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\*\* According to a theory which the European Commission feels is quite realistic, the Community's own energy production resources should by 1985 cover 50%, or even 60%, of the energy consumed in the Community. This is the basis of the NEW ENERGY POLICY STRATEGY adopted by the Council

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of Ministers. Its aim is to make the Community more independent in energy supplies. Several measures will be taken at the same time to promote the rationalization of consumption.

ANNEX 1 sets out the general lines of the policy, from now until 1985.

\*\* Employers contemplating MASS DISMISSALS will have to consult the workers' representatives. This is one of the new items in the EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY.

ANNEX 2 summarizes the decisions adopted by the Council of Ministers of Social Affairs.

\*\* SEVEN OUT OF EVERY TEN Europeans believe JOINT ACTION BY EUROPE to be the best way of dealing with the urgent problems of our time. This information comes from the opinion poll known as EUROBAROMETER No 2.

ANNEX 3 outlines the main trends revealed by this survey of European public opinion.

\*\* The European Commission has made a point of establishing acceptable limits to AID FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. Member States have been induced to finance certain firms whose financial balance might be upset by any further outlay on counter-pollution measures. The aid granted under this heading could affect trade and distort competition in a way that runs counter to the common interest. The Commission has therefore decided that State aid in the form of subsidies must not in 1975 and 1976 exceed 45% of the amount invested by companies for environmental protection purposes, or 30% in 1977 and 1978; and 15% in 1979 and 1980. This decreasing rate should encourage Member States to implement the required regulations at an early date, and induce companies to make the relevant investments as soon as possible.

\*\* Technical, economic and legal study of the problems raised by collecting and processing NON-BIODEGRADABLE PACKAGING MATERIALS for consumer products is being carried out by the Commission's departments. During the first quarter of 1975 the Commission of the European Communities will put forward proposals for Community action, based on the findings of this study.

\*\* After some modification, the standard contract entered into between the "Bayerische Motoren Werke AG" (BMW - Bavarian motor manufacturing company) and its German sales agents has been APPROVED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION. So far the activities of agents has been

limited geographically as regards both the selling of cars, and the supply of spare parts. From now on FREE COMPETITION will be a reality and users will be able to buy their cars from any distributor they like. This is particularly important, because it means that, while it is under guarantee, a vehicle will be repaired by any BMW agent in the Community, with no questions asked. The same applies to the supply of spares. A BMW agent will be able to apply to any of the sales outlets approved by the parent company. By this decision, the Commission has taken one more step along the way to enabling consumers to buy products in the Community wherever conditions and prices are most favourable.

\*\* Twenty-four federations and associations whose aim is to protect the environment and nature have decided to amalgamate in the EUROPEAN OFFICE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, for the purpose of coordinating their activities. The founder organizations feel that, in close liaison with organizations that cover social activities, the European associations for environmental protection have a duty to determine the new priorities for Europe. All correspondence for the European Office for the Environment may be addressed to Gents Aktiekomitee Leefmilieu, 69 Schoolstraat - 9040 Oostakker - Belgium.

\*\* The Community will again be giving FINANCIAL AID to Community projects in the HYDROCARBONS sector. This aid will be in the form of loans, loan guarantees or repayable subsidies, and will go to technological development projects directly connected with prospecting for, producing, storing or transporting hydrocarbons that are likely to improve the security of the Community's energy supplies. A similar operation mounted at the beginning of 1974 was warmly welcomed by companies interested, who submitted 23 technological development projects to the Commission. When processing has been completed, 21 projects will receive aid, totalling 42.5 million u.a. (units of account) (1 u.a. = approximately US \$1.2).

\*\* Belgian consumer organizations are continuing their actions in court. This time it is UFIDEC (Union féminine pour l'information et la défense des consommateurs = women's union for consumer information and protection) which has brought a COURT ACTION against 34 bakers, who are accused of having sold "pains de menage" (standard loaf) weighing appreciably less than the kilo laid down by law. Cases have also been brought against certain butchers, accused of selling minced meat containing sulphite; and certain large-scale distributors, who are accused of having advertised promotional sales when they did not have the products advertised in stock.

\*\* 58 species of birds are threatened with extinction in the very near future. Of the 408 bird species living in the Community in the wild state, 125 are increasing in numbers, whilst the stocks of 221 species are diminishing. The European Commission has therefore decided

to recommend that Member States accede to the international conventions of Paris and Ramsar, concerning BIRD PROTECTION.

\*\* Business between THE COMMUNITY AND JAPAN is profiting from a notable increase in the volume of goods exchanged. Increased exports from the Community to Japan are now noted. The establishment of a Community delegation in Tokyo will promote closer contacts between the two partners.

	Period	EEC imports	EEC exports	Balance
1972	1st half	1 250	722	- 528
	2nd half	1 503	823	- 680
1973	1st half	1 722	1 051	- 671
	2nd half	1 869	1 377	- 492
1974	1st half	2 104	1 531	- 573

\*\* The European Commission has authorized the Federal German Republic to acquire most of the assets of the Essen company, Gelsenberg AG. The Federal Government intends to amalgamate Gelsenberg AG and VEBA, which it already controls. When the operation is completed, the two companies will account for some 33% of the WHOLESALE COAL TRADE.

\*\* Stichting Concawe has just published a supplement and updated version of its index of national REGULATIONS concerning ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION in the European OIL INDUSTRIES (see I&S - No 32/74). This publication is available on request from Stichting Concawe, 60, Van Hogenhoucklaan - 2018 The Hague - Netherlands.

THE COMMUNITY'S ENERGY POLICY UP TO 1985

According to a theory which the European Commission feels is quite realistic, the Community's own energy production resources should, by 1985, cover 50%, or even 60%, of the energy consumed in the Community. This is the basis of the new energy policy adopted by the Council of Ministers. Its aim is to make the Community more independent in energy supplies. Several measures will be taken at the same time to promote the rationalization of consumption.

To make the Community less dependent on imported oil, the Council of Ministers has decided to step up the use of electricity wherever possible, through developing nuclear energy for instance. By 1985, electricity should account for 35% of energy supplies. However, in this sector there is also to be further rationalization - the use of natural gas will be restricted as far as possible to power stations. The properties of natural gas are such as to justify its being reserved for specific uses.

If the Community's efforts in this direction are maintained, the amount of natural gas produced should by 1985 reach a level of at least 175 Mtoe (millions of tonnes oil equivalent), and if possible, 225 Mtoe.

At the same time, development of a series of nuclear plants of at least 160 GWe (Gigawatts electrical) installed capacity, and 200 GWe if possible - should make us independent as regards energy, by 1985.

The production of hydroelectric and geothermic energy will be stepped up to a capacity of 45 Mtoe.

Total primary energy requirements in %

	For comparison		Objectives for 1985 (in round figures)	
	1973 Estimates	1985 Preliminary forecasts	50% Dependence	40% Dependence
Solid fuels	22.6	10	17	17
Oil	61.4	64	49	41
Natural gas	11.6	15	18	23
Hydroelectric and geothermic energy	3	2	3	3
Nuclear energy	1.4	9	13	16
<b>TOTAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In order to discourage waste, a Community action programme has been initiated, devoted to the rational use of energy. The aim is to reduce the long-term average rate of increase in energy consumption, and by 1985 to achieve a level of consumption 15% lower than the forecasts made last year. This will not involve rationing, but efforts on a voluntary basis, relating to such matters as thermal insulation, the use of waste heat, and promoting the use of diesel engines in transport. In the next few months a group of experts will be putting forward proposals for guidelines and for coordination of these efforts.

In the first half of 1974, an appreciable saving of energy was noted in Member States. Internal consumption of the main oil products, as compared with the same period in 1973, fell as follows: Belgium -19.1%, Denmark -25.7%, Germany -15.5%, France -6.1%, Ireland -3.7%, Italy -4.1%, Luxembourg - 16%, Netherlands - 22.8%, United Kingdom -9.9%.

The energy problem will be examined again at a meeting of the Council of Ministers on 20 and 21 January, which will be attended by the Foreign Ministers and Ministers for the Economy. In view of the seriousness and urgency of the problem, the Ministers for Energy have now decided to meet once every two months.

In addition, the Commission has stated its intention to become an "active observer" of the work of the International Energy Agency.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY -  
PROSPECTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The employer is obliged to hold consultations with workers' representatives when he is contemplating collective dismissals. He must notify the public authority of any proposed collective dismissals, it being understood that the dismissals cannot take place for a specific period (30 days, which may be extended under certain circumstances). This period may be used to attempt to avoid or reduce dismissals and to mitigate their consequences - thus the decision of the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs.

In this connection a precise definition has been drawn up - "dismissals effected by an employer for one or more reasons not related to the individual behaviour of the workers concerned where the number of dismissals depending on the choice made by the Member States is:

- either, over a period of 30 days: at least 10 in establishments normally employing between 20 and 100 workers; at least 10% of the number of workers in establishments normally employing between 100 and 300 workers; at least 30 in establishments normally employing at least 300 workers;
- or, over a period of 90 days: at least 20 in any one establishment, irrespective of the number of workers normally employed there."

The Council also recorded its agreement with the directive which aims to ensure observance of the principle of equal pay for men and women. If it is adopted in this final form, the directive will have the effect of rendering null and void any provisions, in agreements or contracts, which are contrary to this principle, set out in the Treaty of Rome. This is the first time that Member States will be obliged to introduce into their national legislation such measures as are necessary to enable all employees, who consider themselves aggrieved by the non-application of the principle of equal pay, to pursue their claims by a judicial process, once they have exhausted all possible recourse to other competent authorities.

The Council of Ministers has also decided to establish a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, and a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Both these bodies have been endowed with legal personality, which means that they will be autonomous to a significant extent.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training will have a double scientific and technical role. The small but specialized staff will be capable of promoting exchanges of information and experience, of distributing documentation and launching research and experimental projects. The Management Board will be composed of members representing the governments of Member States, the Commission of the European Communities, and workers' and employers' organizations.



The task of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions will be to pursue ideas on this subject in the light of practical experience, and to identify factors leading to change. The foundation will advise Community institutions on foreseeable objectives and guidelines, by transmitting scientific information and technical data to them.

The Council has further decided to convene the Standing Committee on Employment which could resume work on 3 February 1975. The Committee will be composed of 18 representatives of workers' organizations, 11 representatives of the Employers' Liaison Committee, 4 representatives of professional agricultural organizations and 3 representatives of the European Centre for Public Enterprises. Provision has been made for 18 alternates in order to ensure the fullest representation of interested bodies.

The Council is therefore acceding to one of the major suggestions made on the eve of the conference on the prospects of the European Social Policy. For the first time at this tripartite conference employers' representatives, workers' representatives and representatives of the Community's public authorities met to discuss the subject.

The result of this conference was basic agreement that priority should be given to maintaining the level of employment and the standard of living, and to counter-inflation measures. In this connection, it would be appropriate to favour particular groups of workers, particularly migrant workers, the young, women and older workers, who are likely to be most affected by inflation and a rise in unemployment. Finally, both sides of industry showed that they were in favour of meetings at which both sides were equally represented, and which were arranged by sector; and whose purpose was to encourage coordination at Community level.

## EUROBAROMETER No 2

Seven out of every ten Europeans believe joint action by Europe to be the best way of dealing with the urgent problems of our time. This information comes from the opinion poll known as Eurobarometer No 2. This poll is conducted twice a year, and indicates short-term trends in European public opinion (see I&S - No 29/74). It embraces a sample of about 9 000 people, aged 15 years and over, spread throughout the nine member countries of the Community.

The main points highlighted by Eurobarometer No 2 emphasize the five problems (out of a list of twelve) which preoccupy the public most:

- (1) Joint action against rising prices
- (2) Working out a joint policy on energy supplies
- (3) Working out a joint policy for nature conservation and counter-pollution measures
- (4) Protecting consumers against fraudulent trading practices and abuse of advertising
- (5) Arriving at the sort of consensus in Europe which would enable it to speak with one voice in discussions with the Americans and Russians.

Asked to choose between three carefully-worded formulae for solving the difficult problems facing our countries, the public made the following selection:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| A. National governments should act entirely independently of each other                                       | 21% |
| B. The nine countries should get together, but each government should reserve the right to have the final say | 39% |
| C. A European Parliament should be elected, so as to set up a European government soon                        | 27% |

In the six founder members, seven out of ten people (69%) feel that the Common Market is a good thing for their country. The percentage for Denmark is only 33% (compared with 35% in May 1974), whereas it is 36% in Great Britain (compared with 33%) and 50% in Ireland (compared with 48%).

If the Common Market were to break up the following would be "very sorry":

- 56% in the six founder countries (no change)
- 27% in Denmark (no change)
- 31% in Great Britain (compared with 24% in May 1974)
- 48% in Ireland (compared with 38% in May 1974).

And what if the United Kingdom decided to leave the Community? In this case, only Ireland (29%), Denmark (20%) and Great Britain (18%) would regard it as "very serious". In the six founder countries between 2% (France) and 8% (Netherlands) regard the United Kingdom's possible withdrawal as "very serious". As far as the Belgians (46%) and the French (49%) are concerned, this departure would "make no difference".

The economic side of Community life is much better appreciated by the public than the political. Only in Germany, Italy and Luxembourg is relatively strong importance attached to the political side, and this is given expression by about 3 or 4 people out of every 10.

As regards informing the public, most people (59%) feel that the media (press, radio, television) give far too superficial a presentation of European problems.

Slightly less than half the population (46%) feel that the press does not pay enough attention to European matters. Four out of ten people (42%) feel that the information disseminated in their country is not objective. Another four out of ten (41%) feel that "the whole thing is far too complicated and boring". And finally, 38% of those interviewed have hardly any interest in these problems.

This criticism reveals the press as a kind of alibi. The public in fact seems put off by the complex nature of the problems discussed and by the fact that there is no way in which it can take an active part. The corresponding problems at national level, if no less complex, are at least "personalized", and the public is probably aware of being able to play a greater part there, in seeking out solutions.