

### S U M M A R Y

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RESOURCES

In the third of the series based on the European Commission's proposed 1984-87 R&D programme, we examine Europe's limited natural resources and the role that technology could play in solving the problem.

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SOCIAL: Record spending

Last year the European Social Fund paid out a record 916 million pounds/1063m IRL to depressed regions, young people and women.

SCIENCE SERIESRESOURCES:

In terms of raw materials, the European Community countries are not particularly well off. They have relatively little oil and few mineral reserves. Europe therefore has to compensate for its lack of raw materials by using high technology, according to the European Commission's 1984-87 R&D programme, which includes options for improving the management of energy and raw material resources.

The Commission estimates that at least 1.14 billion pounds/1.31bn IRL will have to be spent on reducing the Community's dependence on imported energy.

More than half that amount will have to go towards the development of nuclear fission and controlled thermonuclear fusion. The rest will go towards the development of renewable energy sources, such as solar and geothermal, and energy saving schemes.

As far as nuclear fission is concerned, the Commission wants an emphasis placed on safety aspects. Research should centre on the safety of light water and fast breeder reactors, accident prevention and the treatment and disposal of radioactive wastes, says the report.

The impact of controlled nuclear fusion has yet to be assessed. The European Community is taking part in the vast TOKAMAK programme, called JET in Europe, TFTR in the United States and JT 60 in Japan.

But the huge research costs are unlikely to bear fruit in the short term. Experts believe that it will take at least fifty years for fusion energy to become a commercial proposition. By that time 60 billion pounds/69bn IRL may have gone into the programme world-wide.

But the nuclear option is only one of the alternatives on offer. The Commission also wants a major effort to encourage the more rational use of existing energy resources and to promote new sources of energy, such as solar, geothermal, wind and water power.

Europe's dependence on imported raw materials is comparable to her dependence on imported energy. Three quarters of known reserves are concentrated in a few countries outside the Community and she is therefore forced to rely on them to supply her needs.

Experts estimate that, overall, the Community is about 75 percent dependent on external suppliers for its most important raw materials. For products like phosphates, chromium, cobalt, manganese, platinum and titanium, she is 100 percent dependent on imports.

To guarantee regular supplies of vital raw materials to European industry, the Community has already acted to diversify sources of supply, to develop stockpiles, to recycle and to develop domestic resources.

In future, Community research should continue to contribute to reducing Europe's import dependency by increasing domestic potential and encouraging improved use of existing resources, says the report.

Technological progress will be crucial in the exploitation of new, deep raw material reserves, the improvement of mineral processing and prospecting methods and the recycling and substitution of "strategic substances", it concludes.

#### JOBS: Job creation

The European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) are both actively concerned with job creation, according to European "Funds" Commissioner Antonio Giolitti.

In a written reply to French Socialist MEP Yvette Füllet in January, he says that between 1975 and 1981 the ERDF either saved or created about 467,000 jobs. 4.5 million Europeans also benefited from ESF training schemes, he claims.

Between 1978 and 1981, the Social Fund also provided incentives for employers to take on another 450,000 youngsters in Europe, says the Commissioner.

FISHING: Common Fishing Policy

A Common Fishing Policy has finally been agreed in Brussels after seven years of negotiations. By symbolic coincidence it was signed on the same day as the first meeting of the Council of Ministers twenty-five years ago - January 25th.

Europe badly needed a Common Fishing Policy. At Community level a common approach to managing European fish stocks had become vital to protect some of the world's most valuable fishing grounds. Some species were on the point of disappearing altogether.

Under the Common Fishing Policy, European Community member states have agreed to share a "Community catch" fixed annually by the European Commission on the basis of scientific evidence and subject to a system of quotas.

The second aspect of the policy is the question of access. After deciding how many fish could be caught, a decision had to be taken on where they could be caught.

The January agreement gives all Community fishermen free access to the 200 mile Community fishing area, with a single exception. Until the year 2002 an exclusive 12 mile coastal zone will be reserved for inshore fishermen who have always fished there. Access is guaranteed for 20 years and is renewable.

The third aspect of the policy is improved organisation of markets and structural reform. The former is aimed at guaranteeing Community fishermen's incomes and the latter will provide 150 million pounds/172.5m IRL to modernize European fishing fleets.

The Community has fishing agreements with third countries such as Norway and the Faroes and in future negotiations under the CFP it will speak with a single voice.

After the agreement was signed, Commission President Gaston Thorn emphasised its importance for Europe. "Even if there are a number of points to be clarified over the next few years, we've finally put an end to fishing wars", he said.

TRANSPORT: Call to cut airport red tape

Christmas holiday-makers who spent a large part of their vacation suffering from delayed flights, incomprehensible tannoys and airport paperwork will be happy to learn that the European Parliament's Transport Committee has come up with a report on how to simplify airport procedures in Europe.

Among the report's recommendations are the abolition of customs controls for travellers inside the Community, the general adoption of Britain's system of special check-in points for Community nationals and a simplification of existing ticket, baggage and embarkation procedures.

The airlines, the police and customs authorities and the airports themselves could all help to make air travel a little easier, according to the report, which was compiled by French Progressive Democrat MEP Michel Junot and adopted by the Parliament in December.

The Committee is critical of the use by airlines of tickets consisting of several pages "which no-one reads" and asks why passenger lists are needed, when a simple system of railway-type tickets could be used. Similarly, they question the necessity of complicated baggage check-in formalities, when passengers could just as well load their luggage onto the plane themselves in a fraction of the time.

Flights inside the Community should operate from special terminals reserved for "domestic" services and should be exempt from the lengthy customs procedures that "external" flights are subjected to, according to the report. Embarkation and landing cards should also be abolished for Community nationals, as they "contravene the fundamental principles of the Community" and European passports should be introduced by January 1, 1985, say the MEP's.

Airport information services also come in for criticism in the report. Airport reception staff should be able to communicate in as many languages as possible, and not just in their own language and English, it claims. The same applies to in-flight information and on a flight from, for example, Frankfurt to Athens, announcements should be made at least in German and Greek, it argues.

COMPETITION: Commissioner slams state aids

European Competition Commissioner Frans Andriessen has warned against the dangers of state aids to industry in Europe, in a major speech in Bonn (1).

The European Commission, as guardian of the European treaties, cannot allow national authorities to distort free competition, as this would threaten both Europe's competitiveness in world markets and the very existence of the Common Market, he said.

Growing international competition has meant that European Community countries are increasingly resorting to state subsidies to bail out unprofitable firms. In 1981 and 1982, the Commission was forced to reiterate its opposition to state aids to industry.

Commissioner Andriessen believes that state aids to firms in difficulty are a mistake both from an economic and social point of view. They take funds from profitable enterprises and give them to unprofitable ones, he claims.

He blames state aids for "creating an assisted mentality hostile to progress", which is a drain on national exchequers and weakens the Common Market.

The Commission opposes all national aids aimed at undermining competition, encouraging protectionism and limiting free trade. Protecting national producers simply allows them to either put off or avoid having to adapt. Aids also tend to simply hive off national problems onto neighbouring countries.

But the Commission does not condemn all state aid indiscriminately. It welcomes aids aimed at speeding up the adaptation of industrial structures to existing markets or stimulating research and development or reducing the differences between rich and poor areas, because they are consistent with Community aims.

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(1) European File 2/83 "European Competition Policy".

INSTITUTIONS: That list!

To the man in the street it may appear harmless, but the mere sight of it is often enough to send committed Europeans into paroxysms of rage. Eurocrats have even been known to use it to test their blood pressure or that of their colleagues.

At first glance it is nothing more than a fat, pink document published at regular intervals by the European Commission, entitled "List of proposals before the Council".

But in it lie a fantastic array of proposals for legislation on every conceivable topic, submitted by the Commission to the Council, where many have lain festering for periods of up to fourteen years, awaiting ministerial approval.

The problem centres on the fact that Community decisions require agreement in the Council and up to now this has sometimes proved extremely difficult to attain. The years of wrangling that it took to introduce the Common Fishing Policy eventually agreed last month, illustrates the point.

Frustration has risen to such levels in some quarters that the European Parliament has decided to take the Council to the Court of Justice for its failure to introduce a Common Transport Policy.

Typical of the list is a proposal for a regulation relating to access to the inland waterway freight market, submitted in 1967, following its approval by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. Amended on the Council's recommendation and resubmitted in 1969, it is still currently "pending".

Numbering more than 400, the list's topics for proposed Council regulations, directives and decisions are enormously varied. A 1968 proposed regulation on the manufacturing and marketing of butter nestles next to a perhaps aptly-phrased plea to control noise emitted by "dozers and loaders", submitted two years ago. But to the European civil servants and parliamentarians who put thousands of man-hours into preparing and scrutinising the material before its submission to the Council, the situation is no joke. In a sector such as transport, where thirty-seven proposals are currently "pending", Community officials could be forgiven for thinking that somebody may be wasting their time.

MEDIA Prizes awarded

Two veteran journalists have been awarded prizes for their long time coverage of European events by the Association of European Journalists.

Naurice Woods, former London editor of the Eastern Daily News, and an independent correspondent, is credited to the Community for its acceptance of the award. He is the author of the book "The European Community: A History".

The award was presented to Woods at a ceremony in London on the 15th of the month. The award was presented to Woods by the Association of European Journalists.

EUROPEAN UNION

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The grants, which were distributed in five batches, went to the three main categories of women, young people and underdeveloped regions. A large proportion of the grants is for the creation of projects, to help to compensate for the economic effects of the recession in all three years.