

# EUROPEAN COMMUNITY NEWS

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**COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037 phone: (202) 296-5131  
155 East 44th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017 phone: (212) MU-2-0458

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## OLD WORLD PROGRESS

Europe generally looks to America for technological leadership, but Europe has a few advances of its own -- as the fate of three bills in the current Congress have emphasized. The beginnings of a stormy passage for Senator Edward Kennedy's national health insurance proposal are a reminder that Europe long ago came to a decision -- that the only way any country could begin to pay for a reasonable fraction of all the health care a population needs was by a national protection scheme, paid for by compulsory employer and employee contributions. Private health insurance could not be made compulsory, and it was essential that health insurance be universal. An equivalent of America's present Medicaid and Medicare programs, for the poor and the elderly, began in Britain on December 16, 1911, and in France in the Thirties. Comprehensive, womb-to-tomb insurance was introduced generally in Europe after World War Two.

The modest gun controls passed by the Congress this month contrast strongly with rigid European laws on firearms. In most European countries, even hunting guns must be licensed, and licensed pistols for rural home protection must remain inside the licenseholder's house or yard. (Some countries allow a car to be considered as part of the residence.) A gun has to be emptied of ammunition before being taken elsewhere -- for instance, to a gunsmith's for maintenance.

"No fault" auto insurance, a casualty in the Senate this month, has existed for a generation now in Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Finland, Malta, Cyprus and all African countries except Somalia and Equatorial Guinea. European Community members and prospective members that have not yet eliminated "meat trade" lawyers from accident insurance include Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark and Ireland.

## US FARM EXPORTS TO EC HIT RECORD

The European Community accounted for almost one-fourth of US agricultural exports in fiscal year 1971-72. According to the US Agriculture Department, farm exports to the Community reached a record \$1.9 billion during the past year -- a 7 per cent increase over the previous fiscal year. Total US agricultural exports increased only 4 per cent to \$8 billion.

CHINA'S STAKE IN A UNITED WESTERN EUROPE

Peking is paying special attention these days to cultivating good ties with Europe -- because of Russia. French correspondents who accompanied French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann on his recent China visit reported that Mao and other Chinese leaders questioned him closely about prospects for political unity on Russia's western flank, including European defense cooperation. Marc Ullman, of *L'Express*, wrote that the transformation of Europe of the Ten into an independent intermediary power appears infinitely more urgent to Peking than the holding of a pan-European conference of cooperation and security.

"MOBILITY" IS NOT ONE-DIMENSIONAL

Mobility of labor must include not only a change of job but movement up the income scale as well, according to European Commissioner Albert Coppe. Addressing a meeting of the United Nations International Labor Organization this summer in Geneva, Mr. Coppe said: "We have got to live with mobility and like it. To try to fight it is simply a rearguard action, for it is the inescapable concomitant of economic and technological change.... The change of job must bring a change for the better in the worker's lifestyle through a change for the better in his income level." Mr. Coppe noted that although the Community's agricultural labor force had been reduced and its mining, textile, leather goods, and shipbuilding industries had declined, two million new jobs had been created in the chemical, rubber and plastics, mechanical engineering, automobile, and electronic industries.

DUTCH BREWERY "HOPS" TO FRANCE

The Dutch brewing giant Heineken is apparently on its way to becoming the biggest beer maker in the European Community. Heineken is reportedly bidding to take control of the French holding company Brasserie de l'Esperance, which has a majority shareholding in France's third-ranking brewery l'Alsacienne. The trend toward concentration in the European brewing industry is nothing new: the 3,000 independent French breweries of the turn of the century had shrunk to 84 by 1970.

EUROPE OFF DUTY

Any American tourist visiting Paris in August knows he is more likely to see fellow Americans than native Frenchmen. The reason: most Parisians have deserted the city in their annual rush to the beaches and countryside. The same is growing true for Brussels, the seat of the European Community. Commission headquarters, operating with a skeleton staff, is virtually shut down the entire month of August. The average Community employee gets 24 working days (nearly five weeks) annual leave, and he usually takes this vacation in August. Most Europeans in public and private employment now get a month's leave every year.

## P R E S S   V I E W S

### ARABS LOOK TO EUROPE

Departure of Soviet advisors, arms, and influence from Egypt has turned Arab eyes toward Western Europe. Egypt and Libya look more and more northward across the Mediterranean, as they plan for the Egypt-Libya union project agreed Aug. 2 by President Sadat of Egypt and Col. Muammar ad-Qaddafi of Libya. What they see as total United States support for Israeli military superiority has led them to seek arms, economic aid, and diplomatic support in West European capitals rather than Washington. -- John K. Cooley, *The Christian Science Monitor*, August 7, 1972.

### GETTING HOT ABOUT THERMOMETERS

*Brussels.* For more than three years a directive to harmonize the thermometer trade (permitting a German thermometer to be sold in France without first undergoing a quality control by French authorities) has been held up in the European Council of Ministers. Only one point is controversial. It concerns the quality marking of the glass used.... It is easy to say that political will is needed to cope with such situations -- of which, incidentally, there are many.... But it is not really the answer. Are the heads of government to take up the case of the thermometers when they meet in Paris in October? Certainly, if they do nothing else, they will solemnly reaffirm their determination to promote integration. But such goodwill declarations already exist in abundant supply. Alas, they do not cut through the thick undergrowth of administrative inertia and national vested interests. Does anything? -- H. Peter Dreyer, *The Journal of Commerce*, August 4, 1972.

### SPAIN: ODD MAN OUT

*Madrid.* Spain is watching with increasing anxiety and tension as Western Europe organizes long-term economic links -- without Spain. The feeling of odd man out has grown as first the six members of the Common Market -- France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg -- agreed to let in four others -- Britain, Ireland, Norway, and Denmark -- and then joined with six other nations tied to the European Free Trade Association -- Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, Finland, and Iceland -- to form the biggest free-trading bloc in the world.... The basic problem for Spain is the political antipathy that her regime arouses in the rest of Europe.... The idea that Spain, a European nation, should be kept out of Europe is intolerable here, but the Spanish regime is not yet ready to face up to the political implications of entering an essentially democratically-minded community. The more progressive elements of the business community are making it increasingly clear that they are ready to accept these implications and the tension this creates in the Spanish political and economic worlds is one of the major elements of the present Spanish scene. -- Henry Giniger, *The New York Times*, August 10, 1972.

EIB LOANS AND BONDS

The European Investment Bank (EIB) late last month contracted two loans for a total of \$29 million and issued 7 per cent debentures in Italy valued at \$38 million. A \$27 million loan to Kernkraftwerk Brunsbüttel will build a nuclear power station in West Germany's Schleswig-Holstein region. A \$2 million loan to the French company Chaux de Provence will help finance a lime factory at Chateauneuf-les-Martigues, with an initial productive capacity of 200,000 metric tons. Since Chaux de Provence was recently merged with two large German and Belgian lime manufacturers, the EIB noted that the factory constructed on French soil will reinforce industrial interpenetration in the Community.

WORTH QUOTING

\* *The search for a European dimension supplementing our national ones - which is vital to us and useful for the remainder of the world - will undoubtedly be the principal cause of the second half of our century. -- JEAN-FRANCOIS DENIAU, Member of the Commission of the European Community.*

\* *We must give support to a human concept of the State. [This is] an era in which the quality of life will take precedence over... prosperity. --ERNST BRUGGER, Swiss Minister of Economic Affairs.*

\* *Concorde has been a difficult project technically - defeating Isaac Newton in one language is hard enough; in two languages it sometimes seemed nearly impossible. --SIR GEORGE EDWARDS, Chairman of British Aircraft Corporation.*

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