

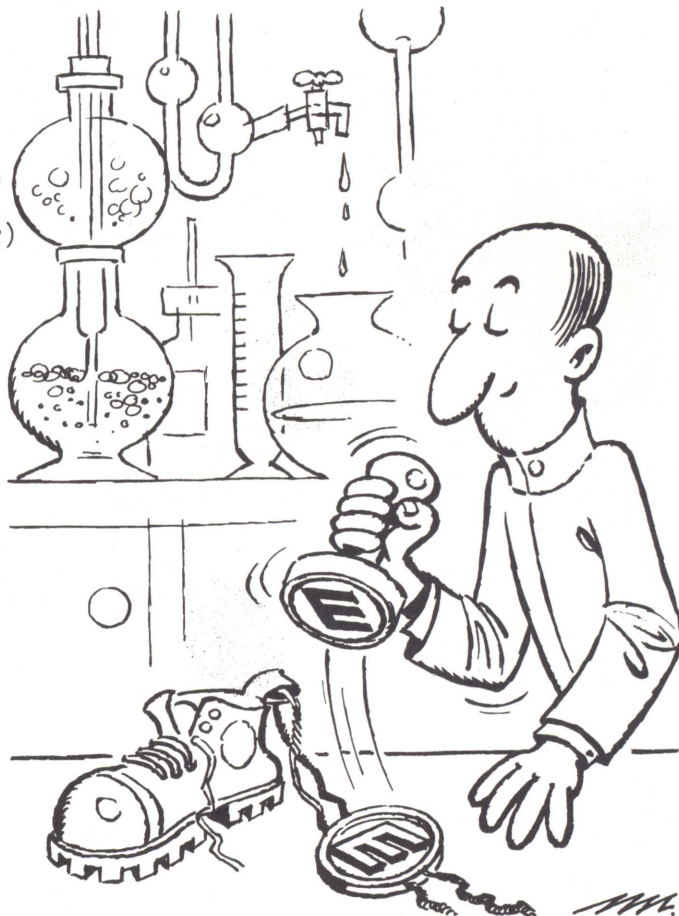
REPRODUCTION AUTHORIZED

Brussels, 10 June 1975

No 23/75

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** Laboratories run by consumer associations in a number of Community countries have decided to pool their know-how and resources. Products which are generally available in all Community countries will now be subjected to a EUROPEAN TEST.

X/306/75-B

This bulletin is published by the

Commission of the European Communities
 Directorate General of Information
 Division for industrial information and consumers
 Rue de la Loi 200
 B-1049 - Brussels - Tel. 735 00 40

Further information is available from the Commission's press and information offices in the countries listed on the inside cover.

The information published in this bulletin covers the European Communities' activities in the fields of industrial development, protection of the environment and consumer welfare. It is therefore not limited to recording Commission decisions or opinions.

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ANNEX 1 explains why and how consumer laboratories have joined forces.

** Mr Scott-Hopkins, rapporteur of the Committee on Agriculture of the European Parliament, has analysed the stocktaking review of the COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY.

ANNEX 2 summarizes the comments and suggestions contained in his report which Parliament will be asked to adopt at its June session.

** How many NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS are in operation or under construction in the Community? Where are they located and what is or will be their capacity?

These questions are answered in ANNEX 3.

** Unemployment in general and YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT in particular was discussed at length at the recent meeting of the Standing Committee on Employment. Representatives of both sides of industry, government representatives and Commission officials, under the chairmanship of Mr Michael O'Leary, Irish Minister for Labour, discussed a number of approaches to the problem (see I&S No 22/75). In an effort to allay the fears of young people and the doubts of employers the Commission proposed that the number of openings for young people in the public sector (for instance in teaching, the police and fire services, public transport, communications, etc.) be increased substantially. The Commission is also considering the introduction of a "youth employment premium" payable to employers engaging workers below a certain age; employers have been known to claim that business suffers if young inexperienced workers are recruited. Also raised at the meeting was the idea of a volunteer service which would enable young people out of work to make themselves useful in the social services or in organizations active in the environmental field.

** REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH SIDES OF INDUSTRY in the Community have had their first joint meeting with Mr Wilhelm Haferkamp, Vice-President of the European Commission, to discuss the present economic situation and prospects for the future. They emphasized the need for a selective short-term economic policy, an approach which the Community's institutions have been advocating since last year. They also made a point of stressing that the coordination of national short-term economic policies at Community level could make a significant contribution to stabilization and urged that such coordination be intensified.

** The problem of MARINE POLLUTION from land-based sources has been tackled by an international convention - the Paris Convention - in which the European Community was involved, first as a negotiator then as a signatory. A solution to the specific problem of protecting the Mediterranean is now being sought and in the interests of consistency

the European Commission wishes to be associated with this work as it was with the drafting of the Paris Convention. If the Council agrees the Commission will produce a draft Protocol on marine pollution from land-based sources modelled on the provisions of the Paris Convention.

** According to information supplied by TEST-ACHATS, Belgium is the centre of a number of CONSUMER PROTECTION AND INFORMATION campaigns.

- . It has been a sad disappointment for the Belgian consumer to learn from surveys carried out by UFIDEC and TEST-ACHATS that bakers are abusing his trust. It seems that Belgian bakers are not content with regular increases in the price of bread; they add a further hidden increase by giving short weight. The surveys carried out by the two consumer organizations covered hundreds of bakers throughout the country and show that short weight is the rule, full weight the exception. The variety of breads available, each with its own minimum legal weight (some with a maximum price), makes it easier to mislead the consumer.

These findings have shocked the authorities and the government now intends to standardize weights. A joint baker-consumer committee has given its views on the matter to the Minister of Economic Affairs who will take the final decision. Bakers and consumers agree on the need for standardization and feel that every effort must be made to eliminate the confusion arising from the same loaf being known by a variety of names.

- . As in many other European countries, Belgian consumers must accept contracts of sale containing "general terms and conditions" which are loaded in favour of the seller. These contracts and the associated guarantees are in fact much less favourable to consumer interests than the Civil Code which is applicable in the event of a dispute. Indeed very few contracts specify the minimum protection to which the consumer is entitled; car insurance, industrial injury insurance and building contracts are among the rare exceptions. This is why TEST-ACHATS has introduced a "fair deal" contract covering the purchase of durables.

Terms and conditions of sale, such as final price, delivery, product description, procedure in the event of dispute, are all clearly defined. Liability in the event of flaw or hidden defect devolves to a much greater extent on the seller and provision is made for consumer compensation. TEST-ACHATS is urging consumers to present this "fair deal" contract to the seller and has undertaken to publish the list of firms who accept it.

** POLLUTION OF THE RHINE is one of the subjects to be discussed at the June session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg. The Parliamentary Committee on Public Health and the Environment recently suggested that the Community should help to finance the installation of purification plants at the points on the Rhine where pollution is most serious.

- **The results of a BUSINESS SURVEY carried out in the European Community at the end of March show that managements consider that the economic situation is unlikely to deteriorate further. The number of industrialists expecting increased activity in the coming months has risen in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Ireland. Orders in hand are still on the low side however. Managements in all member countries expect selling prices to increase much more slowly. The decline in industrial production was less pronounced during the quarter. With investors displaying caution and stocks of finished goods high, firmer consumer spending had only a limited effect on production. The traditional decline in unemployment as a result of seasonal factors was less pronounced this spring than in previous years. The number of wholly unemployed is still rising; short-time working is also more widespread. The Community's trade deficit continues to narrow, but this would seem due to a reduction in imports rather than an increase in exports. Moreover, contrary to the usual pattern, intra-Community trade has grown more slowly than trade with non-member countries.
- ** As early as 1963 the Community adopted a standard list of authorized PRESERVATIVES which can be used in FOOD, provided they comply with certain criteria of purity. The European Commission has now produced criteria of purity for a further series of products and submitted them to the Council for approval. The preservatives are calcium sulphite, methyl p-hydroxybenzoate, calcium bisulphite, thiabendazole, formic acid and its sodium and calcium salts and hexamethylenetetramine. The Commission is also proposing that the use of three other preservatives - the sodium derivative of methyl p-hydroxybenzoate, potassium nitrite and potassium propionate - be authorized. All three have the distinction of being specifically mentioned in the Treaty of Accession under which Ireland, Denmark and the United Kingdom became members of the European Community. As a transitional measure the new Member States were allowed to continue using these preservatives until the end of 1977. Now, following consultation with the Scientific Committee for Food, the Commission is proposing that their use be authorized throughout the Community. The economic advantages are obvious.
- ** The European Commission has contacted those concerned with a view to organizing MEETINGS at European level BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND TRADE UNIONS in the car, chemical, textile, building and glass industries.
- ** The European Commission is examining the feasibility of setting up a Community bank to finance EUROPEAN EXPORTS. The bank, if set up, would finance transactions involving several exporters, and would make it possible to harmonize at Community level the rates of outgoings for certain large-scale transactions. A report is to be submitted to the Commission during the summer on the practical aspects of such a venture.

** A medical symposium on CHRONIC RESPIRATORY DISEASES is to be held in Luxembourg on 2 and 3 July 1975. During the two-day symposium, organized by the Directorate-General for Social Affairs, the following problems will be discussed:

- basic research into pneumoconioses;
- physiopathology and the standardization of the pulmonary function;
- epidemiological investigation of chronic bronchitis;
- prophylaxis and the relevant therapy;
- rehabilitation of the victims of respiratory diseases;
- industrial medicine as seen by employers and workers;
- training of ancillary medical staff;
- pre-employment medical examination for assessing fitness for specific risk industries;
- improvement of working conditions;
- effects and prevention of noise.

Information on this symposium can be obtained from the European Commission, DG V, Centre Louvigny, Avenue Monterey, Luxembourg.

** We would draw your attention to the following items of interest published in the OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (from 12 April 1975 to 24 May 1975):

1. Industrial affairs

Forward programme for steel 1975 (OJ No C 98, 30 April 1975);

Council Decision of 14 April 1975 establishing a programme of technological research in the textile sector (OJ No L 111, 30 April 1975);

Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a number of draft projects on data processing (OJ No C 99, 2 May 1975);

List of opinions given on investment programmes (Article 54 of the ECSC Treaty) (OJ No C 112, 21 May 1975);

Commission Decision of 16 May 1975 on the obligation of undertakings in the steel industry to supply certain information concerning steel production (OJ No L 130, 21 May 1975).

2. Social Affairs

Replacement of a member of the Advisory Council on Vocational Training (Council meeting of 18 March 1975) (OJ No C 83, 15 April 1975);

Decision No 98 of 4 February 1975 of the Administrative Commission of the European Communities on Social Security for Migrant Workers (OJ No C 88, 19 April 1975);

Proposal for a Council Regulation relating to the standardization of the system of paying family benefits to workers the members of whose families reside in a Member State other than the country of employment (presented to the Council by the Commission on 10 April 1975) (OJ No C 96, 29 April 1975);

Proposal for a Council Decision concerning a programme of pilot schemes and studies to combat poverty (presented by the Commission to the Council on 18 April 1975) (OJ No C 101, 3 May 1975).

3. Approximation of legislation

Proposal for a Council Directive relating to side lights, rear lights and stop lights for motor vehicles and their trailers (presented by the Commission to the Council on 31 December 1974) (OJ No C 82, 14 April 1975);

Proposal for a Council Directive relating to the rear-registration-plate illuminating device of motor vehicles and their trailers (presented by the Commission to the Council on 31 December 1974) (OJ No C 82, 14 April 1975);

Proposals for Council Directives:

(1) relating to safety belts and restraint systems of motor vehicles;

(2) relating to head-restraints of seats of motor vehicles

(presented by the Commission to the Council on 31 December 1974) (OJ No C 82, 14 April 1975);

Proposals for Council Directives:

(1) relating to constructional plant and equipment;

(2) relating to the measurement of the sound level of constructional plant and equipment;

(3) relating to the permissible sound level for pneumatic concrete-breakers and jackhammers

(presented by the Commission to the Council on 31 December 1974) (OJ No C 82, 14 April 1975).

4. Environment

Proposal for a Council Decision concluding the European Convention for the protection of international watercourses against pollution (presented by the Commission to the Council on 11 December 1974) (OJ No C 99, 2 May 1975);

Proposal for a Council Directive on the reduction of water pollution caused by wood pulp mills in the Member States (presented by the Commission to the Council on 20 January 1975) (OJ No C 99, 2 May 1975).

5. Consumers

Commission Decision of 26 March 1975 on the sale of butter to certain classes of consumer receiving social assistance (OJ No L 98, 19 April 1975).

EUROPEAN PRODUCT TESTING

Nowadays consumer organizations in nearly all Community countries carry out comparative tests on products and services available on the market. With more time, skill and resources at their disposal than the individual customer, consumer laboratories and research institutes can subject products to intensive tests and compare their merits, qualities and defects.

It is becoming more and more common for Community shoppers to find identical items of the same make in their local stores. The big manufacturers of consumer goods can be found everywhere in Europe where they have their own factories or, failing this, their own sales organizations. Skis, cars, television sets and cameras of nearly every make are on sale throughout the Community which meant in the past that the same product was tested by three or four national consumer organizations. The obvious solution seemed to be to pool the know-how and resources of consumer laboratories and this is in fact what has happened.

The Consumers Association (United Kingdom), the Consumentenbond (Netherlands), the Verbruikers Unie (Belgium) and the Stiftung Warentest (Germany) have been cooperating closely for some years now. Representatives of these organizations meet several times a year to draw up a joint test programme to avoid duplication while attempting to solve the problems raised by consumers in each of the countries represented. Representatives from other European consumer organizations, from Scandinavia in particular, are invited to attend.

Joint testing of this kind obviously has its own problems and limitations. It can happen that all the products to be tested are not universally available in all participating countries. In such cases each organization must send its national brands to the central testing institute to make the market survey complete. This has the advantage of widening the range of products tested, but the inevitable disadvantage of extending the time required for testing.

The definition of testing criteria and procedures causes problems too, because legal specifications (safety regulations for example) are far from being harmonized throughout the Community. Despite this, testing institutes have managed to agree on uniform testing standards for a number of product groups.

The advantages of joint testing far outweigh the disadvantages: cooperation on this front not only cuts down on testing costs but - and this is even more important - promotes worthwhile exchanges of information.

The Secretariat of the International Organization of Consumers Unions (9 Emmastraat, The Hague, Netherlands) has just produced a set of "Guidelines for Joint Testing" in

collaboration with the various national organizations. They contain rules for all possible forms of cooperation, and all members of the international consumer body may make use of them.

Since 1973 cooperation has been extended to the testing of services, especially travel and tourism. Joint teams of inspectors from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany investigate holiday resorts used by package tour operators. They might, for instance, check the cleanliness of beaches in the Balearic Islands or hotels in the Canary Islands and then compare notes.

In an answer to a Written Question tabled by a Member of the European Parliament, the Commission paid an indirect tribute to the standard of the work being done by consumer laboratories. The Commission felt that, because so much progress had been made in the field of Community testing, there was no immediate need for it to set up its own European Testing Institute.

PARLIAMENT AND THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Regular supplies and relatively stable prices are seen by Mr Scott-Hopkins, a British Conservative member of the European Parliament, as the two big advantages of the common agricultural policy. His report on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture will be discussed at length by the Parliament during the session to be held in Strasbourg from 16 to 20 June.

Mr Scott-Hopkins considers that the basic principles of the policy are sound. He is not however completely wholehearted in his support and puts forward numerous suggestions as to how it could be improved. On farm incomes policy, for example, he would agree that it encourages modernization but submits that it should not be applied arbitrarily; a system of selective and sliding subsidies could and should be applied to solve the structural problem. Existing incomes policy could be supplemented to good effect by considerably higher subsidies from the Guidance Section of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), the European Social Fund or the European Regional Development Fund as the case may be. The Parliamentary Committee agrees with the Commission that producers must be helped to react more promptly to changing market situations and that a special effort must be made to prevent the formation of surpluses. This could only be achieved by concerted action and Mr Scott-Hopkins goes so far as to wonder whether it would not be possible for the Commission to promote regional specialization.

On wine, currently a bone of contention between French and Italian growers, he suggests that the emphasis should be placed on quality rather than quantity. Parliament will be urging the Council to act without delay on the Commission's proposal to control vine planting and subsidies.

On fruit and vegetables the problem is two-fold: it is related to politics, because the Community's Mediterranean policy must be reconciled with the interests of European growers, and to health, because there must be stricter control of pesticide residues on Community and non-Community produce alike.

On milk products, Mr Scott-Hopkins stresses the close link between meat and milk production; the danger of surpluses or shortages in either area could not be viewed in isolation. He feels that the Commission should consider the merits of slaughter premiums, end-of-year "fines" or disincentives which would vary monthly with the market situation.

The Parliamentary Committee, like the Commission, fears that the common agricultural market may degenerate into a group of national markets. Member States had proved reluctant, to say the least, to cooperate with the Commission's efforts to produce an inventory of national aids, notably aids for fruit and vegetables. The Committee is concerned that public funds should be wisely spent and advocates the creation of a sort of agricultural audit office which would ensure that Community funds were not misused.

NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS IN THE COMMUNITY

Nuclear power stations in operation or under construction in Community countries, and their net capacity (in megawatts), are listed below:

	CAPACITY (MW)		Date of start-up
	Operational	Under construction	
<u>BELGIUM</u>			
BR 3 (Mol)	10		1966
SEMO 1 (Tihange-Meuse)	870		1975
DOEL 1 (Scheldt)	390		1974
DOEL 2 (Scheldt)		390	
Total	1 270	390	
<u>GERMANY</u>			
VAK (RWE/BW) Kahl	15		1961
KRB I (RWE/BW) Danube	237		1966
KWL I (VEW) Lingen	174		1968
KWW (Preag) Würgassen, Weser	640		1972
KKB (HEW/MWK) Brünsbüttel		770	
KKP I (Baden W/EVS) Philippsburg		864	
KKP II (Baden W/EVS) Philippsburg		864	
KKI (Bayern W/Isar Amper W) Omu Isar		870	
KKK (HEW/NWK) Krümmel, Elbe		1 260	
KWO (Obrigheim)	328		1968
KKS (Stadersand/Elbe) NWK + HEW	630		1972
Biblis am Rhein - A (RWE)	1 146		1974
Biblis am Rhein - B (RWE)		1 178	
KKU Unterweser (Preag/NWK)		1 230	
GKN 1 Neckarwestheim (Neckar)		775	
Mulheim-Kärlich/Rhein (RWE)		1 154	
KWS (BW+EVS) Wyhl/Oberrhein		1 290	
Grafenrheinfeld (Bayern + Preag)		1 225	
MZFR (Karlsruhe)	51		1966
KWV Würgassen (Preag)	640		closed down in 1974
AVR (Jülich)	13		1967
HKG (Schmehausen)		300	
KNK (Karlsruhe)	19		1972
SNR 300 Kalkar Niederrhein		282	
Total	3 253	12 062	

	CAPACITY (MW)		Date of start-up
	Operational	Under construction	
<u>FRANCE</u>			
G2 Marcoule (CEA) Rhône	40		1959
G3 Marcoule (CEA) Rhône	40		1960
Chinon 1 (EDF) Loire	70		closed down in 1973
Chinon 2 (EDF) Loire*	200		1965
Chinon 3 (EDF) Loire	480		1966
St-Laurent 1 (EDF) Loire	480		1969
St-Laurent 2 (EDF) Loire	515		1971
Bugey 1 (EDF) Rhône	540		1972
SENA (Chooz)	270		1967
Fessenheim 1 (EDF) Rhine		890	
Fessenheim 2 (EDF) Rhine		890	
Bugey 2 (EDF) Rhône		925	
Bugey 3 (EDF) Rhône		925	
Bugey 4 (EDF) Rhône		900	
Bugey 5 (EDF) Rhône		900	
EL 4 (Mont d'Arrée) CEA	70		1967
Phenix (Marcoule) Rhône	233		1973
Total	2 868	5 430	
<u>ITALY</u>			
Latina (ENEL)	200		1963
Garigliano (ENEL)	150		1964
Caorso (ENEL)		783	
Trino Vercellese (ENEL)	247		1964
Total	597	783	
<u>NETHERLANDS</u>			
GKW (Dodewaard)	52		1968
KCB Borssele "1" (PZEW)	450		1973
Total	502		

*Closed down in April 1973.

	CAPACITY (MW)		Date of start-up
	Operational	Under construction	
<u>UNITED KINGDOM</u>			
Calder Hall (BNFL)	180		1956-59
Chapelcross (BNFL)	180		1959-60
Berkeley (CEGB)	275		1962
Bradwell (CEGB)	300		1962
Hunterston A (SSEB)	320		1964
Hinkley Point (CEGB)	500		1965
Trawsfynydd (CEGB)	500		1965
Dungeness A (CEGB)	550		1965
Sizewell A (CEGB)	580		1966
Oldbury A (CEGB)	600		1967
Wylfa (CEGB)	1 180		1971
Windscale (UKAEA)	34		1963
Hinkley Point B (CEGB)		1 250	
Hunterston B (SSEB)		1 250	
Dungeness B (CEGB)		1 200	
Hartlepool (CEGB)		1 250	
Heysham (CEGB)		1 250	
Winfrith (UKAEA)	100		1967
FBR Dounreay (UKAEA)	14		1962
PFR Dounreay (NSHB)	250		1974
Total	5 563	6 200	
COMMUNITY TOTAL	14 053	24 865	