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** Nineteen European ministers of technology will meet in Brussels on 22-23 November at the invitation of the Community, with a view to laying the foundations of EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH. The ministers will have to reach ^{on} decisions on the implementing of concrete projects; these will be of an industrial nature or will be aimed at improving certain public services or will be directed at protecting the environment. Details can be found in ANNEX 1.

** Commenting on the recent setback suffered by the Europa-2 rocket, Mr Spinelli, the member of the Commission of the European Communities with special responsibility for research and industrial affairs, noted that this once again underlined the need for a SINGLE EUROPEAN SPACE AUTHORITY. A brief note on the subject can be found in ANNEX 2.

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The information and articles published in this Bulletin concern European scientific cooperation and industrial development in Europe. Hence they are not simply confined to reports on the decisions or views of the Commission of the European Communities, but cover the whole field of questions discussed in the different circles concerned.

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- ** As part of its work on the HARMONIZATION OF COMPANY LAW, the Commission of the European Communities has just adopted a proposal for a directive dealing with CORPORATE ACCOUNTS. The main object of this proposal is to take steps to ensure that the information which must be submitted by companies in the Community is standardized and comparable. (The national legislations on this subject differ appreciably at present.)
- ** A certain number of problems concerning SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZE FIRMS ought to be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Community. This, at least, is what has been requested on behalf of the Benelux countries by the permanent Belgian mission to the Communities. In order to achieve a common purpose and clear guidelines enabling the work in progress at the Community level to be brought to a successful conclusion, Belgium hopes that attention will be directed towards problems relating, in particular, to cooperation between small and medium-size companies, subcontracting, rights of establishment, professional training and, finally, the participation of small and medium-size firms in fairs and exhibitions.
- ** In reply to a written question from Mr Oele, a Dutch member of the European Parliament, on the subject of WATER POLLUTION DUE TO MERCURY, the Commission of the European Communities has stated that because of the large gaps in our knowledge of the subject, it proposed to examine the health aspects linked with the presence of mercury compounds in rivers, and more particularly the paths followed by the mercury and the likelihood of its concentration in living organisms. The Commission intends to arrange meetings of experts and also a scientific symposium dealing with these problems.
- ** Negotiations between the European Community (Euratom) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) took place in Vienna on 9-11 November with a view to concluding, under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a verification agreement on the Euratom safeguards system governing fissile materials (see, in particular, "Industry, Research and Technology" No. 113). The European Community delegation consisted of Commission officials and representatives of the five Member States signing the NPT.

This initial meeting was mainly used to compare the two safeguard systems, and to exchange information on their implementation. Both delegations agreed to continue their work in December in order to broaden the discussion of the matter forming the subject of the negotiations. The delegations also decided to pave the way for their next meeting by means of talks at expert level.

- ** THE POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON TECHNOLOGY, viewed especially from the institutional and legal points of view, will form the subject-matter of a seminar to be held in Nice on 10 and 11 December by the Institute of Law, Peace and Development and the Faculty of Law and Economic Science of the University of Nice, under the aegis of the CEDECE and Europe-Université-Industrie. Mr Spinelli, the member of the Commission of the European Communities with special responsibility for research and industrial affairs, will deliver the opening address at the session chaired by Mr Rey, a former President of the Commission.
- ** Six new TECHNICAL NOTES, each summarizing results obtained under Euratom research programmes, have been issued by the Commission of the European Communities. The purpose of these texts is to enable industrial firms to assess the prospects for the industrial exploitation of the results described. The subjects of these new technical notes are as follows:
- 28/c - Decimal scanner
 - 29/c - Timer
 - 30/c - Logic unit
 - 31/c - Ratemeter
 - 32/c - Adapter unit
 - 44/c - Scanner group.
- ** The working party responsible for carrying out measurements in factories and their surroundings as part of the work performed by the Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in the BATTLE AGAINST AIR POLLUTION IN THE STEEL INDUSTRY recently decided to put the harmonization of sampling and analysis techniques and sampling stations on its next programme of activities.

** The Proceedings of the symposium on the INFORMING AND TRAINING OF NUCLEAR WORKERS ON THE SUBJECT OF PROTECTION AGAINST RADIATION, held in Brussels in December 1969, have just been published in French and German by the Commission of the European Communities. This document (reference number EUR 4668) is obtainable from the Sales Office for European Publications (PO Box 1003, Luxembourg 2).

Nineteen Ministers Responsible for Technology Lay
the Foundations for European Cooperation

Nineteen European Ministers responsible for technology are to meet in Brussels on 22 and 23 November, at the invitation of the Community, in order to lay the foundations of cooperation in the field of scientific and technical research. This ministerial conference will mark the culmination of work by a number of study groups since 1967 (see, in particular, "Industry, Research and Technology" Nos. 1, 64, 98, 109, 112 and 115). It was in October 1967 that the Member States asked a group of Community experts to investigate the practicability of cooperation in the field of scientific and technical research, and particularly:

1. To make a general comparison of national methods, plans, programmes and budgets for research and development.
2. To identify possible areas of European cooperation, extending also, where desirable, to countries outside the Community, and beginning with seven fields of activity, namely, data-processing, telecommunications, new means of transport, oceanography, meteorology, metallurgy and pollution.
3. To consider ways and means of setting up a Community information and documentation system for science and technology.
4. To boost the training and exchange of scientists.

Of all the tasks entrusted to the group of experts, the greatest effort in terms of volume was required for the pinpointing of possible areas of European cooperation in the seven disciplines given priority, which involved a large number of specialists both at Community level and in the Member States. From this there emerged a broad, fundamental consensus in favour of proceeding with some of the projects contemplated in these disciplines on a European basis, as a result of which

the Community countries agreed to invite nine non-member states (Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) to cooperate in the implementation of these projects if they went ahead. At their own request, Finland, Greece and Yugoslavia were later invited to take part, and Turkey was asked to send observers.

Originally, in 1969, the Six had drawn up a list of 47 proposed projects. As a result of the review undertaken by the experts from the nineteen European countries involved, a number of projects have been identified which can be put in hand immediately under the banner of European cooperation.

Admittedly, the projects in view may appear limited in number and scope. It must be borne in mind, however, that these are basically pilot projects: their implementation should gradually lead to wider and more systematic cooperation in science and technology.

Apart from the possible value of this first group of projects as training exercises, the new and flexible methods by which they are to be implemented also warrant mention; these feature, in particular, multinational sharing of the required tasks and costs under programmes decided upon collectively by all the participants, with each enjoying access to its partners' findings.

1. The ministerial conference should give the go-ahead to a number of projects in the fields of data-processing, telecommunications, metallurgy and pollution. The aims of the seven draft agreements which will be submitted for approval to the ministers from the countries concerned will be:

- (a) The setting-up of a pilot European data-transmission network intended to prepare the way for the establishment of operational networks at a later date. After a two-year preparatory period, the pilot network, connecting certain "nodal" centres, will undergo trials for three years.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Yugoslavia and the European Community.

- (b) In the field of telecommunications: a study on the propagation of radio waves intended to improve the efficiency of aërials.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

France, Italy, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

- (c) In the field of metallurgy; two projects with industrial objectives, and spanning five years, one on materials for gas turbines, the other on materials for desalination plants.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Yugoslavia and the European Community.

- (d) Three projects in the field of pollution:

The first, lasting four years, aimed at discovering the natural mechanism by which sulphur compounds are removed from the atmosphere and developing methods and techniques of measurement in this area.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Yugoslavia and the European Community.

The second, lasting three years, is aimed at the development of a versatile detection system covering the whole range of organic substances, for identifying organic micropollutants in water and determining their concentration, with a view to assessing the hazard due to their presence.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Yugoslavia and the European Community.

The third, lasting two years, is aimed at standardizing the existing methods of characterizing sewage sludge prior to a comparative analysis of methods of treating and disposing of it.

Apart from countries obliged to reserve their position, the following should take part in this project:

Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.

2. Two more fairly big projects requiring a permanent body to be set up will also be submitted to the Ministers for their approval in principle, and planning will continue with a view to their final approval at a later date.

The first is for the setting-up of a European Medium-Term Weather Forecasting Centre equipped with the necessary high-powered computing facilities. The Centre, which would be built up gradually over a period of five years at a cost of some 20 million units of account, would also have the task of carrying out research and development on new techniques for producing four- to ten-day weather forecasts,

helping in the post-graduate training of meteorological specialists, and providing certain special services for national meteorological centres; the Centre's annual running costs would ultimately be about 7.6 million units of account; the estimated benefits to the economy likely to result from improved medium-term weather forecasting are 200 million units of account a year, taking all the countries involved as a whole.

The second is for the setting-up of a European Information Centre on computer programs which, for the first three years, would supply all interested parties with full and objective information on existing computer programs and facilitate their access thereto; later, it would consider the advisability of establishing an actual program library, to collect and distribute programs; the estimated cost of this project in the first three years is 3.6 million u.a.

3. The conference will also be informed of the progress made by study groups working on a certain number of other subjects, e.g.:

a study on electronic traffic aids on major roads with a view to improving the traffic flow;

a study on the establishment of an oceanographic and meteorological data-acquisition network in the territorial waters of the European States.

The Launching Failure of the Europa-2 Rocket - The Aftermath

"Circumstances are favourable for a complete reexamination of the Community's activities in the space sector To ensure the realization of (European) space aims, the creation of a single European space organization, responsible for design, decision-taking and the execution of European research programmes is essential The Commission hopes that the ministers of Member States with responsibility for scientific and technical affairs will have an exchange of opinions on all the problems involved, so as to define common attitudes before the next European Space Conference."

These lines were not written on the day after the failure to launch Europa-2. They are in fact taken from a letter of intent addressed by the EEC Commission to the Council of Ministers back in June 1970 (see "Industry, Research and Technology" No. 59).

The Heads of State and Government of the Community Member States, meeting at The Hague several months earlier, reaffirmed their determination to "continue and intensify the Community's activities aimed at coordination and fostering research and industrial development in the leading growth sectors, notably by means of Community programmes, and to make the required funds available". (See "Industry, Research and Technology" No. 36.)

The European Commission raised the issue again some months later by sending a new memorandum to the Council of Ministers in November of last year, the conclusions contained in it being summed up as follows (see "Industry, Research and Technology" No. 75):

"The circles in which Community decisions on research and development are prepared - or shelved, as the case may be - are extremely variegated, just as the status, terms of reference and composition of the different Community groups involved are of a hotchpotch nature. Nonetheless, the

studies and labours of this profuse and somewhat disorderly throng of groups, committees, sub-groups and sub-committees fall far short of covering the entire range of technological activities of the Community countries."

The failure to launch Europa-2 thus appears as a logical outcome of a certain type of European cooperation which boils down to the juxtaposition of purely national programmes, largely independent of each other as regards both their objectives and management.

A completely new and overall approach is essential to get out of the rut into which scientific research and technological development in Europe are sliding. The European Commission has proposed the creation of a single body for planning and programming. On the basis of a broad survey it is to undertake, such a European Research and Development Committee would define those fields in which cooperation is necessary. It could thus put forward proposals for the most suitable type of Community action, ranging from simple coordination of national activities to the initiation of genuine joint research programmes. In addition, and this appears to be particularly important, the Committee would define the aims and methods of the Community's cooperation with non-member countries and international organizations.

In short, we must implement a Community policy worthy of the name in the field of science and technology. As with other recent European failures and near-failures, the abortive launching of Europa-2 provides further proof of this pressing need.