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AGRICULTURE: The end of the "Lamb war"

With so much less turbulence than when it began several months ago, Europe's widely-publicised "lamb war" has been ended peacefully with little attention focussed on the outcome.

The conflict, largely between farming interests in France and the United Kingdom, broke out dramatically with French farmers blockading ports to prevent shipments of sheep meat being shipped across the channel. The dispute, which flared for weeks in the streets and newspapers, also embroiled the political relations between the two countries and the delicate and important mechanisms of the European Community's agricultural policy. Basically, this passionate controversy arose because of the belief by hard-hit French lamb producers that imports of meat from Britain would represent devastating competition and drive prices down, further endangering the precarious livelihood they earned in some of the most rugged and undeveloped parts of France. In addition, they charged that the main reason Britain could afford to compete with exports on the French market was because it was allowed to import substantial quantities of low priced sheep meat from New Zealand through a special arrangement that was an exception to the general rule of Community preference.

A first cease-fire in the clash was negotiated in September 1980 after court decisions and pleas for calm had failed at first to dedramatise the situation. At that time Agriculture Ministers of the European Community reached an agreement on the import of lamb into France to relieve the tension. The accord also included provisions for the amount of imports to be admitted from other producing countries such as Australia and New Zealand, which had also been at the heart of the dispute of previous months. But additional agreements within the European Community recently succeeded in prolonging this truce to a point where interested parties feel the war could be terminated, at least until next year's annual farm price-setting negotiations. The end came July 10 when the European Commission moved to have a related dispute on export payment to British farmers settled in one of the EEC farm management committees.

The action satisfied the British Government, which said it would not only relax its position on the subject but also drop its opposition on a number of other pending Community farm decisions.

It was also felt that the easing of agricultural tension on this prickly issue could improve the climate in the Community for settlement of a number of major agricultural issues ranging from fishing policy to the thorough reform of the common agricultural policy now under consideration, with all its importance to the EC budget and other social and Employment programmes.

THIRD WORLD: A European instrument for development

Out of the four billion men and women who live on the surface of the earth, somewhat more than two-third still live in a state of under-development. In the midst of the "rich man's club", the European Community distinguishes itself by the amount of its effort on behalf of the world's less-developed countries. In 1979, it furnished, by itself, 41 per cent of the world's public aid, an amount much larger than the other industrialised countries, including the two super-powers. Obviously, the Community cannot pretend to be able to resolve all development problems, therefore it has concentrated its efforts toward 60 countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), with which it is linked through the Lomé Convention. Not only has the Community eliminated customs duties for nearly all the exports of these countries, but it also brings to them technical and financial aid which amounts to billions of dollars. Curiously, however, few persons have heard of the institution which manages most of this substantial amount of aid. This is the European Development Fund (EDF), which is supervised by the European Commission in Brussels, but which is financed separately by contributions from the EC Member States rather than through the regular Community budget.

Since its establishment in 1963, the FED has financed about 2,000 development projects responding to the needs and priorities set up by the ACP countries themselves. The balance sheet of its achievements is substantial: 20,000 kilometers of road, 1,500 kilometers of railway, 40 ports, 10 airports, 800 hospitals, maternity clinics and dispensaries, 5,000 primary school classes and 40 factories and plants. In the hydro-agricultural fields, it has been responsible for 7,000 new wells, 180 dams, 2,000 kilometers of water pipes and 300,000 hectares of plantings of various types.

Currently, a priority is given to rural development. Between 1976 and 1980, the agricultural sector has absorbed about 32 per cent of the Fund's financing. Projects underway, include rice production in Mali, industrial processing of cotton in Guinea, land management in the Comoro Islands and the improvement of food crops in the Sudan, to mention only a few. A special status has also been given to energy cooperation. This is aimed at helping the ACP countries to develop new sources of energy. This is an absolute necessity for some of these countries where their oil import bills represent about a third of their national budgets. Endowed with a total of more than 4.6 million European currency units\* for 1981/1985, the European Development Fund is pursuing its ambitious goal to assist the third world.

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\* As of July 1981, a European currency unit was worth approximately 55p.

JUSTICE: Interest renewed in European legal zone

Just as the new French President, François Mitterand, is raising the possibility of setting up a "European social area", the European Parliament has adopted a resolution supporting an idea dear to former President Giscard d'Estaing of a European legal area.

The resolution itself expresses the anxiety of Parliamentarians about renewed acts of terrorism, of which the attacks on President Reagan and Pope John-Paul II are the most notable examples. On December 4, 1979, the Justice Ministers of the European Community had already signed an accord concerning the application of the Council of Europe Convention on suppression of terrorism. But in order to be implemented, this accord had to be ratified by the different national parliaments, which has still not been done. That's why the European Parliament deemed it necessary to urge Member States of the Community to accelerate their adoption procedures in order to reply to the concerns of European citizens about their security.

TRADE: The days of the "butter boats" are numbered

For several years, a number of German shipping companies have been organising cruises on the Baltic Sea to allow passengers to buy duty-free butter, cheese or meat. This means they can make their purchases at world prices without having to pay European Community customs or other duties. European authorities have succeeded in limiting the quantities sold on board these "butter boats", but not in completely eliminating this practice of which they do not approve.

However, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg has just handed down a decision which clearly questions the right to duty-free treatment for purchases made on these ships. According to the Court, only products bought in third countries during a lengthy stopover of at least eight days should benefit from such duty-free handling.

This judgment was made as a result of complaints made by German merchants who felt they were victims of unfair competition from the butter boats. The judgment of the Court is not final since it is only an advisory opinion which nevertheless gives national courts a free hand to forbid duty-free treatment for purchases made on these short cruises. It is therefore likely that the days of these butter boats may be numbered.

RESEARCH: Thermonuclear fusion, an energy source for the future

Despite the economic recession, the countries of Europe currently devote considerable amounts of money to reducing their dependence on oil and in the medium term to substituting other sources of energy for oil. And even though this development is far from being completed, researchers are already preparing the next phase, meaning the shift to new sources of energy in the long term, which will have the advantage of being nearly inexhaustible. At the head of the list of these future solutions is thermonuclear fusion, a source which experts agree is comparable to solar energy, notably because they are both virtually non-polluting.

Several years ago, the European Community took the decision to set up a joint fusion research programme, whose priority objective is a Joint European Torus (JET). This involves a still-experimental technique which consists in maintaining the phenomenal heat unleashed by thermonuclear fusion inside a magnetic field. The installations housing this project are located in Culham, in the United Kingdom.

Toward the end of last year, the European Commission had asked a group of eleven specialists to prepare a report on the state of progress of this research and to point the way for further development of fusion as a future energy source for the Community.

This report, presented to the Commission on July 6, underlines the fact that nuclear fusion is "very promising" and that it represents considerable advantages over other major sources of energy. But it also emphasizes that: "the road to commercially viable exploitation of thermonuclear fusion will be long and costly and will require the solution to extremely difficult technical problems. It appears highly unlikely that commercial use of energy released by fusion will be available in the next 50 years". The efforts undertaken today, therefore, will probably only benefit our grand-children. But it is also obvious that a long-term planning is required if our energy problems are to be resolved.

It is in this light that the European Commission has just adopted a new research programme for thermonuclear fusion for the years 1982-1986. This programme will be endowed with a total of about £373 million. These expenses are lower than those of the ambitious programme in the United States and that in Japan, when calculated per head of the population. They should nevertheless be adequate to maintain the European Community in the race and to allow it to negotiate cooperation accords with these partners at the appropriate time.

ENVIRONMENT: Protection for Antarctic flora and fauna

The geographic and climatic features of the Antarctic Ocean make it one of the least-populated regions of the world. But what applies for mankind is not necessarily true for animals and plants. The aquatic flora and fauna of the Antarctic region are in fact particularly rich and diversified. In addition, numerous fishing fleets, some flying European flags, exploit the area's fish, shell-fish and other marine-life resources. As in all fishing waters, there is the problem of limiting authorised catches to prevent depletion of the most sought-after species and to assure their renewal.

It was with this aim in mind that an international diplomatic conference was held in Canberra, Australia, from May 7 to 20, 1980. The European Community participated in its work, which led to the drafting of an international convention on conservation of Antarctic marine flora and fauna. The Community Council of Ministers decided on July 9 that the Community should officially participate in this accord. Scientific teams and fishermen of the Member States will henceforth be required to report their activities in this zone to a commission especially charged with assuring respect for the provisions of the Canberra convention.

SEDOC: A communications problem

The SEDOC network, through which the various employment offices of the Community member countries can exchange information on job opportunities, has been mentioned frequently in EUROFOCUS. The effectiveness of this system, conceived and coordinated by the European Commission, is apparently beginning to provide satisfaction. But the SEDOC, which is designed to complement and not to replace traditional job placement and information services, has had difficulty in estimating how many workers have found jobs through its services.

Lastly, a British member of the European Parliament, Richard Seligman, has asked the European Commission about this problem. He explained that he had frequently been obliged to visit his local employment service, adding good-naturedly, that he was not personally looking for work, and that he had noticed that only a limited number of job openings in other Community countries had been posted for the information of the British public in his region.

The main problem the SEDOC system has encountered has been in fact connected with the dissemination of information exchanged between national employment agencies and their regional and local outlets. And if the job vacancies communicated through the SEDOC are not notified to potential candidates

then the practical effect of the operation is therefore undermined. The European Commission is now examining the possibility of giving wider dissemination of the SEDOC possibilities by using different mass-media and especially radio. EUROFOCUS also hopes to contribute to the effectiveness of this process by publishing once again a selection of the openings currently available in the Community. For more information, contact:

United Kingdom: The Manpower Services Commission, SEDOC section, Employment Service Division, Overseas Placing Unit, Pennine Centre, 20-22 Hawley Street, Sheffield, S1 3 GA;

Ireland: The National Manpower Service (Department of Labour), SEDOC Section, 50 Mespil Road, Dublin 4.

At the moment, employers are looking for:

(Number)	(SEDOC Code)	(Occupation)	(Language required)
<u>BELGIUM</u>			
Several	7.21.80	Teemer(Steel making)	French
<u>THE NETHERLANDS</u>			
10	8.45.20	Maintenance fitter (Engines)	
<u>GERMANY</u>			
5	0.23.05	Electrical Engineer	German+Eng.+French
9	0.24.10	Mechanical Engineer	German
5	0.25.10	Chemical Engineer	German+English
8	0.32.15	Design Draughtsman	German
530	0.61.10	Medical practitioner	German+English
368	0.71.10	Registered Nurse	
60	7.24.10	Caster (Foundry)	German
20	8.03.10/8.03.20	Leather goods Saddler and Harness Makers	German
10	8.13.10	Foundry patterns maker (Wood)	
12	8.31.70	Constructional Ironwork Fitter-Machinist	German
27	8.33.20	Turner (Metal)	
<u>FRANCE</u>			
10	0.35.10	Mechanical Engineering Technician	French+English
<u>UNITED KINGDOM</u>			
5	0.71.	Registered Nurse	English
<u>ITALY</u>			
600	6.23.37	Temporary Harvest Hand	
3	8.74.11	Marker Off (Structural Metal)	
2	9.52.30	Steel Bender and Fixer	
4	9.54.25	Joiner (Bench)	
2	9.51.20	Mason Bricklayer (Erection)	