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\*\* The Working Group on Scientific and Technical Research Policy (Aigrain Group) will meet in the second half of June to finalize a paper complementing the report previously submitted to the Council of Ministers.

This paper, containing suggestions on PRACTICAL METHODS OF UNDERTAKING THE PROPOSED COOPERATIVE SCHEMES, should be forwarded to the Council of Ministers through the Medium-Term Economic Policy Committee before the end of June, so that the Council can debate it during its session of 30 June and 1 July next.

\*\* The Commission of the European Communities has forwarded a document to the Council of Ministers in which it recommends the SETTING UP OF COMMUNITY URANIUM ENRICHMENT FACILITIES. A summary of the paper is given in an ANNEX.

\*\* FIVE NEW TECHNICAL NOTES, containing brief descriptions of the patented results obtained under Euratom research programmes, have just been published by the Commission. These notes are intended to enable Community industries to appreciate more fully the value of industrial exploitation of the results reported in them. They cover the following topics:

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- 1) Machine for cutting grooves in ~~finned~~ tubes and rods
- 2) Expanding gripping device for securing tubes in measuring rigs and a related extractor
- 3) Device for producing artificial flaws on the inside walls of tubes
- 4) An adjustable gauge ring for calibrating pneumatic tube test rigs (SOLEX system)
- 5) Variable velocity peristaltic pump

\*\* In reply to a written question by Mr. Dublin, Member of the European Parliament, the Commission of the European Communities stated that it "is at present preparing a draft proposal to the Council aimed at establishing closer collaboration between the Member States in the field of AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH" and that it "is resolved to do all that it can in future to COORDINATE RESEARCH EFFORTS" in this sector.

\*\* The Commission of the European Communities has decided to carry on the ANNUAL CYCLES OF MOLECULAR BIOLOGY AND RADIOBIOLOGY STUDIES in various higher education establishments in the Community under its technological education programme. These courses, which have already been held successively at Naples, Brussels, Leyden and Munich, are designed to acquaint young research scientists of Community countries with the new interdisciplinary aspects of radiobiology and molecular biology.

\*\* In a written question addressed to the Commission of the European Communities, Mr. Hougardy, a member of the European Parliament, refers in the following terms to the INTELSAT NEGOTIATIONS:

"What is the Commission's opinion concerning the general revision of the interim agreements concluded in 1968 among sixteen countries of the international telecommunication satellites organization (Intelsat)?"

"Does it not fear that the very conception of Intelsat may be brought into question again on this occasion?"

"What is its opinion on the excessive preponderance of the United States (55%) in Intelsat and on the fact that the USA, through the Comsat company, hold practically all the powers of decision in that organization?"

"Has it prepared a plan by which to weaken the de facto American monopoly in the field of telecommunications and to narrow the gap between the Community and the United States?"

"Research and Technology" No. 10 carries an analysis of the POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES in the INTELSAT negotiations.

- \*\* The use of MODERN DATA PROCESSING SYSTEMS in the field of INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE, particularly as regards protective measures against radiation lesions, was the subject of talks among the specialists of the Joint Research Centre's Ispra establishment and experts from the Member States. It was decided to undertake a study on the introduction of a mechanized data processing system; coordination of the work involved will be in the hands of the Ispra establishment.
  
- \*\* The Euratom Supply Agency has just signed a contract with the US Atomic Energy Commission for the delivery of 110 KG OF PLUTONIUM for the KARLSRUHE NUCLEAR CENTRE'S installations. At the same time a toll enrichment contract was concluded covering the fabrication of the first reactor core for the plant at Würgassen, West Germany.
  
- \*\* The JRC computer centre at Ispra has been TESTING the software for a PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PMS) which replaces and improves on certain features of the operational analysis programmes PERT TIME (Programme Evaluation and Review Technique) and REPORT, hitherto in general use throughout the world.

\*\* Under the EURATOM/US AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, a group of European experts (from Community industries, commerce and government), accompanied by officials of the Commission of the European Communities, went to the United States at the end of May to hold wide-ranging discussions on the research work in progress on either side of the Atlantic, more especially as regards the DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHT WATER REACTORS and PLUTONIUM RECYCLING.

The talks confirmed the American industry's interest in the recycling of plutonium in light water reactors and in reactor safety studies, and also the magnitude of the work still to be done to improve the performances of uranium oxide-based ceramic fuels. More generally, the European representatives found that American firms engaged on light water reactor technology consider that these reactors still offer considerable development possibilities.

\*\* Professor M.G. SALVETTI, vice-chairman of the Italian Atomic Energy Authority (CNEN), has been elected CHAIRMAN OF EURATOM'S SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC).

CREATION OF COMMUNITY URANIUM ENRICHMENT FACILITIES

Communication from the Commission  
of the European Communities

In its recent proposals to the Council of Ministers on the subject of THE COMMUNITY'S LONG-TERM ENRICHED URANIUM SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS, the Commission stresses that the joint setting-up of its own enrichment facilities

- constitutes a major safeguard for the supply of an essential energy sector and a powerful instrument by which the Community could exert a direct influence on the maintenance of reasonable and stable prices;
- is an answer to the Community's anxieties in the fields of industry, technology and research.

Of the various processes which can be employed as the basis for an enrichment facility there are two (gaseous diffusion and ultracentrifugation) having technical and economic characteristics which render them possible choices for use in large-capacity integrated plants or complexes.

Gaseous diffusion is a proven technology, capable of much further development and is particularly suitable for large enrichment plants operating at an attractive cost.

Ultracentrifugation has reached a less advanced stage of development and, in particular, industrial experience. Its development potential is considerable, especially for medium-capacity facilities and for higher enrichments.

Both technically and as regards adjustment to requirements, the two technologies of gaseous diffusion and ultracentrifugation are in no way incompatible and in fact have complementary features; it is perfectly possible to contemplate the use of both processes in order to give the Community an integrated enrichment capacity, provided this is coordinated and planned properly.

ANNEX

As matters stand at present it is impossible to choose between the different technologies that seem likely to provide the Community with good enrichment facilities. In view of this it is advisable to give preference to no one solution as yet and to look for the best designs and operating procedures.

The Commission's proposals are therefore divided into four stages:

- the FIRST STAGE, which might end at the close of 1971, would comprise preparatory studies designed to compare the fundamental technical and economic characteristics of the various enrichment plants based on the two technical processes, possibly with Community participation in the construction and operation of demonstration plants;
- a SECOND STAGE, which might end on 30 June 1973, would consist in design studies leading to a firm decision to build;
- in a brief THIRD STAGE it should be possible, before 31 August 1973, to finalize the decisions on the choice of site and to invite construction tenders, whilst the results of the exploration of possibilities of collaboration between the Community and non-member countries will be examined;
- lastly, in a FOURTH STAGE, up to the end of 1978, the construction should be completed of common enrichment facilities capable of covering a significant fraction of the Community's requirements, which for 1980 are estimated to run to between 5 and 8 million kg units of separative work a year.