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\*\* As part of its policy for the EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION on the design, construction and operation of nuclear plants (see "Research and Technology" No. 8) the Commission of the European Communities recently entered into negotiations with the German company KERNKRAFTWERK STADE (KKS), which wishes to draw on the experience acquired by the Commission and is prepared in exchange to place at the Community's disposal the knowhow obtained as a result of the construction of the nuclear plant which it is due to build shortly at Stade, Germany.

\*\* THE COMMUNITY'S WORKING PARTY ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH POLICY (formerly the Maréchal Group) met in Brussels on 6 and 7 March for a preliminary examination of the draft text of the report asked for by the Council of Ministers concerning the project for wider European cooperation in the scientific and technological sphere (see in particular "Research and Technology" Nos. 1 and 8).

The Working Party will meet again on 17 and 18 March in order to put the finishing touches to the report, which will immediately be sent to the Community's Medium-term Economic Policy Committee, who will discuss it during their meeting on 31 March and ..../..

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\*\* 1 April, after which it will be forwarded to the Council of Ministers.

It already seems certain that the research activities proposed in the seven sectors to which the Council considers that priority should be given (information science, telecommunications, means of transport, oceanography, metallurgy, abatement of nuisances, meteorology) will be appraised according to their state of maturity, their present and future scope and the advantage that would accrue in each individual case from an extension of cooperation to non-member countries.

On the other hand, owing to lack of time for a more profound study, it is probable that the Working Party's report will merely give an outline of the "horizontal" problems to which scientific cooperation gives rise (comparison of national research programmes and budgets, scientific information, training of research personnel, etc.).

\*\* The Commission of the European Communities is actively engaged in preparing the next EURATOM MULTIANNUAL PROGRAMME. The Commission is expected to define the main guidelines for this programme by the end of this month so that the competent departments can submit to it by mid-April a detailed preliminary draft multi-annual programme which it should be possible to lay before the Council at the end of April.

\*\* FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EUROPE, 38 French, 23 German and 16 Belgian pins are now being irradiated in one single assembly in the Dounreay fast reactor in Scotland, under an agreement between Euratom and the UK Atomic Energy Authority.

- \*\* For several days now delegates from 63 Western countries (including five of the European Community states) responsible for negotiating the final text of the convention on a WORLD-WIDE SYSTEM OF COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES (INTELSAT) have been meeting in Washington. A summary of the position adopted jointly by the European countries is attached.
  
- \*\* On 26 and 27 March 1969 representatives of industrial firms and public bodies in the Community engaged in nuclear research will meet together, under the sponsorship of the Commission of the European Communities, to conduct a detailed examination of THE RESEARCH SITUATION AS REGARDS THE VARIOUS REACTOR TYPES (heavy water, high-temperature gas and fast neutron), and ascertain the prospects in the field of reactor development.
  
- \*\* THE BWR NUCLEAR POWER STATION AT DODEWAARD, Holland (52 MWe), which was built with financial aid from the Community and accorded the status of a "joint enterprise" within the meaning of the Euratom Treaty, will be officially opened on 26 March 1969 in the presence of HM Queen Juliana of the Netherlands.
  
- \*\* Mr. Timms, a member of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission, paid a courtesy visit to the Commission of the European Communities on 11 March 1969.
  
- \*\* On 6 March 1969 the Commission of the European Communities held a meeting with representatives of the Community organizations and industries which were associated with the Euratom research programme on NUCLEAR MARINE PROPULSION (including the Dutch RCN, the German company GKSS and the Italian firm of Fiat. The terms of cooperation in the nuclear marine propulsion work in progress in the Community were defined at this meeting.

EUROPE'S STAKE IN A WORLD COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE SYSTEM

For several days now delegates from 63 Western countries (including five of the European Community states) responsible for conducting the negotiations on the definitive text of an agreement on a world-wide system of communications satellites (Intelsat) have been meeting in Washington.

Since it was set up in 1964, Intelsat has operated under arrangements expressly stated as being of an interim character, this being done notably at the request of the countries of Europe, which in 1964 wanted time to put their own satellite into orbit and thereby secure for themselves a stronger negotiating position with respect to the unquestionable preeminence of the United States in this field. However, unlike the European space organizations ESRO and ELDO, whose ups-and-downs are common knowledge, Intelsat can look back on four particularly fruitful years, despite operating under interim arrangements, marked by the construction and successful launching of four satellites - all of which are still working.

The United States will use this undisputed efficiency as an argument to persuade its partners that the final constitution of Intelsat should differ as little as possible from its provisional constitution. This gives it a majority in the Committee (votes being weighted according to the amount of international traffic, the United States accounting for 53%) and makes the American organization Comsat the manager of Intelsat, i.e., the authority which ..//..

awards contracts to industry. (Whereas only 2% of the contracts for Intelsat 2 were placed outside the United States, the corresponding proportion was fixed at 27% in the case of Intelsat 4, after pressure had been brought to bear by the European members.)

The negotiations which have just opened will be of considerable consequence for Europe, both in the political or cultural sphere and on the industrial and technological level. The Commission of the European Communities therefore emphasized, back in May 1968, in a memorandum to the Council of Ministers:

"... Lest Europe's position be allowed to deteriorate further in the 1969 negotiations for the renewal of the Intelsat agreement, it is important that Europe should decide as soon as possible where it stands on this matter and make up its mind without further delay whether it wishes to try to play a part of some significance in the very rapidly expanding field of world telecommunications or whether it is going to throw in its hand."

It was shortly after this, in November 1968, that a European Space Conference held at Bad-Godesberg adopted the basis of a common European standpoint which will be upheld in Washington in negotiations with the other parties to the Intelsat agreement.

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The main points covered by the European countries' common standpoint are the aims and functions of the body to be set up, its financing and its institutional structure:

1) The definitive communications satellite system

- should cover only conventional "point to point" telecommunications (telephone, telegraph, telex, facsimile transmission, radio and television relays); its creation should not jeopardize the possibility of handling other services by means of satellites (navigation aids, prospecting of natural resources, meteorology, etc.) under an organization other than Intelsat;
- should concern only the "space" side of the operation: the setting up and operation of ground stations should come directly under the signatory states (subject to technical approval);
- should not result in the creation of monopolies, but leave it open to the signatory states to set up "domestic" (national) or "regional" (groups of countries) systems.

2) As regards organization and financing, the European countries advocate a structure based on that of commercial or industrial firms and featuring an International Assembly, a Board of Management and an Executive Body. The Assembly would be the organization's highest body, responsible for laying down the main lines of conduct and taking decisions of a political nature. Every member state would have one vote in the Assembly. The Board would ..//..

be responsible for the design, construction, establishment, maintenance and operation of the space network; it would determine each member's financial contribution, which would be worked out according to the planned use to be made of the space and ground facilities.

The allocation of Board votes would to a certain extent depend on the member states' contributions, but the difference in any two countries' voting rights should be less than the ratio of their respective contributions, so that a country that had put up the major part of the capital could not block or force through a decision. Thus, for example, the United States, which has extremely heavy traffic, should not have more than 30-40% of the votes, with a similar proportion for the other industrialized countries of the Western world.

- 3) Lastly, with regard to contracts and industrial property, the European countries also adopted a common standpoint which obviates the danger that the definitive Intelsat constitution might hamper the development of Europe's space industry.

In a few days time it will be known whether the countries of Europe have succeeded in putting their viewpoint across by virtue of the common front which they have formed and which, it is to be hoped, they can maintain throughout the negotiations now in progress.