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** In the report which he presented to the European Parliament on the Commission's programme of activity for the present year, Mr. Jean Rey, President of the Commission of the European Communities, announced forthcoming concrete proposals on the REORGANIZATION OF THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE.

He also confirmed that the Commission is drawing up an important memorandum on the COMMUNITY'S INDUSTRIAL POLICY, which will be published during the next few weeks.

** The European Parliament has adopted the EURATOM DRAFT RESEARCH BUDGET for 1970 submitted to it by the Council of Ministers of the Community (see "Research and Technology" No. 40). In the resolution which it passed, the European Parliament emphasizes that this draft budget "has only a conservational and interim value" and invites the Council "to draw up a multiannual research and training programme with the least possible delay". The Parliament further requests that supplementary credits be allotted for the study of the reorganization of the Joint Research Centre (370,000 units of account) and for the study of the possibility of undertaking non-nuclear work there (130,000 units of account).

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- ** THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSSESSES URANIUM RESOURCES REPRESENTING ABOUT ONE-TENTH OF ITS NEEDS over the next thirty years. It will therefore be appreciated that the problem of nuclear fuel supplies is an acute one; the Commission of the European Communities recently made a study of this subject, a summary of which is given as an ANNEX.

- ** The use of COMPUTERS IN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT in the Member States recently formed the subject of a communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council of Ministers. The Commission considers that it would be desirable to encourage exchanges of information and experience in order to promote this new use of computers.

- ** The five volumes comprising the PROGRESS REPORT ON THE SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES of the Ispra Establishment of the Joint Research Centre in 1968 were recently communicated, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty, to the Member States and to those firms within the Community which have provided proof of their legitimate interest in receiving them.

- ** The "Challenges of Modern Society" will be the subject of studies to be carried out under the auspices of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). An ad hoc committee has been formed to examine the various problems raised by these challenges, notably the COMBATING OF POLLUTION of the air, sea and inland waters, a research subject which was recently included among those put forward as proposals for European scientific cooperation by the Council of Ministers of the European Community (see "Research and Technology" Nos. 30 and 31).

- ** THE DESIGN WORK on the 300 MWe thorium high temperature reactor which the firm of Hochttemperatur-Kernkraft-Gesellschaft is to construct at Schmehausen (Rhineland-Westphalia) WAS CARRIED OUT UNDER THE Euratom/Brown-Boveri-Krupp/AFA Jülich ASSOCIATION.

** The experts of the Commission of the European Communities, who last November organized an international conference in Brussels on the USE OF PRESTRESSED CONCRETE IN THE FABRICATION OF NUCLEAR REACTOR VESSELS, are participating in the working panel on this subject which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is holding in Vienna on 9-13 February.

THE SUPPLY OF NUCLEAR FUEL TO THE COMMUNITY

According to the estimated development of the production of nuclear energy between now and the end of the century, the cumulative needs of the European Community with respect to natural uranium over the next thirty years will lie between about 325,000 tons (corresponding to an installed nuclear power of 310,000 MWe) and about 525,000 tons (corresponding to a power of 410,000 MWe).

A study carried out by the Commission of the European Communities derives these data from an analysis of the nuclear fuel supply situation, from which it is concluded that the known reserves of the Community amount to only about 58,000 tons, almost all of it in France (where the present production is about 1,600 tons per annum). It is thus clear that the Community will have to import the greater part of the fuel required to cover its short and particularly its long term requirements.

For the period up to 1975, existing stocks and the installed production capacity of the Western world should suffice to meet the needs, which will be about 30,000 tons per annum. This is not the case with the medium term situation: annual requirements will be somewhere between 56,000 and 80,000 tons in 1980, so that new cheap ore deposits will have to be found before then in sufficient time to allow for the delay of three to six years which elapses between the discovery of a deposit and its exploitation.

As regards the Community, each Member State is trying to obtain direct access to the available resources, particularly in Africa. Up to the present time, however, only France has succeeded in increasing the overseas reserves at its disposal - up to at least 35,000 tons, which will permit a production of about 2,700 tons in 1975, as against 500 tons at the moment. In view of the estimated increase in the cumulative uranium needs of the Community over the next thirty years, it is a matter of some urgency that a fresh impulse be given to the search for new sources and it is important that this should be realised.

As regards enriched uranium, a moderate estimate sets the Community's requirements in 1980 at between five and eight million kilograms of separative work uranium (kg/U SW). The plants of the US Atomic Energy Commission (USAEC) are at present capable of meeting all the Community's enriched uranium needs. But the supply agreement at present in force will expire in 1975 and all the Community authorities are agreed as to the desirability of setting up European enrichment facilities (see in particular "Research and Technology" Nos. 18, 20 and 33).