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A clear and effective warning system is required for potentially dangerous substances (see page 3).

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++ ENERGY CONSUMPTION SLOWS

In 1977 the Community consumed less oil and coal, but more gas and electricity than in 1976. Overall energy demand only increased 1.1%. In 1978 an increase of 3% is expected.

The background to these figures is presented in Annex 1.

++ LIFE-SAVING PICTURES

Do not swallow; harmful to eyes; do not inhale; keep away from children; cancer risk with high dosage..... there are numerous warnings which have to be displayed on the packaging of dangerous substances but in a Community of nine countries, not all consumers speak the same language. A universal language needs to be developed which is clear and effective.

The European Commission has come up with the idea of generalising the use of "pictogrammes" - clear and unambiguous picture symbols. Details in Annex 2.

++ EUROPEAN ELECTIONS ON TV

Elections in all nine countries at the same time has inspired the European Broadcasting Union to draw up an ambitious "battle plan" to give European-wide coverage to all stations during the elections.

Euroforum outlines the plan in Annex 3.

++ XMAS BUTTER IN 1978?

The Community produces 1,800,000 tonnes of butter and consumes 1,600,000 tonnes. To deal with the surplus, the European Commission exports part to the world market, gives another part to developing countries as food aid and, as happened last Yuletide, distributed some 72,000 tonnes in the Xmas butter operation.

By choosing Christmas as the time to distribute butter held in storage at reduced prices, the European Commission deliberately managed to avoid upsetting the market for fresh butter. The Xmas butter operation was undertaken for a limited period, covered a limited quantity of butter and took place at a time when normal butter production was low and consumption relatively high.

It is too soon to say whether the operation will be repeated this year in one form or another. The Community has to be sure that bringing butter out of the storage freezers does not force fresh butter into storage. Such a rotation of stock would not necessarily be of any benefit to consumers or to the common agricultural policy.

**++ NO DOCTOR MIGRATION**

Since September 1976, the Community's 450,000 doctors have been legally free to set up practice in any EEC country following the Community directive on free establishment for the medical profession (see Euroforum N° 39/76).

There have been fears of a medical exodus or doctor migration, and even certain medical organisations expressed their concern.

One year after the directive came into force, the number of doctors who have requested to set up shop in another Community country from their own, is still less than 400.

**++ CONTRABAND RESTRICTION**

Duty free whisky, cigarettes and perfume have traditionally been available on cross channel ferries and international flights. The right to such perks has even been incorporated in customs and excise regulations and founded on the principle that such goods will be consumed outside the customs territory. The customs franchise currently covers a much wider range of products than the list usually offered to passengers, and the European Commission has recently become concerned that the wide range of products covered - particularly agricultural produce - is effectively encouraging contraband. The regulation is being exploited by traders in farm produce to the expense of the Community budget.

The Commission is proposing a reduction in the number of products which benefit from the duty-free franchise. The franchise will also be restricted to international flights, sea and rail travel and fishing and rescue vessels. Pleasure boats and private aircraft will be excluded.

**++ FALSE LABELLING FRAUD**

A label claiming "pure wool" and attached to a 100% man-made fibre garment was just one of the examples of fraudulent labelling recently cited in the Italian press. The Community in fact already has a Council directive requiring compulsory labelling of both qualitative and quantitative fibre content of textiles. Monitoring of the labelling is the responsibility of the competent national authorities who undertake sample checks. In Italy, the measures which translate the directive into national law, make provisions for legal and financial sanctions to ensure consumers are protected from fraudulent labelling.

**++ ECOSOC AND AEROSOLS**

At its plenary session, March 1-2, the Economic and Social Committee examined:

- the Commission's draft recommendation to intensify research into the effects of fluorocarbons - the gas used as an aerosol propellant which is thought to put both the environment and human health at risk (see Euroforum N° 31/77). The Committee gave its approval by 35 votes to 17;
- the draft directive on the protection of participants in correspondence courses (see Euroforum 31/77) which was approved by all except one;
- the draft directive to harmonise national legislation concerning product liability (responsability for defective products, see Euroforum 40/75 and 46/77). In the absence of a majority in favour, the proposal is to be rediscussed;
- farm prices : following the Commission's proposal of a 2% average increase in farm prices, the Committee voted in favour of a 4.2% increase. In the Committee's view the method of calculation used in previous years would have given an increase of 4.7%.

The Committee also made a number of observations relating to agro-monetary measures, surpluses and production targets, the job situation and farm incomes, and the disparities in food prices evident within the Community.

**++ SOCIAL RESEARCH SEMINAR**

A seminar dealing with social research was held by the European Commission, March 9-11. Discussions covered:

- the definition of priority problem areas;
- the development of appropriate methodologies;
- cooperation amongst researchers.

**++ EEC-SWEDEN ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION**

Since the end of 1977, Sweden and the European Commission have been formally party to an environmental cooperation agreement, following numerous contacts at the technical level. Reaching a further stage in this cooperation, experts from the two parties met in Brussels, March 9th, to exchange information on work they have undertaken concerning : marine pollution, air pollution, control of chemicals and technical information systems concerning the environment. Naturally

enough it was the problem of long range atmospheric pollution which was the focal point of discussions. The Commission was also particularly concerned about the problem of pollution in the Baltic sea.

++ MYTHOLOGICAL STAMP

A scene out of Greek mythology depicting a youthful half-clad woman - Europe - taming Zeus the bull, has been taken by the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as its design for a new stamp being brought out to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome.

Though the European Community is one of the most important events of contemporary history, only one country - the smallest of the Nine - has brought out a commemorative issue for its anniversary.

++ EUROPEAN COMMISSION STAFF

The staff of the European Commission in 1977 amounted to 8,004 permanent employees and 218 temporary staff.

Because the Commission is obliged to use six official Community languages (German, English, Danish, Italian, French and Dutch) 38% of its staff is employed by the Commission's linguistic services.

++ THE COMMUNITY'S MONEY

Whilst the Dutch contribution per head to the Community budget last year amounted to 216 florins, the per capita contribution to the national budget amounted to 6,013 florins and not the more modest figure quoted in Euroforum issue 46/77. The overall picture for 1977 was as follows:

|             | <u>Contribution to<br/>Community budget</u> | <u>Contribution to<br/>national budget</u> |
|-------------|---|--|
| Belgium     | 2,953 FB                                    | 103,047 FB                                 |
| Denmark     | 325 Dkr                                     | 17,490 Dkr                                 |
| Germany     | 148 DM                                      | 5,216 DM                                   |
| France      | 202 FF                                      | 7,373 FF                                   |
| Ireland     | 8 Pounds                                    | 736 Pounds                                 |
| Italy       | 17,797 Lira                                 | 1,003,409 Lira                             |
| Luxembourg  | 1,915 FLx                                   | 96,067 FLx                                 |
| Netherlands | 216 Florins                                 | 6,103 Florins                              |
| UK          | 14 Pounds                                   | 1,020 Pounds                               |

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## ENERGY CONSUMPTION SLOWS

In 1977 the Community only recorded a 1.1% increase in energy demand, and though this low level of increase was principally due to the low rate of economic growth (2% of gross national product (GNP)) it also reflected to a certain extent the energy savings effort. Comparison with 1976 data (energy +6%, GNP +4%) would seem to indicate that energy demand still reacts strongly to both slow downs and accelerations in economic activity.

During 1977, demand for oil fell 2% (to 530 million tonnes) but this was basically due to reduced consumption of fuel oil, particularly in power stations where use of nuclear and hydroelectric power has increased. Coal consumption also dropped by about 3% (to around 250 million tonnes of oil equivalent), the decrease reflects the depression in the steel industry and reduced coke and coal consumption, though it does conceal the increase in coal use in electricity generating power stations.

Natural gas consumption by contrast rose 6% and its share in total energy supply climbed to 17.5%. Electricity demand itself showed an increase of 3.4% with domestic and service sector requirements expanding more rapidly than industrial needs.

Forecasts for 1978 seem to indicate an increase in GNP of the order of 3% which is still considerably below the Community's annual and medium-term target of 4.5% to 5%. Energy demand itself should rise 3%, reflecting a 2% increase in oil demand and a 9.9% rise in demand for natural gas. Demand for electricity should increase by about 3.9% whilst there will only be a marginal rise in coal consumption.

At the end of 1977, total nuclear capacity stood at 22,400 MW, benefiting from the addition of 3300 MW of capacity during the year. Nuclear capacity in 1978 should exceed 27,000 MW and the nuclear share of total electricity production should rise to 12% in 1978 as against 10% the previous year.

These statistics on the market situation in 1977 and outlook for 1978 are taken from a report drawn up by the European Commission for the Council of Ministers, who have undertaken to discuss the latest world and Community energy situation at their sessions dealing with energy.

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## LIFE SAVING PICTURES

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A dramatic skull-and-crossbones marked on a bottle of liquid would indicate to most people that the substance could put their life at risk. Similarly the majority of people now recognise the international sign to denote radioactivity and the sign that warns of high voltage electricity. There are many products, however, which do not present dangers which are as dramatic as these, but which could lead to danger if people are not clearly warned : do not swallow. harmful to eyes, do not inhale, keep away from children, potentially cancer-producing, etc. Quite recently, a do-it-yourself addict killed himself accidentally by applying a wood varnish in an unventilated room. The fumes were fatal but the warning carried on the tin was almost too small to read.

### Clear as R 25b!

The approach to this up until now has been to legislate for a compulsory description on the label of the dangers presented by a product and, where necessary, emergency measures which should be taken. A directive adopted by the Community's Council of Ministers in 1967 specified the precise requirements for the classification, labelling and packaging of dangerous products with this in mind. But is this enough?

Goods produced within the EEC are increasingly being traded among other Member countries and third world countries. To list all the dangers on the label of products in all the languages where the products are to be sold is not only likely to make the list extremely long for some products (and consequently printed very small) but more importantly, is likely to diminish the impact. The 1967 directive tried to assist this by prescribing a reference-code system covering the risks involved and the safety measures to be taken in case of emergency. A doctor, policeman or hospital receptionist could read the indication R 25b, S 39d on a label, look up the code among the 400 references in the annex of the '67 directive and find out the dangers involved with the product and the appropriate remedial action to be taken. By then, however, it could be too late for the innocent citizen or child who adds water to a particularly risky substance, and is asphyxiated by toxic fumes. All households who use toxic detergents however cannot be expected to harbour a copy of the 1967 directive, neither can the weekend do-it-yourself fanatic.

### Community study

What can be done to improve the immediate recognition of dangerous substances and products? The European Commission has been looking into the possibility of developing a system of pictorial designs which could be used on dangerous products to give a clear and unambiguous warning to the user, whatever his or her nationality. A study on the packaging and labelling



of dangerous products has been undertaken for the Commission to analyse the present situation, the work of other international organisations and assess the feasibility of embarking on such a descriptive system. The findings of the report have been positive.

It recommends that a series of "pictogrammes" be designed corresponding to the "R" and "S" descriptive codes used in the 1967 directive. The main problem, it recognises, is finding symbols that are unambiguous and it recommends that the pictogrammes be thoroughly tested on the public to gauge their effectiveness. Though not everyone is likely to understand every symbol (some people might even misinterpret the skull-and-crossbones as a risk of attack by pirates) a 66% positive responses would be a sufficient measure of effectiveness.

Once the suggested pictogrammes had proven their worth through public testing, they should become compulsory in the Community. The report also wishes to include products which are potentially carcinogenic, teratogenic or mutagenic and ensure that they are also suitably labelled.

#### Motorway and factory pictogrammes

In a multilingual Community such as Europe of the Nine, the use of pictorial designs would seem an understandable objective. The European Commission has already had some success in introducing universally understandable pictorial designs for use in the work place. In July of last year, the Council of Ministers adopted a directive drawn up by the Commission containing pictogrammes to be used at work to increase safety by designs indicating when protective clothing should be worn such as safety helmets, ear protectors, goggles, gloves, etc.

Are such symbols likely to be accepted? Already on our roads an international system of road signs, some giving warning, some giving advice and some imposing a complete ban, have been introduced and are now readily understood. With a little education, a system concerning dangerous products could be as effective.

The report stresses the need to improve the educational aspect of dangerous substances and proposes that every two years a "poison prevention week" should be organised simultaneously in all Community countries to inform parents, teachers and pupils of the various poisoning risks that confront us.

#### Consistent colour

Black words on a red background, white writing on a green background - the report insists that the use of the same colours also becomes compulsory and recommends that the colour/danger system devised by the International Safety Organisation (ISO) be incorporated in the 1967 directive.

Ideas that have been suggested are that, as is the case in Canada, an octagonal frame surrounding the symbol should indicate danger, a diamond frame should symbolise a warning and a triangle should signal caution.

### Safety tops

The packaging of dangerous products which are to be used in the home can also be important and the study recommends that special safety sealing devices be fitted to all containers of dangerous toxic, corrosive or irritant products which are to be used in the home.

A sealing device for such a product should be constructed with children in mind. Standards concerning such safety devices should also be drawn up at the Community level. The main concern here, of course, is pharmaceutical products which should also clearly indicate that they should be kept out of the reach of children.

Pharmaceuticals which can reduce the efficiency of a car driver (tranquillisers, etc.) should also display a clear label to this effect, the report stresses.

The universal answer to these problems is to develop universal unambiguous symbolic labels. Who should be responsible for designing these? Well, you of course. The report recommends that a Community-wide competition be organised to find the most effective pictogrammes.

The services of the European Commission are currently studying the implications of the report and will be making proposals in due course.

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EUROPEAN ELECTIONS ON TV

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Though 70% of Europeans are in favour of holding direct elections to the European Parliament, the elections are not, at the present moment, one of their greatest causes for concern. Whilst for some the date, ways and means of the elections may seem too distant to excite much political interest, others are already preparing themselves for the big election day (or more likely the big night) : the European Broadcasting Union.

The EBU needs to have the TV and radio sides well organised and well coordinated to give proper coverage to the elections both at the European and the national level : they have nine countries to cover in depth.

The European Broadcasting Union (E.B.U., U.E.R. in French) is an independent non-commercial organisation which for the last twenty five years has tried to develop radio and TV and protect the interests of its members who currently number 107 : 38 full members broadcasting from the European zone and 69 associate members working outside this area. Eurovision was the work of the EBU and had its baptism in summer 1954 through an exchange of European TV programmes (coordinated in France at Lille.)

The EBU does not wish to be taken unawares by the direct election campaign and already has its battle plan prepared. It comprises three stages:

- the pre-electoral campaign;
- the campaign itself or the two months leading up to voting;
- the election itself and the diffusion of results.

Pre-campaign

To introduce voters to their first ever European vote, the TV and radio stations in the Nine will themselves need to possess the necessary information. The EUR has decided to provide them with an election guide - a collection of information to be used by journalists.

In addition to the exchange of information and of programmes which is its normal function, the EBU will give greater priority to information and programmes of a European nature.

### The campaign

In normal circumstances, the EBU is in contact with radio and TV stations three times a day acting as broker for all the different news items available : selling or buying programmes on the French elections, kidnappings in Italy, anti-terrorist operations in Germany etc. In addition to this regular coverage of European news, the EBU will, for the duration of the campaign, enable the media to be in instant contact with nine countries and to be able to add the full European dimension to whatever is happening. The organisation also wishes to establish closer contacts between its members through an exchange of information on the European elections which will take place every day between 14.00 and 16.00 hours.

### Election night

For quick presentation of developments in the decisive stage of the elections, EBU has requested that the details of the counting and results be fixed without delay. It is still not known whether the voting will take place simultaneously or will be spread over a period of days. The same is true of the announcement of results. If they are not conducted simultaneously, it will be difficult for the Nine's TV and radio stations to produce joint programmes and it will be difficult for the event to have the desired impact on the public.

Whether its wishes are granted or not, the EBU has already arranged logistical support for all eventualities:

- installation of a central studio in Brussels (with a team of coordinators and technicians);
- a central computer in the Brussels studio to collect information from national computers for redistribution;
- finally, a "multilateral" and a "unilateral" production arrangement which would enable, on the one hand, all relevant TV sequences from each of the nine countries (voting scenes, political speeches, etc.) to be collected in the central studio and redistributed to all Community stations, and secondly a facility to enable correspondents working in other EEC countries to be linked up to their stations and broadcast (e.g. to assist a BBC correspondent sent over to Paris to interview elected French candidates).

Several of the points in the European Broadcasting Union's plan have already been adopted by the radio and TV stations in the Nine. The joint TV programmes are on their way and should enable more variety to be added to the whole campaign. Each producer will approach the campaign in a different fashion and this diversity can be shared by viewers in all nine countries.

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