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- ** On 28 February the Commission is to hold a meeting of the representatives of the Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE) with a view to discussing the practical possibilities of IMPROVING THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY. The discussion will be based on the White Paper recently published by the Commission under the title "Survey of the Nuclear Policy of the European Communities", and the problems treated will include industrial structures, multi-national regroupings, export arrangements, the need for cooperation between the nuclear industry and research centres, the combining of orders for nuclear power plants and the possible creation of a Community fund for aid to industry. We will report on the result of this exchange of views in the near future.

In addition, an exchange of views with BODIES CONCERNED WITH THE PRODUCTION OF ELECTRICITY will be organized on 25 February, with the aim of defining the part which should be played by nuclear energy in the next few years in overall electricity production.

- ** In the introduction to the GENERAL REPORT on its activities during 1968, the Commission of the European Communities includes, among the REASONS FOR SATISFACTION, the resumption of the meetings of the Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy. Among the REASONS FOR CONCERN the Commission mentions the Euratom crisis:

"It is perfectly understandable that Member States should disagree on the programme of work to be accomplished by this Community institution, since the basic elements of nuclear research and its industrial follow-up have changed greatly since the European Atomic Energy Community was established, and their disagreement is even more understandable when it is remembered that in most of them

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the national programmes themselves are the subject of difficult rethinking. But the real cause of the crisis is the absence of any genuine political will for joint action. It is deeply disquieting that once again agreement has proved possible only on a provisional programme for one year - and even then half the projects are to be paid for by only five of the Member States out of six - while the 1969 research budget is still not adopted. If the Member States should get into the habit of financing only those projects which are of direct concern to them, the result would be a rapid and serious deterioration of Community action.

The interest of the Community as a whole must come first; and so it was not without a feeling of bitterness and impatience that the Commission participated in the deliberations at the end of the year when the Member States were discussing the reduction of their joint effort in the first large technological centre created by the Community. And this at the very time when American cosmonauts were flying round the moon and striving to outbid their Soviet rivals in the conquest of space!"

- ** The construction files on the ORGEL Prototype, submitted to the Commission by the industrial grouping consisting of GAAA (France), Interatom (Germany) and Montedison (Italy) (see "Research and Technology" No. 4), have been forwarded by the Commission of the European Communities to the Council of Ministers, with appropriate comments.

- ** The Commission of the European Communities has begun the proposed series of consultations with the Community's industrial enterprises and research organizations with the aim of defining the main outlines of the JOINT MULTIANNAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME. The consultations will continue up to the end of March, and a preliminary draft research programme could be examined by the Commission in mid-April and forwarded to the Council towards the end of that month.

- ** The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recently set up ties with the Commission of the European Communities preparatory to drawing up its planned INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR INFORMATION SYSTEM (INIS). It proposes an arrangement by which, under terms still to be decided on, it could profit from the experience acquired by the Commission's Centre for Information and Documentation (CID), which has been running a semi-automatic documentation system for several years now. This proposal, which also concerns the six Member States, will shortly be discussed by the Community's Council of Ministers.

- ** It now appears certain that the Council of Ministers of the European Communities will not be able to adopt the Euratom RESEARCH BUDGET for 1969 before its meeting slated for 3 and 4 March 1969.

- ** In 1968 the Commission of the European Communities financed 152 GRANTS TO YOUNG SCIENTISTS (training at research centres, preparation of theses, etc.).

- ** The last of the monographs describing methods of IMPROVING WOOD BY IMPREGNATION WITH POLYMERIZED MONOMERS under radiation was recently published by the Commission of the European Commissions.

- ** The European members of the Geological Information Committee of the International Union of Geological Sciences will meet at the Joint Research Centre's Ispra establishment on 13-15 April 1969 to consider ways and means of FACILITATING INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES OF OPINION ON GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS. At the same time they will take the opportunity to examine the work being done at Ispra on the automation of science documentation and on machine translation.

- ** Problems of THE LEGAL BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (industrial property rights, insurance in dangerous industrial or scientific installations, etc.) will be discussed during the international congress on "The Approximation of Economic Legislation in Europe", due to be held on 18-20 March 1969 by the Institute of Law Studies on the European Communities, of the University of Cologne.

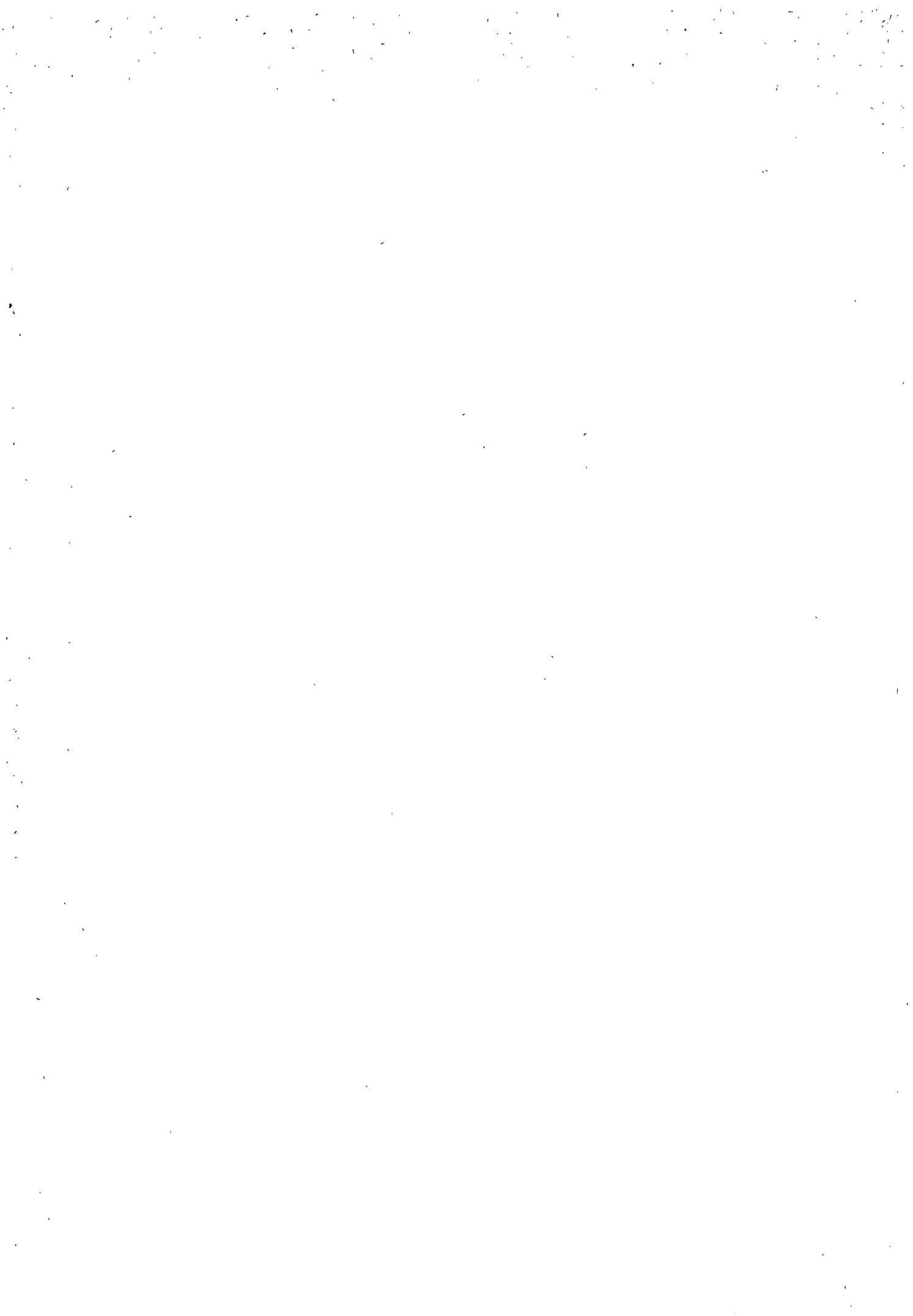
- ** THE AMERICAN ASTRONAUT FRANK BORMAN visited the Commission of the European Communities on 7 February (see "Research and Technology", No. 6). Attached is a summary of the main replies given by Frank Borman and his scientific advisers to questions put by the Commission's specialists.

**Visit by Astronaut Frank Borman to the Commission
of the European Communities**

The American astronaut Frank Borman made a point of visiting the Commission of the European Communities during his short stay in Brussels on 7 February 1969. He was received by President Jean Rey and other members of the Commission, and then took part in a round-table discussion chaired by Vice-President Fritz Hellwig, Commissioner with special responsibility for research problems.

In reply to the various questions put by the Commission's specialists, Frank Borman, who was assisted by three scientific advisers, made the following points:

1. During the Apollo capsule's return to earth, Colonel Borman and his crew were the first men to pass through what is called the Van Allen belt. This barrier, which at one time was a source of considerable concern, does not now seem to constitute any danger to the human organism during space missions.
2. Generally speaking, while it might have been thought that man is a limiting factor in space travel, it has been found that he does not undergo any major psychological stresses except during re-entry into the earth's atmosphere, and there is every reason to think that even these will soon be overcome.
3. The Americans plan to make their first moon landing next July. The scientific work will consist mainly in taking samples of lunar soil. They intend to bring back to earth about 25 kg of lunar material, which will be distributed round the world for an analysis programme to be conducted by about a hundred scientists. It is also proposed to make a second landing, during which an experimental device equipped with a power pack will be placed on the moon's surface by the astronauts and left there after their departure.



4. In the long term the United States will no doubt direct its efforts towards the construction of large permanent space stations designed for testing systems and acquiring sophisticated medical data. A two million dollar design contract for such a station has already been placed with an American firm.
5. America's offer to Europe to cooperate in studying the possibility of carrying out a joint long-term space project (such as sending a probe towards Jupiter) is still open. The United States are awaiting a reply from their European partners on this subject.

