for exports.

Germany was again the strongest trading partner, with the UK not far behind. Most Member States recorded increases in imports of around 20% over the same period the year before, except for the UK, which reported the lowest increase (nearly 12%) owing to low raw materials imports.

The relatively weak (8%) growth in exports was due to sluggish increases in German, British and Dutch sales abroad. France and Italy, on the other hand were more successful, turning in increases of 15.6% and 19.8% respectively. Both did especially well in trade with the candidate countries for Community membership (Greece, Portugal and Spain) and with Japan and China. Irish exports were up by almost 14%.

Nevertheless, the Community overall suffered an alarming deterioration in its trade balance. The £2 400 million deficit of the same period in 1978 soared to £9 200 million in 1979. All Member States fell victim, but Germany, whose balance of trade surplus was halved, and Italy, whose deficit doubled, were particularly hard hit.

Above average growth rates were recorded in Community trade with the state-trading countries, especially the Soviet Union and China. Imports from the Soviet Union grew faster than exports so that in the first nine months of 1979 the Community's trade deficit was 50% higher than in 1978. Trade with China, however, developed positively: a strong growth in imports (+32%) was more than offset by a doubling of exports, resulting in a trade surplus of £459 million in the Nine's favour.

Poor export performance coupled with increased imports led the Community to turn a £400 million trade surplus with the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries into a £1 500 million deficit. The same pattern was evident in trade with OPEC, where the Community's deficit trebled to reach £8 400 million. There was a 12% overall drop in exports to both the ACP and OPEC. The ASEAN countries gave the Nine a ray of light: sales were up by 10% here.

No such joy with other industrialized countries, however, with imports exceeding exports, and trade deficits widening. A positive development did emerge in trade with Japan: the Community only imported 11% more Japanese goods than in 1978, and exported a massive 31% more. The Community's trade balance, still in deficit, showed a slight improvement, from -£2 300 million to -£2 200 million. Only the UK failed to contribute to this improvement.

Even such small joys have their price however, and a slight upward trend in Community trade with the United States in 1978 was reversed last year. Imports from the US grew three times as fast as exports, and the Community's trade deficit yawned a little over 80% wider (from -£2 300 million to -£4 100 million).

The surplus with EFTA countries remained unchanged at £2 800 million, with imports up by 22.4% and exports by 18.6%. Of the three candidate countries only Portugal improved its position with the Community importing 36% more Portuguese produce and exporting 12% of her own back. Although Community imports of Spanish and Greek goods also rose relatively fast (23.3% and 27.9% respectively) this was offset by even speedier export growth (32% and 33.3% respectively).

The share of intra-Community trade in the total trade of each Member State shows to what extent each has become integrated into the Common Market. Some 75.5% of Irish imports came from her Community partners, compared with 67.6% for Belgium-Luxembourg and 56.6% for the Netherlands. For the other Member States intra-Community purchases represented around 50% of the total, except for Italy and the UK, who only looked to their Community partners for 45% and 40.8% of their total imports respectively.

The same pattern emerges for exports, where Community integration is more complete than for imports (53.6% as against 50.7%). Ireland exported 78.4% of her total exports to the other eight Member States, with the Netherlands and Belgium-Luxembourg close behind: 72.5% of their exports travelled within the Nine's borders. The United Kingdom was again the least integrated of the lot: only 39.9% of her exports were headed for Community destinations.



Wide variations in income earned from the land

One of the recurring elements of the European Community's annual farm price-fixing debates, and more recently of the wider discussion on the Common Agricultural Policy, is farmers' incomes. Farmers' organizations maintain that incomes in the agricultural sector tend to rise at a slower rate than those in the industrial sector, and the Agriculture Commissioner, Finn Olav Gundelach himself admits that farmers' average incomes fell slightly in real terms last year.

The average income of farmers in the Community is itself difficult to assess, and the concept of an 'average income' tends anyway to hide the wide differences in earnings between farmers in the nine Member States.

The European Commission relies on the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) for its information on the incomes of the Community's agricultural holdings. FADN figures for 1977/78 reveal the extent of these differences.

Working fellow countrymen of the Danish Agriculture Commissioner enjoy by a long way the best average annual income: about £9100 per year. Next well-off are the Dutch on around £7500 and the Belgians on £6200 per year.

Farmers in the United Kingdom and Ireland earn close to what would be an average Community income, the equivalent of about £5100 per year. German farmers, often featured popularly driving large cars, actually appear from the FADN figures to be relatively poorly off, banking only about £3800 annually, just slightly more than their French counterparts.

Poorest on the salary scale are Italian farmers, whose average yearly income of £3200 is only a third of their Danish colleagues.

The Commission points out, however, that inter-country comparisons based on purely monetary terms are generally recognized to be inadequate. Purchasing power parities would give a more realistic picture.

A somewhat different pattern emerges from figures given by FADN for the average gross cash earnings of permanent, regular male workers, who are a minority of the agricultural labour force.

Danish farm workers join their bosses at the top of the earnings league, grossing about £2.64p per hour, which works out, on a very crude average of paid hours per month multiplied by twelve basis, at about £5800 per year.

Close behind come Dutch farm workers on £2.60p per hour £5700 annually. German farm labourers appear from the FADN

figures to earn a good deal more than their employers—£5300 a year—although the Commission points out that the figures are not homogenous enough to allow such a comparison to be realistically made.

British and Irish farm workers are the lowest hourly wage earners with £1.15 and £1.07 respectively, less than Italian workers, who averaged £1.26 per hour.

German farmers enjoy best credit terms

If you were a German farmer looking for a loan to finance investment on your holding, you could count yourself luckier than your fellow farmers in the rest of the European Community. The annual interest rate asked of you would be lower, and in most cases very substantially so, than that demanded by banks in the other eight Member States.

Last year, both short and long-term loans for farm investments in Germany were subject to an annual interest rate of 6.8%. This compared with short-term interest rates of 7.8% in Luxembourg, 8.5% in France, 9.8% in Belgium, 10.3% in the Netherlands, 15% in Italy and Ireland, 15.6% in the United Kingdom and 16.8% in Denmark (a full 10% higher than in Germany).

The pattern for long-term loans tells a very similar tale: 9.1% in the Netherlands, 10.3% in France, 15% (average for fixed and variable term) in the UK, 16% in Ireland and 17.9% in Denmark.

Interest rates rose in most Member States between 1978 and 1979, with Denmark (where the rate remained steady) and Luxembourg, (where it fell by 0.2%) being the exceptions. The highest increases were in Ireland (an average increase of 3.5% for all durations, i.e. short, medium and long term loans) and the UK (average of 2% for all durations).

In Germany, France, the Netherlands and Belgium, however, interest rates for farm investments were actually lower last year than in 1974, the difference again being most in favour of the German farmers: a 4.6% drop in interest rates during that five-year period.

THIRD WORLD

Bulk of emergency aid devoted to war victims

Probably not for the first time, man seems to be outdoing nature in wrecking peaceful lives. Last year over half the emergency aid given by the European Community to the developing countries had to be spent on refugees from wars and military disturbances.

Food and other forms of refugee relief accounted for £42 million of the total emergency aid of £80 million.

And of the £9.5 million already allocated by the Community for this year, some £8.5 million will be spent on refugees—£6.5 million on the Afghan refugees in Pakistan and, more hopefully, £1.95 million for the repatriation of refugees from Zimbabwe.

Inevitably, the bulk of the emergency aid for refugee relief went to South-East Asia last year—£35 million out of £42 million. In fact, South-East Asia, including Cambodia, accounted for £45 million of the total emergency aid for 1979. Africa, on the other hand, received £21 million and Latin America £12 million.

Nearly half the total emergency aid took the form of food aid in 1979. Some 186 000 tonnes of cereals, 6 800 tonnes of milk powder and 850 tonnes of butter oil (plus a special supply of red beans) were provided by the European Community.

Although 21 countries in all received food aid last year, the largest quantities went to Cambodia and the other South-East Asian countries for distribution to refugees.

Emergency aid for the victims of natural disasters, which last year included volcanic eruptions as well as cyclones, amounted to £27 million. It was distributed over 23 different relief operations, in countries as far apart as India (cyclones) and Paraguay (floods).

Under the special aid provisions of the Lomé Convention the Community gave £17 million to a number of African countries facing an emergency situation because of conflicts. For example, Ruanda and Burundi

received emergency aid following a breakdown in traditional supply routes as a result of the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania.

Helping developing countries to beat the oil crisis

If we imagine we in the European Community have an energy crisis on our hands we should spare a thought for our less fortunate brethren in the Third World.

True, their needs are not so great since most of them are exposed to extremes of heat rather than cold, but the availability of supplies of indispensable energy are still correspondingly much scarcer than ours.

An important part of the Community's aid programme to the developing countries is devoted to helping them to increase their domestic energy supplies. Electricity production and transmission have received most of the money so far, but greater emphasis is being placed this year on renewable resources.

Last year, grants were made either from Community or national funds worth just under £200 million. This was almost two-thirds of all such aid given by the more advanced countries through such organizations as the World Bank, the United Nations or OPEC.

In addition, the Community and the nine national exchequers gave around £130 million in loans on special terms or on near-market terms.

This year, total Community aid is expected to increase by 40% in an effort to help the Third World become reasonably independent of costly imported oil.

Support for Zimbabwe

The European Parliament has called for Community support for the economic development of Zimbabwe following what it described in a formal resolution as 'free and fair' elections.

The Parliament said it was essential for new investment to be encouraged

and it supported Zimbabwe's eventual membership of the Lomé Convention if it wishes to apply.

Membership of the trade and aid convention is open to any independent country in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Zimbabwe would be the sixtieth member.

IN BRIEF

Who earns what?

Oil-rich Kuwait, for many years regarded as the richest country in the world, continued to head the league table in 1978 on a *per capita* income basis. Income among the dunes and oil wells stood at just under \$15 000 a head. It was followed by the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, the United States, Germany and Norway. Canada was next and then three more Community countries—Belgium, the Netherlands and France. At the other end of the scale, Laos and Bangladesh managed only \$90 a head, according to the World Bank.

Key role

Commissioner Claude Cheysson, who is responsible for Third World affairs, has stressed the vital and growing role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in development aid. He was speaking at the sixth general assembly of NGOs in Brussels. (See *Euroforum* 5/80 for details of Community aid to these organizations).

Aid for Uganda

The Community is making emergency aid of almost £200 000 to Uganda to help victims of drought. In the past year the Community has given emergency aid worth £300 000 to Uganda, as well as drawing up a programme of short-term aid worth £11.5 million.

Emergency aid

The Community is making emergency aid to three countries to help them to overcome recent natural disasters—£455 000 to Senegal, £390 000 to Jamaica and £23 000 to Swaziland.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Retired folk

Sir,

I was particularly interested in Robert Cappa's letter (*Euroforum* 4/80) dealing with the important but somewhat neglected subject of retirement. I am involved in lecturing and counselling on retirement and I am convinced that the topic deserves more serious attention for many reasons. Let me outline a few.

First, advanced technology (e.g. microelectronics) is forcing more and more people into earlier retirement. Second, large numbers of unemployed in certain age and trade groups (e.g. steelworkers) are unlikely to find employment again and are therefore virtually retired now.

In the UK there are about 11 million retired (about 1 in every 5 people) and over 14.4 million (about 1 in 4) over the age of 55. If this pattern is typical of the Community as a whole, it is evident that at least 50 million Community citizens are affected.

Moreover, in the UK we have nothing like the French 'éducation permanente' or the University of the Third Age; nor has anything really effective emerged from the Council of Europe Working Party on Preparation for Retirement.

What is needed is not talk, but action! First, action on an article as requested by Robert Cappa. Second, and more important, a well-orchestrated campaign is needed to get Council, Commission and Parliament to act to raise the quality of life for retired people. This calls for social, political, educational and financial action.

Tom Moore,
Senior Lecturer,
Thames Polytechnic,
Wellington Street,
London, UK.

Nuclear waste

Dear Sir,

In your article 'Nuclear waste: the precautions that must be taken' in *Euroforum* 5/80, the point is once again raised of 'the much-needed home-produced energy that can be a viable alternative to increasingly dear imported oil'.

You may not be aware of the fact that nuclear energy can only be used to generate electricity. Moreover, the share of electricity in total energy consumption is quite small (between 10 and 15%) and this in spite of widespread incentives to step up consumption of electricity.

It is erroneous, not to say ludicrous, to pretend that nuclear energy is a valuable all-round substitute for oil. The only exception is heavy fuel oil which is being used in power plants.

The OECD itself has said that by substituting nuclear energy for heavy fuel in power plants wherever this is possible our oil imports would be cut back by 10% at the most.

In spite of these facts, nuclear energy is time and again presented as the magic wand which will make us independent from imported energy. Nevertheless, it is useless for 90% of our total energy needs.

What's more, our uranium supplies (with the exception of France) virtually all come from outside the Community (USA, Canada, South Africa), so that the term 'indigenous source of energy' hardly seems to be adequate.

Your article also states that 'the radioactive waste produced during the operation of nuclear power stations is generally of low-level activity and requires storage for a limited period only'.

This is a highly misleading phrase since 95% of nuclear waste material is created at a later stage, during the enrichment process of irradiated fission material.

The text does not supply many details in this regard. It fails to mention anything about waste production of enrichment plants (inert gases, iodine-isotopes) nor about the fact that the highly radioactive waste materials have to be cooled, aired and agitated continuously during a 5-year period, after which they will undergo further treatment. The permanent underground storage of nuclear waste products can only be envisaged after a period of fifty years.

If we were to believe *Euroforum*, the waste problem is a point of minor importance, which seems to be in contradiction with the keen interest and even feelings of panic displayed by public opinion in this regard.

E. Tys
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Belgium

Lomé II

Sir,

The new Lomé Convention which has been concluded between ACP countries and the Community presents a certain number of changes and innovations compared with Lomé I. Many specific references to environmental protection can be found in this new legal instrument. It is interesting to note that this cooperation agreement reflects a recognition on the part of both the Community and ACP States that sound, long-term economic development can only be achieved on the basis of a healthy environment and a sound management of resources.

Upon close examination of the text of the new Convention, one can remark that Lomé II not only presents positive aspects but that certain lacunae also exist. However, there are several provisions covering financial aid for projects and actions that could have a genuinely positive impact on the environment and quality of life of the ACP populations, while conserving resources and preventing damage which is sometimes irreversible. It is to be hoped that decision-makers both in the ACP countries and in the Community will make full use of these possibilities.

G. Verbrugge,
European Environmental Bureau
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THE NEWS AT A GLANCE

Accord signed

The cooperation agreement between the Community and Yugoslavia (*Euroforum* 5/80 cover story) was signed in Belgrade on 2 April. The European Commission, which negotiated the agreement on behalf of the Community, is to open a delegation in the Yugoslav capital.

Sessions row

A number of members of the European Parliament have complained that the Parliament's Bureau, which is responsible for arranging its business, did not consult the full Parliament over where it would hold its sessions for the second half of this year. The Bureau decided to remain in Strasbourg where all sessions were held during the first six months pending completion of the new Parliament building in Luxembourg, where a number of the sessions are generally held.

Last journey

The Nine are investigating ways of cutting through red tape to help Community citizens repatriate the remains of relatives who have died in another Member State. This news resulted from a complaint made by a British MEP that one of his constituents had to wait 16 days to bring back a body from France.

Getting together

A seminar is to be held in Brussels next November on the feasibility of creating a centralized European securities market in addition to national or regional stock exchanges. One idea is to link existing exchanges through a sophisticated telecommunications network.

More money

The Community is to make an extra £18 million available this year to help finance the conversion of firms hit by the crisis in the iron and steel industries. This will be in the form of interest rebates on loans for investments designed to create jobs.

Fewer optimistic

Consumers in the Community are less confident than they were, according to the European Commission's latest economic survey. Between last October and last January, confidence fell by 5%. The consumer price index rose by 1.3% between January and February.

Into law

The current Italian presidency of the Council of Ministers has assured the European Parliament's legal committee that it intends to press ahead with the drawing up of a draft agreement on mutual assistance between the Nine in criminal matters. This would be a first step in implementing a convention, signed last December, which is designed to combat terrorism.

Wide agreement

The European Commission is studying the problems involved in creating a legal basis for Community-wide collective agreements. It believes such agreements could play an important role in the development of the Community as a means of establishing a social consensus between employers and trade unions.

Call for action

The European Parliament has adopted a resolution calling on the Commission and the Council to ensure that the Nine sign the UN convention adopted last December which aims to prohibit any form of discrimination against women.

Woman Commissioner

Commission President Roy Jenkins has said that he would favour the appointment of women as Commissioners. However, he reminded the European Parliament's ad hoc Women's Committee that nominations were in the hands of the nine national governments. The next meeting of the Committee will take place in Brussels on 21-22 April.

Fowl treatment

Attitudes on cruelty to animals and our feathered friends vary widely, not only from country to country in the Community but also between individuals. In the European Parliament recently, Farm Commissioner Finn Olav Gundelach revealed that investigations had shown that battery hens enjoyed anything from 59 to 600 square centimetres of living space each. He told a worried member, Sir John Stewart-Clark, that the Commission could not therefore be sure that minimum standards were being observed throughout the Community.

Extra scrutiny

The Nine have agreed to a system for registering petroleum product imports into the Community. This will enable the Community to improve its monitoring of the oil market.

Boycott rejected

The European Parliament has rejected a call by some Socialist and Independent members for the Nine to exercise as much pressure to prevent the British Lions rugby team going on its forthcoming tour of South Africa as they have on shunning the Olympic Games in Moscow.

Changing shape

Mr Turgut Ozal, one of the principal economic advisers to Turkish Prime Minister Suleiman Demirel, was in Brussels recently to explain to the European Commission the changes that are taking place to establish a stable market economy in place of the Socialist structure favoured by the previous Ecevit government. He told the press that this was a necessary corollary of Turkey's bid for Community membership.

Little change

Unemployment in the Community fell slightly between January and February from 6.1% of the total civilian working population to 6%. However, there still remain almost 6½ million out of work.



Keeping alive a European tradition

When John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy and Count of Flanders, conferred 'The Order of the Hop' on some Flemings more than five centuries ago, little did he dream what an essential part of the European Community that little cone-shaped flower would one day become.

Nor, in all probability, did he realize that the order would exist to this day—an order which he founded in 1402 to appease the restless Flemings from stirring up troubles in the County of Flanders and to link Flanders more closely to the French crown.

Then as now, hops were used in the Low Countries as one of the main ingredients for making beer. In fact, the first known use of that flower in beer-making—the female species to be exact—was introduced in the areas of Bruges and Ghent between 1250 and 1300 by monks who, besides their religious duties, spent their time farming and experimenting in wines and other beverages.

History has it that the Low Countries were responsible for the introduction of hops to England during that medieval period. Hops were also used in various medicines, and still are to a much lesser extent today.

But the use of hops is as indispensable in beer-making today as grapes are to wine-making. And today, as in the days of John the Fearless, recognition comes to those who serve. The International Growers' Convention, which is now the seat of 'The Order of the Hop', reverently distributes the distinction to those who perform outstanding service to the hops industry.

Formulae for beer making in the European Community are the closely-guarded secrets of the individual breweries. The laws controlling these are the responsibility of the national governments of the nine Member States. But these laws must conform to certain regulations set forth by the Community itself.

The rumour which was circulated some years ago that the Community was going to impose a standard Eurobeer on its consumers was never contemplated. The Community never intended to create a Eurobeer where the formula, process, bottling and packaging would be controlled by rigid common standards. The Community feels the unique personalities of each beer brewed in the Nine must be safeguarded. This is the basic aim of Community regulations concerning beer.

What the Community has done is simply to adopt certain regulations governing the hygienic standards of beers and their production, the movement

of beers across borders, and certain marketing rules.

The role of beer in everyday life in the Nine is so important that the European Commission has two highly qualified experts scrutinizing the beer industry from its raw materials stage through its processing to final marketing. One of the experts is a human encyclopedia on the growing and utilization of hops. (He, too, is a Knight of the Order of the Hop).

Despite the surplus of wines in the Community, beer continues to retain its magic grip on a large number of consumers. This is seen in the number of breweries currently working at full capacity to satisfy the thirsty demand.

Germany alone has 1 447 breweries, followed by Belgium with 150, and the UK with 143. France has 73, Italy 31, Denmark 25, the Netherlands 21, Ireland 7 and tiny Luxembourg 6.

Germans are also the biggest beer drinkers in the Community, followed at some distance by the British, and much farther behind by the French.

Both beer production and consumption have been increasing in recent years in the Community, and little wonder. Besides beer's capacity to replace body moistures and body-building proteins spent during a hard day's work, it also induces a feeling of well-being. This calming effect derives from that major ingredient the hop, which not only provides the bitterness to the beer's flavour, but also lends a soporific value to the brew. This tendency to provoke drowsiness is a characteristic of the hop known for centuries.

Peasants in medieval times made pillows bursting with hops to help induce sleep by their strong aroma.

So, here's to the humble hop!

Euroforum

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