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** The Ministers responsible for ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION in the nine member countries recently attended a meeting of the Council of the European Communities.

Details of the decisions adopted are given in ANNEX 1.

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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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** EUROPE + 30, the European Community's ambitious FUTUROLOGY PROJECT, is feasible. This was the statement made by Lord Kennet, when he presented this bulky report, drawn up by a large research team, to Mr Guido Brunner, Member of the European Commission with special responsibility for research.

A general outline of the Europe + 30 report is given in ANNEX 2.

** The first grants from the EUROPEAN REGIONAL FUND will be used to part-finance 655 investment projects in the less-favoured regions of the European Community.

ANNEX 3 gives details of the sums involved, the sectors which will benefit and the hopes associated with the EUROPEAN REGIONAL FUND.

** A total of 20 million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.3) is to be granted from the EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND to European workers affected by the TEXTILE AND CLOTHING crisis.

ANNEX 4 describes the situation in the textile and clothing industries and explains how the money from the Fund will be used.

** THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX stood as follows at the end of August 1975:

(1970 = 100)

	<u>August 1975</u>	<u>July 1975</u>	<u>Change between July and August 1975</u>	<u>Change between August 1974 and August 1975</u>
Germany	135.2	135.4	- 0.1%	+ 6.0%
France	153.8	152.8	+ 0.7%	+ 11.0%
Italy	172.5	171.4	+ 0.6%	+ 15.3%
Netherlands	153.1	151.7	+ 0.9%	+ 10.4%
Belgium	151.0	149.9	+ 0.7%	+ 11.4%
Luxembourg	142.9	142.3	+ 0.4%	+ 10.6%
United Kingdom	190.6	189.4	+ 0.6%	+ 26.9%
Ireland	187.1		- 0.8% ¹	+ 18.9% ²
Denmark	158.0	157.5	+ 0.3%	+ 9.7%

¹Change between 15 May 1975 and 15 August 1975.

²Change between 15 August 1974 and 15 August 1975.

** During its recent meeting in Brussels, the Consumers' Consultative Committee held a wide-ranging discussion on CONSUMER INTERESTS IN THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY. Mr Scarascia Mugnozza, Vice-President of the European Commission, stated that he was prepared to re-establish contacts between the Committee and Mr Lardinois, Commissioner responsible for agriculture, so that the Committee could make known its views on the

formation of farm prices and their implications. The Committee went on to discuss the preliminary draft Directive prepared by the Commission on general conditions of consumer credit and put forward a number of proposals for improving consumer protection. It also decided to deliver an opinion to the European Commission in the near future in connection with the latter's work on care labelling of textiles. A working party was set up to examine the problems associated with door-to-door selling.

** Some twenty BROADCASTERS specializing in CONSUMER information for various RADIO networks throughout the Community met recently in Brussels at the invitation of the Commission's information services to discuss the possibility of extending the use of radio in this sector. It was agreed to hold further multinational working meetings of this type between broadcasters and the European Commission on a regular basis.

** NATURAL RADIOACTIVITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE GENERAL PUBLIC was the subject of a meeting of European experts organized in Luxembourg by the European Commission. In an attempt to assess the extent of individual exposure to natural radiation, the experts outlined the situation in their respective countries with regard to completed and planned natural radioactivity monitoring programmes. Limited supplies of the report of this meeting are obtainable (French and English only) from the Directorate for Health Protection of the European Commission, Centre Louvigny, Luxembourg.

** The Consumenten Bond informs us of the latest developments in CONSUMER PROTECTION and INFORMATION in the Netherlands:

- . 1 November will mark the entry into force of a law governing door-to-door selling. Under this law door-to-door salesmen will require to be registered with the Chamber of Commerce and may be struck off in the event of misdemeanour. A contract in writing will be necessary for all sales amounting to more than 75 florins, the purchaser receiving a copy of the contract which the salesman must register with the Chamber of Commerce. Failing this, it will have no legal value. The purchaser will have the right to cancel the transaction within a period of one week from the date of registration. Dutch consumer associations are not totally satisfied with this new law: an outright ban on door-to-door selling would have been more to their liking.
- . A draft law on misleading advertising is currently under examination by the Upper House of the Legislative. This law will make it possible for all victims of misleading advertising to institute legal proceedings, and the court will have powers to terminate the advertising in question and to enforce publication of a corrective statement at the advertiser's expense. Complaints may be lodged by individuals, by competitors and by producer or consumer associations. Dutch consumer associations have expressed reservations on this draft law. They regret that misleading advertising cannot simply be punishable as such and that each individual case must be taken to court. Moreover, it falls to the plaintiff to demonstrate that the advertising is misleading. It is difficult to imagine the ordinary consumer embarking on such lengthy and costly investigations.

. The Gezondheidsraad (Health Council), a consultative body set up by the Dutch Government, recently published its opinion on restricting the use of tobacco. It stresses the social cost of tobacco which, it believes, should weigh heavier in the balance than the economic interests and high tax revenue involved. It recommends a ban on tobacco advertising, a health warning on each packet, a ban on smoking in certain premises, a ban on smoking by those appearing on television, a ban on selling tobacco to minors below 16, a reduction in the number of distribution points and the elimination of all cigarette machines.

** The EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN THE STEEL INDUSTRY is causing the Community authorities grave concern. Considerable effort has been made to reduce the working week rather than resorting to redundancies. The reduction in the number of workers has so far been modest when compared with the 24% drop in production. In order to obtain a clearer picture of the situation, the European Commission decided on 17 July 1975 that the steel companies would have to supply information on the latest employment trends. The returns show significant reductions in hours of work, notably in Germany (1.8 and 2.0 million hours lost in July and September respectively) and in Belgium (0.9 million and 1.7 million hours lost). The number of workers affected by these measures which represented 26% of the total in Germany and Belgium in July, should rise, in September, to 30% in Germany and 40% in Belgium. In France 94 500 working hours were lost in July, 5% of the workers being affected. In the United Kingdom 90 500 hours were lost in the private sector (companies affiliated to BISPA) in July; the Agreement governing the public sector (British Steel Corporation) does not permit a reduction in hours of work, and no figures are available at present.

** 10 million Belgian francs have been allocated by the European Commission to various CONSUMER ORGANIZATIONS to carry out a number of studies and surveys. The European Bureau of Consumers' Unions (BEUC) is to study consumer education in schools and consumer transport requirements. The Committee of Family Organizations in the European Communities (COFACE) will investigate the question of information given on labels. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) is to concentrate on general conditions of sale. The European Community of Consumer Cooperatives (EURO COOP) will deal with adult consumer education, while the European Secretariat of the Confédération générale du travail (CGT) will study the cost of consumer instruction.

** COMMUNITY LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS are to be improved. Sample surveys, which have been carried out among households regularly since 1968, are to be continued every two years and will now include additional questions, notably on unemployment among young people and women and "hidden" unemployment. Community coverage for the annual figures on employed wage and salary earners will be reviewed and extended to include all branches of industry.

Short-term information on the labour market will be gradually harmonized: under the new programme of the Statistical Office of the European Communities the information is to be broken down in the same way for all countries according to age, sex, region, occupational group, sector and duration of unemployment. This will enable a fuller analysis than was previously possible of specific problems such as unemployment among young people, and the regions, occupational groups and sectors particularly affected.

** INVESTMENT IN THE COAL INDUSTRY is expected to reach 514 million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.3) in 1975, as against 324 m u.a. in 1974. This was one of the facts to emerge from the replies of coal undertakings to questions put to them by the European Commission. It is therefore hoped to maintain the Community extraction potential at a 264 million tonne level between 1975 and 1978. This will rely, however, on an increase in the output potential of opencast mines to offset the expected 4 million tonne reduction in deep-mining potential during the same period.

Extraction potential in Community coalfields - 1974, 1975 and 1978:

(million tonnes)

	Actual 1974	Expected	
		1975	1978
Germany	100.9	97.0	96.0
Belgium	11.8	10.3	9.8
Netherlands	1.0	-	-
France	23.6	23.0	20.5
United Kingdom	130.0	133.6	137.1
European Community	267.3	263.9	263.4

ENVIRONMENT: DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

The Ministers of the Environment of the nine member countries attended a meeting of the Council of the European Communities on 16 October. A number of practical decisions were adopted to encourage environmental protection in Europe but Ministers were unable to reach agreement on the Commission proposal relating to the discharge of dangerous substances into the aquatic environment. The Council will return to this subject at a meeting to be held on 8 December.

1. Development of the Community's environment policy

Since the entry into force of its First Action Programme on the Environment, the European Community has adopted three directives relating to firstly the quality required of surface waters intended for the abstraction of drinking water, secondly waste, and thirdly the disposal of waste oils, a recommendation on the implementation of the polluter-pays principle, a resolution on the relation between the production of energy and the environment, a decision authorizing the signature by the Commission of the Paris Convention for the prevention of marine pollution from land-based sources, a decision establishing a common procedure for the exchange of information between surveillance and monitoring networks in respect of atmospheric pollution caused by certain substances and, last but not least, a regulation setting up a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

Other projects are well on the way to completion, as can be seen in the Commission's latest progress report (see I&S No 24/75). Numerous proposals presented by the European Commission are currently being discussed within the Council of Ministers. These involve inter alia measures to reduce atmospheric pollution by lead, measures to ensure the quality of drinking water, a draft directive relating to polychlorinated biphenyls, and measures relating to water pollution caused by the woodpulp industry and the titanium dioxide industry.

In addition, the information agreement (see I&S No 3/75) has resulted so far in the Commission and Member States receiving 110 notifications involving 25 laws or regulations, 77 draft provisions and 8 international agreements, as well as the putting in hand of some 12 Commission proposals.

The European Commission feels that the Community's Second Action Programme on the Environment should concentrate on:

- (i) continuation, completion and intensification of action begun under the present programme;

- (ii) action to control wastage, particularly the reduction and recycling of waste;
- (iii) action to ensure that when decisions are taken the preventive aspect is duly respected (safeguarding the natural environment, protecting resources and maintaining the quality of life);
- (iv) action to protect and, where necessary develop the Community's environmental heritage. A well-planned environmental policy should in fact not only affect the organization of economic operations, particularly as regards location and timing, but should also concentrate on protecting and developing certain rare or threatened natural resources.

2. Sulphur content of gas oils

At this meeting, the Council also adopted a Directive, proposed by the Commission as part of its programme for the removal of technical barriers to trade within the Community, to reduce the sulphur content of gas oils, which are mainly used as fuel for domestic heating and for vehicles with diesel engines (see I&S No 9/75).

The aim of the Directive is to achieve a substantial reduction in atmospheric pollution caused by sulphur dioxide produced by the combustion of gas oils. Even with the present oil supply situation some increase in the price of gas oil (not more than 5%) and in crude oil requirements (less than 1%) is justified by the desire for improved protection of public health and the environment.

To achieve this aim, the maximum sulphur content will be limited to 0.5% as from 1 October 1976 and to 0.3% as from 1 October 1980. For zones with low atmospheric pollution levels and those where gas oil accounts for a negligible proportion of these rates levels will be less severely limited, namely to 0.8% as from 1 October 1976 and to 0.5% as from 1 October 1980.

Member States are of course at liberty to bring forward the dates for implementation, depending on local factors.

3. Bathing water

The Council adopted the Directive proposed by the Commission (see I&S No 3/75) laying down quality standards for bathing water, both fresh water (lakes and rivers) and sea water. The aim is to clean up, gradually in view of the financial effort involved, all the beaches of the Community.

4. Inventory of sources of information on the environment

The Community is to set up and continuously up-date an inventory of sources of information on the environment in the Community. Each member country will forward to the European Commission a list of scientific and technical information and documentation centres and services, a list of specialist centres and independent experts and a list of current and scheduled research projects. The Commission will process this information electronically to enable it to be incorporated into the International Referral Systems (IRS) of the United Nations Environment Programme.

5. Conference on the protection of the Mediterranean against marine pollution

The Council adopted a Decision concerning Community participation in the negotiation, at an intergovernmental meeting in Barcelona, of an Outline Convention, together with Protocols, for the protection of the Mediterranean against marine pollution.

6. Discharge of dangerous substances into the aquatic environment

The Ministers discussed in detail the problems associated with the European Commission's proposal for a Decision on the reduction of pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment. The main item under discussion was the choice to be made between introducing Community emission standards and laying down quality objectives. Delegations were unable to reach an agreement, and the Council will return to this subject at a future meeting on 8 December. The question of Community participation in the negotiations for the conclusion of a Convention on the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution was likewise deferred.

EUROPE + 30

EUROPE + 30, the European Community's ambitious futurology project, is feasible. This was the statement made by Lord Kennet, when he presented this bulky report, drawn up by himself and his large research team, to Mr Guido Brunner, Member of the European Commission with special responsibility for research.

The history of the report goes back to January 1974 when the Council agreed to a detailed study on the development of a Community instrument for technological forecasts and assessments. In the spring of 1974 the European Commission, whose interest in the advantages of futurology is of long standing, appointed Lord Kennet of Britain to chair the Project Board and direct the research team. The Project Board, which has a mainly supervisory and advisory function, is made up of some of the world's leading scientists: in addition to Lord Kennet, Professor Ralf Dahrendorf, former Member of the European Commission and currently Director of the London School of Economics, Dr Max Kohnstamm, Rector of the European University Institute in Florence, Professor Bertrand de Jouvenel, founder of the International Association of Futurologists, Professor Nørregaard Rasmussen, economist at the University of Copenhagen and Senator Mary Robinson of Trinity College, Dublin, are members of the Board.

Similarly the research team has recruited some of the most eminent scientists from universities, private institutes and international organizations. A general meeting was held at the beginning of October 1974 and the study itself was launched. Months of work and countless more restricted meetings were to follow before the present report was produced.

In the opening pages of this report the shades of Cassandra, Trojan prophetess of doom fated never to be believed, are evoked but only to be banished soon after. Unlike Cassandra who was unable to give the reasons for the imminent disasters, futurology's role is to explain why risks are run, at the time decisions are made.

Present-day forecasting

Many forecasting instruments are already being used throughout the Community. The results of the work carried out by the various private or public institutes, whose financial resources, working methods, degree of political independence and the like vary immensely, are consulted by the government authorities.

As far as the European Community itself is concerned, forecasting is clearly useful in all the basic policy sectors such as energy, agriculture, transport, employment. The Commission's task of collecting the information required for long-term policy making is

fraught with many obstacles: the statistics available are difficult to compare from one country to another, overall planning does not exist in all cases and, even where it does, it is not necessarily complied with.

Forecasting and assessment methods, which are described at length in the Europe + 30 report, are also surprisingly varied and have multiplied continually over the last twenty years in an attempt to keep pace with the growing complexity and number of issues involved. This chapter concludes with the comment that the European Community is very different from any of the countries taken individually and that similarly the integrated long-term forecasting instrument it requires must be very different from anything already in existence.

A first important step in moving towards such an instrument would be to integrate the sectoral forecasts already effected at Community level with national forecasts. The authors of the report explain that they have resisted the temptation to go into too much detail on the actual method to be used in order to avoid prematurely committing those responsible for the future Europe + 30 project, should it come into being. The report does however indicate three sets of complementary variables which should be taken into account: the past and the future, social development and political choice, and the European Community and the rest of the world.

Major sectors involved

The concept of integrated forecasting is demonstrated by a list of sixteen sectors characterized by their interdependence: climatology, population, agriculture, public health, social structures, education, science and technology, industry, energy, raw materials, environment, transport, social communication, economics and finance, defence and disarmament, and political institutions.

By way of example, the Europe + 30 report considers the very real case in the transport sector of the projected high speed rail link between the major European cities. The questions here are numerous: what would be the long-term effects on the volume and nature of passenger traffic by road, rail and air, on transport costs, on energy consumption, on accident rates, on atmospheric pollution, on the use made of ground, on the local inhabitants and on employment in the regions and towns affected? Forecasting must provide two answers to each of these questions, depending on whether or not the high speed railway is built.

Some of the information needed to reply can normally be obtained from transport experts, for example data on existing stations, capital investment requirements, geographical characteristics of the areas travelled through, present-day passenger habits, etc. But a lot of other information is required, if the project evaluation is to be comprehensive, for example foreseeable economic trends in the areas travelled through, possible movements of population between rural and urban areas, gross regional income, probable effects on the environment, etc.

In the case in question forecasters will clearly require to examine the implications in terms of population, macro-economics and energy, as they affect regional planning and environmental protection, as well as transport itself.

Science controls science

Recent decades have shown up the contradiction which can exist between technological development and the underlying aims of society. It is unfortunately not a rare occurrence for the remedy invented by man to be worse than the illness. The Europe + 30 report recommends the use of evaluation to anticipate the impact of new technologies on all sections of society. However, the authors do not consider it necessary to set up a separate European technological evaluation office. The work in question, which is closely tied up with futurology, could be carried out as part of the Europe + 30 programme.

Concrete proposals

The drafters of the report thus come out in favour of evaluating the Community's political decisions with reference to their long-term effects, particularly developments expected over the next thirty years, and of setting up a Community forecasting instrument, for the time being to be known as "Europe + 30", capable of being up-dated.

But Europe + 30 must not be used to replace the work of other futurologists, but should exploit and adapt their work to meet Community requirements. Any gaps should be filled by studies commissioned outside and by the Community's own forecasts.

The main function of Europe + 30 will be to provide the European Community with a comprehensive long-term forecasting capacity and to assess the effects of technology on European society. It will also establish international links with other forecasting organizations and carry out specific studies at the request of Community institutions, member countries or other organizations.

The report is now to be examined by the European Commission following which the Commission may well present a number of proposals to the Council of the European Communities.

EUROPEAN REGIONAL FUND

The first grants from the European Regional Fund will be used to part-finance 655 investment projects in the less-favoured regions of the European Community. The aid approved by the European Commission represents a contribution of 160 million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.3) to the total investments of 1 234 million u.a. programmed by the different member governments. The sum available to the European Regional Fund for 1975 amounts to 300 million u.a. The balance will be allocated in December.

Infrastructure projects account for 100 million u.a. (448 projects) including 10 million u.a. (95 projects) for rural infrastructure in deprived agricultural areas. The remaining 60 million u.a. are for 207 investment projects in the industrial, handicraft and service sectors, creating or maintaining over 36 000 jobs.

Clearly one must not try to assess the overall impact of the European Regional Fund, which will have a continuing activity, on the basis of this first allocation of grants. Any initial imbalances between regions or different types of projects will be ironed out as future allocations are made.

It will be remembered that the European Regional Development Fund was established on 18 March 1975, with a total of 1 300 million u.a. at its disposal over the three years 1975-77. The Fund's resources are used to part-finance certain types of regional aid which the governments give thus releasing national resources which can then be used to finance other regional development projects. Thus the combination of national and Community funds can help a larger total number of projects, and create a larger number of new jobs. This will help reduce regional disparities which are even greater at Community than at national level.

The Fund can help finance industrial, handicraft and service investments in the regions which are eligible for national regional aids and which aim to create new jobs or help safeguard existing ones which might otherwise be threatened. It can also help finance infrastructure projects which are directly linked to the type of job-creating investments referred to above.

Projects approved this time relate to industrial plant, transport and communications and energy supply. The Fund can also aid certain types of infrastructure projects in agricultural areas facing special problems of geography, climate, etc. (mountain areas, for example).

As far as this first allocation is concerned, the applications were received from governments between early August and mid-September. They were processed by the Directorate-General for Regional Policy, in consultation with other departments, in time to be sent to the members of the Management Committee at the end of September.

The Committee met to give its opinion on 14 and 15 October, after which the European Commission was able to take its decision. The speed at which the applications have been dealt with was greatly helped by using a standard form of application and by the many bilateral contacts which took place between the Commission and the member governments in order to determine which of the projects proposed were suitable to receive aid from the European Regional Fund.

First allocation of grants from the European Regional Development Fund (October 1975)

	Number of projects	Total aid granted (million u.a.)
Germany	20	6.226
Denmark	34	3.870
France	147	21.920
Ireland	88	14.213
Italy	126	86.837
Luxembourg	1	0.750
Netherlands	3	5.586
United Kingdom	236	21.231

(To date the Belgian Government has not put forward any projects to the European Commission).

AID FROM THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND FOR THE TEXTILE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES

Between 1970 and 1974 the total number of persons employed in the textile industry alone dropped by 322 000, from 2 209 000 to 1 887 000, while in the clothing industry the number of workers fell by 125 000, from 1 292 000 to 1 167 000, over the same period.

Confronted with this critical situation, the European Community has been making use of the Social Fund since 1973 to assist workers in the textile industry (and those employed in the processing of chemical fibres). The average cost of operations to promote vocational training programmes and facilitate geographical mobility since then has been 670 units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.3) per worker. In 1975 some 16 500 persons in the textile industry were covered by applications for assistance from the Social Fund.

The employment situation in the textile industry has in no way improved, and the reasons which justified the 1972 decision are equally valid today. Moreover, since the difficulties encountered in the textile industry proper have gradually spread to the clothing industry, it has now become imperative to grant assistance to the latter as well. The European Commission is proposing that a total of more than 20 million units of account be granted annually to these two sectors by the European Social Fund.

The high number of redundancies reflects the extent of the deep-seated changes which continue to affect the textile and clothing industries, as well as the scale of equipment and capital conversion and worker redeployment which prove necessary as a result.

Not only have the textile and clothing industries been amongst the sectors which have suffered most from the recession but, above all, they have also been faced during the last three years with a spectacular reversal in their trade balance. As far as exports are concerned, certain traditional overseas outlets have been lost, while the competition encountered on the markets of non-member countries has become particularly aggressive. As far as imports are concerned, certain goods have been made more vulnerable as a result of the policy of gradually lowering barriers in respect of the developing countries, particularly in the context of generalized preferences.

The effects of the technological innovations introduced in recent years have been two-fold, firstly to reduce the number of jobs and secondly to raise the standard of professional qualifications required for the jobs which remain. There is thus a very clear need for dynamic retraining, specialization and adaptation operations.

Lastly, certain problems concerning employment and manpower are a result of the very structures of the textile industry, and that of the clothing industry in particular. The latter has continued to a large extent to be a labour-intensive industry (80% women), with a very high turnover of staff and relatively small average increases in productivity. The number of small- and medium-sized undertakings (average size: 62 persons per undertaking, without counting individuals) is extremely large, and working at home is still widespread. Moreover, the clothing industry is geographically very scattered, and decentralization to rural and mountain regions or areas in decline has often helped undertakings to obtain the labour which they had difficulty in finding in more industrialized centres for the rates of pay and working conditions which they offered.