

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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## INTRODUCTION

I

Strengthening the links between the Economic and Social Committee and the Council and the European Parliament was very much a live issue during the period covered by this Bulletin.

The April plenary session was attended by Mr CALIFICE, the Belgian Minister for Labour, deputizing for the President of the Council, Mr O'LEARY, who was prevented from coming to Brussels. Mr CALIFICE's statement on the current situation in the Community and the ensuing discussion consolidated the precedent in relations between the two Institutions set last year by the visit of the French Minister for Labour, Mr DURAFOUR. The Economic and Social Committee hopes that this practice, the usefulness of which need no longer be stated, will continue in the future. It is also worth mentioning that the Committee decided to admit journalists to the observers' gallery, so that the debate could be covered by the press.

Relations with the European Parliament have been progressively strengthened following an exchange of letters with Presidents BERKHOUWER and SPENALE and it was agreed to invite committees of the European Parliament to hear Rapporteurs of the Economic and Social Committee when they so wish. The first topic chosen under this scheme was the Stocktaking of the Common Agricultural Policy and Mr BOUREL, the Rapporteur responsible, spoke on the matter on 18 April. In principle, other such hearings should follow in the future.

Neither were the Economic and Social Committee's external relations neglected during the period under review. There was the official visit of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen to France, the joint meeting of the Committee Bureau and the Bureau of the French Economic and Social Council, and the Chairman's fact-finding visit to the Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung in Nuremberg. Further details can be found later on in this Bulletin.



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129th PLENARY SESSION

The 129th plenary session of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities was held in Brussels on 23 and 24 April 1975. The Chairman of the Committee, Mr Henri CANONGE, presided.

1. Statement by Mr CALIFICE, President of the Council

The Belgian Minister of Labour, Mr CALIFICE, replacing Mr O'LEARY, who had been unable to come to Brussels, spoke on the Council's behalf. Among other things he expressed his pleasure in adding his part to the tradition of a dialogue between the Council and the Economic and Social Committee which Mr DURAFOUR had initiated at the plenary session of July 1974.

Since the summer of 1974, Mr CALIFICE said, the Community has been under great tension. Various factors are responsible. The worst has been the grave increase in unemployment, which has reached levels unprecedented in the history of the Community. The downturn in employment in the Community has been general and widespread. The number of unemployed has risen by about a million in the last twelve months. The number of hours of work have also fallen. Given the partly structural nature of unemployment and the lags in reaction on the labour market to reflationary developments, the economic policy of the Member States of the Community is faced with considerable difficulties. Reaching an agreement on an appropriate solution to employment problems is the biggest single challenge facing the Community.

The inflationary spiral which has been particularly serious in certain Member States, and which continues to be the preoccupation of all. If I mention the rise in the price of energy as a major factor, it is to emphasize that in the increasingly complex and interdependent system in which we live today, there are many elements which lead to inflation with the result that inflation itself, and indeed the various measures we are taking to combat it, have repercussions on all aspects of economic and social activity. All our Governments recognize that to try to beat inflation independently is not the best way of setting about the problem. Neither is it wise to tackle the economic and social sectors in isolation : employment, prices, the terms of trade, agricultural, financial and social policy are linked in the greater whole and must be seen in the wider perspective.

It is to be feared that the depression in the world economic situation will continue for some months yet and that in the most optimistic analysis the tide will not turn until towards the end of the year.

At this point I would like to make a general remark which may temper the rather gloomy picture I have drawn. During the relatively long period when the European economy was moving ahead, when each year we were able to note a regular increase in growth and prosperity, we often heard comments to the effect that it is relatively easy to build up a European economic union whilst the economy is prospering, but what would happen to the Community in a time of crisis? Well, our Governments have not faltered in their European policy, quite the contrary.



It is against this background that the conclusions of the Conference of Heads of State or of Government in Paris in December 1974 and of the first European Council in Dublin in March of this year should be seen.

It is important to note that the attitude of our Governments, as expressed at these two meetings, reflects not only the wish to avoid any measures which could harm this European construction, but also a positive willingness to move towards the convergence of our economic policies. The need to ensure "expansion in stability", the need to avoid restrictive practices in trade - these are important principles accepted by our Governments.

I should like to dwell more particularly on two elements of the Paris Communiqué. The first is the question of regional policy. The measures agreed upon on 18 March 1975 are of particular importance in the present economic situation, and will help to encourage economic expansion whilst aiming at curbing inflation and seeking, where necessary, equilibrium in Member States' balances of payments.

A point which should be mentioned in particular concerns social policy and in particular problems of employment.

The Heads of State or of Government in Paris, gave particular prominence to the role which your Committee can play in associating the "social partners" in the definition of the economic and social goals of the Community.

In December 1974, we arranged a Conference on the perspectives for European social policy which enabled us to take up the dialogue with the representatives of the employers and the trade unions. The Conference noted the dramatic increase in unemployment and echoed the anxieties evoked by this increase. Urgent measures were called for which would maintain employment in parallel with efforts to combat inflation and re-establish balance in the economy. Subsequently, the Standing Committee on Employment has been able to take stock of the measures taken in the Member States to deal with the present crisis and to evaluate their effects; the Committee has also considered measures which could be taken at the Community level to deal with the employment crisis. In this context, a study in depth has been made of the role which the Social Fund could fulfil.

A minimum reaction of the Community to the recent employment crisis could well consist in a substantial increase in the number of programmes financed by the European Social Fund, and in giving it greater resources.

Labour problems must be seen, however, in relation to all the other aspects of economic and social activity. There is no doubt that in order to combat the present employment crisis, and its various structural and recessional causes, we must take full account of the interdependence of economic, social, fiscal and monetary policies in order to achieve a coordinated strategy and mobilize all available resources.

The Council Presidency - aware that the present employment situation, with more than 4 million out of work and 1.7 million on part time, is the most important problem to be tackled by the Community - is firmly attached to the proposal to hold,

as soon as possible, a joint meeting of the Ministers responsible for economic and financial affairs and the Ministers of Labour, in order to measure the impact of the various policies on the employment situation in the present conditions.

Mr CALIFICE then turned to the problems in the energy sector. In this field, the Council has adopted four important resolutions. The first of these formulates a number of basic choices which will have to be made within the framework of the new strategy for the Community's medium-term energy policy.

Two others set out the Community's energy policy objectives for 1985 and the establishment of a Community programme of action for the rational utilization of energy. And the final resolution defines the action to be taken to achieve the Community's energy policy objectives for 1985.

Inflation has also had its effect on the agricultural sector. From the summer of 1974 onwards, the exceptional increase in the costs of production has created an impossible situation for the farmers. Thus, the Council raised the agricultural prices which had already been fixed for the 1974/1975 market year, making an exception to the rule laying down that the prices should be fixed for a whole market year. Naturally, the Council took account of this increase when fixing prices for the 1975/1976 campaign. A balance was finally found between the fear of a new inflationary cost-push and the need to protect the farmers who saw their income put in jeopardy and the gap between them and the workers in other economic sectors increasing.

Naturally, the problems of the agricultural sector have not stood still. In October 1974, the Council invited the Commission to take stock of the common agricultural policy and to submit a report together with any conclusions deemed necessary. The Council is currently studying this report and; in this connection, has also appreciated the initiative taken by the Economic and Social Committee in reviewing the common agricultural policy separately. The Committee has, in fact, produced a lucid and thoughtful document.

Before closing, Mr CALIFICE stressed the importance of the agreement which had recently been reached in Lomé. As well as certain countries of the Caribbean and the Pacific, a very large number of independent African countries had signed one and the same agreement with Europe. The Treaty of Lomé goes a good deal farther than previous association agreements. It represents a whole range of integrated means of cooperation with the Community, which enables the income from traditional exports of the ACP countries to be stabilized. The Community will help financially in cases of bad harvests or a reduction in prices. Quite apart from the financial aid (amounting to 3 milliard 400 million units of account), the Community, having recognized the needs of the contracting parties, has given a new form to international solidarity.

In conclusion, Mr CALIFICE stated that he was convinced that the progressive and effective work performed by the Economic and Social Committee in the past would continue in the future and that the Committee would enhance its role as an important consultative body in the Community's economic and social spheres.

## 2. Adoption of Opinions

### a) Social Action Programme

Rapporteur : Mr CARROLL - Ireland - Workers

The programme of pilot schemes and studies to combat poverty concerns the most underprivileged regions of the Community. In January 1974, in the Resolution on the Social Action Programme, the Ministers for Social Affairs asked the Commission to cooperate with the Member States and the appropriate private organizations in drawing up a number of schemes to study and combat poverty in the European Community. The proposed programme contains nineteen pilot schemes, most of which are to study the causes and the extent of poverty. A limited number of them concern practical assistance. The pilot schemes relate to groups of people living below a certain standard. The groups concerned are to participate in implementing the schemes. In short, they must set an example for the Member States, and prompt them to take similar steps or to develop action taken under the Community programme against poverty. Each scheme or project is 50% financed from the Community budget.

The Committee has adopted unanimously, with 5 abstentions, its Opinion on the

Programme of Pilot Schemes and Studies to combat Poverty, drawn up in accordance with the Resolution of the Council of 21 January 1974 concerning a Social Action Programme.

The Committee approves the proposals for the Programme of Pilot Schemes and Studies to combat Poverty and stresses and endorses wholeheartedly the priority status which was accorded to this action against poverty. The Committee wishes to stress in particular the following points : the causes of poverty are manifold. It is accepted that a major element is the existence of inequality which arises to a real degree from the structures of society and of the economy. The Committee feels that particular attention should appropriately be devoted to the situation of marginal groups within society; these include the very old, those afflicted by long-term illness, individuals and their families impoverished because of the effects of addiction to drugs or alcohol, of gambling and of criminal behaviour, and those who are unable to adjust or cope with the stresses of modern, industrial society. The Committee wishes to stress that the eventual elimination of poverty will involve long-term structural reform, including a wider access to knowledge, changes in the distribution of resources and in the relative influence of different groups in society. The programme of pilot schemes and studies should have a real and fundamental action orientation. Policies directed towards the poor and towards areas of deprivation cannot be effective in isolation. It should be recognized that, in considering poverty, social and economic issues are closely intertwined. Attention should be directed to the rationalization of the activities of various government departments and Community institutions.

Furthermore, the Committee feels that individuals should be seen as something more than productive or potentially productive units with the economic system. The Committee calls for a

commitment by the Council to review the progress of the Programme during 1976, with a view to making adequate financial and other provisions for the continuance of schemes and studies which are determined to be effective and worthwhile. Special attention should be given to projects which relate to the long-term relief of poverty, rather than to the maintenance of income.

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In a short statement Dr HILLERY, Vice-President of the Commission, stressed that there is a growing public awareness that a real advance has been made where the possibility of Community solidarity in the social field is concerned. Much of this new awareness is due to the fact that a number of the actions being taken under the Social Action Programme have a stimulus effect out of proportion to the resources backing them.

Already the proposed Programme of Pilot Schemes and Studies to combat Poverty today has had an effect of this kind. The programme is, of course, one of the priority actions of the Social Action Programme. Its acceptance as a priority, a choice which the Economic and Social Committee supported when considering the proposed action programme, was important in itself.

That was an indication of concrete awareness of the brute fact that many people in our Community do live in poverty, despite the widespread improvement in living standards and the extension of social security coverage.

We know the Community's poor are probably numbered in millions, said Dr HILLERY. We all know something of the conditions in which they live, often in the middle of our largest and richest cities. Yet, of how this can be, and how poverty might be alleviated or prevented on a practical long-term basis, we know very little. Well-planned and executed research of the kind envisaged in our programme should teach us a great deal which can be turned to the real benefit of our underprivileged fellow citizens.

It is important, however, to mention that the Commission has now approved (16 April) a draft decision for submission to the Council which is in identical terms to the Communication before the Economic and Social Committee.

Dr HILLERY concluded : "We should have no illusions. This programme cannot abolish poverty and offers no aid to those in need now. It should give us a clearer understanding of the problem of poverty and help us to pioneer new techniques for tackling it. I hope that when we have the understanding and knowledge to act effectively, we may be able to find the resources to do so".

b) Policy on data processing

Rapporteur : Mr de FERRANTI - United Kingdom - Employers

The Committee has unanimously, with 6 abstentions, adopted its Opinion on the

Communication of the Commission to the Council concerning a Community policy on data processing.



The need for urgency in establishing a European policy in the field of data processing was underlined in the Committee's Opinion which demanded action "before it is too late to grasp the opportunities which the changing shape of the industry is opening up".

The Committee urges a European policy promoting a competitive European industry while avoiding harmful effects on employment opportunities and the general public and respecting individual privacy. It views this development in the light of the current situation in the computer industry; e.g. the effective limits on competition, the progress made in providing for compatibility, the limited steps taken to unbundle software (thus enabling a variety of companies to provide computer services equipment), the growing importance of data communication based systems and the various actions in the United States against the one dominant manufacturer.

The Committee approves the Commission's Communication on the subject but stresses that the European policy on data processing should contribute to the economic and social development of the Community. This can be achieved, the Opinion states, by strengthening the international competitiveness of the European data-processing industry and by protecting the best interest of users, particularly in providing a wide and more effective choice.

The Community should encourage and, where necessary, support manufacturers in their efforts to achieve minimum viable size. Action, however, should not be confined to this but companies in the other data-processing fields should also be promoted

so that they can play their full part in competing internationally. These include communications and other specialized system suppliers, terminal, peripheral and mini-computer manufacturers, the semi-conductor industry and various service companies such as bureau and systems, software and consultancy houses.

The Community should ensure that all suppliers follow new marketing practices, based on unbundling, which support the above strategy and open the computer market to a wide range of companies. Promotion of these practices can be effected by studying which of them can and should be followed or discouraged, discussing these with a wide range of interested parties and publishing the conclusions and recommendations. Encouragement and enforcement, where necessary and sensible, should be effected via agreed and preferred standards (e.g. for interfaces and programming languages), by adopting other EEC measures such as those devised under Article 100 to remove technical barriers to trade (for instance unbundling) and under Article 86 to avoid dominant positions and by well-conceived Government procurement policies in order to work towards free access to public purchasing within the Community.

c) European Monetary Cooperation Fund

Rapporteur : Mr CALMANN - Germany - Employers

This proposal may be seen, in part at least, as an attempt to re-launch Economic and Monetary Union. In 1972, the Community exchange rate system was established. In 1973, the European Monetary Co-operation Fund was inaugurated. Since then,

however, considerable changes have occurred in the monetary relationships between one country and another. Lack of close co-ordination of monetary policy is seen as a major stumbling block to integration into other fields.

The Commission's Proposal for a Regulation seeks to extend the powers of the Fund vis-à-vis those assigned to it by the Council Regulation of 3 April 1973, so that the Fund may :

- better co-ordinate internal monetary and credit policy;
- better co-ordinate external monetary policy, particularly capital movements and exchange rates;
- better co-ordinate policies in respect of international capital markets.

The Fund, which heretofore has been run by the BIS in Basle, as agent will, under the Proposal, have a separate administration and Director General. The Fund has been a body with virtually no powers or activity other than that of compatibilization of movements of currencies between countries remaining within the 'Snake'. The Commission believes that the Fund, duly strengthened, would be a more effective body. It would also be in a position to submit Opinions to the Commission.

The Committee, adopted by 58 votes in favour, 25 against and 25 abstentions, its Opinion on the abovementioned subject.

However desirable closer monetary cooperation in the Community may be, it will hardly be reached by merely shifting at this stage the competence for this field from other Community institutions to the European Monetary Cooperation Fund, as the Commission proposes. This was the view expressed by the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities in its Opinion which pointed to the hopelessness of trying to fill a vacuum on monetary policies with technical substitutes.

It stressed that the main requirement of the moment was not an extension of the Community's instruments, but common objectives in economic and monetary policies. "To harmonize only the instruments", said the Opinion, "would be failing in the urgent task of so aligning central bank and government policies as to make it possible also to establish a common internal and external monetary policy, a common capital market and a common policy on the Euro-dollar market".

Progress towards these objectives, which the Committee had always strongly supported, was still way behind schedule since the Member States had so far failed to show the political will for limiting their sovereignty, and since the persisting lack of stability of the international monetary system had made more difficult the cooperation of monetary policies in the Community.

d) Rights and advantages

Rapporteur : Mr MUHR - Germany - Workers

Concentrations of undertakings in the Community, which have rapidly increased in recent years, can take the form of mergers, takeovers or transfers of individual establishments.

In view of this development, an adequate legal framework must be created at Community level. A number of legal instruments have already been prepared in the competition and company law fields.

Experience has shown, however, that changes brought about in the structure of undertakings as a result of concentrations often have far-reaching effects on the social situation of the workers employed by the undertakings concerned and that the legislation of the Member States applicable to such operations does not always take sufficient account of workers' interests.

Therefore when the Council adopted the Social Action Programme on 21 January 1974, it put on record its political will to take the measures necessary to protect employees affected by amalgamations, concentrations or rationalization measures.

This is the purpose of the proposed directive, which by introducing safeguards and guarantees for employees, seeks to ensure that they do not forfeit essential rights and advantages acquired prior to a change of employer.

This aim is to be achieved by :

- automatic transfer of the employment relationship from the transferor to the transferee, i.e. from the old to the new employer;
- protection of employees against dismissal due exclusively to a change in the structure of undertakings;
- the provision of information, and consultation and negotiation with the employees' representatives concerning the interests of the employees concerned.

.../...

The Committee adopted its Opinion by 62 votes to 27, with 14 abstentions on the

Proposal for a Directive of the Council on the harmonization of the legislation of Member States on the retention of the rights and advantages of employees in the case of mergers, takeovers and amalgamations.

The proposed Directive, which forms part of the Social Action Programme adopted in January 1974, is designed to protect workers through the introduction of safeguards and guarantees against the loss of basic rights and advantages acquired prior to a merger or takeover.

The Committee was unable to agree on whether there should be joint and several liability of the transferor (former employer and transferee new employer) in respect of claims dating from before the merger or takeover : some members were in favour of prescribing joint and several liability in respect of all entitlements granted to workers by a transferor before a takeover, as is already the case in the civil law of at least one Member State; the majority, however, accepted the Commission's standpoint and thus preferred to see the matter of joint and several liability dealt with by a separate legal instrument. But even the latter regarded the matter as urgent.

On the continued validity of collective agreements, the Committee proposed that rights and obligations stemming from plant or company agreements entered into by the transferor should be automatically transferred to the transferee and should continue in force until a new collective agreement was concluded.

Where the transferor was bound by a trade association's collective bargaining agreement and no new collective agreement was concluded within a year after the merger or takeover, the trade association collective agreement, if any, to which the transferee was bound should apply.

The Committee recommended as a general measure detailed prior discussions with workers' representatives even in the case of dismissals for pressing business reasons. The workers' representatives should be supplied with all the documents they needed in order to have the fullest possible information about the projected operations; they should also be permitted to call in one or more experts of their choice to assist them.

On the question of the proposed arbitration boards for disputes between workers and employers following mergers and takeovers, the Committee was in favour of the parties being allowed to choose between use of the proposed arbitration procedure and procedures provided for in municipal law or according with national practice; the arbitration award should only be binding if the parties had agreed in advance that they would accept it.

Finally, the Committee said that the proposal should be amended to preclude acquisition of double claims to social benefits (pension schemes, etc.).

e) Education programme

Rapporteur : Mr SLOMAN - United Kingdom - Various  
Interests

The Economic and Social Committee, exercising its right of initiative, unanimously adopted, less 3 abstentions, its Opinion on Education in the European Community with particular reference to the proposals contained in the Commission document entitled "Education in the European Community".

The Committee wishes to stress that education is central to the full and healthy development of the Community. The present Opinion is limited to those areas referred to by the Commission in its communication to the Council of 11 March 1974, and the so-called priority spheres of action identified by the Ministers of Education on 6 June 1974.

The Committee emphasizes in its Opinion the following areas : education of migrants and their families, mobility in education, the learning of foreign languages, mutual recognition of qualifications and periods of study, cooperation between educational systems and between institutions, documentation and statistics of education and European institutions.

The Committee believes that a Community programme in education is indispensable. The economic and social policies of the Community will be effective only if they are accompanied by the appropriate educational policies. Education must be society-wide and the Committee is deeply concerned that educational opportunity continues to be so persistently unequal. Furthermore, the Committee stresses that the educational institutions at every level should increasingly include in their teaching a large European and international component.

The Committee attaches particular importance to the involvement of all interested parties - the teachers, the taught and representatives of the **society** at large - in the formulation of educational policies. In the case of migrants, special introductory courses should be held before they leave their own country. In the host country, day-release schemes are necessary to enable



them to combine with their work language instruction as well as vocational training. Children of migrants should be educated, as to have the option either to settle into the new environment of their parents or to return to their own country with appropriate recognition of the education they have received.

The Committee also calls attention to the value of mobility of students following courses in vocational training in countries other than their own and stresses the value of extending the programmes of exchanges of young workers as envisaged under Article 50 of the Treaty of Rome.

Furthermore, Community programmes in education should take account of the activity of other international organizations so that work is not duplicated.

Education can no longer be seen as a once-and-for-all affair during adolescence. It must be life-long. Since the educational systems of the Member States are so diverse, it would be impractical to impose a single system. "Yet, precisely because of this diversity it is imperative that there is cooperation and in some areas coordinated policies, so as to allow greater educational mobility between the Member States and a better linkage of the diverse educational systems".

f) Community cattle quotas

Rapporteur : Mr MAHER - Ireland - Various Interests

With the aim of satisfying the obligations which the Community subscribed to in its exchange of letters of 21 July 1972 with Austria, the draft Regulation lays down provisions for the opening, allocation and administration of Community quotas of products falling within subheading ex 01.02.A II b) 2 of the Common Customs Tariff.

The Committee adopted unanimously, with 2 abstentions, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Regulation (EEC) of the Council on the opening, allocation and administration of the Community tariff quota of 30,000 head of heifers and cows, not intended for slaughter, of certain mountain breeds, falling within subheading ex 01.02 A II b) 2 of the Common Customs Tariff,

and the

Proposal for a Regulation (EEC) of the Council on the opening, allocation and administration of the Community tariff quota of 5,000 head of bulls, cows and heifers, not intended for slaughter, of certain Alpine breeds, falling within subheading ex 01.02 A II b) 2 of the Common Customs Tariff.

As the situation on the beef and veal market on the whole has not improved from last year, the Committee still believes that opening the tariff quotas as proposed could threaten the already precarious balance of supply and demand on that market. The Committee therefore asks for the strict application of the Regulation as amended, to ensure that the cattle imported are used strictly for breeding purposes.

g) EURATOM loans

Rapporteur : Mr O'CEALLAIGH - Ireland - Employers

The Commission points out that electricity producers are faced with a major problem in financing nuclear development due to its capital intensive nature, the current tightness of financial markets and the fact that artificially low electricity tariffs limit the scope for self-financing.

.../...

Accordingly, it is proposed to raise loans of an annual volume of up to 500 m u.a., under the terms of Article 172 of the EURATOM Treaty, which could be re-lent to electricity producers under conditions which concur with normal banking practice and which fully cover the cost of servicing the borrowed funds, the precise terms being negotiated between the Commission and the electricity undertakings.

Financial intervention by the Commission is not intended to replace the traditional source of finance in the energy investment sector, but to mobilize capital to which electricity utilities would not normally have access. Such intervention, therefore, would not normally exceed 30% of the other funds borrowed by the undertaking.

By 75 votes in favour, 14 against and 9 abstentions, the Committee approved its Opinion on the

Draft Council Decision empowering the Commission to issue EURATOM loans with a view to a Community contribution towards the financing of nuclear power stations.

The Committee, without discussing the general principle of a rapid transition to nuclear energy, takes a broadly favourable view of the Commission's present proposal. It recognizes that the Community can, by raising loans for re-lending to utilities, play an important role in developing the nuclear capacity required to meet the Community's energy targets.

However, the Committee feels that the proposed annual funding of 500 million u.a. must be open to subsequent review, as experience dictates, because this figure falls well short of the size of programme the Community must undertake if it is to make a significant contribution to the financing of the target installed nuclear capacity of 160 GWe to 200 GWe which the Council of Ministers has already adopted for 1985.

Community financing should, with the same priority, be extended to nuclear fuel cycle installations, taking into account their particular problems in providing acceptable bankers' security and their dependence on longer-term financing. In the case of these installations, as well as for power stations, it should be possible to waive the limitation of loans to 30% of the total amount which is envisaged by the Commission as a rule of thumb.

The Community, when seeking guarantees for loans granted, should be guided, on the one hand, by a set of purely financial criteria and, on the other hand, by criteria designed to evaluate measures dealing with public health and the protection of the environment.

Finally, in order to safeguard its effectiveness, the procedure used for the commitment of funds should ensure continuity over time.

#### h) Protection of international watercourses

Rapporteur : Mr SCHLITT - Germany - Various Interests

In the light of negotiations held with the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe regarding the Community's accession to the European Convention for the protection of international

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watercourses against pollution and in the light of jointly agreed amendments to the draft Convention, the Commission proposes that the Convention should be concluded by the Council on behalf of the Community.

The Community will be represented on the bodies provided for under this Convention by the Commission, which will have to take into account any instructions it might receive from the Council.

The Committee adopted unanimously, less one abstention, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Decision concluding the European Convention for the Protection of international watercourses against pollution.

The Committee endorses the Commission's proposal under which the Community is to participate in the Strasbourg Convention together with the Member States. Although it recommends accession to this Convention, the Section believes that the Decision on accession should not come into force until this Convention has been harmonized with the Decision regarding the discharge of certain dangerous substances into the Community's aquatic environment.

i) Atmospheric pollution

Rapporteur : Mr EBOLI - Italy - Various Interests

Following action which it has already taken on other aspects of atmospheric pollution, including the lead content of petrol and the sulphur content of gas-oil, the Commission proposes that a system be set up for exchanging information on atmospheric pollution caused by sulphur compounds and suspended particulates.

The Commission proposes to use the data in question to monitor the trends in pollution caused by sulphur compounds and suspended particulates subsequent to the adoption of anti-pollution measures at EEC and Member State level.

.../...

The Economic and Social Committee adopted unanimously, less one abstention, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a common procedure for the reciprocal exchange of information between the surveillance and monitoring networks based on data relating to atmospheric pollution by sulphur compounds and suspended particulates.

While expressing its approval of the draft Decision, the Committee feels that the Commission should step up its efforts with a view to achieving data intercomparison programmes. Completely comparable data are vital if the proposed directive is to make an effective contribution to controlling atmospheric pollution caused by sulphur compounds and suspended particulates.

j) Second-category pollutants

Rapporteur : Mrs STROBEL - Germany - Various Interests

As part of its environmental action programme, the Commission is submitting a new list of second-category pollutants. This list has been drawn up on the basis of a study carried out by the Commission, the results of which have been discussed by a group of specialists in toxicology, ecology and environmental hygiene.

The Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion on the

Draft Council Resolution concerning a revised list of second-category pollutants to be studied as part of the Programme of Action on the Environment.

.../...

The Committee approved the Commission's proposed revised list of second-category pollutants. The Committee would, however, particularly stress the importance of toxic effects on human beings, and of prolonged exposure to small doses, which will have to be assessed over a very long period of time. The Committee also believes that some priority should be given to the subsequent determination of existing levels of pollution caused by the substances listed. It stresses that the Commission's proposal is of particular importance to public health within the Community, but it also realizes that the study of these pollutants and groups of pollutants will require a considerable amount of time.

k) Pollution caused by wood pulp mills

Rapporteur : Mr BOUREL - France - Employers

This proposal, which forms part of the Community environment action programme, is a necessary sequel to the draft Decision on reducing pollution of the aquatic environment, on which the Economic and Social Committee is currently preparing an Opinion.

Studies made by the Commission show that the pulp industry is of prime importance in the campaign against water pollution, since the manufacturing processes used are a potential source of very severe pollution.

There are disparities between the various actual laws governing discharges from pulp mills into the aquatic environment.

Unless these laws are harmonized, administrative measures by the Member States could mean that financial burdens on the pulp industry would vary from one Member State to another, giving rise to distortions of competition.

The Commission therefore proposes that minimum discharge standards be adopted at Community level. Such standards would vary according to the manufacturing process used and according to the ability of the relevant water course to assimilate discharges. In order to take account of economic, social and local constraints, the Commission advocates special aids for certain existing plant and recommends that the proposed standards be applied with a degree of flexibility.

The Economic and Social Committee adopted, by a large majority, with four Members voting against and five abstentions, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the reduction of water pollution caused by wood pulp mills in the Member States.

The Committee endorses the objective of the proposal which reflects its repeatedly expressed concern that the Community's aquatic environment should be protected. Nevertheless, the burdens imposed on Community undertakings should not be so heavy that they would be forced to close down.



The Committee has also stressed the serious air and soil pollution caused by the pulp industry. It has requested the Commission to pursue its research in this area and to submit, in the near future, concrete proposals based on the findings.

Dealing with derogations from the standards laid down in the Directive, in cases where these would create economic and social problems in the pulp industry, the Section points out that very few derogations should be granted and that other means including public aids must be employed to solve such problems.

In this connection the Section suggests that a single Community fund should be set up, as the Committee had recommended, to provide Community administration of these aids.

Realizing that the Directive must keep pace with technical progress the Section states that the relevant socio-economic groups must be involved in this work and the Commission must hold prior consultation with them within the appropriate bodies and in an appropriate manner.

1) Alcoholometers

Rapporteur : Mr CLARK - United Kingdom - Employers

This Directive comes within the ambit of the abolition of technical barriers to trade. The aim is to harmonize the provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action,

concerning the definition of the proportion of alcohol in mixtures of water and alcohol and the design and procedures for the approval and testing of alcoholometers and hydrometers for alcohol which are used to measure these proportions.

When it has been adopted and implemented the Directive will serve to eliminate any disagreements arising in trade in alcohol, wines, spirits and so forth, as regards the determination of the proportion of alcohol.

The Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the harmonization of the laws of the Member States concerning alcoholometers and hydrometers for alcohol and alcohol tables.

In its Opinion the Committee expresses its approval of the Commission's proposal.

m) Registration-plate

Rapporteur : Mr MARVIER - France - Various Interests

The proposal merely stipulates design and test specifications for rear-registration plate illuminating devices for motor vehicles, as the relevant installation specifications are included in another proposal concerning lighting and light-signalling devices which the Commission has already presented to the Council.

In order to facilitate trade, the proposal takes into account existing international standards, including those of the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

The Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the rear-registration-plate illuminating device of motor vehicles and their trailers.

In its Opinion the Committee expresses its approval of the Commission's proposal.

n) Towing hooks on motor vehicles

Rapporteur : Mr MARVIER - France - Various Interests

The proposed directive lays down that vehicles have to be fitted with a device suitable for the attachment of a towing bar or cable. The absence of such a device at the front of a vehicle delays and complicates the towing, and impairs safety since an improvised fitting can damage certain internal components.

The proposal also states that vehicles in category M<sub>1</sub> must be fitted with a rear towing device, unless the vehicle concerned is not authorized to tow any load.

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted unanimously its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to towing hooks on motor vehicles.

The Opinion approves the Commission's proposal.

o) Headlights for motor vehicles

Rapporteur : Mr MARVIER - France - Various Interests

The proposed directive lays down the design and test specifications for main-beam and dipped-beam headlights and their lamps. The installation specifications for such headlights are covered by a proposed Directive on the installation of lighting and light-signalling devices which has already been submitted by the Commission to the Council.

In order to facilitate trade, it takes into account current international standards, including those of the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

The Committee unanimously adopted its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to headlights for motor vehicles emitting an asymmetrical passing beam or a driving beam or both, and to incandescent electric lamps for such headlights.

In its Opinion the Committee expresses its approval of the Commission.

p) Side-lights, rear lights and stop lights

Rapporteur : Mr MASPRONE - Italy - Employers

The proposed Directive extends the scope of the Community type-approval procedure provided for in Council Directive No. 70/156/EEC of 6 February 1970.

.../...

It lays down the design and testing specifications for side lights, rear lights and stop lights. The installation specifications for these devices are set out in another proposal, which has already been presented to the Council by the Commission, on the installation of lighting and light-signalling devices.

In order to facilitate trade, the proposal takes account of existing international prescriptions, particularly those of the United Nations\* Economic Commission for Europe.

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted unanimously its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to side lights, rear lights and stop lights for motor vehicles and their trailers.

In its Opinion, the Committee approves the proposal. The Committee trusts, however, that the Commission will look into the problem of the lateral visibility of motor vehicles and, if need be, submit appropriate draft directives at the earliest possible opportunity.

q) Veterinary Committee

Rapporteur : Mr WICK - Germany - Employers

All veterinary directives contain paragraphs instituting a decision-making procedure involving the Standing Veterinary Committee.

It is proposed, in the first place, that from now on certain procedures of the Veterinary Committee be made permanent. Up to now such procedures have only had limited validity. Secondly, in order to avoid a situation in which no decision could be taken, it is proposed that the possibility of the Council rejecting by a simple majority the measures put forward by the Commission be eliminated.

The Committee has adopted by a large majority, with 3 votes against and 4 abstentions, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive Nos. 64/432/EEC, 64/433/EEC, 71/118/EEC, 72/461/EEC and 72/462/EEC as regards the procedures of the Standing Veterinary Committee

and the

Proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision No. 73/88/EEC as regards the procedures of the Standing Veterinary Committee.

The Committee approves without reservation the amendments proposed, which seek to make permanent certain procedures of the Standing Veterinary Committee.

The Committee stresses the need to provide for consultation of itself and of the socio-economic interest groups directly involved with respect to decisions to be taken in the veterinary sector.

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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

1. Joint meeting - Bureau of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities/Bureau of the French Economic and Social Council

On 18 March the Bureau of the Economic and Social Committee held a joint meeting in Paris with the Bureau of the French Economic and Social Council. This meeting had been arranged on the initiative of Mr G. VENTEJOL, President of the French Economic and Social Council.

The Bureaux considered various points of joint interest - inflation and unemployment in the Community, European regional policy, CAP and the Lomé Convention. There was a fruitful comparison of the views put forward by the representatives of European and national trade union organizations, employers' organizations, and organizations representing other interests.

At a lunch offered by Mr VENTEJOL, the Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, Mr Henri CANONGE, said that the meeting had been very valuable and trusted that the links which had been established would constitute the basis for closer collaboration between the two institutions.

2. The Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities meets the French Government

"If it is to win hearts and minds, Europe must be built for man", declared Mr H. CANONGE, President of the Economic and Social Committee.

Mr Henri CANONGE, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, made an official visit to France on 17, 18 and 19 March. Mr CANONGE was accompanied by Mr Louis AMEYE (Belgium) and Mr John CARROLL (Ireland), Vice-Chairmen, and by Mr Delfo DELFINI, Secretary-General. He met Mr Jean SAUVAGNARGUES, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Christian BONNET, Minister for Agriculture, Mr Michel DURAFOUR, Minister of Labour, and Mr J.F. DENIAU, State Secretary for Agriculture. He also had talks with Mr Edgar FAURE, President of the National Assembly, and Mr Alain POHER, President of the Senate.

During the discussions, Mr CANONGE stressed the pre-occupations of the Committee with regard to European unification. The Community still exerted a pull, as witness the Lomé Convention between the ACP States and the Community. But unification could not make progress without popular support. "If it is to win hearts and minds, Europe must be built for man".

The Committee therefore intended to use its right to take up matters on its own initiative - to further the construction of a Community which has the backing of the two sides of industry and the public at large.

The Committee welcomed the fact that at Strasbourg the Commission's President had put forward an action programme commensurate with the problems of society, and dealing especially with measures to combat unemployment and inflation. (The urgent steps to be taken with regard to unemployment and inflation figured prominently in the discussions held on 18 March between the Bureau of the Committee and its French counterpart, the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council).



Following the fruitful meetings with Mr TINDEMANS, Belgian Prime Minister, on the subject of what the Committee could do to help him discharge the task given him by the Heads of State or Government at the recent Paris Summit, the Committee had decided to make known its views on the form which European union should take.

The Committee trusted that the community of interests which had ensured the highest growth rate ever achieved in Europe would be replaced by a community of men and women based on solidarity. The Committee would bend all its efforts to that end.

Mr CANONGE also said that the Lomé Convention marked a new stage in relations between the peoples of the Third World and the advanced countries. The Committee was prepared to evaluate the agricultural and industrial implications of the Convention, and to consider the agricultural and industrial adjustments which would be needed in the Community and in the developing countries. Mr CANONGE expressed some anxiety about the changes which were liable to create difficulties for certain sectors, agricultural products and regions in the Community, unless they were planned and monitored. For that reason, the Committee intended to arrange contacts and meetings with the trade unions and employers' organizations of the ACP States where necessary.

### 3. New relations between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee

A new dimension has been given to working relations between the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee. On 18 April Parliament's Agricultural Committee was addressed by Mr François BOUREL, the member of the Economic and Social Committee who had drafted its Progress report on the Common Agricultural Policy of November last. The Agricultural Committee was examining the Commission's Stocktaking of the Common Agricultural Policy.

Mr Henri CANONGE, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, was also present on this occasion, which marked a new form of cooperation between the Committee and Parliament. Afterwards, Mr CANONGE said that the Committee was at the disposal of Parliament should it wish its members to be informed on any matter whatsoever through hearings of members of the Economic and Social Committee by the Committees of the Parliament.

4. Chairman's visit to the Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsvermittlung in Nuremburg

On 20 March, the Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee, Mr H. CANONGE, accompanied by the Director-General, Mr R. LOUET, had talks with Mr STINGL, President of the German Federal Labour Office. Among the topics discussed were a better coordination of the activities of national labour services and a possible contribution by the Economic and Social Committee towards achieving such coordination.

5. Mr DELFINI at the Congress of European Municipalities in Vienna

The European Municipalities held their Congress in Vienna from 3 to 5 April. Among those attending was Mr DELFINI, Secretary-General of the Economic and Social Committee.

6. Setting-up of a European Secretariat of the Liberal Professions

On 18 April, representatives of the "Liaison Committees" of the various liberal, learned and social professions held a meeting at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Committee in Brussels. The meeting was attended by Sir John PEEL, Mr Y. CHABROL and Mr H. REES, members of the Economic and Social Committee, Mr A.A. BATH, Mr D.J. DEVINE, Mr K.H. MASSOTH and Mr P. LORIOT from the Commission and Mrs R. SCOTT from the Council.

The opening of the meeting was attended by Mr H. CANONGE, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee.

The representatives compared the outcome of the endeavours and took note of the - sometimes disappointing - development of the problems facing their professions as a result of the implementation of the Treaty of Rome. The recent introduction of freedom of movement for doctors was given special attention from the point of view of similar decisions being taken for other professions.

In addition, they stated their intention of preparing demographic surveys of members of the professions from the point of view of their mobility within the European Community.

Finally, the representatives set up a European Secretariat of the Liberal, Learned and Social Professions (ESLLSP).

NEW CONSULTATIONS

During the course of March and April, the Council asked the Committee to deliver an Opinion (optional) on a

1. Commission memorandum to the Council on equality of treatment between men and women workers (access to employment, to vocational training, to promotion, and as regards working conditions).
2. Progress report on the Common Agricultural Policy

This document has been prepared in accordance with a Council Decision of 2 October 1974. As the matter is so important, the Council would like to know the Committee's views as soon as possible.

On 28 November 1974, the Committee adopted a study on this matter.

3. Commission work programme for the simplification of customs procedures, customs legislation and institutional methods for dealing with customs matters.
4. Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a common procedure for the preparation and constant updating of a European inventory of sources of information on the environment.
5. Communication from the Commission to the Council containing initial proposals for priority projects in data processing, drawn up in accordance with paragraph 1 a) of the Council Resolution of 15 July 1974 on a Community data processing policy.

6. The President of the Commission asked the Committee to deliver an Opinion on the

Development of the Social Situation in the Community in 1974.

7. In a letter dated 18 April, the Chairman of the Section for Agriculture, recalling previous work of the Section and the Committee, drew the Bureau's attention to the concern recently expressed by the various social and occupational categories in the Community in respect of the Community's proposed Mediterranean Policy. These groupings take the view that the Community's Mediterranean Policy cannot be seen in isolation from the major principles underlying the Common Agricultural Policy without serious risk to certain branches of industry or to certain Member States.

Consequently, The Chairman of the Section requested authorization to prepare a study on :

The current prospects for Mediterranean agricultural production in the Community.

The Committee granted this authorization at its April session.

PROVISIONAL FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

130th plenary session - May 1975

- Veterinary Committee
- Common transport policy
- Radioactive waste
- Research and development programme (energy)
- Nuclear safety
- **New energy policy strategy**
- Restructuring of the economies
- Credit institutions
- Roll-over protection structures (tractors)
- Safety belts
- Head restraints
- Type-approval of motor cycles
- Medical equipment
- Constructional plant and equipment
- Gas appliances
- Situation of women
- Equality of treatment (men and women workers)
- Social Action Programme
- Bathing water
- PCB's
- Ceramic articles
- Pesticides

131st plenary session - June 1975

- Stocktaking of the CAP
- Telecommunications (Study)
- Simplification programme (customs administration)
- Social situation
- Fresco (developing countries)
- Inventory of sources of information (environment)
- European Union

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MEMBERS' NEWS

1. Resignations

Mr H.L. JANSEN, former Secretary of the Economic and Social Advisory Committee of the Benelux Economic Union, resigned his membership of the Economic and Social Committee. He had been a member since 1964.

Mr Giorgio GARINO, Director-Delegate of the Italian concern Magneti Marelli, resigned his membership of the Economic and Social Committee on 6 March 1975.

2. Appointment

On 14 April, the Council of the European Communities appointed Mr C.A. BOS, Lecturer in the Free University of Amsterdam, a member of the Economic and Social Committee, to replace Mr JANSEN.

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