

# BULLETIN

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I

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

The highlight of the period covered by this Bulletin was the first ever visit by the President of a Member State. His Excellency Cearbhall O'DALAIGH, President of Ireland, paid a visit to the Economic and Social Committee on 17 June 1975. Mr O'DALAIGH was accompanied by Dr. Garret FITZGERALD, President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers, Mr Brendan DILLON, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Communities, and several senior Irish Government officials.

He was received by Mr H. CANONGE, Committee Chairman and then attended a ceremonial meeting of the Bureau held to mark the occasion at Committee headquarters. The ceremony was also attended by the members of the Committee's Bureau, the Chairmen of the nine Sections, the Chairmen of the three Groups (Employers, Workers and Various Interests), and the Irish members of the Committee. The meeting was followed by a reception in the President's honour.

In his welcoming address, Mr CANONGE stressed the important role which Mr O'DALAIGH had played in the process of European construction. He expressed the concern, even the anxiety, of the economic and social groupings with regard to certain retrogressive trends exhibited occasionally by the Governments of the Member States. Noting that the Committee had transcended purely technical consultation in order to acquire a wider insight into Community problems, Mr CANONGE welcomed the confident and consistent links which had been established between the Committee and the Community Institutions, at the instigation of the Irish presidency of the Council. Finally, he outlined the future tasks of European Union, which included in particular the granting of real political power to the European Parliament and the consolidation of the role and working methods of the Economic and Social Committee. These were fundamental to genuine economic and social democracy.

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Having thanked the Chairman of the Committee for the warm welcome he had received, Mr O'DALAIGH made the following speech :

The Economic and Social Committee is a unique body within the Communities in that its membership is specifically designed to represent directly the social partners. Because of this, its special consultative role in the EEC has a particular importance in helping to shape and influence Community legislation and action in such a way that it fully reflects the needs and aspirations of the citizens of our Community. This special role of the Committee is recognized by the various institutions when framing and implementing Community legislations, and nowhere is this more so than in that most essential area of social policy.

Any large-scale organization runs the risk of being open to the charge of "facelessness" and the EEC, by virtue both of its structure and the complexity of its procedure, has been open to this charge, whether justified or not. The Community itself has, of course, been increasingly aware of the need to counteract this impression : the dry bones of bureaucracy have to be flushed out with a "human face".

EEC social policy is commonly referred to as the "human face" of the Community, and it is true that social policy has a unique potential for securing the involvement of our citizens in Community work. Social policy, however, is not just a public relations exercise for the Community. It operates in an effective and tangible way so that it becomes a daily reality to all the citizens of the Member States, in particular to the disadvantaged groups within the Community : the poor, the handicapped, the unemployed, those suffering from social discrimination of any kind. With the aid and advice of the Economic and Social Committee, the Community

strives to eliminate inequalities in opportunity and disparities in living and working conditions throughout the Member States.

Following the definition of social policy at the Paris Summit in 1972 and the clarification of its aims and means of implementation, your Committee was closely involved in the formation of a social action programme which was adopted by the Council in January 1974, and you have a vital role to play in the implementation of the programme. The provisions of this programme in turn are now being translated into the national law of Member States through the adoption at Council level of implementing regulations and directives.

The content of the social action programme is particularly inspiring. In the employment field, there are the documents on concentration of employment policies, an action programme for migrant workers and a draft directive for the achievement of equality between men and women workers. Progress has also been made in the area of improvement of living and working conditions and I note that last month the Council approved the regulations setting up the European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions. Needless to say we in Ireland are particularly happy that this Foundation is to be located in our country.

We look forward to early progress on the draft programme of pilot schemes to combat poverty designed to raise the standards of living of the weaker sections of our populations and to tackle the underlying causes of chronic poverty.

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As regards the third area of priority action - the increased involvement of management and labour in the economic and social decisions of the Community, the reconvening of the Standing Committee on Employment has been an important step. The Economic and Social Committee has a particularly important role to play and is itself a most important forum for ensuring the practical involvement of management and labour in Community decision-making.

Last February, the Council approved directives facilitating the right of establishment for doctors and I understand that these directives are expected to provide a model for right of establishment provisions that will apply to other professions. The problems of mutual recognition of qualifications has from the beginning been one of the chief obstacles to mobility and right of establishment within the community of professional workers and to ensuring that its citizens enjoy the highest standards of professional service.

On this question of mobility, I have no doubt from my own experience of the worthwhileness, in professional and personal terms, of time spent living and working in another Community country. Horizons are broadened and understanding deepened.

The changed economic situation may require a new set of responses, perhaps even a new set of questions and this will apply with special force to Community social problems. The Economic and Social Committee, whose members have varying backgrounds representing a wide spectrum of opinion is well placed to meet the challenge which this involves in the formulation of Community social policy.

## II

### 131st PLENARY SESSION

The Economic and Social Committee held its 131st Plenary Session in Brussels on 25 and 26 June 1975. Mr H. CANONGE, the Committee's Chairman, presided.

The highlight of the Session was a speech by Mr F.X. ORTOLI, President of the Commission.

a) Speech by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr H. CANONGE

Thanking Mr ORTOLI for coming to the Committee to talk about the current situation, Mr CANONGE said that the Community's present problems were taking on more and more of a world dimension and when people spoke about the new economic order, and a world distribution of labour, this indisputably meant an enlarged role for the Community.

We had to cope with a changed, if not completely new, world. The employment crisis, inflation, monetary instability, the energy crisis, were some aspects of this new situation; so was the passing of the colonial period since the last war, the emancipation of the peoples of Africa, for example, and the large-scale migrations of workers to satisfy the labour needs of the rich countries.

Twenty-five years ago, a few men, with a rather rare insight into Europe's future, had foreseen that the countries of Europe had a choice between entente and cooperation, and the threat of disaster. The Communities were born from such seemingly



banal ideas. For a number of years we had been carried along by our determination, and - sometimes blind - enthusiasm. But had not the great events of history often arisen out of such states of mind ? It was not always possible - fortunately - to foresee and to plan for all contingencies.

The European venture had suffered fierce attacks from within and from without, and if it had withstood the storm, it was no longer in exactly the same condition today as in the beginning. The Community had achieved, and was still achieving, it was true, a number of results, and the world outside looked upon it as an entity with which it was possible and necessary to talk and negotiate.

The Committee had attached real importance to the Lomé Convention, and it still regarded this pioneering achievement as a landmark and a road which we should follow, with method and judgement, granted, but also with conviction and hope. However, neither the Community nor the Lomé Convention would be what they should unless the steps were taken to make the Institutions into a thing of the people, expressing its views through the Parliaments, the organizations representing professional and other interests, and the economic and social bodies.

The Economic and Social Committee draws its existence from the Treaties, Mr CANONGE went on. It was the first body of its type. It is intended as proof of the determination which the Community must have to involve the various professional interests and the general public in its policy and its achievements.

Our Committee cannot, without abandoning its responsibility confine itself to the everyday business of submitting Opinions on questions of varying importance. The right to take up and express its views on issues on its own initiative allows the Committee to go further. It has already gone some way in this direction, and there certainly still remains much to be done. I believe, moreover, that we must attach great importance to building up relations with the Parliament, which will soon be elected by direct suffrage, and I have been able to put our views on this clearly to the President of the Parliament and to gain his support.

We consider ourselves an economic and social assembly. We intend to be the vehicle of economic and social democracy, which is absolutely essential to political democracy.

We hope that the Council, the supreme Community institution, will have the courage and the determination to enforce the decisions.

In conclusion, Mr CANONGE asked : "What is the European Community ? - an intergovernmental agreement, involving major developments, but tending above all to cooperation and coordination ? Or is it a genuine treaty uniting the nations and their governments, which are progressively pooling their destinies in common achievements executed through common institutions, and which are opening up to the new world in which we live, to take their place therein and act as a leaven of progress and peace ?".

b) Speech by the President of the Commission, Mr F.X. ORTOLI

Mr ORTOLI, President of the Commission, began his speech by contrasting the period of passion and faith which had overshadowed the birth of the Community - a period of war realism and thus inspired realism with the current realism which is of necessity much narrower in application. A vigorous reaction is nevertheless necessary for such realism is no less worthy and constructive, if we remember that it is based on the will to preserve Community progress to date, but also and above all, on a profound will for peaceful co-existence. Political will, about which there is so much talk, is always based on a fundamental conviction.

Mr ORTOLI welcomed the satisfactory outcome of the British referendum, and particularly the large vote in favour of continuing British membership, which was proof in itself that the United Kingdom was willing to play a full and constructive role in the future of Europe. He also welcomed the current discussion on Europe's future. European Union

would of course not be achieved simply by drafting reports but the fact that it had been agreed at all levels to embark on discussions was important in itself.

Referring to the Community's positive achievements, Mr ORTOLI stressed the success of its foreign policy, and referred specifically to the Lomé Convention. Today the Community presented a united front to the outside world and has abandoned a "wait and see" attitude in favour of genuine commitment. Unfortunately, this external success was offset by a malaise within the Community which is having difficulty in finding common solutions to the serious problems of inflation, economic recession and unemployment. This situation was all the more deplorable because interdependence is a fact and Europe is a necessity. The links which have been forged between the Member States call for the development of common action, in order that national and thus piecemeal solutions may be avoided.

This has been the Commission's concern since the beginning of the crisis. The key issues of the Community action are harmonization of the international monetary system, complementarity of economic policies, and concertation on problems of energy and raw materials supply.

Turning to internal questions, Mr ORTOLI recalled that initial proposals on the financing of common action in energy policy were currently under discussion in Luxembourg. In addition, for the last year, the Finance Ministers had been holding monthly meetings with a view to achieving a certain convergence of economic policies. Nothing had been institutionalized but progress was being achieved by pragmatic action.

In addition to anti-crisis measures, an effort has been made to hammer out a consistent employment policy and to extend the scale of Community action at regional and sectoral level (action to assist young people and migrant workers, in respect of which Europe's behaviour has symbolic importance).

The current criticism of these necessary measures is that the political will is weak. But the main weakness is that the Institutions are not functioning properly, that is to say in the manner originally intended. It is vital that Europe be given clearly defined and wider responsibilities as well as Institutions that really work. Otherwise it will not have the requisite means to fulfil the objectives which have just been defined. It must be recognized that one of the main obstacles, the traditional discussion among the majority, is gradually fading out. In addition, the Community institutions must be made more democratic by the introduction of direct elections, and the Community provided with a genuine legislature.

Such institutional progress would at last allow us to go beyond a mere customs union, and to achieve the requisite economic integration. First of all, however, the Community "snake" would have to be strengthened. Moreover, the European Monetary Cooperation Fund would have to be given larger resources so that it might one day become the European Central Bank. Cooperation among the Central Banks was, on its own, insufficient to harmonize monetary policies (liquidity, credit and interest rate policies). The new European unit of account would have to be used on a wider scale. This unit which is in current use in EDF transactions must some day become a settlement instrument between the Member States, the banks and, why not indeed, between private individuals.

Mr ORTOLI also stressed the importance of creating an institute for medium-term forecasting and analysis and the setting up of a European Export Bank to assist Community exporters.

Finally, Mr ORTOLI referred to the role which should be played by the Economic and Social Committee in the future. The importance of the Committee as a spokesman for occupational and social interests in the Community would increase, as part of the democratization of the European Institutions. He had undertaken to take account of the Committee's aspirations and had encouraged it to debate comprehensive dossiers on specific problems at three or four plenary sessions a year in the presence of the Commissioners responsible.

c) General discussion

During the debate which followed Mr ORTOLI's address, Mr ARENA (Italy - Employers) insisted upon the absolute necessity of re-establishing economic and social equilibrium in the Community. Emphasizing the serious problems which beset Italy, he declared that a gulf had opened up between the most-developed and the least-developed regions, the latter having received less aid per inhabitant than the former. The present policy seemed to be to penalize the poorest countries, and he noted a lack of solidarity for which all the Institutions were to blame.

Mr HENNIKER-HEATON (United Kingdom - Employers) referred to the result of the British referendum, which had re-affirmed the will of the British people, particularly the younger generation, not only to be Europeans but world citizens. He underlined the need for accelerating progress on the economic front and the will to arrive at full monetary union. In the social field progress had been slower. He believed that the Community would make more speedy and highly desirable progress in the social field if employers and workers, whether at sectoral, national or Community level, did not waste time on fruitless struggles with each other. Europe did not need to choose between the systems of the Eastern bloc or of the United States; it had to develop its own mixed economy system. In the final analysis, the Committee's role was not dependent on any powers given to it by the Community Institutions but on the credibility which it achieved by the quality of its work.

Mr DEBUNNE (Belgium - Chairman of the Workers' Group) said that Europe's external role was not to create a European nationalism and that it should engage in dialogue with its partners on an equal footing, and cooperate with them to achieve a better distribution of the world's riches. If Europe had to make sacrifices there would have to be internal re-distribution between rich and poor regions. Any democratic country wishing to join the Community should be able to do so.

The consumer society based on growth, as we knew it, was a thing of the past. We now had to ask ourselves what new growth and new society wanted. This society had to have better living conditions, a fairer distribution of wealth, no under-employment, a society where workers behaved as adults. They would find it difficult to accept a fall in purchasing power and higher unemployment. In fact, such developments would spark off strong reactions. At the moment, Europe was to some extent a businessman's Europe. It had to be transformed into a workers' Europe. We were seeking political democracy at the institutional level but this was not enough; economic, social and cultural democracy were also necessary.

On behalf of the Various Interests Group, Mr HENNIG (Germany) said that the Community was no longer so attractive to its members and that all the problems mentioned were affecting the categories which his Group represented. Consumers had to be better informed about the usefulness of the Community and he deplored the general lack of information on this matter. Small- and medium-sized firms and craftsmen wanted to be more involved in Community decisions, farmers were becoming increasingly concerned about rises in the cost prices of their products and about the liberalization of markets, especially as part of the Mediterranean policy.

Mr DE BIEVRE (Belgium - Employers) stressed the economic difficulties of maintaining overall purchasing power and the need for direct monetary power. Economic integration without political integration was just a game of chance.

Mr BOUREL (France - Employers) wondered how the Heads of State intended to turn the relationships between the Member States into a European Union. The Committee completely agreed with this in principle but there was a risk that the external success of the Community might lead to an upsurge of nationalism within the Community. A transfer of powers was essential. He had deplored the lack of information for the citizens of the Community. A qualitative leap had to be made : let Europe be an area of lucid will at the service of the world.

d) Adoption of Opinions

1. Development of the Social Situation

(Rapporteur : Mr NODDINGS - France - Various Interests)

As in previous years, the Committee has been instructed to deliver an Opinion on the Report on the Development of the Social Situation in the Community in 1974.

This report is annexed to the "Eighth General Report on the Activities of the European Communities" in accordance with Article 122 of the EEC Treaty. It gives a detailed analysis of the various aspects of the social situation in 1974 and outlines the Community's activities in the social sphere.

The Committee adopted by 58 votes to 29 with 6 abstentions its Opinion on

The Development of the Social Situation in the Community in 1974.

The Committee's Opinion deals with both the measures taken by the Community in the social field during 1974 and the general features marking the development of the social situation during the same year.

The Committee notes that, though significant achievements have been made, particularly under the Social Action Programme, the Community's social policy is still far from complete.

The deficiencies in this policy, particularly as regards an active employment policy, are that much more regrettable since 1974 was marked by a combination of an alarmingly high rate of both inflation and unemployment.

The Committee analyses the effects of this situation on employment policies, particularly as regards some of the more vulnerable categories of workers, on working conditions, on industrial relations and on the maintenance of the purchasing power of the incomes of all the peoples concerned.

During the debate, the workers' representatives, who in the main voted against the Opinion, stressed the need for a wide-ranging and fundamental debate on the consequences arising from the picture of the social situation in the Community in 1974; in the view of these members the Opinion does not sufficiently stress the shortcomings of Community action and the frequently negative trends at national level.

From the overall point of view, the adoption of this Opinion is a token of the Committee's wish to see the Community authorities play a more active and effective role in the drive against unemployment and inflation, on the one hand, and protecting the purchasing power of non-speculative incomes on the other.



## 2. Intervention by the Social Fund

(Rapporteur : Mr PASSINA - Italy - Workers)

At the Paris summit meeting on 10 December 1974, the Heads of State or Government called for vigorous and coordinated Community action to deal with the problem of employment, backed up if necessary, by greater use of the resources of the ESF. With this in view the Commission proposes that specific action be taken to improve the matching of labour supply and demand.

In order that mobility can be achieved under suitable conditions, the Commission considers that the operations to be granted assistance from the Social Fund must come under restructuring or development programmes capable of providing the labour force with productive employment or re-employment.

For this reason the Commission proposes that, pursuant to Article 4 of the Council Decision of 1 February 1971, assistance from the Social Fund should be granted to operations likely to facilitate the employment and the spatial and/or vocational mobility of persons seeking stable employment in economic activities whose development or structural reorganization require adequately skilled labour; (the restructuring of the energy sector, priority community needs, structural adjustment, diversification and reconversion of sectors, branches or production activities with structural problems seriously affecting employment).

The Commission requests that priority be given to operations which are carried out in regions most affected by employment problems, and are of benefit to persons employed in sectors or branches with structural problems seriously affecting employment; young people under 25 years and women who are unemployed or seeking employment.

The Committee adopted unanimously, but for 3 abstentions, its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Council Decision on intervention by the Social Fund to encourage structural adjustment measures.

The Economic and Social Committee considered that the Commission proposals were a laudable attempt to tackle a number of problems of importance for the economic and social future of the Community.

In view of what was at stake and the difficult choices to be made, the Commission should have proposed not a piecemeal decision of limited scope and short-term effect, but a comprehensive purposeful measure, based on a precise definition of the economic and social goals to be aimed at and capable of giving the European Social Fund the means of action and the reliability needed to make it the instrument of Community social policy par excellence.

As regards the scope of the new provisions, the Committee considered that in the present situation, priority must be given to migrants and to people under 25 who were unemployed or were seeking their first job.

The Committee also considered that the Fund must be provided with financial resources commensurate with the social implications of the restructuring of the economy, in particular in connection with earned income support and vigorous and efficient labour policy.

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### 3. Ceramic Articles

(Rapporteur : Mrs EVANS - United Kingdom - Various Interests)

As its first step in applying the outline Directive relating to Materials and Articles intended to come into Contact with Foodstuffs, the Commission is submitting a proposal for a Directive with the aim of harmonizing test methods and extraction limits for lead and cadmium in the following ceramic articles :

- tableware and kitchenware;
- plates specially designed for very young children;
- cooking ware;
- packaging and storage containers.

The proposal also regulates the conditions under which these articles may be offered for sale from the point of view of consumer information. Provision is made for markings enabling the consumer to identify easily the articles and their purposes.

National laws specifically dealing with this subject currently vary quite considerably, thus creating a barrier to trade within the Community and, above all, patently jeopardizing the protection of human health, which forms the specific objective of the proposal.

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

Proposal for a Council Directive on the Approximation of the Laws of the Member States relating to Ceramic Articles intended to come into Contact with Food  
(Limitation of Extractable Quantities of Lead and Cadmium)

Given the health hazards caused by the use of more than a certain quantity of lead and cadmium in the manufacture of ceramic articles, the Committee welcomed the fact that the Commission had selected this field for the initial application of the outline Directive on Materials and Articles intended to come into Contact with Food.

It had been at the request of the Committee that the Council had included this issue in the General Programme for the Elimination of Technical Barriers to Trade and instructed the Commission to study the question of harmonizing national laws as regards the limits for the migration of lead and cadmium into food-stuff and the methods of checking and analyzing ceramic articles.

The Committee approved the limit values proposed by the Commission, since the still imperfect knowledge of the health hazards which arose from the use of lead and cadmium should not be allowed to preclude a reduction of current limit values.

The Committee also approved the principle whereby every article would have to comply with the limit value for the category within which the article fell. The Committee recognized the merits of such a provision from the point of view of achieving a high level of consumer protection since, in order to comply with the stipulation of the Directive that no article was to exceed the limit value of  $1 \text{ mg/dm}^2$ , production would have to be geared to an average limit value of approximately  $0.5 \text{ mg/dm}^2$ . This requirement could be particularly onerous and consequently could have adverse effects on the production of ceramic articles, especially in the case of small- and medium-sized firms and craft workshops.

Restructuring of the abovementioned undertakings would be necessary. The Committee therefore felt that it would be appropriate within the framework of an appraisal of the sectoral policies, to make provision for aid to be granted to them, and for a transitional period during which they would be able to adapt their manufacturing processes to conform with the provisions of the Directive.

Finally, the Committee was aware that effective consumer protection in this field posed serious problems. It urged that a major campaign be mounted at all levels to familiarize consumers with the meaning and implications of the particulars which are to appear on ceramic articles.

#### 4. Pesticides

(Rapporteur : Miss ROBERTS - United Kingdom - Various Interests)

The proposed directive has been drawn up in pursuance of the General Directive of 1967 on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances. It lays down general specifications for the packaging of pesticides which are to be placed on the market and establishes criteria for classifying pesticides as "toxic" or "harmful" according to how dangerous they are.

The basic aim of the proposed directive is to harmonize laws concerning the information to be given to users on the risks connected with pesticides and the manner in which such information is to be presented (contents, dimensions and colours of labels).

By such harmonization, the Commission intends to ensure free movement of goods and effective protection for public health.

.../...

The Committee adopted unanimously its Opinion on a

Proposal for a Council Directive on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of pesticides.

The Economic and Social Committee approved the objectives pursued by the Commission in the proposed Directive since the latter was a definite step forward in the protection of life, public health and, in particular, the health of persons handling pesticides.

Noting that the Commission was at present preparing a proposal for a Directive on the type-approval, distribution and use of pesticides, the Committee stressed the urgency of this new directive, especially as it should have been the point of departure for a set of logical and sensible rules concerning pesticides.

With regard to the criteria for classifying pesticides, the Committee considered that a practical system of classification must take into account the various ways in which they were used and the possible exposure of people that might arise either during their use or as a result of their use.

The Commission should, therefore, invite experts to designate categories which will define methods of use and the appropriate safety precautions. When these categories have been agreed, each pesticide would be assigned to the appropriate category depending on the formulation and recommended manner of use.

The assignment of pesticides to these categories should be effected by toxicologists who could appraise the data on overall toxicity and assess the likely hazards arising from the proposed use.

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In the interests of consumer protection, the Committee also considered that a distinction must be made between the risks attaching to products intended for domestic use by the general public and the risks connected with products reserved for use by specialists. These two categories of products could be covered by different rules. In particular, it would be desirable to ban the domestic use of any preparations which were classified as "toxic".

Aware of the dangers of using pesticides in the home, the Committee also asked that provision be made for adequate precautions to protect any children into whose hands such products might fall.

#### 5. Roll-Over Protection Structures for Tractors

(Rapporteur : Mr PURPURA - Italy - Various Interests)

The proposal for a Directive is connected with the Community type-approval procedure for wheeled agricultural and forestry tractors, which was the subject of Council Directive No. 74/150/EEC of 4 March 1974.

The Proposal will make it obligatory under the EEC type-approval procedure for all wheeled agricultural and forestry tractors to be fitted with roll-over protection structures.

In particular, the Proposal contains detailed specifications for testing the strength of the roll-over protection structure and its attachment to the tractor. Other components and characteristics of the protection structure (dimensions, protection of passengers and so forth) are left undealt with for the present.

The Committee adopted, by a unanimous vote, its Opinion  
on the

Proposal for a Council Directive on the Approximation of  
the Laws of the Member States relating to the Type-  
Approval of Motorcycles.

The Committee approved the Commission's Proposal, but  
asked the Commission to look into the possibility of presenting  
proposals on three-wheeled vehicles which fall neither within the  
scope of the present Proposal nor within that of the Directive on  
the type-approval of motor vehicles.

#### 8. Oil Seeds

(Rapporteur : Mr SCHNIEDERS - Germany - Workers)

The Council has decided to increase the basic target and  
intervention prices for colza and rapeseed by 11% and for sun-  
flower seed by 12%, in respect of the 1975/1976 marketing year.  
Following these decisions, the Commission is now proposing derived  
intervention prices which are to be applicable in the main inter-  
vention centres for the same marketing year.

The Commission proposed that the present regional divisions  
be maintained and that the derived intervention prices be increased  
by 11% for colza and rapeseed, and 12% for sunflower seeds.

The Committee adopted unanimously its Opinion on the

Proposal for a Regulation (EEC) of the Council fixing  
the main intervention centres for oil seeds for the  
1975/1976 marketing year and the derived intervention  
prices applicable in these centres.

The Committee approved the Commission proposal but  
suggested that the intervention prices proposed in respect of  
Danish centres, which are derived from Hamburg prices, should be  
increased slightly in order to rule out any possibility of diver-  
sion of trade.

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9. Horticultural Production under Glass

(Rapporteur : Mr BUKMAN - The Netherlands - Various Interests)

Since producers of crops cultivated under glass are not in a position to pass on in their selling prices the increase in production costs following the rise in energy prices, the Commission proposes fixing a premium which would offset the cost of dismantling glasshouses so as to enable producers to cease horticultural production under glass.

The Committee adopted by a large majority, there being 6 votes against and 5 abstentions its Opinion on a

Proposal for a Regulation (EEC) of the Council laying down Measures for the Rationalization of Horticultural Production under Glass (Doc. COM(75) 185 final).

In the Committee's view it was urgently necessary to make it possible for glasshouse producers to adapt gradually to the changed fuel cost situation. This entailed, inter alia, degressive Community aids over several years.

The premium for the dismantlement of glasshouses should be above all a supplementary social measure for glasshouse producers wishing to give up part of their production or leave the industry entirely. This premium, which, in the view of the Committee, should be applied even to houses covered with rigid plastic, must have two components - one to cover dismantling costs and one to offset the loss of capital.

10. Implementation of AETR Agreement

(Rapporteur : Mr de VRIES REILINGH - The Netherlands - Workers)

The European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR), drawn up in Geneva on 1 July 1970, has been open for signature by Member States of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) since 31 March 1971.

.../...

Six countries not members of the EEC (Spain, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Greece and Yugoslavia) have now deposited instruments of ratification or of accession. The AETR could enter into force 180 days after the deposit of instruments of ratification by the Member States of the Community.

The Community has always been keen to see the AETR enter into force, as it regards it as a prerequisite for the establishment of uniform social provisions. The Commission would like the agreement to come into force, in all the Member States of the Community, on 1 January 1976.

Only seven Member States are currently ready to deposit their instruments of ratification within the specified time. Ireland and Italy find they would have difficulty in doing so.

In order to avoid the division of the Community into two zones with different legislation, as would be the case if two Member States did not ratify the agreement, the Commission proposes that the Council adopt a Regulation obliging all Member States to deposit their instruments of ratification before 15 June 1975. The AETR could then come into force 180 days later, that is on 1 January 1976.

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

Proposal for a Regulation of the Council on the action to be taken to bring into force the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR).

The aim of the Proposal was to introduce a regulation to oblige the Member States to ratify the AETR Agreement by 15 June 1975. This deadline has now expired and the Committee calls on the Council to set a more realistic date and to examine to what extent the AETR and Regulation No. 543/69, should the latter be amended, could be aligned.

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11. Telecommunications

(Rapporteur : Mr ROSEINGRAVE - Ireland - Various Interests)

The Committee adopted unanimously its Study on the

Application of Telecommunications Facilities and the  
Interrelationships between Transport and Telecommunications

In this Study the Committee stressed that Telecommunications had become, and would increasingly constitute, a vital part of our society and would play a crucial role as a catalyst and instigator of economic and social change. Telephones, which now offer 300 million individuals in Europe (OECD countries) a means of telecommunication, were a significant example.

One major advantage of telecommunications from the business and administration point of view, lay in the possibility of decentralization. Related to this advantage of telecommunications was the fact that good telecommunications facilities made it possible for business to be started and run successfully in areas distant from those other businesses and agencies with whom they had to interact. That meant that telecommunications facilities were an important part of the infrastructure which was a prerequisite for regional and cultural development.

There was a certain correlation between the extent of telecommunications facilities (especially telephones) and the per capita GDP of countries in many parts of the world. Moreover, as it could be seen in the Annex, it was an illuminating fact that the gap in this field between countries whose GDP exceeds the threshold of \$4,000 per capita (USA, Sweden, Switzerland, etc) and the EEC Member States was in the ratio of approximately 2 to 1, as regards the telephone and 4 to 1 as regards data terminals.

.../...

This could well be taken to indicate at least that good telecommunications facilities were important for economic development.

Present-day and future transport was no longer feasible without telecommunications facilities. The use of such facilities was forever on the increase and ensured that means of transport were safer, more rational and more competitive and more easily and more readily accessible to users.

The Committee considered that the Commission should start a detailed investigation into the possible applications for telecommunications in the transport field, including their possible employment consequences. The Commission should also make an examination of the question of the substitutability between transport and telecommunications in the Community.

In the Committee's view, it was undeniable that the message transmission systems now used in Europe were too expensive when compared with those in wealthier areas.

The disparities that existed between the various Member States as regards pricing prompted the Committee to urge that tariffs for frontier-crossing services be harmonized at once in order to remove the all-too-frequent barriers to freedom of movement in the disguised form of frontier charges.

The telecommunication area was one for which a common policy for the Community has still to be framed.

The Committee called upon the Commission to submit as soon as possible proposals on the implementation of such common telecommunications policy. The Committee wished to be consulted on all future Commission action in this field. For its part, the Committee was willing to provide the Commission with every possible assistance.

.../...

III

REFERENDUM IN GREAT BRITAIN

Mr Henri CANONGE, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, warmly welcomed the result of the British referendum.

In a statement released on 6 June 1975 he said : "I would like to express the deep satisfaction felt by all members of the Economic and Social Committee and by myself at the result of the referendum in the United Kingdom. The uncertainties which have stood in the way of the development of the Community must now have been swept away by the expression of will of the British people.

The Economic and Social Committee, which groups representatives of the employers, the workers and various interests of the nine Member States, has an important contribution to make in the Community's decision-making process. So far, the British Delegation to the Committee has remained incomplete, largely because of the absence of representatives of trade unions affiliated to the TUC. We hope that the referendum result will bring the trade union movement to reconsider its decision and that it will play its full part in helping to shape the European Community."



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| 6. Annual Report 1974<br>60 p.  | Free |
| 7. Annual Report 1973<br>64 p.  | Free |

IV

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

1. The Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee visits the International Labour Organization (ILO)

On 18 June, Mr Henri CANONGE, Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, accompanied by Mr DELFINI, Secretary-General, and Mr LOUET, Director-General, were received by Mr Francis BLANCHARD, Director-General of the ILO.

The talks focused on the relations which have been initiated between the two institutions and which both bodies wish to develop in order to improve the reciprocal provisions of information in their respective fields of responsibility.

The Economic and Social Committee Delegation also visited the International Labour Conference and had talks with representatives of many of the States with which the European Community is linked by association or cooperation arrangements.

Finally, the Economic and Social Committee Delegation met Mr TEVOEDJRE, Director of the International Institute for Labour Studies, a body which constitutes an important source of information for the Economic and Social Committee.

2. Study of the Committee discussed at the meeting of the UACEE (Union of Master Craftsmen of the EEC) in Rome

The Economic and Social Committee was represented by Mr KOLBENSCHLAG, a member of the Committee, at the meeting of government experts and craftsmen's representatives held in Rome on 5 and 6 June 1975 and organized by the Union of Master



Craftsmen of the EEC and the Italian Confederation of Craftsmen. The meeting was held at the time of the Rome Fair and was devoted to the study of various topics of interest to the crafts and small industry in the Community, including the Regional Development Fund, the use of data-processing in the management of craft enterprises, and the Committee's Study on the situation of small- and medium-sized undertakings in the Community.

Mr KOLBENSCHLAG, Rapporteur of the Committee on this last subject, made a statement in which he reviewed overall policy and listed the various incentives proposed by the Committee.

During discussions, due note was taken of two written questions emanating from German parliamentarians, namely :

- (i) the question addressed by Mr KRALL, Member of the European Parliament, to the Commission asking what proposals the latter would be putting forward to encourage competitiveness among small- and medium-sized undertakings in the Community. The Commission has not yet replied to this question;
- (ii) at the same time, Mr WURBS, Member of the Bundestag, asked the Federal Government what initiatives it was planning to take at European level to assist small- and medium-sized undertakings. In its reply on 15 May 1975, the Federal Government expressly welcomed the Study of the Committee and said that the proposals and suggestions it contained would be given careful consideration at future meetings between government experts and the Commission.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF FUTURE WORK

132nd Plenary Session - July 1975

- Simplification programme (customs administration)
- Gas appliances
- Equality of treatment (men and women workers)
- European Union
- Wine sector
- Stocktaking of the CAP
- Mediterranean agricultural products (Study)
- Generalized preferences

133rd Plenary Session - September 1975

- New energy policy strategy
- Quality of bathing water
- Migrant workers
- Common transport policy
- Situation of women
- Family benefits
- Lead
- Community work on employment

134th Plenary Session - October 1975

- Fresco (Developing countries)
- Regional policy (Study)
- Safety, hygiene and health protection

VI

PERSONAL NEWS

Mr van GREUNSVEN, Member of the Executive Board of the Netherlands Catholic Trade Union Federation (NKV), was elected Vice-Chairman of the Economic and Social Committee on 26 June 1975, to replace Mr CARROLL. He has been a member of the Committee since 3 February 1964 and a member of the Bureau of the Committee since 1972.

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