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PRESS RELEASE

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION SEEKS \$145 MILLION FOR NEW THREE YEAR

EUROPEAN ATOMIC RESEARCH EFFORT

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 1 -- The Commission of the European Communities has proposed that \$145 million be allocated in the next three years for research and development into atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

To be administered by the Joint Research Center of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the proposed three-year program is an effort to renew continuity in European atomic research.

The Commission's proposal, which must be approved by the European Council of Ministers before it can go into effect, would be the first pluri-annual program established since 1968. This year, funds for Euratom's 1970 research program totalled about \$59 million.

Euratom is the organization set up in 1958 by the six countries of the European Community -- Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands -- to combine efforts and resources in developing Europe's atomic energy industry for peaceful purposes. Euratom's research is devoted mainly to finding cheaper ways to produce electricity through new reactor designs and improvement of existing types.

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If the Council approves the program, the funds will support activities of the Joint Research Center with facilities located in Geel, Belgium; Petten, Netherlands; and Karlsruhe, Germany. The main facility is situated in Ispra, Italy. The Center's activities would include public services, long-term energy supply research, training programs, and the development of nuclear industry.

For the first time, limited funds have been proposed for non-nuclear activities in the areas of pollution and reference standards for materials.

The Commission's proposal includes the decision to shut down the Essor reactor in Ispra. This reactor was built to test fuel elements of heavy water moderated organic cooled reactors. Conversion of Essor to test fuel elements of light water reactors was considered. It was finally rejected, however, due to the high costs involved.

The Commission also proposes an additional program of \$30 million to support specific projects by public and private concerns in Euratom member countries. The Commission hopes to sponsor projects focusing on light water reactors and advanced type reactors (high temperature gas-cooled reactors and fast reactors) and activities in the area of radioactive waste disposal as well as scientific and technical training.

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