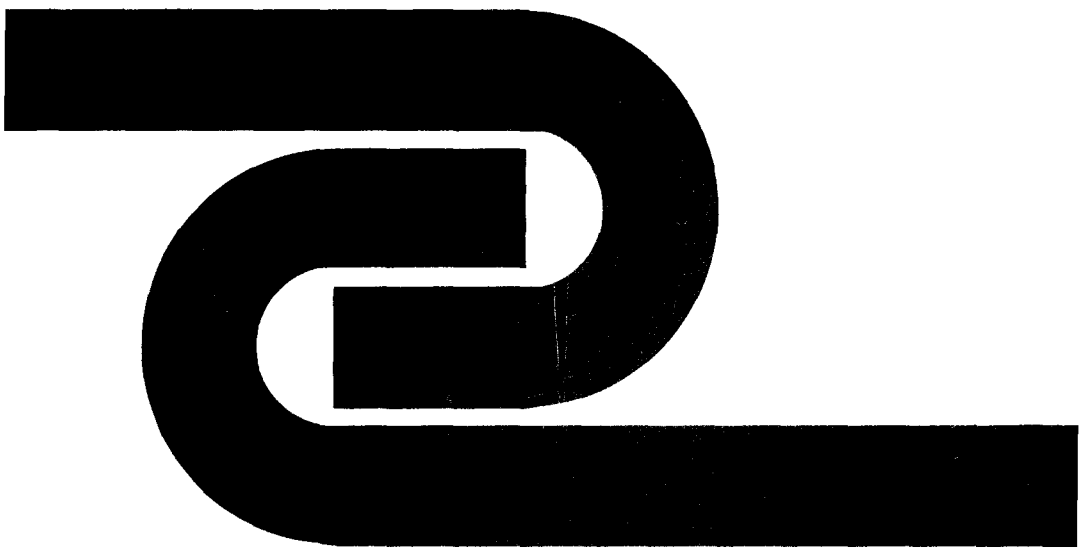


ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

# BULLETIN



Brussels - No. 11/1984

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## EUROPE AND THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

More than 650 people attended the Economic and Social Committee's conference on Europe and the New Technologies in Brussels on 6/7 November. Participants came from industry, the tertiary sector, agriculture, consumer groups, research interests and administration.

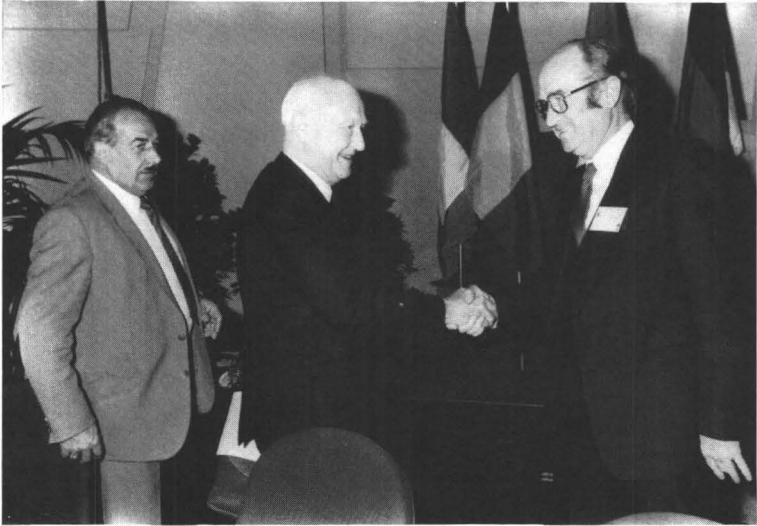
This was the first time that the new technologies have been discussed at European level by so many representatives of the industrial and technical sectors directly involved, notably both sides of industry. The conference achieved its aim of alerting the economic operators to the fact that the introduction of new technologies in all sectors was inevitable in Europe, and that there could be no turning back. The participants were adamant that the impact on work patterns and environmental protection should be urgently assessed.

The hesitancy of the Council of Ministers and the Member States on the need for rapid action was severely criticized, especially by the ESC Chairman, Mr Muhr. Mr Muhr drew attention to the absurdity of the 1984 Community budget allocation of less than 0.5% for industrial policy, information and innovation. The proposal to further reduce research funds for 1985 was even more ludicrous.

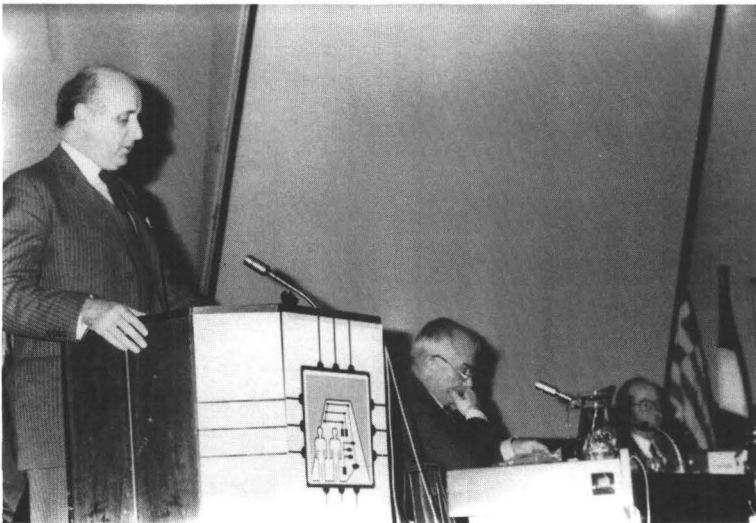
The social, economic and moral consequences of the new technologies, for traditional industry, information and biotechnology, were reviewed. Over the two days attention focussed on the need to evaluate the impact of the new technologies, to sketch out an adequate social policy and to urge the EEC to play a much more active role in implementing a coordinated European strategy.

The conference was opened by the new ESC Chairman, Mr Gerd Muhr. Speakers included Mr Etienne Davignon, Vice-President of the EC Commission, Prof. Rolf Rodenstock, former President of the German Federation of Industry, Mr Georges Debunne, President of the ETUC, Mr Umberto Colombo, President of the Committee for the European Development of Science and Technology and Lord Pennock, UNICE President.

The closing session was addressed by Mr Muhr, Mr Pierre Pflimlin, President of the European Parliament, Commissioner Ivor Richard and Mr John Bruton, Irish Industry Minister and President-in-Office of the EC Council.



*Mr Pierre Pflimlin, European Parliament President, being welcomed to the New Technologies Conference by ESC Chairman, Mr Gerd Muhr, and Mr Roger Louet, ESC Secretary-General (left).*



*Commission Vice-President Davignon addressing the Conference.*





## 221st PLENARY SESSION

The 221st Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee was held in Brussels on 21 and 22 November 1984. The chair was taken by Mr Gerd Muhr, the Committee's Chairman.

Mr Alan Dukes, Irish Minister for Finance, participated in the discussion of the Commission's Annual Economic Report 1984-1985.

### Summary of speech by Mr Muhr, ESC Chairman

Mr Muhr emphasized the "technology conference" theme. The conference was the biggest event of its kind in Europe and showed that the Economic and Social Committee was a particularly suitable forum for the social partners. The conference had been hallmarked by considerable agreement between employers' representatives and trade unionists. There was general agreement that the new technologies posed an economic and industrial problem which could only be resolved in a European context. The social aspects should not however be overlooked, for example, working and living conditions, the labour market situation and work organization, training and further training, industrial democracy and worker participation in individual firms and throughout entire sectors. Workers would above all have to be briefed about the planning and implementation of the new technologies.

In conclusion, Mr Muhr expressed the hope that the conference would not be a flash in the pan. He proposed the establishment of a Working Party to assess the impact of the introduction of new technology — possibly in one or more "initiative" opinions.

## Opinions adopted

### 1. ANNUAL ECONOMIC REPORT

“Commission's Annual Economic Report 1984-1985 »<sup>(1)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 587 final.

## **Gist of the Commission's Annual Economic Report**

The Commission's Annual Economic Report 1984-1985 goes beyond the traditional description of the economic situation and the short-term outlook.

At the beginning of its Report the Commission outlines economic developments in 1984 and the outlook for 1985 and then goes on to deal with what it considers to be the main theme of its Report, viz. the "need to achieve a substantial and durable growth of employment in the Community, and therefore one consistent with stabilization objectives".

In its assessment of economic developments in the Community the Commission states that the Community economy is on a recovery course. This recovery is, however, gradual and subject to uncertainty and is insufficient to bring down unemployment significantly.

As far as 1984 is concerned, GDP is rising, industrial output is on the increase, as is public and private consumption, inflation is continuing to slow down, and the Community's balance of payments on current account is remaining in equilibrium, but unemployment is continuing to rise.

The Commission forecasts similar trends for 1985, subject to certain assumptions turning out to be correct.

After this brief description of economic developments in 1984 and 1985, the Commission gives guidelines for achieving a substantial improvement in economic performance in the Community.

These guidelines, set out in 16 points, can be regarded as a medium-term economic programme and relate to:

- economic and financial policy,
- boosting of business competitiveness,
- expansion of employment,
- the Community in the world economy.

These 16 points form the kernel of the Commission's Report.

The second part of the Report is devoted to a brief description of economic developments in the Member States.

## **Summary of the Statement by Mr Dukes, President-in-Office at the Council**

Mr Dukes spoke of present levels of unemployment, particularly among the long-term unemployed and young people, which not only have



*The Plenary Session*

economic costs but have also very considerable social costs. The Community's inability to provide employment opportunities for the millions of people who would like to work is unacceptable. Apart from the social and personal costs involved, the loss of human capital entailed in the persistence of high unemployment rates constitutes a reduction in the Community's productive potential.

Mr Dukes said however that it would be foolish to pretend that there are easy solutions to the problem of unemployment. The slow and inadequate response of employment to the increased output in the Community, as outlined in the Commission's Annual Economic Report, illustrates convincingly that an acceleration of economic growth in the Community from the modest rate envisaged would not be sufficient, in itself, to bring about a significant reduction in Community unemployment. It is necessary to come more closely to grips with the structural causes of our employment problem and reach solutions which will endure in the intensively competitive climate of today's world, the Minister said. We must seek to tackle effectively the rigidities and relatively high cost levels which exist not only in the labour market but in all areas of our economies. The full range of structural problems must be solved if sufficient employment is to be generated through adequate productive investment.

Mr Dukes pointed out that the slowness of the employment response to date should not discourage us in making the further adjustments which are necessary in our economies. These structural adjustments will be assisted by the post-recession growth, which promises to be durable. In some countries, investment is making a good recovery. Inflation is being reduced throughout the Community. So too are the imbalances which threaten stability. Favourable trends in the international climate support the belief that employment would increase significantly if we were to accelerate the process of structural adjustment. Greater cooperation and consensus between the social partners were necessary conditions for securing a better employment response to economic growth.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted by 58 votes for, 46 votes against and 13 abstentions, the Committee welcomes the Commission's decision to give in its Annual Economic Report 1984-1985 a clear and frank picture of the major problems of the Community's economy. It regrets, however, that other economic hypotheses are not dealt with in the Report.

As regards employment and investment problems, the Committee notes with satisfaction that the Commission is directing its efforts towards the two fundamental priorities of economic recovery and employment.

As regards the employment measures proposed by the Commission, the Committee notes that the measures taken by a number of Member States show that a pay-pause helps to check a contraction of employment in the short term, but creates few or no jobs. There is also reason to fear that demand will fall off if the pay-pause continues over a long period. It is necessary to make sure PR that the existing system of industrial relations in the Member States is not disrupted; such vigilance is necessary in order not to aggravate the economic repercussions and the social and political tensions stemming from the present crisis.

The Committee considers that the reduction and reorganization of working time is both a social and an economic problem and cannot be tackled from just one of these angles. It must accordingly be left to the two sides of industry to solve where possible.

The Committee considers that the Commission's proposed measures for the business sector are interesting in principle and points out that efforts should be made to draw up more concrete measures. Given the vast diversity of tax provisions designed to help firms in the EEC,

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(1) CES 1093/84

the Committee feels that there is a need for a minimum level of harmonization, to be followed by a Community-level study of the best ways of encouraging an upswing in job-creating investment.

The Committee believes that restrictions or cutbacks in public expenditure must not be allowed to jeopardize certain functions and services performed by the State which are considered to be priorities. Everything should be done to improve the management of public funds.

The Committee recognizes that the monetary policy pursued by the Community in 1983 and 1984 has had some success. It regrets, however, that the Commission Report is not more explicit about action in this area.

Finally, the Committee expresses its surprise at the absence of any reference in the Report to agriculture.

Representatives of the Workers' Group put forward a fundamental amendment which noted that the Commission's Report dealt with the structural aspects of the European economy and that some of its proposals deliberately called into question the labour legislation and worker protection measures in force in Member States. It therefore opposed the adoption of the proposals of the Commission's 84-85 Annual Report at the present stage. The amendment was however narrowly defeated (60 for, 65 against and 7 abstentions).

Representatives of the Workers' Group made a minority declaration on this basis.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Economic and Financial Questions, chaired by Mr Marvier (France - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Pelletier (France - Employers).*

## **2. POVERTY**

### **“Proposal for a Council Decision concerning Specific Community Action to Combat Poverty”<sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

The Commission stresses how the multi-dimensional, “traditional” poverty identified in the first programme to combat poverty (1975-1979), affecting an estimated 30 million people in the nine Member

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 379 final

States, has since been exacerbated and extended by the current economic crisis and by accompanying industrial-technological upheavals, new strains on social security systems and changes in family structures so as to produce a "new poverty" in the European Community.

Defining "the poor" as "persons or groups of persons who have inadequate available resources and an uncertain social status and are excluded from the dominant (material and cultural) way of life", the Commission proposes a new 35 mio ECU five-year programme of cross-national "action research" assisting efforts to combat poverty in underprivileged urban and impoverished rural areas. Projects to be part-subsidised would concern the following specific population "target" groups:

- the long-term unemployed;
- jobless young people;
- elderly people;
- one-parent families;
- second generation migrants, refugees and returning migrants;
- "marginal" groups outside social protection cover.

The aim of the programme is to:

- promote the dissemination and exchange of information and experience concerning poverty throughout the Community;
- establish comparable data;
- encourage new innovative approaches and coherent, comprehensive policies, and reforms of Member States' own social systems.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In a unanimous Opinion the Economic and Social Committee has spoken out vigorously against plans to make cuts to the value of 20% to the Community programme to combat poverty.

The Commission proposes 35 million ECUs for the next five years compared with allocations to the current value of 44 million ECUs for the previous 5-year programme. The Committee, referring to the worsening poverty situation in Europe, demanded an increase in allocations to meet this challenge.

While welcoming efforts to alert public opinion to the problem of poverty in Europe, the Committee pointed out that some important

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(1) Doc. CES 1084/84

groups are excluded from the programme's terms of reference, namely the disabled, the low-paid and those who care for them.

It also demanded that the Community move speedily from the stage of research on to that of specific action.

Strenuous efforts are clearly needed to get on with the job of combatting poverty, of motivating governments to act and to link up with the EC's social policy aims in related fields such as local employment initiatives, working time and the social integration of "outcasts".

Given the limited expenditure, the programme of "action-research" can only be of value if it acts as a supplement to wider programmes of anti-poverty measures. Such an effort, requiring determined action by governments, should focus on such issues as unemployment, social security problems, low pay and housing, amongst others.

If the action-research programme were to be seen as a substitute or distraction from wider concerted efforts, then it would be counter-productive, the Committee stated. Keeping the programme firmly set within the wider context of action is essential to its success.

Declaring that poverty is a danger to democracy, the Committee wants to know why certain groups fall into poverty in the first place, especially those groups which make up the "new poor". To be a member of a particular group within society is not in itself a sufficient explanation of poverty?

It is necessary to ask the question: Why does the status of being unemployed, or being a single parent tend to result in poverty? Why, especially, have the income maintenance and other systems failed such people and are they likely to fail still further the growing new category of long-term unemployed?

Answering such questions should be a specific objective of the programme, which envisages the setting up of a transnational "clearing house" to collect and disseminate both information and the proposals of anti-poverty activists. The Committee however warned against the degeneration of this organ into a bureaucratic institution or "glorified library".

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Kirschen (Italy - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Roycroft (United Kingdom - Various Interests).*

### **3. ACTION TO COMBAT LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT**

#### **“Commission Communication to the Council on Action to Combat Long-Term Unemployment”<sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission Document**

This Communication was issued in response to a request made by the Joint Council of Finance and Employment Ministers in November 1982. The Communication was discussed by the Informal Council on 20-21 September and has been examined by the Standing Committee on Employment in October.

The Communication states that the problem of long-term unemployment has now reached extremely serious proportions. In 1983, over 4.3 million people in the Community had been continuously registered as unemployed for a year or more, of whom 2.1 million had been registered for two years or more. It adds that the threat of long-term joblessness is increasingly affecting whole areas of the Community as technological and structural change, coupled with economic stagnation, remove major traditional sources of employment. Unemployment amongst the young has been particularly apparent and has attracted much concern (28% of the long-term unemployed are under 25). However, 25-50 year old men — many of whom are among the better qualified — are now much more strongly represented amongst the long-term unemployed than in the past.

The Communication stresses the social and economic costs of long-term unemployment. Not all those involved are entitled to claim unemployment benefits, but, even for those who are, the rate of benefits generally decreases as the period of unemployment lengthens. Within one or two years, many families can find themselves reduced to the minimum level of social assistance. The surveys that exist show that most households experience a drastic cut-back in living standards.

The Commission notes that the idea that the long-term unemployed commonly find work in the “black economy” to supplement social security income does not seem to be supported by available research.

It states that prolonged unemployment can undermine an individual's confidence, leading to feelings of humiliation and loneliness. Skills deteriorate through lack of use and many people end up believing that they may never find a job again.

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 484 final



As for economic costs, the Commission estimates that the long-term unemployed probably account for a loss of 3 to 4% of Community GDP potential. In addition, unemployment payments now exceed 5% of public expenditure in the Community. The Communication adds that there are also longer-term losses to the Community as the results of past education and training remain unused and deteriorate. The Commission concludes that long-term unemployment represents the most expensive form of paid inactivity.

The Commission examines existing national measures and states that there does not appear to have been much systematic thinking about the scope and scale of the measures, about their coherence with respect to overall economic and social objectives, or about long-term strategies. Nor are the respective roles of the employment services and the social security services clearly defined.

In its conclusions, the Commission states that on present trends the prevailing expectation is that the level of unemployment in the Community will remain high throughout much of this decade and the long-term component of that unemployment will remain at least as high as now.

It stresses that action to combat long-term unemployment needs to be both strengthened and better targeted. The policy objectives should be to ensure that temporary unemployment does not degenerate into long-term unemployment, that those seeking to enter the labour market have a reasonable opportunity of succeeding and that those who do become long-term unemployed are given every possible opportunity to maintain their skills. This will require a strengthening of the efforts by governments and the two sides of industry. It stresses, however, that while more effective policy measures are essential, they need to be linked to wider policies to stimulate economic growth and employment creation.

It suggests specific measures to overcome weaknesses in existing policies by:

- making greater efforts to create new job opportunities and to improve the flexibility and adaptability of the labour market;
- providing adequate and comparable information about long-term unemployment, to be used *inter alia* as a criterion for Social Fund interventions;
- ensuring that employment and social security policies interact more effectively so as to help prevent the unemployed sinking into long-term unemployment;
- providing adequate levels of income and social support for those who nevertheless remain unemployed for long periods.

The Commission pledges itself to work with Member States to achieve a better understanding of long-term unemployment; encourage the Member States' policy efforts; and cooperate with the two sides of industry. Finally, the Commission states it will initiate a broad policy review at Community level in order to develop a more coherent medium-term approach to the problem.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

Measures to alleviate youth unemployment and promotion of occupational mobility were two of the five priorities on which the Economic and Social Committee adopted a unanimous Opinion.

While welcoming the idea of Community deliberations and proposals on long-term unemployment, the Committee regretted that the Draft Resolution was not part of a comprehensive, consistent strategy to tackle unemployment.

The Committee felt that the approach adopted in the Commission document was too piecemeal and that not enough stress was laid on the prerequisites for stimulating economic recovery. These factors were crucial to job creation — the cornerstone of any effective policy to combat long-term unemployment.

The Committee pointed out that implementation of a policy tackling both the causes and the effects of long-term unemployment hinged on a number of factors, including:

- a renewed common drive towards economic and social goals and more closely aligned national and Community measures in these spheres;
- attainment of a genuine internal market enabling the European economy at last to reap the benefits of a large Community market;
- implementation, backed by adequate funding, of the various components of a Community R & D policy calculated to generate new jobs;
- greater speed in bringing the results of R & D to the marketing stage;
- continuation and intensification of the dialogue between both sides of industry, especially on the introduction of new technologies.

As part and parcel of a comprehensive, consistent policy to boost employment, effective action to combat long-term unemployment had to focus on the following five priorities:

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<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1080/84

- action to tackle youth unemployment must take pride of place. It is no longer tolerable that, every year, more and more young people have no option but to join the dole queues;
- the intervention procedures of the European Social Fund must be streamlined and speeded up at Member State level;
- steps should be taken to encourage occupational mobility by promoting a more flexible and adaptable labour market;
- vocational training schemes are needed to tailor training to changing requirements, particularly the demands of new technology;
- job creation presupposes concerted action by all parties involved (both sides of industry, public authorities, local government, etc...).

The Committee drew attention to the implications of allowing the unemployed to carry out certain forms of unpaid work for public or private organizations without forfeiting unemployment benefit. The Committee felt that there must be no question of such activities, which are commendable in theory, competing with normal employment.

As regards job creation, the Committee would have liked the Commission to have made an analysis comparing the situation in the Community with that in the Community's main trading partners such as the USA and Japan. Lessons could probably have been drawn from such an analysis, especially as regards the potential benefit of a more adaptable and flexible labour market and a climate conducive to employment-generating investment.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Kirschen (Italy - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Noordwal (Netherlands - Employers).*

#### **4. POSITIVE ACTION FOR WOMEN**

##### **“Draft Council Recommendation on the Promotion of Positive Action for Women”<sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission Document**

This Draft Recommendation is connected with the Community Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women (1982-85) (COM(81) 758 final) which was adopted by the Commission in December 1981. Its aim is to promote at national level the creation

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 234 final

of a legal and political framework providing greater equality of opportunity for women. This applies particularly to employment, as women have been harder hit by unemployment than men in the present economic crisis.

The Commission recommends that the Member States adopt specific positive measures to promote equal opportunities for women in areas of working life where women are at a disadvantage. The aim is:

- to eliminate or offset the effects of preconceived ideas regarding the division of roles in society between men (career) and women (home and raising children); and
- to encourage the participation of women in all occupations where they are currently underrepresented and to ensure that they hold a larger share of responsible positions.

The Commission recommends that such measures be taken in the public sector and in all areas of vocational training and placement; similar action is needed in the private sector. The measures and programmes must be made known to women and the public at large.

Individual measures which the Member States could take include:

- programmes to promote the participation of women in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g. by advertising vacancies, promoting appropriate vocational training, etc.);
- programmes which help to broaden the range of occupations open to women;
- measures to eliminate or reduce the problems faced by parents (men and women) who work full-time.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted by 77 votes to 27 with 6 abstentions, the Committee called for the continuation and intensification of positive action undertaken for women and the initiation of new measures.

It agrees with the Commission that a programme of positive measures should be proposed to the Member States. While a Directive rather than a Recommendation would be more appropriate for furthering the Commission's aims, it considers that binding legislation would not be suitable at the present stage.

The Committee is aware that the programme of positive action for women in undertakings will cost money but considers that these costs

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<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1079/84

should be accepted for the sake of assisting women and that they will moreover be repaid in the long term.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Kirschen (Italy - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mrs Weber (Germany - Workers).*

## 5. EXCHANGE OF YOUNG WORKERS

### **“Proposal for a Council Decision Establishing a Third Joint Programme to Encourage the Exchange of Young Workers Within the Community”<sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

The Proposal follows on from earlier programmes aiming at:

- developing young workers' vocational qualifications and enriching their practical experience;
- promoting their awareness of the problems of the working world;
- bringing them into contact with the working environment of the host country;
- improving their knowledge of living conditions and social relations in the host country;
- promoting adequate information on the Community's objectives and how it functions.

In response to the large number of applications and the scale of youth unemployment in the EC, the following adjustments are proposed in the new programme:

- not only “young workers” but also “young job-seekers” (unemployed) will be eligible to participate, and the previous requirement that participants should have begun their working life before the age of 20 will be dropped;
- “young worker” trainees are to benefit from the same social protection measures as migrant workers; and “young job-seeker” trainees are to be treated on the same footing as regards all social security benefits as young people undergoing training or enrolled in courses in their country of origin;
- while requesting the opinion of Member States concerned before approving the exchange projects, and likewise the opinion of the

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 265 final

social partners concerned as regards applications, the Commission is to entrust the implementation of exchanges to a body or group operating at a European level without, as at present, having to obtain the opinion of the Member States;

- Commission grants to trainees, particularly travel allowances will be geared to the distances involved and in order to maximize participation (Member States, regional and local authorities and promoters are also expected to help).

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

The Committee Opinion, adopted unanimously, broadly endorses the Commission proposal and stresses that the positive experiences with the second programme provide adequate justification for continuing and expanding the programmes, even though a number of implementation problems remain unsolved.

The Committee stresses the importance of heightening young people's awareness of Europe and goes on to support the Commission proposal that the third programme should embrace young jobseekers with a basic vocational training or practical work experience.

The Committee points out however, that financial resources are limited and that care should therefore be taken to prevent the inclusion of young jobseekers from raising expectations which cannot be fulfilled.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Kirschen (Italy - Workers). The Rapporteur was Mr Löw (Germany - Employers).*

## **6. BIOTECHNOLOGY**

**“Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a multiannual research action programme of the European Economic Community in the field of biotechnology”<sup>(1)</sup>**

### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

The Commission proposes a multiannual research programme to cover a five-year period starting on 1 January 1985 at a cost of 88.5 MECU to the EC budget. The programme includes work to be carried out via shared-cost contracts to be placed with appropriate industrial orga-

<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1079/84

<sup>(2)</sup> COM (84) 230 final

nizations, research laboratories and universities and via concerted actions which aim to coordinate at Community level research activities which are part of Member State research programmes. The programme also includes expenditure on training.

This Research Action Programme (RAP) on Biotechnology consists of two priority actions:

- I. Research and training;
- II. Concertation.

The RAP contributes to the achievement of all the goals listed in the Community's Framework Programme, although biotechnology itself comes specifically under the industrial competitiveness goal. This Programme and the Biomolecular Engineering Programme on which the Committee gave a favourable Opinion in September 1983 come within the 80 MECU budget envisaged for biotechnology in the 1984-1987 Framework Programme.

#### **Action I — Research and Training**

The proposed programme is essentially pre-competitive and is oriented towards medium and long-term objectives essential for the strategic strength of European industry and agriculture.

It consists of two sub-programmes which deal respectively with:

- CONTEXTUAL MEASURES —  
the establishment of the necessary infrastructure for biotechnology research in Europe;
- BASIC TECHNOLOGY —  
the elimination through research and training of bottlenecks preventing the commercial use of biotechnology techniques. This sub-programme follows on from the Biomolecular Engineering research and training programme.

Action will be concentrated in two main areas: Bioinformatics which involves the use of computer-based techniques on biological materials, in particular model building, direct data capture, storage and access. And the organized collection of biotic materials which is of fundamental importance for all applications of the life sciences.

Research and training efforts at national level are fragmented and insufficiently funded. The lack of qualified scientists and engineers and adequate industry/university cooperation is considered a major bottleneck to the commercial competitiveness of European biotechnology. Community action is aimed at improving the transfer of academic knowledge to industry and agriculture.

## Action II — Concertation

6.4 MECU of the budget has been set aside for action to improve standards and capabilities in biological sciences and to enhance the strategic effectiveness with which these sciences are applied to the economic and social objectives of the Community.

This work will essentially be implemented by creating and exploiting within the Commission an organized information base. The Biotechnology Concertation Unit ("CUBE") has been set up to provide the administrative basis for this work. The Commission will also commission reports, organize workshops and meetings and provide for the diffusion of information.

## Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee supports the Proposal for a Council Decision Adopting a Multiannual Research Action Programme of the European Economic Community in the field of Biotechnology (1985-1989).

The Committee's support however is conditional upon certain specific recommendations. Acceptance of these recommendations would in the Committee's view ensure that maximum value comes from the proposed research action programme. The Committee urges that they be taken into account.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr de Normann (United Kingdom - Employers).*

## 7. CONTROLLED THERMONUCLEAR FUSION — TRITIUM HANDLING LABORATORY

**"Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a Research and Training Programme (1985-1989) in the field of Controlled Thermonuclear Fusion**

**Proposal for a Council Decision complementing Council Decision 84/1/EURATOM, EEC, of 22 December 1983 — Realization of a Tritium Handling Laboratory"<sup>(2)</sup>**

<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1085/84

<sup>(2)</sup> COM (84) 271 final



## Gist of the Commission Proposals

The Commission document is divided into two distinct parts. Part I contains a proposal for a Council Decision on a research and training programme for controlled thermonuclear fusion. The programme includes the extension of the JET device to full performance, as well as its operation and exploitation.

Part II contains a Proposal to build a Tritium Handling Laboratory at the Joint Research Centre at Ispra.

### Part I

A five-year programme beginning in January 1985 at a cost of 443 MECU (exclusive of JET) is proposed. The additional expenditure for JET over the same period amounts to 347 MECU.

The programme covers:

- a) plasma physics;
- b) plasma confinement;
- c) light-matter interactions, transport phenomena and high-power lasers;
- d) plasma heating methods;
- e) improvement of diagnostic methods;
- f) definition and predesign of NET (Next European Torus) and technological developments required for its design and construction as well as those needed in the longer term for the fusion reactor;
- g) extension of the JET device to full performance; operation and exploitation of JET.

The work on points *a)* to *f)* will be carried out by means of association or limited duration contracts. The JET project has been entrusted to the "Joint European Torus (JET), Joint Undertaking".

### Part II

The current approach to controlled thermonuclear fusion concentrates on the deuterium-tritium reaction. The construction and exploitation of a Tritium Handling Laboratory is part of the "Fusion technology and safety" sub-programme and is fully integrated into the JRC 1984-1987 programme.

On 22 December 1983 the Council decided to put aside 12.5 MECU of the JRC budget for European Activities of particular significance.

The Commission's proposal allocates these appropriations to the building of a Tritium Handling Laboratory at the JRC, Ispra.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

This Opinion was adopted unanimously.

As regards Part I of the Commission document, the Committee feels that thermonuclear fusion could be of immense significance as a potential future energy source. Although commercial fusion energy is unlikely to be in general use within the next 50 years, the Committee believes that considerable Community efforts to develop fusion energy are both necessary and justified. The proposed 1985-1989 programme is a logical follow-up to the current programme.

The Committee regards the development of thermonuclear fusion as a prime example of European cooperation. It is pleased to note that companies from nearly all Western European countries are involved in the JET project providing specialized know-how. The industrial spin-off has been of value world-wide.

The Committee notes with satisfaction that the current procedures for coordination between the JET programme and the general fusion programme have clearly proved their worth. It feels it important that problems associated with fusion technology be discussed openly from the outset.

On Part II of the document, the Committee emphasizes the importance of safety and environmental aspects and notes that the safe handling of very large quantities of tritium is one of the major safety problems associated with fusion energy.

The Committee therefore endorses the plan for a Tritium Handling Laboratory at the JRC, Ispra. The funds for the laboratory have already been set aside within the JRC's overall budget.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Social Questions, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr von der Decken (Germany - Various Interests).*

## **8. 17th VAT DIRECTIVE**

### **“Proposal for a Seventeenth Council Directive on the Harmonization of the Laws of the Member States relating**

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<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1083/84

**to Turnover Taxes — Exemption from Value Added Tax on the Temporary Importation of Goods Other than Means of Transport”<sup>(1)</sup>**

**Gist of the Commission document**

The Proposal seeks to cut back fiscal barriers to the free movement of goods imported temporarily from one Member State to another. This will facilitate the free movement of persons, it will make it easier for business-men, technicians and artists to provide services throughout the Community and it will reinforce and consolidate the internal market.

The Proposal has two main objectives. It introduces VAT exemption facilities in respect of temporary imports from third countries. These facilities are based on the customs duties' arrangements adopted by the Council<sup>(2)</sup>. The Proposal also introduces broad exemption in respect of various goods temporarily imported from one Member State to another. These include professional equipment, medical, surgical and scientific equipment, commercial samples, goods for display at exhibitions and fairs, teaching aids, advertising material, travellers' personal effects and materials for curtailing the effects of disasters. Temporary import exemptions would normally run for 24 months but would be limited to 6 months in certain cases.

**Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(3)</sup>**

In its Opinion adopted unanimously, the Committee welcomes the Commission's draft documents for the following reasons:

- it will help to remove tax barriers to intra-Community trade in goods;
- it aligns tax law on customs law as regards trade in goods with third countries.

The Committee does, however, regret that the Commission has not been sufficiently resolute in pursuing the aim of greater liberalization of trade in goods.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr de*

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 412 final

<sup>(2)</sup> Regulation (EEC) No. 3599/82 on temporary import arrangements, due to come into force on 1 July 1985 (OJ No. L 376 of 31.12.1982, page 1).

<sup>(3)</sup> CES 1082/84

*Wit (Netherlands - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Broicher (Germany - Employers).*

## 9. FINANCIAL SUPPORT — SOLID FUELS

**“Amended Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) concerning Financial Support by the Community in favour of Industries producing Solid Fuels”<sup>(1)</sup>**

### **Background to this amended Proposal concerning Community Financial Support in favour of Industries producing Solid Fuels (i.e. hard coal, brown coal and lignite, and peat)**

This is the second time in just over a year that the Committee has been asked to give an Opinion on this question.

The Committee gave its Opinion in December 1983<sup>(2)</sup> on a draft Regulation<sup>(3)</sup> which sought to define conditions in which undertakings would receive Community aid for (a) reducing coal stocks with a view to opening up markets, and (b) investing in modernizing and productivity-improving projects.

The Committee agreed in general with the Commission's aim to concentrate investment in Community solid fuel production in those mines etc. which are the most efficient producers. It disagreed radically however with the eligibility criteria the Commission was putting forward. The Committee felt for instance that the break-off point of 380 kg per man/hour below which no Community aid would be given, was too high. It proposed 320 kg per man/hour, at least for the initial stage, coupled with other sub-criteria. It did not think either that a Community grant for those undertakings that manage to reduce their stocks of coal, should be linked to their managing to modernize hard coal production too!

In May of this year, the Council finally rejected the initial proposal. As a consequence of this the Commission, in its letter of 17 September 1984, informs the Committee that it has decided to change its proposal in the light of the Opinions issued by the European Parliament and by the Economic and Social Committee.

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 469 final

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ No. C 35 of 9 February 1984

<sup>(3)</sup> COM (83) 447 final

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

The current Opinion, adopted unanimously, less 5 abstentions, states that the amended Regulation should be seen in the context of an overall Balanced Solid Fuels Policy. The Committee recalls that it supported the Commission Communication on overall Solid Fuels Policy subject to a number of reservations.

The Committee is unable to support the current Commission Proposal because the amendments go against the changes requested by the Committee in its original Opinion. In particular:

- The Proposal to make grants for reducing coal stocks expressly approved by the Committee has been withdrawn.
- The eligibility criteria have been made more stringent whereas the Committee Opinion suggested that they be less stringent.
- The Committee Opinion suggested that the maximum level of Community aid for investment be increased. The amended Proposal lowers the maximum percentage of Community aid from 25 to 20%.

*The Rapporteur-General was Mr Flum (Germany - Workers).*

## **10. RESEARCH PROGRAMME HYDROCARBONS**

### **“Proposal for a Council Decision adopting a Research and Development Programme for the Optimization of the Production and Utilization of Hydrocarbons 1984-1987”<sup>(2)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission's Proposal**

This Proposal for a 35 MECU sub-programme of research and development for the optimization of the production and utilization of hydrocarbons 1984-1987 has to be seen in the context of:

- the Community's overall energy strategy;
- the Framework Programme for Community Scientific and Technical Activities (and in particular the Research Action Programme in Non-Nuclear Energy 1983-1987);
- and the Community's long-established Programme of Support for Community Projects in the Hydrocarbon Sector (following the Council's 1973 Decision 3056/73) and on which programme some

<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1087/84

<sup>(2)</sup> COM (84) 273 final

307 MECU have been allocated in commitment appropriations between 1974 and 1983.

The Community's energy strategy has been one of reducing its energy dependence on uncertain supplies of imported oil and of making optimum utilization of the oil which is consumed (referred to as rational use of energy).

The Framework Programme was established in 1983 in order to make sure that Community RD & D addresses specific Community objectives, and to enable the Council better to budget for RD & D, enabling it to give greater priority to some research programmes than to others.

The programme of support for Community projects in the hydrocarbon sector seeks to promote the industrial development and new technologies, which by their nature directly contribute to improving the security of supply of the Community in the field of hydrocarbons.

In giving flesh and blood to the Framework Programme, the Commission put forward proposals for a Research Action Programme in Non-Nuclear Energy (1983-1987). While these proposals were under consideration it became apparent that a Community research action in the fields of hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation would be appropriate. Accordingly, the Commission has prepared this supplementary proposal for an additional programme on hydrocarbon research, to be added to the Research Action Programme on Non-Nuclear Energy.

This research sub-programme seeks to complement research on energy saving and on alternative energies contained in the Commission's previous proposals (COM(83) 311 final). Improvement of oil technology is already supported by the Community through Council Regulation No. 3056/73 referred to above.

The Proposal covers only pre-competitive R & D, with the exclusion of any demonstration and large-scale development work (this being dealt with by separate Council Regulations). Because of this specific nature, the proposed work comes before and thus does not duplicate that covered by the Community Programme of Support for Projects in the Hydrocarbon Sector.

The programme covers the following research topics:

- a) Improvement of knowledge of hydrocarbon fields;
- b) Utilization of natural gas;
- c) Utilization of heavy oil fractions;

d) Matching engines and fuels.

These activities are to be executed by way of cost-sharing contracts.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

The Committee endorses unanimously the draft Council Decision which will form a part of the Community's non-nuclear energy strategy.

It considers that the proposed funding of the Research Programme is "meagre" if serious positive results are to be achieved in the foreseeable future. It goes on to say that "adequate finance" should be made available to achieve the programme's objective of stimulating new, integrated and rapidly productive research in all the Member States.

The Committee endorses the aims of the basic research proposed, viz. to increase knowledge in respect of hydrocarbon exploration and development, to improve the conversion yield, to expand theoretical knowledge in respect of recoverable oil deposits, and to bring about a better understanding of inter-relationships that determine the matching between internal combustion engines and their fuels.

The Committee also comments on the place of the sub-programme in the scientific and technical strategy of the Community, its relationship to other Community activities, and deals with specific points concerning the optimization programme itself (hydrocarbon deposits, evaluation techniques, fluid mechanics).

Finally, the Opinion has also something to say on the question of research into the utilization of natural gas, the utilization of heavy oil fractions and the matching of engines and fuels.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Energy and Nuclear Questions, chaired by Mr Romoli (Italy - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Binnenbruck (Germany - Employers).*

## **11. POLLUTANTS — COMBUSTION PLANTS**

### **"Proposal for a Council Directive on the Limitation of Emissions of Pollutants into the Air from Large Combustion Plants"<sup>(2)</sup>**

<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1089/84

<sup>(2)</sup> COM (83) 704 final

### **Gist of the proposal**

The proposal is part of the Community's campaign to prevent and reduce air pollution. Its main provisions are:

- the setting of overall reduction targets for total annual emissions, to be attained by the end of 1995 at the latest;
- the Member States to draw up appropriate programmes for the attainment of the above-mentioned objectives;
- the introduction of Community emission standards for new combustion plants with a capacity of over 100 MW from 1985 and for those with a capacity below 100 MW 5 years after the date of the adoption of the Directive;
- the drawing-up of common rules for monitoring emissions;
- the introduction of an information system covering the reduction programmes drawn up by the Member States with a view to harmonizing them at Community level.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, less 5 abstentions, the Committee approves the Commission proposal subject to the qualifications set out below.

In general terms the ESC urges:

- the integration of this Directive with others on pollution and its coordination with energy policies;
- adequate dissemination of information.

The ESC makes the following specific proposals:

- in addition to "new plant" (post 1.1.85) and "existing plant" (pre 1.1.85) already defined in Article 2, a third category should be added to cover plant authorized before 1.1.85 but not yet in service by that date;
- the time needed to draw up the national programmes of the Member States should be reduced to a minimum and these programmes should *i)* include monitoring procedures for checking air quality and acid depositions in addition to emissions, *ii)* provide for a survey of fuel types used;
- the rates of emission reduction should be reviewed;

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<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1092/84



- the proposed Directive sets a target date of 1995 for the reduction of emissions from new and existing plants. Separate limits should be set for *i)* existing plants of over 100 MW capacity *ii)* new plants between 50-100 MW capacity;
- the Directive should be adapted periodically in accordance with the state of the art.

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Protection of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Affairs, chaired by Mrs Heuser (Germany - Various Interests). The Rapporteur was Mr Vercellino (Italy - Workers).*

## **12. VETERINARY MATTERS — INTRA-COMMUNITY TRADE IN FRESH MEAT**

**“Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 64/433/EEC on Health Problems affecting Intra-Community Trade in Fresh Meat”<sup>(1)</sup>**

### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

Council Directive 64/433/EEC lays down the hygiene conditions under which fresh meat must be produced in slaughterhouses and cutting plants. It provides for health inspections and microbiological analyses covering inter alia equipment, utensils and carcasses with a view to an objective assessment of the standard of hygiene.

The Commission considers that the veterinary inspection authority should be empowered to make microbiological checks where it sees fit. The microbiological examinations should be compulsory for checking the hygienic production of meat produced in a particular way. In addition the execution of microbiological control in slaughterhouses and cutting plants must be based on the use of harmonized microbiological methods in order to obtain reliable results.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(2)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee welcomes the Commission's proposal amending Directive 64/433/EEC. It represents a considerable step forward in the hygienic control of meat production

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 439 final

<sup>(2)</sup> C.E.S 1088/84

and consumer protection in that the proposal adds a further parameter to the present criterion of "visual cleanliness".

*The Rapporteur-General was Mr Storie-Pugh (United Kingdom - Various Interests).*

### 13. MIGRATION-TESTING SIMULANTS

**"Proposal for a Council Directive laying down the List of Simulants to be used for Testing Migration of Constituents of Plastic Materials and Articles intended to come into Contact with Foodstuffs" <sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission Proposal**

The material used in packaging foodstuffs may, under particular conditions, transfer some of the substances used in its manufacture to the foodstuffs it contains. The consumer may be at risk if these substances are toxic.

Directive 82/711/EEC on plastics lays down, among other things, the basic rules for checking the level of transfer (migration) to foodstuffs in contact with the plastic substances used in packaging materials.

It also lays down the simulants to be used for plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with foodstuffs of all types. These are:

- distilled water
- 3% acetic acid (W/V)
- 15% ethanol (V/V)
- olive oil.

This Directive also specifies that a later Council Directive should list the simulants to be used for plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with a single foodstuff or a specific group of foodstuffs. In such cases it will no longer be necessary in the migration tests to use all the simulants prescribed for the general case. Only those selected as appropriate for each foodstuff or group of foodstuffs need to be used.

The present proposal fills this gap. It contains in an Annex a list of the most commonly sold foodstuffs. Opposite each foodstuff, or group

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 152 final

of foodstuffs, the simulant(s) prescribed for the migration test are indicated.

Selection of the appropriate simulant has been based mainly on information on the composition of the foodstuff (water, fat, alcohol content, etc.) and its physical properties (solid, semi-solid, liquid, granulate, etc.).

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its Opinion, adopted unanimously, the Committee welcomes the proposal, even though it deals with only one very limited aspect of the problem.

The crucial step — namely determining which plastics may be used and specifying under what conditions these plastics and the additives required for their processing may enter into contact with foodstuffs — still has to be taken. Nationally-compiled permitted lists exist already, but this above all is an area where there should be Community harmonization. This final step should be taken as soon as possible. In the interest of consumer protection provision should be made for a procedure involving permitted lists which is clear and as simple as possible and is sufficient guarantee that the plastics do not have a harmful effect on health or impair the food's taste.

There are two possible methods for compiling permitted lists:

- 1) suitable plastics to be specified (as they are at present in Member States' permitted lists) and migration tests to be performed to determine whether the packaging materials or containers made from these plastics can be used and, if so, for which foodstuffs;
- 2) maximum permissible amounts of the processing agents which may be used in conjunction with the plastics to be determined by means of migration tests.

In the case of the first method it would be possible to use any combination of substances to manufacture the food packaging material or containers. With the second method the composition would be laid down in advance and no fresh migration tests would be necessary. Of course, a combination of both methods would be feasible.

The Committee also considers preventive action to be an absolute necessity, i.e. the composition of the packaging material should be tested prior to its use so as to ensure that foodstuffs packaged in unsuitable material do not have to be destroyed.

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<sup>(1)</sup> C/E S 1081/84

*This Opinion was drawn up in the light of the paper produced by the Section for Industry, Commerce, Crafts and Services, chaired by Mr de Wit (Netherlands - Employers). The Rapporteur was Mr Broicher (Germany - Employers).*

## **14. LEAD IN PETROL**

### **“Proposal for the Amendment of EEC Directives on the Lead Content of Petrol and Motor-Vehicle Emissions”<sup>(1)</sup>**

#### **Gist of the Commission proposals**

The Commission's proposals aim at (i) the elimination of lead from petrol, and (ii) the reduction in emissions of carbon monoxide (CO), unburnt hydrocarbons (HC) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>).

These measures are designed:

- to consolidate and build on the efforts made by the European motor vehicle industry to improve its competitiveness on world markets, in terms not only of cost and price but also of product performance;
- to fit in with the policy of conserving non-renewable imported energy;
- to maintain the unity of the Common Market;
- to make a significant contribution towards protecting public health and the environment.

The main points in the Commission's proposals can be summarized as follows:

#### **A. Lead in Petrol**

1. From 1989:
  - both lead-free and leaded petrol must be marketed;
  - all new models must run on lead-free petrol;
  - a maximum lead content in petrol required for existing vehicles of 0.15 grammes per litre.
2. From 1991:
  - All new cars (and old models) must run on lead-free petrol.

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 226 final

3. From 1986:  
Permission for the Member States to bring lead-free petrol on to the market at an earlier date.
4. The Commission will allow regular and premium grades (92 RON and 96 RON respectively) of leaded petrol and will lay down appropriate technical rules.
5. The Member States are called on to encourage the widest possible use of lead-free petrol by ensuring that it sells as far as possible at a lower price than that of leaded petrol.

#### **B. Limit values for motor vehicle emissions**

1. First stage: 1989 for all new models  
: 1991 for all new vehicles

Values:

— CO	:	45 g/test
— HC + NO <sub>x</sub>	:	15 g/test
— NO <sub>x</sub>	:	6 g/test

2. Second stage: 1995.

The technical decisions for this second stage, which take effect in 1995, will be adopted by the Council in 1988 on a proposal from the Commission.

Member States may implement this decision at an earlier date.

#### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

Lead-free petrol should be introduced in the European Community in January 1986 instead of in July 1989, the Economic and Social Committee declared. This is the gist of its Opinion adopted by 58 votes for, 8 votes against and 21 abstentions. It was drawn up under the urgency procedure in the wake of the recent deadlock in the European Parliament on the subject. This date would apply to both the reduction of the lead content of petrol from 0.4 to 0.15 g/l (grammes per litre) and to the Community-wide availability of unleaded petrol.

While the Commission's proposals aim to match American emission regulations — generally met by the use of catalytic converters — the Committee believes that Europe can achieve even better results than the US at a lower cost and without waiting for the second phase of the EC programme.

<sup>(1)</sup> C1:S 1094/84

US standards should apply to larger cars only and with effect from 1988/90 instead of from 1989/91. For all other cars, the lower European levels should be applied also from 1988/90 the Committee said. This would keep the annual cost for motorists of installing catalytic converters below the 15 billion ECUs estimated by the car industry. The Committee further proposed that the Commission investigate the technological possibilities of meeting US emission levels by 1990 using techniques other than catalytic converters, and that it make proposals accordingly.

In its Opinion, the Committee stressed the need for the Council to legislate jointly on the two current proposals — the lowering of gaseous emissions from cars and the introduction of unleaded petrol. Certain emission control techniques (e.g. catalytic converters and exhaust-gas-recycling) cannot function properly with leaded petrols. Cars with catalytic converters would be prevented from travelling internationally if the right quality and sufficient quantity of unleaded petrol were not available throughout Europe. For this reason, there is an urgent need to open negotiations with non-Community countries in order to encourage them to introduce unleaded petrol.

Tax incentives should be used by Member States as a means of fostering the use of lead-free petrol. Since unleaded petrols are more expensive to produce than equivalent leaded petrols, and so are more costly to consumers, the pricing principle of "polluter pays" must be applied, the Committee said. It also asked that governments begin to promote the use of vehicles that conform to future emission standards in order to speed up efforts to protect human health and the natural environment.

*The Rapporteur-General was Mr Poeton (United Kingdom - Employers).*

## 15. MARKET IN WINE

**“Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No. 337/79 on the Common Organization of the Market in wine;**

**Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) amending Regulation (EEC) No. 338/79 Laying Down Special Provisions Relating to Quality Wines Produced in Specified Regions;**

**Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) Introducing a Derogation to the Scheme Provided for in Regulation (EEC) No. 456/80 on the Granting of Temporary and**

**Permanent Abandonment Premiums in Respect of Certain Areas Under Vines and of Premiums for the Renunciation of Replanting;**

**Proposal for a Council Regulation (EEC) on the Granting for the 1985/86 to 1989/90 Wine years of Permanent Abandonment Premiums in Respect of Certain Areas Under Vines;**

**Amendment of the Proposal for a Council Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 337/79 on the Common Organization of the Market in wine”<sup>(1)</sup>**

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(2)</sup>**

In an Opinion, which was adopted by a large majority with 1 vote against and 8 abstentions, the Committee stresses that the deadlines set for issuing the Opinion do not permit adequate consultation and discussion.

The Committee therefore asks the Council not to take a decision until it has been informed of the outcome of the Committee's consultations with the economic and social forces in the Community.

With this provision the Committee endorses the Commission's analysis of the situation in the wine sector although it feels that fraud and the inadequacy of statistics could have been dealt with in greater depth. The Committee shares the Commission's concern on the need for overall balance and measures to control production.

The Committee cannot however subscribe to the proposed guarantee threshold for the wine sector for two reasons: *a*) it is not a genuine guarantee threshold *b*) the Committee is anxious to ensure that the proposed measures form a coherent package.

*The Rapporteur-General was Mr De Grave (Belgium - Workers).*

## **16. ORGANISMS HARMFUL TO PLANTS**

**“Proposal A for a Council Directive amending Directive 77/93/EEC on Protective Measures against the Introduction into the Member States of Organisms Harmful to Plants or Plant Products**

<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 515 final and 539 final

<sup>(2)</sup> CES 1086/84

**Proposal B for a Council Directive amending Directive 77/93/EEC on Protective Measures against the Introduction into the Member States of Organisms Harmful to Plants or Plant Products (Greece)"<sup>(1)</sup>**

**Gist of the Commission Proposals**

**Proposal A for a Council Directive amending Directive 77/93/EEC on Protective Measures against the Introduction into the Member States of Organisms Harmful to Plants or Plant Products**

The proposal provides for:

- new models of phytosanitary certificates, the content of which corresponds to that of the International Plant Protection Convention and the layout of which is standardized for the Member States of the Community;
- transition periods for the use of stocks of previous models by the Member States;
- rules concerning model certificates used by third countries.

A number of the terms used in Directive 77/93/EEC have given rise to practical difficulties and are therefore in need of clarification. Among these terms are "living parts of plants".

Directive 77/93/EEC requires or empowers the Member States to accept a "slight contamination" by certain harmful organisms. The proposal lays down a procedure whereby such tolerances may be determined at Community level.

The proposal provides for the abolition of provisions concerning disinfection of plants against San José scale which have become superfluous because the measures to deal with this harmful organism have been exhaustively redefined in the annexes.

The proposal also amends the rules governing import checks in intra-Community trade which no longer meet legal and practical requirements and must be brought into line with the judgments handed down by the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

The rules governing the granting of Community-approved exemptions from certain provisions of Directive 77/93/EEC have proved effective because they made it possible to gauge the extent to which Member States are endangered by certain plants or plant products

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM (84) 288 final



because of conditions affecting the state of health of such plants or products and to take the necessary technical safeguards. For this reason the Commission feels that the currently limited field of application should be broadened.

The procedure for amending the annexes has proved cumbersome and does not take sufficient account of the need to adapt swiftly to new developments. The same is true as regards the assessment made under Community law of certain import bans against third countries.

The proposal provides for simplifications compared with the procedures implemented to date.

### **Gist of the Committee Opinion<sup>(1)</sup>**

In its unanimous Opinion, the Committee endorsed the draft Directive.

However, the Committee urged caution on tolerances, since some Member States were still free of the pests and infesting organisms concerned. A number of disputes or even anomalies could arise out of possible differences between the positions of the exporting and importing countries. Another difficulty was that there was still too little regular contact between the plant protection inspectorates of the Member States.

The possible future enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal also made caution advisable.

*The Rapporteur-General was Mr De Tavernier (Belgium - Various Interests).*

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<sup>(1)</sup> CES 1091/84



## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### **Study Group visit to Israel**

From 14 to 16 November 1984 the ESC Study Group on the Community's Mediterranean Policy visited Israel at the invitation of the Israeli Economic and Social Council.

The Committee delegation had talks with Israeli Government representatives and members of economic and social interest groups. Talks focussed on the EEC/Israel Agreement and the potential impact of Community enlargement on existing relations.

The trip was one of a number of measures in connection with Committee action on Community Mediterranean policy, including a visit to Yugoslavia last April.

### **Other activities**

On 12 November 1984, Mr McLaughlin, a Director at the ESC, attended a meeting of "Intergroup PME" in Strasbourg. Mr McLaughlin was invited to attend by the Intergroup Chairman, Mr I. Friedrich, MEP.

Mr Dassis, ESC Member, represented the Committee at the second Conference of Mediterranean regions held in Delphi, Greece from 16 to 18 November 1984.

## NEW CONSULTATIONS

On 12 November 1984, the Council asked the ESC to deliver Opinion on the :

***“Proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 652/79 on the Impact of the European Monetary System on the Common Agricultural Policy” (COM(84) 565 final).***

# OUTLINE PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE WORK

## DECEMBER 1984 PLENARY SESSION

### Opinions upon consultation

- European Social Fund statistics
- Food sampling methods
- INSIS
- Customs debt
- Hormones
- Swine fever
- Impact of the European Monetary System on the Common Agricultural Policy
- Generalized Preferences Scheme
- Fish
- Medical checks on handlers of fresh meat

## SUBSEQUENT PLENARY SESSIONS

### Opinions upon consultation

- 16th VAT Directive
- Tax arrangements for the carry-over of losses of undertakings
- Raising of capital
- Noise level of motorcycles
- Railway infrastructure
- Animal feed
- Worker protection
- High-technology drugs
- Frozen food
- Protection of Mediterranean environment
- Health protection programme
- Protection of forests (2nd addition Opinion)

- Economic/social situation in the regions
- 9th European Regional Development Fund Annual Report
- Shipbuilding Aids (additional Opinion)
- Telecommunications standards
- Air transport
- Strengthening of EEC-Latin American relations
- Dangerous substances
- Relaxing of Social Regulation
- Fresh meat health checks
- Mediterranean policy of the enlarged Community

**Own-Initiative Opinions**

- Community research priorities

**Information Reports**

- Demographic situation
- Integrated operation in Wales
- Hydrocarbon exploitation
- Shared-cost research programmes
- Energy options: environmental constraints
- Community fisheries policy
- Development of upland areas
- National regional development aids

## PUBLICATIONS OBTAINABLE FROM THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

### Periodical

- Bulletin (monthly publication)

### General Documentation

- The Economic and Social Committee (leaflet) (January 1980)
- The Economic and Social Committee (December 1982) (A descriptive brochure) 16 p.
- Annual Report 1983

### Opinions and Studies

- Inaugural Conference — "1983 the European Year of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (Proceedings) (December 1983) (LSC 83-016)
- The Economic and Social Situation in the Community (2 Opinions) (July 1983) (LSC-83-013)
- Youth Employment (Opinion) (June 1983) (ESC-83-011)
- Transport policy in the 1980s (Opinion) (March 1983) 99 p (ESC 83-003)
- Inaugural Conference — 1983 The European Year of SME (February 1983) 27 p (LSC 83-002)
- Guidelines for Mediterranean Agriculture (4 Opinions) (September 1982) 64 p (LSC 82-010)
- The Economic and Social Situation of the Community (2 Opinions) (July 1982) 57 p. (ESC 82-008)
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