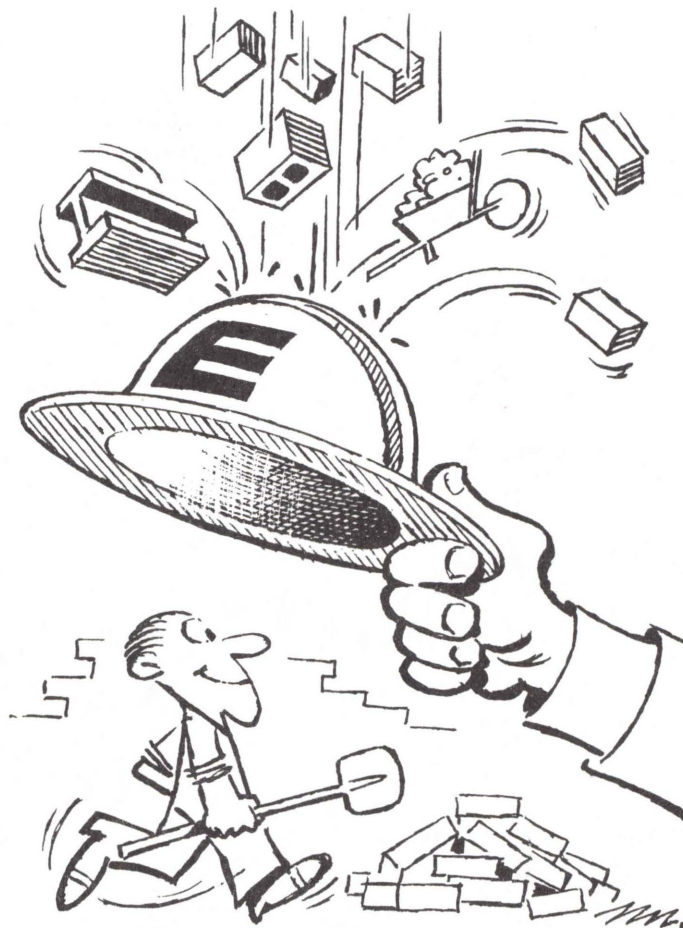


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\*\* Each year nearly a hundred thousand people die and more than twelve million people are injured in accidents in the Community. INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS, including occupational diseases, account for more than 30% of the total.

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#### PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

##### BELGIUM

1049 BRUSSELS  
Rue de la Loi 244  
Tel. 735 00 40

##### DENMARK

1457 COPENHAGEN  
4 Gammeltorv  
Tel. 14 41 40

##### FRANCE

75782 PARIS CEDEX 16  
61, rue des Belles-Feuilles  
Tel. 553 53 26

##### GERMANY

53 BONN  
Zitelmannstraße 22  
Tel. 23 80 41

1 BERLIN 31  
Kurfürstendamm 102  
Tel. 886 40 28

##### GREAT BRITAIN

LONDON W8 4QQ  
20, Kensington Palace Gardens  
Tel. 727 8090

##### IRELAND

DUBLIN 2  
29 Merrion Square  
Tel. 76 03 53

##### ITALY

00187 ROME  
Via Poli, 29  
Tel. 68 97 22 à 26

##### LUXEMBOURG

LUXEMBOURG  
Centre européen du Kirchberg  
Tel. 479 41

##### NETHERLANDS

THE HAGUE  
29, Lange Voorhout  
Tel. 070-46 93 26

##### SWITZERLAND

1202 GENEVA  
37-39, rue de Vermont  
Tel. 34 97 50

##### UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037  
2100 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 707  
Tel. (202) 872-8350

NEW YORK 10017  
277 Park Avenue  
Tel. 371-3804

ANNEX 1 deals with the guidelines for a Community programme for safety, hygiene and health protection at work.

\*\* The health of NUCLEAR WORKERS rarely crops up in discussions on nuclear energy. For years past however the European Community has been concerned to protect workers employed in the industry.

ANNEX 2 explains the significance of the technical recommendations drawn up by the European Commission for monitoring programmes in this field.

\*\* In the last two years redundancies have been widespread in the EUROPEAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY. Efforts to restructure the industry which got underway some years ago are now being jeopardized by a rush of imports.

ANNEX 3 describes the situation and explains what the European Commission is doing to help this key industry.

\*\* In a discussion in the European Parliament, Mr Spinelli, member of the European Commission, gave a general outline of the problems of the MOTOR INDUSTRY. There was more behind the present crisis than mere cyclical difficulties; the crisis was structural and could only be solved by restructuring on a long-term basis. The slump was only one aspect of the problem. The industry's high degree of mechanization meant less job satisfaction. The problem of humanizing working conditions was inextricably bound up with regional policy problems, since factories would be forced to move to areas where labour is cheaper. Customers were demanding cars which met all safety requirements and public opinion was insistent that cars should not add to the pollution problem. These requirements meant that manufacturers would have to review their policies completely just at a time when road traffic was becoming more and more problematic. In Mr Spinelli's view the entire industry was at a turning point in its evolution. The European Commission, he said, was taking an active interest in developments.

\*\* The CONSUMER PRICE INDEX stood as follows at the end of March 1975:

1970 = 100

	<u>March 1975</u>	<u>February 1975</u>	<u>February/March 1975</u>	<u>March 1974/March 1975</u>
Belgium	145.1	144.1	+ 0.7%	+ 14.3%
Denmark	153.2	152.0	+ 0.8%	+ 13.5%
France	148.2	147.0	+ 0.8%	+ 13.5%
Germany	132.6	132.0	+ 0.5%	+ 5.9%
Ireland		177.8	+ 8.1% <sup>1</sup>	+ 23.9% <sup>2</sup>
Italy	165.8	165.6	+ 0.1%	+ 20.3%
Luxembourg	137.5	136.6	+ 0.7%	+ 10.5%
Netherlands	147.8	145.3	+ 1.7%	+ 9.9%
United Kingdom	170.1	166.8	+ 2.3%	+ 21.2%

<sup>1</sup>Change between 15 November 1974 and 15 February 1975.

<sup>2</sup>Change between 15 February 1974 and 15 February 1975.

\*\* Since it was set up in April 1974, the Community's Scientific Committee on FOOD has delivered opinions on the following at the request of the European Commission:

- (a) Mercury contamination of foodstuffs (with special reference to fish products);
- (b) Effects on health of colza oils;
- (c) Approval of a number of new preservatives.

The Committee is currently working on:

- (a) A revision of the list of colouring matters approved for use in foodstuffs;
- (b) A toxicological assessment of Ethoxyquin used for the surface treatment of certain fruits.

The Commission intends to consult the Committee in the near future on flavourings, anti-oxidants and substances used to treat fruit.

The intention is that the Committee will meet six times a year. The frequency of working party meetings will depend on the complexity of the matters examined.

\*\* The chief editors of some twenty journals specializing in CONSUMER INFORMATION AND PROTECTION in the nine Community countries attended a meeting organized by the information department of the European Commission in Brussels on 12 May. Following a general survey of Community activities affecting consumers, the editors agreed to cooperate more closely, notably by exchanging information (through Industry and Society) on progress in consumer protection throughout the Community.

- \*\* It was at the request of the European Parliament that the Commission's Communication on COMBATING POVERTY (see I&S No 2/75) was transformed into a proposal for a Council Decision. This being so Parliament's recent approval of the pilot programme of schemes and research for combating poverty came as no surprise. The Resolution approving the programme (moved by Mr Dondelinger) invited the Council of Ministers to review progress in 1976 to guarantee future financing of the programme.
- \*\* The COURT OF JUSTICE of the European Communities has given twenty judgments against Member States for non-fulfilment of their obligations under the Treaties. In six cases the infringement ceased before the Court gave its ruling. In four cases the situation was regularized within two months of judgment. In the remaining ten cases regularization took five to forty-eight months, the longest delay being explained by the fact that the dispute involved the tax rate to be applied to hundreds of products.
- \*\* It is almost certain that the Council of Ministers meeting on SOCIAL AFFAIRS will take place on 16 June. The main items on the agenda will be equality of men and women at work (see I&S No 7/75), the adoption of the forty-hour working week, the introduction of four weeks annual paid holiday and the fight against poverty (see I&S No 2/75).
- \*\* Europe's SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY is in a curious position: it is unable to compete on the world market yet is getting dangerously near to having excess capacity. In an attempt to solve these twin problems the European Commission has drawn up a third directive on aid to shipbuilding and hopes that it will be approved by the Council of Ministers before 1 July 1975. Time is short: the second shipbuilding directive which came into force in July 1972 has been extended twice already, although fresh measures are now required. The European Commission considers that state aids which have the effect of increasing production are contrary to the common interest. It wishes to be kept informed of any national aids granted to shipyards in an effort to restore their competitiveness.
- \*\* The ELISABETH HAUB PRIZE has been awarded to Mr Michel Carpentier, Director of the Environment and Consumer Protection Service of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Paul Harroy, Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and Mr Jean Lamarque, Professor at the Bordeaux Faculty of Law. The prize is awarded by the University of Brussels, in agreement with the International Council of Environmental Law, for outstanding achievements in the field of environmental law.
- \*\* A conference on comparative methods of BIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WATER is to be held from 2 to 6 June at Koblenz, on the very banks of the Main. The conference is being organized by the Bundesanstalt für Gewässerkunde in conjunction with the Environment and Consumer Protection Service of the European Commission.

The Environment and Consumer Protection Service is also organizing a technical seminar at Lyon from 16 to 20 June on the bacteriological analysis of the quality of water for human consumption.

\*\* There are roughly four EUROPEAN OFFICIALS per 100 000 inhabitants of the Community whereas in the United Kingdom, for example, there are nearly 1 300 civil servants per 100 000 inhabitants. This interesting fact was pointed out by Mr Borschette, member of the European Commission, in a debate in the European Parliament.

SAFETY AND HEALTH PROTECTION AT WORK

Each year nearly a hundred thousand people die and more than twelve million people are injured in accidents in the Community. The human consequences are incalculable, but it is worth indicating that according to a Commission estimate the total annual cost of these accidents in economic terms, that is both the direct and the indirect cost, amounts to more than 15 000 million units of account (1 u.a. = US \$1.2). Industrial accidents, including occupational diseases, although not the major sector of risk as far as fatal accidents are concerned, represent the largest group of accidents taken as a whole. In Germany, for instance, the total number of accidents are grouped as follows: more than 30% at work, about 15% each for "traffic", "at home" and "leisure", and 25% in other circumstances.

These figures show that industrial accidents are a priority area for Community concern. The Social Action Programme, adopted in January 1974, makes special mention of hygiene, safety at work, the health of workers and the improved organization of tasks. Health protection is also a major concern of the Community's action programme on the environment which was approved by the Council of Ministers on 22 November 1973.

In response to this concern the European Commission has now produced guidelines for a Community programme on safety, hygiene and health protection at work.

Eight broad objectives have been chosen:

1. To encourage concerted action between Member States on regulations and monitoring procedures.

Whenever an important problem arises or a new reform is proposed in a Member State, the Commission will be informed. It will then organize an exchange of views or concertation between Member States and where appropriate draw up Community measures to encourage progress. The aim here is to solve problems before they arise thereby avoiding complicated concertation procedures after the event.

2. To improve coordination of research activity to make the best use of available resources.

Experience has shown that accident prevention research is often dispersed. Exchange of information on work in progress should be improved, research should be coordinated where appropriate, and research results should be transmitted as quickly as possible to those who have to consider them or put them into practice.

3. To improve statistics on industrial accidents and occupational diseases to assist accident prevention policies.

Once the situation has been examined and essential needs defined, it should be possible to carry out Community surveys in specific fields.

4. To develop training for safety and health protection in various branches and at various levels of education.

This is an extremely important long-term investment, the basic aim being to encourage Employment and Education Departments throughout the Community to work in close cooperation. Technical education would be given priority.

5. To utilize audio-visual methods to provide better information for sections of the population most affected.

The use of television and radio is certainly one of the most important and effective means of informing certain sections of the population. There must be more cooperation between Departments of Employment and television and radio networks in the Member States.

6. To promote participation by both sides of industry in preventive action at national level, within industry and inside the firm.

Prevention must follow the general trend towards democratization both for reasons of principle and effectiveness. In this context a comparative study of the situation in the various countries would be extremely informative.

7. To promote safety and health protection inside the firm.

Preparatory work on a Community concept of safety services and medical services is in progress. A working party has also produced pictorial warning signs for hazards within the firm; these would be to the worker what road signs are to the motorist.

8. To deal with specific problems affecting certain sectors and categories of workers.

European codes of safety and hygiene should be prepared and implemented for workers exposed to specific risks. Migrant workers present a particular problem here because of the language barrier.



PROTECTION OF NUCLEAR WORKERS

The health of nuclear workers rarely crops up in discussions on nuclear energy which tend to concentrate on pollution and environmental problems. For years past however the European Community has been concerned to protect workers employed in the industry. In February 1959 the Council of Ministers adopted a directive on Basic Safety Standards for protection against ionizing radiations; this was partly revised in March 1962. In November 1973 the European Commission submitted a new revised directive to the Council which takes account of the latest developments in this field and now it has published technical recommendations, drawn up in cooperation with national experts, for monitoring the exposure of individuals to external radiation.

Over the last twenty years, considerable efforts have been made to provide individual monitoring for workers who are exposed to ionizing radiations from sources external to the body. Substantial advances have been made both in techniques and in the establishment of regulatory codes. Many countries already have well-established monitoring programmes at the service of those who are responsible for the radiological protection of workers.

It should be emphasized that these monitoring programmes are applied more strictly and more precisely in the nuclear industry than in any other industry. Indeed they often serve as a headline for programmes to monitor other hazards. For example, monitoring varies with the part of the body concerned (skin surface, internal organs, extremities, trunk).

It is hoped that these new recommendations will lead to increased harmonization of individual monitoring programmes in the Member States and provide general advice to those responsible for drafting legislation in this field. The recommendations will be reviewed in one or two years' time to keep them in line with advances in knowledge and technology.

THREATS TO THE EUROPEAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

Since 1972 redundancies in the textile and clothing industries totalled 83 000 and 75 000 respectively in Germany, 76 000 and 41 000 in the United Kingdom and 5 000 and 3 000 in Ireland. In the same period 3 000 workers were made redundant in each of these industries in Denmark and 8 000 in the Netherlands. Yet the Community's textile industry still accounts for approximately 9% of all industrial production in terms of value added and is of key importance at regional level since it is concentrated in a few regions where it provides employment for 30% of the active population.

The Community's textile industry has however been faced with three major problems for several years now: firstly, consumption of textile fibres is increasing at a slightly slower rate than individual incomes; secondly, demand for clothing is increasing at 3% per year while imports are galloping ahead ( $\pm 45\%$  between 1972 and 1973); lastly, imports (especially those from South-East Asia and some Latin American countries) are often 30% to 45% cheaper than similar articles made in Europe and therefore lead to market disruption.

Restructuring initiated several years ago continues with aid from national authorities and the European Social Fund which provided 6.3 million u.a. in 1974 to help retrain redundant workers. If restructuring is to be pursued and serious social upheaval avoided, the disrupting influence of these imports must be checked. For this reason the Community acceded to GATT's Multifibre Arrangement on 21 March 1974 in Geneva. This Arrangement allows the signing of bilateral agreements on mutually acceptable terms between importing and exporting countries to avoid market disruption. The first agreement of this kind was signed between the EEC and India on 19 April last. The Geneva Arrangement allows signatories to apply a safeguard clause to limit disruption caused by excessive imports of a given product from a given country.

The Commission decision of 7 May 1975 to place imports of 22 textile products under surveillance was taken in this context: Member States are to notify the Commission of prices, quantities and origin of imports of these sensitive products in the first ten days of each month, thus placing the Commission in a position to apply the safeguard clause if imports from one particular country become excessive.

This decision reflects the Commission's concern to keep the European textile industry competitive and protect the jobs of four million textile and clothing industry workers.