

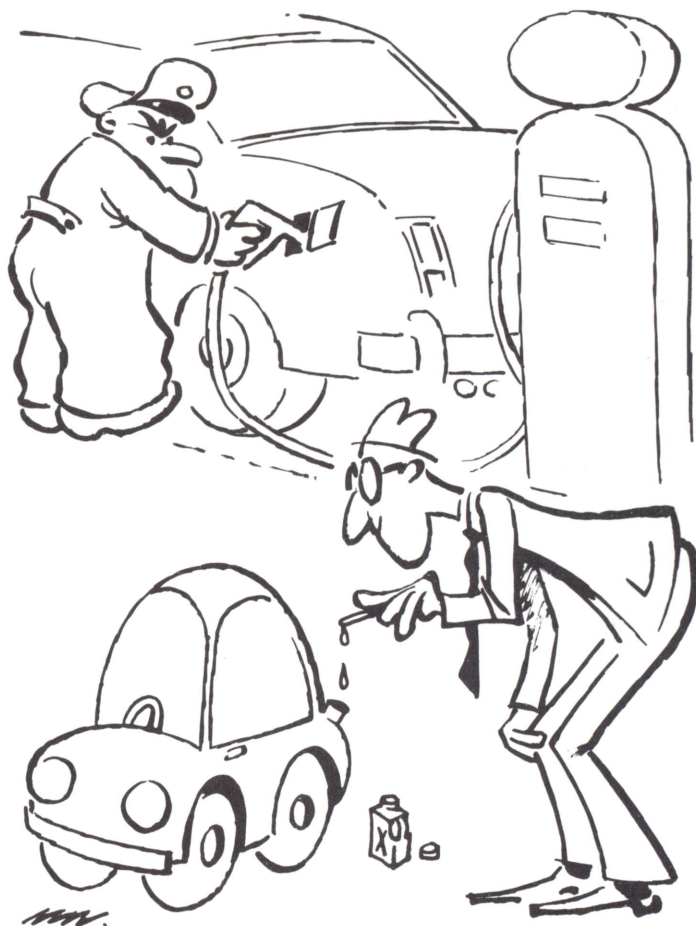
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** The transport sector accounts for 28% of all the crude oil consumed in Europe. The needs of the private car alone represent nearly 70% of the total amount of energy consumed by the transport sector. Since European countries seem anxious to save energy and, in particular,

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The information published in this bulletin covers the European Communities' activities in the fields of industrial development, protection of the environment and consumer welfare. It is therefore not limited to recording Commission decisions or opinions.

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to provide new impetus to developments in public transport, the European Commission called for a study on the amount of ENERGY CONSUMED BY THE VARIOUS MODES OF TRANSPORT (trains, cars, buses, underground, etc.).

ANNEX 1 gives a short summary of the findings.

** When he addressed the EUROPEAN CONSUMERS' FORUM in West Berlin on 23 January Mr P.J. Hillery, Vice-President of the European Commission, said that 1975 should mark the culminating point of the Commission's first efforts in the field of consumer protection and information.

ANNEX 2 is a summary of Dr Hillery's comments.

** Following publication in "Industry and Society" of an article on consumer information programmes broadcast by Italian television (see I&S No 31/74 and the special issue of October 1974), Mr Roberto Bencivenga, one of the producers of the RAI channel, sent us some comments which are reproduced IN ANNEX 3.

** Mr Wim Bosboom has received the Special prize from the Commission of the European Communities for the FILM "KONING KLANT" (The customer is always right), which he made in cooperation with Dutch Vara television, the Belgian RTB and the German Sudwestfunk. The film was shown at an international competition for films dealing with consumer topics, which was held during the "Grüne Woche" at Berlin from 20 to 25 January. It illustrates the different prices which European consumers currently pay for the same product in the various Community countries.

** On the subject of the education of MIGRANT WORKERS' CHILDREN Mr Brunner, member of the Commission, addressed the European Parliament as follows: "Foreign children now growing up in our countries should also benefit from the results of European unification, if in the future they are not to cast in our teeth all that is bad and imperfect in Europe. Therefore we need:

- special crash classes to help migrant workers' children to learn the language and settle into the school routine of their new environment;
- extra classes during normal teaching hours, to enable the children to keep up their mother tongue and the culture of their country of origin;
- teachers recruited in the country of origin of the migrant workers' children and special training for all teachers who will be in charge of such children;
- social workers to help these children outside of school hours;

- equal opportunities for both foreign children and European nationals to gain scholarships."

** Five of France's leading TINNED MUSHROOM producers had concluded a German market-sharing agreement with Taiwan mushroom exporters (worth DM 300 million per year). The European Commission has compelled the various partners to cancel this agreement, and has fined the French canners a total of 100 000 u.a. (1 u.a. = US \$1.2). The French and Taiwan canners are the world's chief producers, whilst Germany is the largest consumer. The agreement provided for annual export quotas and a joint pricing policy which could only operate against the interest of German consumers. By condemning the Franco-Taiwan agreement the Commission has emphasized its own responsibility for ensuring that appropriate trading policy measures are adopted, to remedy any situations which may arise in particular sectors. For instance, in August 1974, the Commission adopted preventive measures provided for in the Treaty, in order to deal with large quantities of tinned mushrooms originating from the People's Republic of China and Southern Korea which were being dumped on the common market.

** Preserving our ARCHITECTURAL and natural HERITAGE is an important element in the Community's environmental policy. The Commission has therefore recommended that, insofar as they have not already done so, Member States should sign the convention for the protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage, adopted by UNESCO in November 1972, and if possible to do so before the end of 1975. In addition, the Commission recommends that Member States should give the European Architectural Heritage Year, organized by the Council of Europe for 1975, as much support as possible.

** In DENMARK there have been various developments in the field of CONSUMER PROTECTION:

- The consumer council has proposed that the Danish Government should levy a tax on sugar, instead of withdrawing the subsidy to milk products. Denmark is now one of the countries where sugar is cheaper, costing about 4 crowns a kilo. The level of consumption is striking, averaging close to 50 kilos per head per year. The consumer council points out that sugar has absolutely no nutritional value. It only supplies "empty" calories which take the place of really useful foodstuffs, and it produces dental caries.

- The Danish National Home Economics Council and the National Institute of Technology have just completed the first comparative survey ever carried out in Denmark on kitchen units. The results appeared in "Rad og Resultater" (Advice and Results) No 6/1974, which is the official publication of the Danish National Home Economics Council. Some 80 different makes of kitchen unit are currently sold in Denmark.

The Home Economics Council tested 8, which were representative of the different types and qualities. The tests showed that the cheaper kitchen units were also of the poorest quality, but that higher prices were by no means a guarantee of quality. Danish consumers are now justified in hoping that this survey will lead to an improvement in the situation.

- At present two makes of dishwasher sold in Denmark bear the "Varefakta" (technical specification) label. Given the many models, it was becoming difficult to decide which one offered the best value for money. Now the consumer is "rescued", if the dishwasher has the "Varefakta" label, since this provides all the relevant information on the design, mechanism and features of each machine, to make it easier to compare the various models.

** In the industrial world the Community is the LEAST PROTECTIONIST economic group. The weighted average for customs duties on industrial products entering the Community is approximately 7.0%, compared with 7.5% for the United States, 9.8% for Japan, 15.8% for Australia and 22.5% for New Zealand. As a result of the liberal trading policies practised by the Community, total imports rose on average by 8.9% per year during the period 1958 to 1972, faster, in other words, than the total for world imports, for which the rate of increase was about 8.6%.

** Since the enlargement of the Community a new updated edition of the MAP FOLDER, which so many teachers and pupils found useful, has been looked for. Professor Kormoss and his team from the Collège d'Europe have gathered new data and drawn up fourteen maps, which come in a 22.5 x 32 cm folder. This map series covers nuclear industry sites, as well as the main industrial sectors and navigable waterways. Anyone interested in obtaining the complete folder at a reasonable price (Lit 550, Bfrs 30, Dkr 4.75, FF 3.65, DM 2.00, Lfrs 30, £0.32, Fl 2.10, US \$0.75) can do so from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, P.O. Box 1003, Luxembourg.

** Lignite from the Rhineland has been successfully used for the DIRECT REDUCTION OF IRON ORE. It proved possible to carry out the reduction process at a remarkably low temperature and the "sponge iron" obtained has a 98-99% iron content. This experimental research, called for by the European Commission, could have important economic effects, for Rhineland lignite is an inexpensive fuel, and the reserves in the Rhine basin alone are estimated at some 50 thousand million metric tons.

** Volume II of the papers given at the seminar on IODINE FILTER trials, held in Karlsruhe from 4 to 6 December 1973, has just been published. It contains a summary of the comments and discussions. Those who attended the seminar will receive this document

automatically. Anyone who did not attend but who would be interested in receiving a copy should contact the Directorate for Health Protection, Commission of the European Communities, Luxembourg. Orders will be met as long as stocks last.

** Over the next four years, 4.5 million u.a. (1 u.a. = US \$1.2) are to be allocated to a European research and teaching programme on PLUTONIUM RECYCLING. Until the advent of industrial scale fast-breeder power plants, it should be possible, by using plutonium judiciously, to achieve a saving in uranium of the order of 10%, in power plants using light water reactors, the type most frequently installed at present in nuclear power plants in Europe and throughout the world.

Joint action is therefore called for on the part of the nine members of the Community to promote the research being carried out in the Community on plutonium recycling. Such recycling would lead to savings in the uranium required to fuel the present generation of nuclear power stations.

The first section of the joint programme aims at solving general problems connected with the use of plutonium. The main task is to define the requirements of the plutonium market, and to examine problems involving the plutonium industry and its environment. What amounts will power stations be producing, at what rates; and what surpluses can be expected? Also, what are the technical problems of harmonizing the safety precautions practised in the various Community countries?

The second part of the programme aims to fill gaps in scientific and technical knowledge concerning plutonium recycling. The first step will be to acquire better knowledge of some plutonium isotopes and to compare this with the performance calculated for plutonium fuelled reactors. Next, will come a study of the behaviour from the safety and control point of view of power plants, normally fuelled with uranium, which will gradually be changed over to plutonium fuel.

Finally, if the need arises, provision is made for the Commission to offer financial aid, subject to certain conditions, for post-radiation tests on plutonium fuels.

** The Commission of the European Communities has just published a report in English on NON-ORGANIC MICROPOLLUTANTS. This four volume document gives a detailed inventory of the measurements carried out since 1968 to determine the extent of non-organic micropollutants in the environment. More than 77 000 measurements and samples were taken. Study of the various methods of analysis employed in Member States makes it possible to consider harmonization of the research in this field. Information on the subject may be requested from the Directorate for Health Protection, rue Aldringen 29, Luxembourg.

** Knowledge of the latest figures for WAGE COSTS is essential for many reasons. Labour costs in Europe were examined as early as 1966, 1969 and 1972, for industry as a whole, and included the cost of energy and water, as well as the building industry and civil engineering. The European Commission has requested authorization from the Council of Ministers to make a further similar survey, in 1976, of the figures for 1975. The intention is that as in 1972 the survey should cover all establishments employing an average of 10 wage-earners and up. This would mean that the wage cost survey would be parallel with other Community wage statistics (profits, wage structure and distribution) which cover the same general field.

TRANSPORT AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

The transport sector accounts for 28% of all the crude oil consumed in Europe. The needs of the private car alone represent nearly 70% of the total amount of energy consumed by the transport sector. Since European countries seem anxious to save energy and, in particular, to provide new impetus to developments in public transport, the European Commission called for a study on the amount of energy consumed by the various modes of transport (trains, cars, buses, underground, etc.).

Carriage of Persons

Cars account for about 70% (in travellers per kilometer) of any stream of traffic in Europe, and 39% of all the traffic in urban areas. Forecasts of future developments in the carriage of persons show an increase in the air transport share (from 1% in 1970 to 6% in 1990) at the expense of buses and trains (from 9 to 7%).

Of the total amount of energy consumed in the transport sector, 70-80% goes on the carriage of persons. It would appear that energy consumption per vehicle and kilometer showed little change, between 1950 and 1970, as far as cars, buses, trams and the underground are concerned. On the other hand significant fluctuations have occurred in the case of aircraft (a marked rise in energy consumption) and trains (consumption decreasing).

In urban areas, the bus would appear to be the most economic means of transport. If we take 100 as the index for energy consumption per traveller per kilometer covered by bus, we arrive at the following comparative indices: 75 for mopeds, 300 for cars and 150 for underground and trams. In urban traffic the weight of the vehicle is an important factor in energy consumption (doubling the weight can result in a 90% rise in energy consumption).

As regards inter city transport, the energy consumption index per traveller per kilometer is 100 for buses, 150 for trains, 300 for cars and 600 for aircraft. Passenger load greatly influences energy consumption, as does speed (steady speed, and whether high or low). Capacity has a minor effect but aerodynamic resistance (streamlining) can make a difference of 10% in the carriage of persons on the highway.

Standards restricting pollutant emission do not have any effect on fuel consumption in Europe, although their influence is relatively important in the United States, where standards are severe.

It should be noted that some accessories like power steering and, chiefly, air-conditioning can increase energy consumption, particularly at low speeds, by up to 20%. In town, automatic transmission produces a 10-15% increase in consumption (falling to 2-10% on the highway). Finally, a 1500 cc engine consumes 10% more than one of 1000 cc, on the highway (the difference ranging between 15 and 20% in town). Diesel engines consume 35-60% less energy.

Carriage of Goods

In 1970 transport by road accounted for 48% of all traffic in Europe, transport by rail for 32%, by water for 13%, while oil and gas pipelines took up 7%.

The transport of goods in towns is almost entirely carried out by delivery vans which are comparable as far as energy consumption is concerned to private cars with a fairly large engine capacity. Below 20 km/h (average speed in urban traffic), average traffic speed has a considerable effect, and installing diesel engines in delivery vans could mean energy savings of 10-20%.

Where inter-city goods traffic is concerned, the following energy consumption indices may be deduced from available studies (metric tons of freight per kilometer): water-borne - 75; pipeline - 60; rail - 100; road - 300; air - 4 000. Rail traffic figures largely depend on the number of trucks used - for any given load factor, raising the number of trucks by five could result in a fourfold energy saving.

New Transport Methods

A great deal of attention is currently being paid to developing new means of transport (both urban and inter-city) mainly to reduce travelling time. Here it is mainly technological and economic factors that are being taken into account. Environmental protection factors are also coming increasingly to the fore. But, up to the present, the energy aspect has hardly been examined.

As far as urban transport is concerned, the systems chiefly being considered are non-guided (for example electric cars in the city), and small tracked vehicles (Personal Rapid Transport, PRT). The energy consumption of new urban transport systems such as PRT, the minitram and the mini-underground is comparable to that of present systems with an identical load.

For inter-city transport, preference is being given to the development of guided systems in the form of high-speed trains (reaching speeds of up to 300 km/h) and ultra high-speed, air-cushion or magnetically suspended systems (capable of reaching 500 km/h). The main

purpose in developing such systems is to shorten travelling time considerably. This necessarily involves using a great deal of propulsion power to overcome air resistance. From the point of view of energy consumption this is a most unfavourable aspect. Aerial devices currently being developed show an energy consumption even more adverse than that of the large aircraft now in use. Air cushion systems have an energy consumption efficiency roughly equal to that of present day aircraft; only the magnetically suspended systems would appear to consume relatively less energy.

DR HILLERY ADDRESSES THE EUROPEAN CONSUMERS' FORUM

When he addressed the European Consumers' Forum in West Berlin on 23 January Dr Hillery, Vice-President of the European Commission, said that 1975 should mark the culminating point of the Commission's first efforts in the field of consumer protection and information. Implementation of the Commission's action programme for the protection of consumers marked another new phase in the development of the Community, and was further evidence of its social consciousness and concern for people. As the Member of the Commission responsible for social affairs this was particularly gratifying for him, Dr Hillery said.

The Commission had already taken some steps to implement the consumer action programme. In particular, draft directives for harmonizing Member State laws on consumer credit, labelling of food products, standard packaging and producer responsibilities had been drafted, and it should not be long before proposals concerning misleading advertising were ready.

From the beginning, when elaborating the common policies provided for under the Treaties, the Community had concerned itself with consumer interests. Examples of this concern were many and varied, for example: the free movement of agricultural and industrial products which had provided the Community consumer with a greater choice of goods; the Common Agricultural Policy where, in several sectors of production, consumers were benefiting from prices lower than those on world markets; the Commission's rules on competition which had played an important role in keeping increases in consumer prices within reasonable limits; and, finally, the approximation of Member State laws, where account had been taken of the need to protect the health and safety of the Community consumer.

However, on the basis of experience gained over the years, it had become increasingly clear that the time had come to develop a specific and comprehensive common policy for consumer protection and information. In this a considerable impetus had been provided by the Paris Summit of October 1972, when the heads of State or Government affirmed their willingness to undertake such a policy in reinforcing and coordinating their efforts to protect the consumer. The principal objective of this policy was an overall improvement in the quality of life. As was the normal procedure in the Community, it was the Commission which had been given the task of preparing the necessary initiatives in this area during 1973, when it set up the Consumers' Consultative Committee which was charged with the task of advising the Commission on all problems related to consumer protection.

This Committee was a very valuable link between the Commission and the various European consumer organizations and should permit more effective consultation with these bodies in the elaboration of Community policies. In this connection the exchange which had recently

taken place between a delegation from the Consumers' Consultative Committee and various Members of the Commission on the subject of the agricultural prices proposed for the 1975/76 season was particularly significant.

The Commission's consumer action programme adopted in December 1973 had been forwarded to the Council for approval. This programme defined the objectives and priorities which would guide Community action in the field of consumer protection and information over the next four years, and set out the basic rights of European consumers.

WHAT TELEVISION DOES TO HELP THE CONSUMER IN ITALY

Following publication in "Industry and Society" of an article on the consumer information programmes broadcast by Italian television (see I&S No 31/74 and the special issue of October 1974), Mr Roberto Bencivenga, one of the producers of the RAI channel, sent us the following comments:

- (1) The programme "Io compro, tu compri" (I buy, you buy), broadcast by Italian television from 1969 to 72 was always very objective. In all its surveys and reports all parties had the opportunity to speak at all times, and were completely free to put their point of view. In order to keep up viewer interest, the programme was divided into two parts, the first concentrating on contentious issues, and the other on constructive proposals and advice. Among the many surveys carried out, those on the magistrature, Parliamentary interventions which resulted in proposed legislation being amended or withdrawn, and the halting of attempted speculation which would have been contrary to consumer interests, deserve mention. Action was undertaken, amongst other things, to prohibit dangerous toys, close illegal agencies specializing in placing domestic servants, and to amend the regulations on biodegradable detergents.
- (2) "Io compro, tu compri" focussed particular attention on veal, showing that this meat contained more water than other types of beef, but, of course, in a legitimate way.
- (3) Concerning the programme on mineral waters, the producers were able to name the manufacturers, and asked a magistrate to explain to the public the reason why the case of a certain mineral water had been brought before the bench.
- (4) Rising inflation and the need for Italy to alter its consumer habits led Italian television to put out a successor to "Io compro, tu compri", i.e., a series of programmes aimed at encouraging the public to participate in the efficient management of the national economy. We therefore had a series called "I nostri conti" (Our Family Budget), and another eight-week series devoted to consumer advice, so as to reduce beef and veal consumption. Finally, in February and October last, there were two special series on meat and fish, which again sought to encourage viewers to participate and make suggestions.
- (5) Soon my latest evening programme will be going on the air. It is called "Parliamo di Prezzi" (Talking of prices) and, like its predecessor, will be dealing with the latest and most urgent problems consumers are having to face.