

research and technology

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** The Council of Ministers of the European Community has just agreed to allow Finland, Greece and Yugoslavia to take part in its project on EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, to which the Community has already invited nine other countries - Austria, Britain, Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland (see "Research and Technology" No. 30)

Meanwhile the project is continuing. The last meeting of the senior research officials of the fifteen European countries was held in Brussels on 26-27 January 1971. It decided to participate financially (to the amount of \$30,000) in a forward study on telecommunication requirements by the year 1985, to be carried out by the European Conference of Posts and Telecommunications (ECPT). In particular, the senior officials of the fifteen countries reviewed the work of the study groups responsible for preparing the ground for the decisions to carry out concrete projects.

Work is going forward rather slowly, and the next meeting of senior officials will not be held until 20-21 April 1971. In view of this it is difficult at present to say when it will be possible to hold the Ministerial Conference of the Fifteen at which the ministers of research are to lay the foundations of the broad European scientific cooperation which is desired.

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The information and articles published in this Bulletin concern European scientific cooperation. 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 circles concerned in European cooperation in science and technology.

PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

1 BERLIN
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2100 M Street, NW
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tel. (202) 296-5131

The Community nucleus formed by the Six within this larger body might then take new initiatives to speed up their scientific cooperation on the basis of the declaration of intent addressed by the Commission of the European Communities to the Council in November 1970 (see "Research and Technology" No. 75).

** For some months now there has been a MASSIVE INCREASE IN THE COMMUNITY'S IMPORTS OF INTEGRATED CIRCUITS AND CONDENSERS, which had already risen appreciably in 1969 with respect to 1968. The world's excess production capacity in this sector is having very serious repercussions on some industrial companies in the Community. ANNEX 1 contains a short note on recent trends in the European market for electronic components.

** The Community's Scientific and Technical Research Policy Group (PREST) has just sent the Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE) and the European Centre for Public Undertakings (CEEP) a letter in which it expresses the wish to CONSULT INDUSTRIAL CIRCLES concerning European scientific cooperation, the scope and forms of which it is in process of defining.

ANNEX 2 contains the text of an information note attached to this letter and intended for industrialists.

** THE ELIMINATION OF TECHNICAL OBSTACLES TO INTRACOMMUNITY TRADE enables companies to benefit fully from the size of the Common Market. It also helps to protect the consumer by requiring manufacturers to provide clear and honest information on the nature of their goods.

Under a general programme adopted by the Community on 28 May 1969 the Council of Ministers had, on the Commission's proposal, drawn up on 31 December 1970 a directive on crystal glass, together with eight directives on motor vehicles relating to the following matters:

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1. Acceptance testing of motor vehicles and their trailers.
2. Permissible noise levels and the exhaust unit.
3. Proposed measures to combat air pollution caused by internal combustion engines.
4. Liquid fuel tanks and rear protection devices.
5. Positioning and mounting of rear number plates.
6. Steering.
7. Doors.
8. Acoustic warning devices.

** In 1970 the Commission of the European Communities published under the terms of the Euratom Treaty eight "viewpoints" on NUCLEAR INVESTMENTS totalling about 900 million units of account (1 u.a. = \$1) and relating to the following subjects:

(a) the construction of nuclear power plants at:

- Biblis (1,150 MWe) - West Germany;
- Brunsbüttel (770 MWe) - West Germany;
- Caorso (783 MWe) - Italy;
- Borssele (450 MWe) - Netherlands;
- Tihange (870 MWe) - France/Belgium;

(b) the construction of the following prototype nuclear reactors:

- Geesthaacht II (West Germany) (construction of this high-temperature direct-cycle reactor has since been deferred to a later date);
- Phénix (France) (233 MWe fast reactor);

(c) a pilot plant for the production of plutonium-containing fuel elements at Dessel (Belgium).

- ** The Commission of the European Communities is to have a study conducted into the possibilities offered by AUTOMATION OF DOCUMENTATION IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY. Because of the considerable development of innovation and position occupied by patents in this sector, the problem of access to documentation is such that automation appears inevitable. The question is whether automation could advantageously be carried out at Community level, account naturally being taken of the work already done at both private and national level.
- ** About 360 Community INSTALLATIONS are at present subject to the EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS AND CONTROLS (see "Research and Technology" No. 81). Each month these installations submit about 3,000 material balance-sheets and inventories; containing about 12,500 items of information concerning 12,536 tons of natural uranium, 14,690 kg of U⁻²³⁵ enriched uranium and 1,143 kg of plutonium.
- ** THE CONTROL OF FIREDAMP EMISSION AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF MINE ATMOSPHERES will be the subject of a conference organized by the Commission of the European Communities to be held in Luxembourg on 24-25 February 1971.
- ** Under the sponsorship of the European Communities, the University of Leiden proposes to organize, jointly with the Medisch Biologisch Laboratorium TNO, Rijswijk, and the Faculty of Medicine, Rotterdam, AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING COURSE IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AND RADIOBIOLOGY, FREE OF CHARGE, to take place at Rijswijk, in the Netherlands, from 15 August to 3 September 1971, for the benefit of young researchers. Applications for enrolment must reach the Molecular Biology and Radiobiology Course Secretariat, Commission of the European Communities, DG XII/1, 200, rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels, before 5 April 1971.

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They must be accompanied by:

- the applicant's personal history, which must state in particular his knowledge of languages;
 - a list of his scientific publications; and
 - a letter from the head of his laboratory.
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The Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy
Wishes to Consult Industrial Circles Concerning
European Scientific Cooperation

(Background note for the attention of Community firms)

The Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy (Aigrain Group) of the Medium-Term Economic Policy Committee has received the following instructions from the Council of the European Communities:

- to examine the possibilities of cooperation between European countries in the field of research and development;
- to undertake a comparison of the research and development plans and programmes of the Member States.

This dual task could best be carried out - as the Council's resolution emphasized - in consultation in industrial circles.

The first stage of the work of the Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy (PREST Group), which related to seven sectors, namely, data processing, telecommunications, metallurgy, new means of transport, oceanography, meteorology and pollution, afforded an opportunity to initiate such consultations in some fields.

These attempts confirmed the advantage to both the public authorities and industry of contacts of this type at European level. Whether they concern the choice of aims, the preparation of programmes or the determination of methods of implementing cooperative and concerted projects, such consultations can provide government representatives and industrialists with data of importance to their decisions on research and development policy.

The PREST Group has therefore decided to develop contacts with industrial circles, in close liaison with the Commission. This intention is furthermore in line with the wishes expressed by numerous firms and trade associations.

The aim of the proposed consultations would be to collect opinions, ideas and suggestions from industrialists and industrial organizations on subjects of two types:

- general questions, such as transfers and exchanges of information, concerted projects, and industrial property;
- specific and sectorial questions: possibilities and opportunities of cooperation, projects for concerted action in specific fields, technological forecasts, advisability of initiating cooperative research programmes, etc.

Depending upon the subject, these consultations will be undertaken by PREST either through UNICE or by direct contacts with the quarters concerned. PREST may delegate this task to its specialist study groups.