

Europe 85

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Why the Royal Pavilion
is under wraps

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PICTURES BY BEN JOHNSON

Running repairs to the Royal Pavilion

The Royal Pavilion, Brighton, has been a tourist attraction for almost 200 years. In 1876, the Prince Regent (later King George IV) rented a 'superior farmhouse' and began converting it into a building that has been described as 'one of the greatest showpieces of Europe'.

In March, I joined the visitors to see some of the results of recent restoration work – work that has succeeded in presenting the palace, with its Indian and Chinese influences, in a form that is close to its original splendour.

But first I was taken to view a part of the Royal Pavilion that tourists do not see at close quarters. I followed my guide, Barry Edwards, building conservation officer, up ladders and across scaffolding until we were standing alongside the famous onion-shaped domes, at roof level above the beautiful Music Room where Queen Victoria used to sing with her family.

The crumbling stonework and general deterioration are the result of a host of influences, from inherent design faults to the ravages of salty sea air and car exhaust fumes. Past neglect and lack of finance have conspired to make matters worse, until now the only solution is a massive renovation programme that will cost in the region of £4 million.

Most of the money for this work is coming

In Brighton, the most exotic of Britain's residences, now regarded as an architectural treasure, is undergoing vital renovation – with help from a special grant from Brussels. ROY STEMMAN reports

from the Government (for repairs only, not improvements), from the English Tourist Board, and from Brighton ratepayers. But the importance of the Royal Pavilion has also been recognised by the European Community: it has just announced a £20,000 (37,000 ECUs) grant to be used on exterior improvements to the Music Room. The money will enable the owners to replace or repair its columns and filials in their original materials.

The Brighton Pavilion is one of 10 chosen operations, one for each member country, which are receiving EEC financial aid from a special conservation fund.

Before I inspected the crumbling stonework, Julian Rogers, principal keeper of conservation,

and Barry Edwards had outlined the scope of the total work and explained why this unique building has so many problems. The dome-dominated palace certainly achieves the striking effect that George, Prince of Wales, hoped for. But its design does not help the dispersal of rainwater. Its royal creator also liked to alter it – with the result that external drains ended up on the inside when additions were made. Soon, dry and wet rot and the spread of fungus infestation began to get a grip on the fabric of the building.

First signs of dry rot were detected as long ago as 1827 – only five years after John Nash had completed his royal commission. Julian Rogers says that some of it has been spreading ever since, eating away at the timber-framed building.

The visitor is largely unaware of the relentless battle that is being waged behind the scenes by a team of conservation and maintenance staff. These experts know that it is going to be impossible to eradicate certain of the problems, so they concentrate on a policy of treating and containing the decay when it is discovered.

The fortunes of the Royal Pavilion have changed enormously over the years. Those who were responsible for building and decorating it could not have anticipated that its survival would mean so much to us today. There was



The Prince Regent built the Royal Pavilion more for pleasure than durability. It is taking all the skills of restorers and masons to make it, once again, the pride of Brighton.

even a time when, due largely to public indifference, it seemed likely to be demolished.

Now, of course, it is regarded as Brighton's trademark: a glamorous reminder of the royal patronage which the fashionable seaside resort enjoyed for so long. When the Prince of Wales discovered it in 1783, though, it was still little more than a fishing town – then called Brightelmstone – to which had been added ballrooms, houses to rent, and gaming establishments. These amenities, plus the virtues of seawater bathing and drinking, extolled by Dr Russell of Lewes, helped make the town's fortune.

The prince, aged 21, loved the sparkling atmosphere of Brighton and the company of people of wit and style. Within three years he had rented the farmhouse and began enlarging it: a transformation which took 35 years to complete. Soon, the heir to the throne met Maria Fitzherbert, a young widow whose Catholic religion stood in the way of marriage to the Prince. Nevertheless, they married secretly in 1785, and took separate houses in Brighton.

Ten years later, however, the Prince was obliged to take a royal wife, Caroline of Brunswick, because of his enormous debts. The marriage was a disaster: they were estranged even before their daughter, Charlotte, was born.

By 1812, the Prince Regent (as he now was) decided to enlarge the pavilion, and John Nash was commissioned to carry out the work. The prince scrutinised every detail of his architect's plans, as well as influencing the grand design of the rooms' fittings and ornaments. But he was alarmingly likely to change his mind. So Nash became more concerned with humouring his client than with ensuring that the buildings would stand for centuries – particularly as it was unlikely that the prince would have sufficient funds to translate all his dreams into reality.

Nevertheless, Nash was an adventurous architect who used the work on the Royal Pavi-

lion to experiment with new building techniques and materials – not always successfully. An early example of the use of cast iron and laminated timber is to be found in the roofs of the Banqueting and Music Rooms, both of which are topped by domes.

Nash used fairly sound building methods in these unusual structures, but his decision to apply Dihl mastic – a patented form of stucco – to provide a weathertight finish was a miserable failure. By 1827, water had seeped through, causing considerable damage, and the Dihl finish had to be replaced with steel plates, covered with copper.

The earlier work on the Pavilion had resulted in interiors decorated in exciting and fanciful Chinese styles; but the Indian influence began to creep in by 1803, and it was this style which Nash followed for the transformation and extension. By 1822, two years after George became king, the Pavilion as it now stands was finished. A year later, the interior, with its sumptuous decorations, executed to a high standard of craftsmanship, was completed. George IV is said to have cried for joy at the sight of it.

The King was now 63. For most of his adult life he had been concerned with the creation of the palace. He had a powerful influence on most of the present royal homes, including Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle; but the Royal Pavilion was his favourite.

Because of its relatively small size he had been able to furnish it in a lavish manner, and with close attention to detail. And he used it to entertain on a grand scale. Yet, by the time his 'fantastic but stately dream' was a reality, his reasons for building a palace at Brighton had vanished with his youth. He had not bathed in the sea for 16 years; he was grossly overweight, and plagued with gout and dropsy.

Just four years after the finishing touches



'The £20,000 grant is to be used on exterior improvements to the Music Room'

were made to the Royal Pavilion, George IV paid his last visit. Three years later he died. Though the brother who succeeded him as King, William IV, dismissed the art and decoration of the Royal Pavilion as 'knickknackery', he was as fond of the place as George IV had been. He visited it within two months of his accession and it was he who elevated it to the status of royal palace.

William added 36 rooms to accommodate visitors, and did not allow the building to deteriorate during his seven years as king. On his death, Victoria assumed the throne; and within four months Brightonians were welcoming her to the palace. She returned a year later, 1838, and again in 1842, when she spent a month there with her children.

Later, she began to lose her affection for Brighton. Her visits were described as like an angel's – 'few and far between'. And, since nearly 100 people (mostly servants) had sleeping accommodation at the Pavilion, it was no surprise when the Queen decided to economise by selling it. The proceeds were to be used towards the £150,000 required to extend and enhance Buckingham Palace.

While the town argued about the Pavilion's future, the Queen arranged for most of its contents to be removed. A surviving manuscript lists 137 loads of clocks, china, furniture and decorations, which were removed by a local firm between January 1847 and June 1848, and six more loads left before the end of the year.

The official guide also refers to an affair that became known as the Brighton Puzzle: 'While the Lord Chamberlain's men methodically removed the contents, stripped the walls of their



Crumbling stonework is a problem. Substitutes having failed, the restoration is being carried out with traditional materials. Right: the sumptuous Music Room now lacks only finishing touches. The ceiling (top right) is one of the Pavilion's glories.

canvas-backed murals and wallpapers, the cornices, doorways and pilasters of their fantastic gilt ornaments, and the ceilings of their dazzling gasoliers.

'While these employees left not a looking glass or decorated door in position, nor even the kitchen tiling, those of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests were executing the usual repairs and painting of the exterior – not easily explicable where demolition was the expected fate, and stoves, ventilation grills, and ball wires were being ripped out for scrap.'

Eventually, in 1850, the people of Brighton succeeded in buying the royal palace for £53,000. They then set about restoring some of

its former extravagant splendour and making it a public amenity.

In modern times the work of restoration has continued to great effect – despite pressure, at one point, to turn the building into a casino. Work on the Music Room became essential in 1970, when a dangerous weakening of its ceiling was discovered.

When completed in 1975 it was regarded as one of the great interiors of Europe. But it was short-lived: an arson attack in November 1975 partly destroyed the east wall and other parts of the room. Now the work of restoring it once more is nearly complete.

Having almost recreated the original splendours of the Royal Pavilion's interiors, the team's attention has now turned to its exterior. The domes, minarets and other stone adornments are now totally shrouded in scaffolding and plastic sheeting, as the delicate and painstaking work of replacing and improving the fab-

ric of the building continues.

The work includes replacing 14 minarets, carved from new stone obtained from a Bath quarry, close to the source of the stone used by Nash's builders. However, as recently as 1969-71 some of the minarets were replaced with glass fibre versions, which, instead of absorbing water (as the stone ones did) threw it off, causing other problems. They also glistened when wet, appearing very different from their natural stone companions. Now they are being replaced.

When the covers come off in 1986 and the Royal Pavilion is once again revealed it will be as near as possible, in colour, texture and design, to its original 'royal magnificence'. But the work will not step there. For as long as people wish to preserve such unique examples of their architectural heritage, the conservationists will continue their task of making it fit for a King – and his people.

Why 'harmonisation' still strikes a harsh note

Harmonisation of technical standards should contribute towards making the Community of Ten into a real Common Market. Alas, as everyone knows, the reality is still far away.

However, a new approach is now under way. Recently proposed by the European Commission, it has been given a favourable reception by the Council of Ministers. It can be summarised as follows: let the ministers and diplomats make the policies, but leave the technical details to the experts.

In the European Community, a French machine-tool manufacturer, for example, cannot sell his products in Germany because they do not conform to the technical standards enforced in German factories. Can we talk of a Common Market in these conditions?

The member states have at their disposal a whole arsenal of rules and technical standards which are theoretically aimed at protecting the health or the security of the users of each product.

But in fact, these regulations often serve to keep out of the home market, 'foreign' products coming from other Community countries. This

'For many products there are still no common standards'

was shown once again last year by the affair of the 'pure beer' (Rheinheitsgebot) in Germany.

For many products there are still no common or harmonised standards. In that case the only guarantee which a manufacturer in a member state has of being able to sell his products in the other Community countries is the Treaty of Rome bans on any measure serving to restrict importation.

The Court of Justice in effect considers as a restriction on imports the application by a member state of its national, commercial and technical regulation to imports coming from another member state. If it wants to do this, the 'protectionist' country must prove that vital interests, such as health or security, are at stake. But if a Belgian product, for example, has to wait for a European Court judgement in order to enter the Italian market...

In this climate of uncertainty, many industrialists tend to produce only for their national market. This prevents them from making the economies of scale which a market of 270 million inhabitants would allow.

It would be unfair to give the impression that nothing has been done. Since 1969 the Council of Ministers has adopted nearly 180 directives which set out, for the manufacturers of a whole series of products, especially in the car industry, the technical specifications they must conform

National regulations and protective barriers continue to get in the way of a truly Common Market. The new Commission is already getting down to cases



to, at the European level.

But in this field, the Treaty of Rome itself obliges the European ministers to take their decisions unanimously, which does not simplify the problems. It takes on average 10 years to create a harmonised standard at the European level! Needless to say, national authorities move more quickly to create purely national standards. Indeed, technological progress, in many cases, is outstripping the work of the European authorities.

The Commission believes that it is both necessary and possible to move much faster. Until now, the political authorities – the ministers, diplomats and high-level officials of the member states – have included in the directives they have drafted all the technical details necessary to the manufacture of the products. In one sector alone, that of low-voltage electrical material, a different method was followed: the ministers set out only the basic, general requirements applicable to the products, from the points of view of security, health, consumer protection, defence of the environment etc. As for the precise technical specifications, they left it to the possibly European, otherwise national, standards to define these.

This way of proceeding proved effective. The ministers and their representatives treat the questions of a political nature and the experts from the different industrial sectors resolve the technical problems. It should be stressed that these experts, engineers representing the Ten, decide by majority, unlike the ministers. The European Commission is proposing to the member states that from now on they systematically respect this division of tasks in the field of

standardisation.

Specialised European standardisation agencies do exist, such as the European Committee for Standardisation and CENELEC in the field of electricity. According to the Commission's proposal, these committees would elaborate technical specifications according to the basic requirements set out by the ministers. These specifications would not be compulsory, unlike the basic requirements of the directives.

But products manufactured according to the same specifications could pass freely from one Community country to another, since all the member states would consider them a priority as conforming to the directives. On the contrary, a manufacturer who did not respect the common specifications would have to prove that his product conforms fully to the criteria of the relevant directive.

To illustrate its ideas the European Commission drafted a model of the new-look directive. This would cover a whole range of products – eventually several dozen – instead of only one as at present.

It would set out the basic requirements for security, health etc which the products covered would have to fulfil; and it would oblige the member states to allow in imported products which were accompanied by a certificate of conformity to these requirements.

The member states would keep the option of banning a product which did not, in fact, correspond to the requirements laid down by the directive. After verification by the Commission and a special committee, the product in question would even be banned throughout the whole Community.

In the absence of Community technical specifications, national standards could play the same role, in so far as they respected the requirements of the relevant directive. This conformity would be checked by the European Commission with the help of a permanent special committee composed of representatives of the Ten.

The Commission intends to inaugurate this new approach in three sectors: mechanical engineering, especially machine-tools, building

'Member states would keep the option of banning a product which did not correspond to the laid-down requirements'

materials, with a priority on their reaction to fire, and, finally, electrical appliances.

In mid-February, the ministers of the Ten responsible for the internal market and consumer protection gave a fairly positive reaction to the Commission's 'new approach'. They consider the matter to be 'urgent', and they have sent it for immediate consideration to their permanent representatives in Brussels.

A BLUEPRINT FOR EUROPEAN TELEVISION

Carlo Ripa di Meana, EEC Commissioner for information policy and cultural affairs, outlines his proposals for TV programmes aimed at the entire Community for an integrated European television service

Spontaneous internationalisation of television programmes in Europe, from now until the year 2000, could well have a 'Europeanising' effect on viewers – they will be able to choose between an increasingly large range of programmes of many different origins. At the same time, it is desirable for the Commission to stimulate initiatives which go beyond this 'Europeanisation by accident', by creating a new European dimension as regards origination, broadcasting and targets. A programme which is looking for Community backing must be planned and created by a multi-national European team; aimed at the entire public covered by the broadcasting range of European satellites; and multilingual, so that all viewers can follow the programmes in their own languages.



In 1983 the Commission said that it was prepared under certain conditions 'to support the initiative of the EBU and its members', aimed at creating a European television channel. At the beginning of March a programme of this kind, Olympus, co-produced by four European networks, was broadcast for the first time from the NOS studios in Hilversum, and relayed all over Europe by the European Communication Satellite. From next autumn, Olympus plans to broadcast for 40 minutes per day. This will then be extended to five hours of programmes for young people, news programmes and light entertainment, which must be financed entirely through advertising – a total of about 25 minutes of advertising slots each evening.

During the take-off period of three to five years, after which Olympus must be able to stand on its own two feet, all costs will be borne by the organising television networks, the four founding companies, and any eventual new members. At the moment, the Commission and the main contractors of Olympus TV are working out the methods and the kinds of Community support.

As regards methods, the Commission must not simply make a financial contribution. Its support must be on the lines of financing particularly complex and innovative structures, such as those necessary for simultaneous broadcasting in several languages, working out pilot-programmes and producing others which convey the multiple aspects of the cultures of all Europe's regions. Also, it seems to me that the Community institutions are in a good position to guarantee the independence of multinational programme editing from all outside influence, whether national, political, professional or social.

As to the scale of financial support that the Commission would like to give to Olympus, that depends on our budgetary positions for 1985 and the following years, which have not yet been fixed. Everyone knows that we have serious problems at the moment, and that we depend entirely on the decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers in this regard. In my opinion, Community support must be significant, so that it can have the desired effect on European television: to strengthen the project and guarantee its essentially European character.

Last year the Commission was asked to give material support to help another TV project get off the ground – a non-stop news channel, proposed by the TV news agency Visnews. This is a valuable initiative, which is worth looking at. The programme will consist of audiovisual reports, grouped as far as possible around a 'main event' illustrated in about 10 minutes. The complete news

bulletin, of about 15 minutes, will be repeated without interruption from 7 o'clock in the morning to 3 o'clock in the afternoon, continually updated and, when necessary, interrupted by newswashes.

This will all go on without an announcer – as in Olympus, in fact – to allow the programme to be made in different languages without having an original language and problems of dubbing. It is an interesting project, and has become even more so since Visnews reformulated its application. It is no longer asking for financial support, but for concrete political backing from the Commission. The agency will itself cover all its costs during the take-off period of the project, which should begin next September.

The idea of a support system for audio-visual production in Europe is very important to us. The cinema and television industries are now finding themselves in a position of inferiority by comparison with their American and Japanese competitors. According to our statistical forecasts, in 1990 there will be a demand for about 500,000 hours per year for film-type programmes (essentially fiction). Of these, some 125,000 hours should be covered by European productions if we want to keep a certain balance in our programmes.

However, the present production capacity of our audio-visual industries does not exceed 10,000 to 15,000 hours a year. So in 10 or 15 years this sector must be able to produce 10 times more. But this seems impossible in the present state of affairs – a fragmented market and inadequate financial, technical and professional resources. So there is a serious danger that the European audio-visual area will be

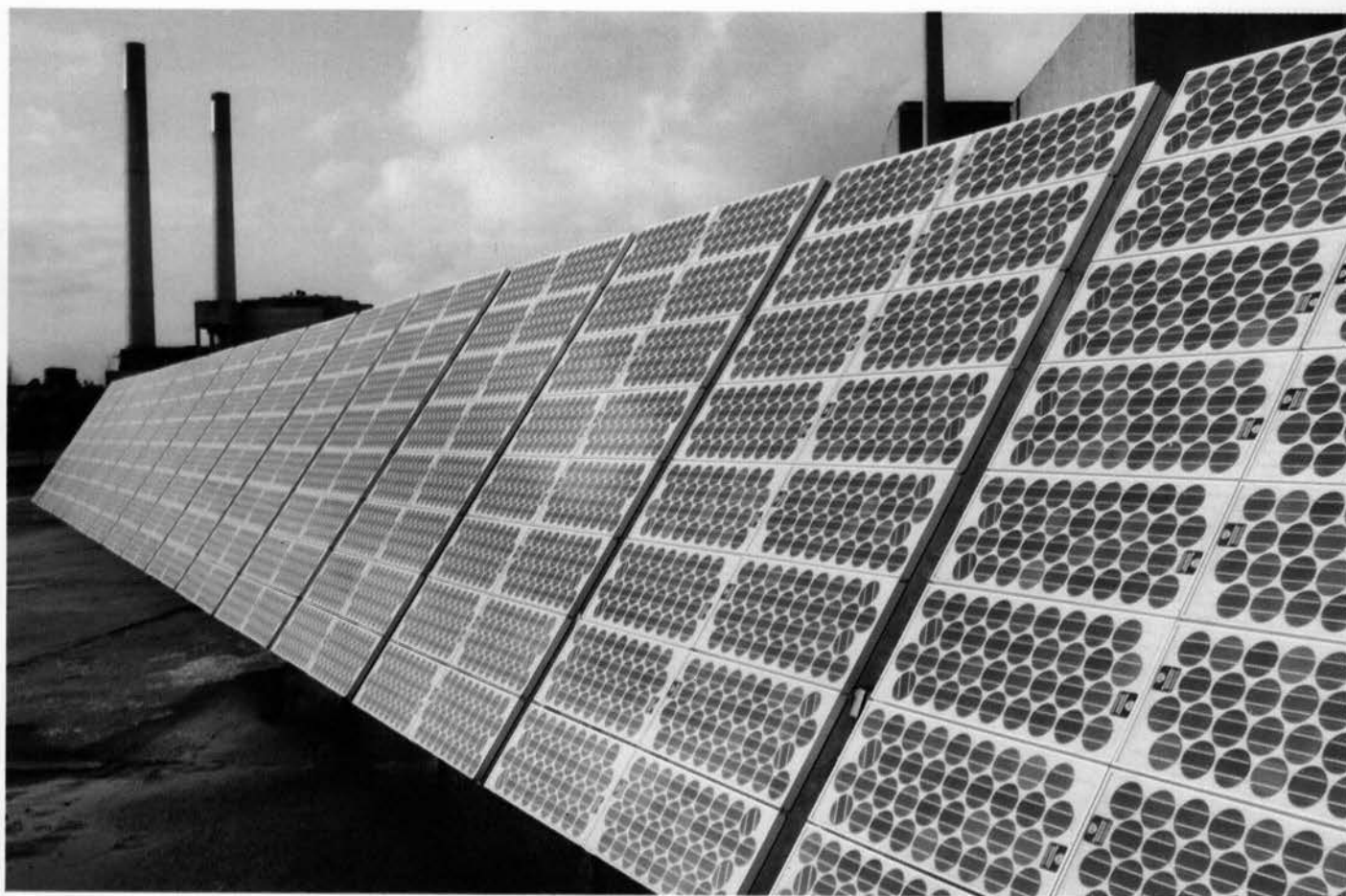
'We propose to get rid of the legal and economic obstacles which hinder the free movement of TV programmes in Europe'

almost entirely dominated by non-European programmes. For this reason, the Commission has prepared a draft regulation for a system of financial assistance for cinema and television co-productions, which should be presented to the Cultural Affairs Council on 28 May. No quick decisions, however, are expected.

The Commission wants to act as a catalyst, to stimulate contacts between the different organisations interested in this project. In addition, we propose to get rid of the legal and economic obstacles which hinder the free movement of television programmes in Europe. This will be first step towards a more ambitious objective – harmonisation in the Community on the basis of agreed principles.

The Community has no precise competence in the cultural sector, according to the Treaties. But the Commission, considering television as a service industry, believes that it can act in this field. With the publication last year of the Green Paper on 'television without frontiers', the out-going Commission opened a legal and economic debate which is of prime importance for the future of television in Europe.

I believe that we must work out general principles which will be valid and accepted in the whole Community. The basic idea is, naturally, to guarantee equal treatment for European citizens in the whole Community. This is merely an inevitable application of the principle of freedom of movement and establishment, already guaranteed by the European Communities' Treaties.



Wanted: 50,000 solar-powered freezers

The UK is hardly Apollo's – the Sun God's – favourite country. So it may have seemed strange to the uninitiated that, in April, some 500 people from 40 countries gathered in Kensington Town Hall, London, for the sixth European Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference to discuss the creation of electricity from the sun.

The aim was to bring together solar cell specialists in research and development, and those who produce and market solar energy products. Sponsored by the European Commission, Unesco, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the European Photovoltaics Industry, and specialist British firms such as Pilkingtons and SPK Engineering, the conference was largely technical. But the politics of solar energy are very significant.

While this system of energy creating is likely to remain marginal in industrialised countries equipped with national electricity grids and other fuel resources, in poorer and developing countries solar energy could be a major replacement for wood, where today forests and woodland are decimated for burning.

As in other fields, however, whereas America and Japan are investing seriously in the applications of solar energy, the European Community, with some exceptions, has shown comparatively little interest in the new technologies. To

An important meeting of solar researchers in London, part-sponsored by the European Commission, has come up with some useful applications of the new science of photovoltaics. PEGGY CRANE reports

try to remedy this situation, the Conference established the European Photovoltaic Industry Association – EPIA – representing the majority of the photovoltaic companies operating in Europe, including such names as Interatom Siemens from West Germany, BP Venture and Solapak from the UK, and Photowatt from France.

The aim is to gain public, government and European Commission support for development of solar energy systems, and to provide incentives for this young industry to maintain and increase its world market share.

Although solar energy can be produced in several ways, the photovoltaic industry is a spin-off from satellite development, and its products are still largely innovative and experimental. Mr

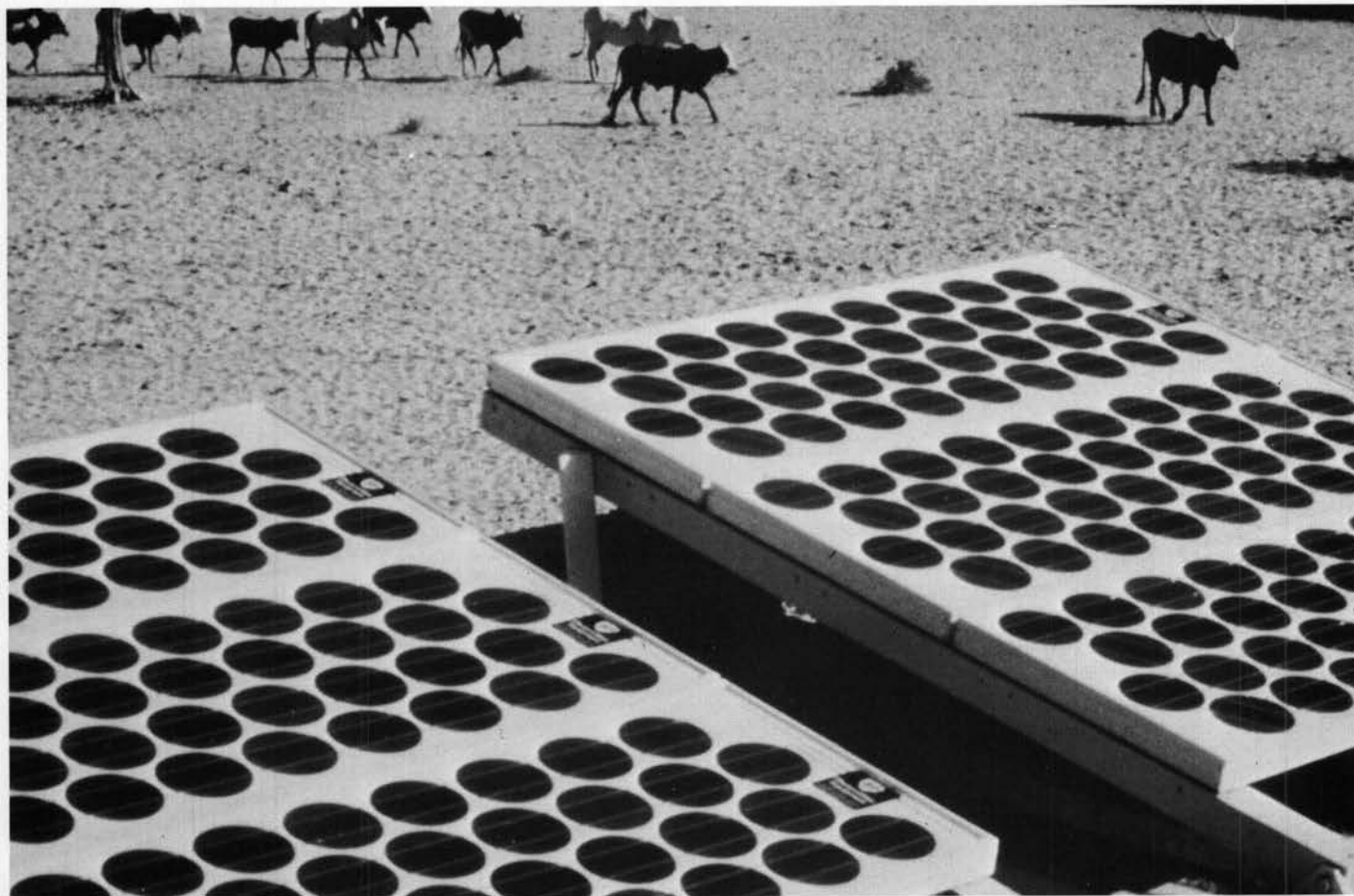
F.C. Treble, who chaired the Kensington conference, is clear that, without help from the European Community, the industry could not have progressed as far as it has.

In fact, Community R&D programmes on photovoltaics started in 1975, and the Council of Ministers adopted the third such programme to run from 1985-88 last December. Although the EEC's financial contribution is probably not much more than 5 per cent of all public spending on photovoltaic development among the Ten, the money has been well directed on research and demonstrations, such as the Marchwood power station at Southampton, funded by the Community, the Department of Industry, and BP Solar Systems Ltd.

Photovoltaic solar generation is based on the conversion of light to electricity. Light, according to a BP solar systems operator's handbook, is a form of electromagnetic wave, like a radio or television signal.

Light may be likened to particles or *photons*, which can be imagined as 'packets of sunlight' that carry the energy to earth.

When brought to bear on electrons, photons create a voltage which can be transmitted by wires as an electrical charge. When light falls on the solar modules that make up the solar array, the electricity produced passes through the wires to batteries, where it is stored. The array



Left: the solar array at Marchwood Power Station, Southampton. Above: a solar-powered refrigerator in Niger stores vaccine to protect cattle from rinderpest.

can be firmly fixed to a stable base, which may be built at ground level or on a strong, flat roof. Properly cabled, and with an electronic control unit, it can deliver a continuous charge during the hours of daylight, irrespective of temperatures.

The Commission's Energy Directorate points out that, up to 1982, most of its sponsored demonstrations were based on thermal use of solar energy concerned with heating, and that photovoltaic projects only started to be significant in 1984. At present, there are some 16 experiments going on throughout the Community, mostly in remote areas where electricity is unavailable.

Three marine lighthouses, for instance, two in Greece and one in Italy, currently using gas, will be equipped with pv (photovoltaic) arrays, which will make them fully automated, and help to solve a staff problem. It has apparently been very hard to find people willing to work in absolute isolation in a lighthouse built on a small rock in the Mediterranean!

In the French Alps, 12 mountain refuges, standing at heights of over 2000 metres, are pv solar projects. In Tuscany, the public will soon be able to see two Etruscan tombs made visible by pv plates.

Another array will replace a noisy diesel engine on a small bird sanctuary near the German North Sea coast. The old engine disturbed the birds' wild life; the new one will be silent, allow-

ing better scope for scientific activities on the island.

There are also experiments in hand to assess the use of pv in supplying electricity to remote

'The photovoltaic industry is a spin-off from satellite development'

houses or shepherd shelters in the Pyrenees, as well as grid connected projects such as Marchwood. But perhaps the most exciting potentialities lie in the developing countries. Mr Treble warns that a great deal of work has yet to be done to reduce installation costs. But, that said, a normal pv array would probably last from five to 10 years, providing energy equivalent to a small diesel engine but with little or no maintenance.

BP – one of the several oil companies interested in solar energy – has produced a solar pv refrigerator designed to store vaccines, through its subsidiary, Solar Systems Ltd. Solar-powered refrigerators being field-tested in Ghana, Niger, Egypt, Tanzania, Kenya and Algeria, have been widely welcomed by the World Health Organisation, which estimates that, under its 'Cold Chain' project to control disease in developing countries, some 50,000 refrigerators – a large number of them solar-powered – will be required in the near future.

Photovoltaic systems could also be used for

pumping, irrigation, street lighting, and possibly rural electrification. But, at present, according to Mr Palz of the Energy Directorate in Brussels, funding agencies such as the UN, the World Bank, national government agencies, and even the European Commission, have not shown themselves fully aware of the potentialities of pv in developing countries. And local efforts, such as ones made under the auspices of the West African Development Bank, and in Mali, have not so far proved very successful.

In the UK, where government spending on solar R&D is about £1.5 million a year, the main interest has been on energy conservation, directed at buildings and building fabrics. Field trials at Milton Keynes, for example, have shown that houses built to new designs have a net heating requirement of about half of that of a conventional design built to current regulations, while solar water heating systems in rehabilitated houses in London's East Dulwich have also proved successful.

Compared, however, with France, which, within its overall energy programme, allocates funds and supports demonstrations on solar energy, and Italy or Greece, the UK programme is very minor.

Opening the Kensington conference on 15 April, David Hunt, Minister for Renewable Energy Sources, emphasised the importance of private enterprise in the photovoltaics business. Companies, he said, could now stand on their own in developing the equipment and the market. It is a view that the EPIA might wish to challenge.

A new spirit in the European Parliament

The second directly elected European Parliament met for the first time last July, uneasily aware that it had much to do to bolster its public image and prestige.

Direct elections had produced reduced turn-outs in most member states, and the different national campaigns had been fought primarily on domestic issues increasing the sense of confusion and apathy.

Nonetheless, one should not forget that the mere fact that the second election was held is an achievement.

The European Parliament is the first elected legislature in history to bring together representatives from 10 different countries, with distinctive cultures and political traditions, less than 40 years after the last fratricidal war. The 63 political parties represented in the assembly cover every conceivable strand of European political thought from neo-anarchists on the left to neo-fascists on the right. They are organised in eight umbrella groupings of varying degrees of homogeneity and operate in seven official languages.

The difficulties of organising this polyglot assembly into a cohesive institution with a clear identity and political purpose are obvious, but they should not be allowed to obscure the scale of the endeavour and the loftiness of the vision. The European Parliament frequently may seem feckless and ridiculous, but everything it does is an experiment, and the survival of liberal democratic values and principles in the next millennium will depend in large measure on how it develops.

For all that, the new Parliament, by comparison with its predecessor, is hearteningly prosaic. Many of us who took our seats in July 1979 had literally no idea of what was expected of us, let alone of how the institution was going to work. Indeed, the first two years largely were taken up with a complete re-casting of the rules of procedure.

This time, there is a much greater sense of experience and professionalism, not least because many of the great names – Brandt, Debré, Berlinguer, Rey – which added lustre to the dignity of the first Parliament are no longer there. Although it was a privilege to sit in an assembly which included nine former Prime Ministers and many other distinguished statesmen, it is refreshing to find that most members now have their careers and their reputations to establish and they see the European Parliament as their natural forum.

If the institution is to flourish, it must be because it nurtures its own breed of Europolitan and does not simply inherit the grandees of a former epoch.

Politically, there are some significant differences. The election of a number of 'Green members' from the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands has significantly extended the width of the spectrum. For the most part, they belong to the far left and have

MICHAEL WELSH, MEP for Lancashire Central and chairman of the Parliament's social affairs and employment committee, detects significant differences between the current assembly and its immediate predecessor



their roots in the student protests of 1968. Indeed, the *enfant terrible* of the last Parliament, the Italian radical Marco Pannella, now seems a curiously establishment figure.

The Greens have formed themselves into the whimsically named 'Rainbow Group' and have their counterpart in the new Group of the European Right, which is dominated by the formidable Frenchman Jean-Marie Le Pen. They stand for traditional values, including the rolling back of permissive society.

It is noticeable that few, if any, of these new Members have yet found their bearings or come to terms with the nature of the institution. For many of them, the Parliament is a convenient platform from which to harangue their fellow countrymen at home, and, because it has little direct power, there is an abiding temptation to indulge one's favourite obsessions to the full and let off steam.

If past experience is anything to go by, the abler members will quickly become absorbed in the detailed work of committees and begin to

'There is a much greater sense of experience and professionalism'

enjoy the scope for constructive influence and action which is available to the Members of the European Parliament. The others will gradually become sidelined.

This process already is getting under way, the more so because the political balance of the new Parliament is by no means clear. Formerly, the non-Socialist groups had an overall majority of 50 which could be relied on to deliver on most substantial issues. This has now shrunk to 17. Although the centre parties succeeded in electing the urbane and much respected Pierre Pflimlin as President, with a handsome plurality on the second ballot, the Parliament is almost perfectly poised; and this puts a premium on cooperation between the political groups and resolute opposition to those who seek to disrupt the Assembly and prevent it from doing its work.

There is much work to be done. At the January session Jacques Delors, the new President of the Commission, presented his outline programme and asked for a vote of confidence, in itself a significant extension of Parliament's influence.

He got his vote amid a feeling of cautious optimism that perhaps the *immobilisme* of the past four years is behind us and that the member-state governments have been panicked into realising that, with steadily rising unemployment and deteriorating competitiveness, they had better act together or they will surely perish separately.

Completion of the internal market, leading to the establishment of complete freedom of movement for people, capital and goods, is everybody's priority, followed closely by the development of the European Monetary System and a common European currency. Then, at least, we will not be passive victims of the vagaries of US fiscal and monetary management.

In December, the Parliament delivered a parting kick at the outgoing Commission by refusing discharge for the 1983 budget, and served notice on the Council of Ministers that it was not to be taken for granted by rejecting the draft budget for 1985.

Unlike the last time this happened, in 1979, there is no sense of crisis, simply a feeling that MEPs generally should not accept a budget that was manifestly inadequate to cover the Community's commitments, and that we are not prepared to allow Europe to be run by inter-governmental agreement.

This brings us to the heart of the issue, which seems likely to dominate the next four years. It seems increasingly clear that the majority of Europeans have concluded that their interests will be best served by rapid progress towards closer European union, including an updating of the Treaty of Rome establishing the Community and devolution of increased powers to the European institutions.

With three exceptions, the Heads of Government seem to have accepted this, and a special

committee is currently examining ways in which the treaties might be revised.

The European Parliament is at the heart of this process. The first directly-elected European Parliament, under the leadership of Altiero Spinelli, produced a draft treaty of union which has been submitted to the different national parliaments and is likely to be the basis of any change.


Not everyone is happy with the details of the Spinelli draft. Some of its proposals seem mechanistic and misconceived, and, significantly, it makes no attempt to deal with the exceptionally difficult area of the rights of national parliaments which, after all, will be expected to pass the new treaty into law. But there is no question that it was the Parliament's initiative which triggered off the process, and that in so doing it was responding to a deeply felt popular need.

The fact is that the European Parliament is the only institution which is capable of producing the kind of instrument of union which can achieve manifest public consent. The very diversity of our membership means that every conceivable viewpoint can be discussed and tested, and the difficulty of constructing majorities means that only those aspects for which there is a broad consensus will be adopted. European union will not come about by an agreement between Heads of Government meeting in secret and attempting to re-enact the Concert of Europe. It can only be delivered by a popularly elected assembly, representing and responding to the will of its electors.

'In December, the Parliament served notice on the Council of Ministers that it was not to be taken for granted'

There is, of course, a massive risk. Sitting as we do in Strasbourg and Brussels, much of our time is spent away from home, and it is only too easy to lose touch with our own grass roots. There are times when the debating chamber does seem to be detached from reality and when MEPs seem to be responding more to dictates of their institutional ego than to the aspirations of the people outside.

If the European Parliament is to deliver European union, it must become a genuinely popular body leading people in the direction in which they want to go. It must not try to force them into an ideological straight-jacket. Otherwise, the process will be devalued and the ideal itself compromised.

The last Parliament achieved many good things, but it signally failed to capture the public imagination and to rally popular support and enthusiasm for its collective belief. If the European experiment is to succeed, the new Parliament must rise to this challenge. It is too early to say if it will, but our fingers should be firmly crossed. 

Holland's marathon on ice



For a national sporting event, Holland's 'Elfstedentocht' takes some beating. For one thing, it only happens once every 20 years or so, when winter takes a grip on the country fierce enough to freeze the whole place over. It's an event no-one can be too sure will happen in his able-bodied lifetime. And when it does, the entire population drops everything.

It happened again – the first time since the great freeze-up of 1963 – on 21 February. Suddenly, the eleven townships of the ancient province of Friesland, in the northern Netherlands, were totally iced in. The Elfstedentocht was on.

In a country where skating is the national sport, there is no shortage of people wanting to take part in this unique ice marathon, 200 kilometers long. If you want to win it, there is no time for stops or refreshment. It's a long, long way, and competition is ferocious.

This year, 250 people entered the race itself, and a further 16,000 lined up for the hell of it. They turned out for a six o'clock start in

the freezing darkness, to push off on what must be – if you take it seriously – an endurance test as tough as any yet devised in the name of sport.

No wonder 3,000 of the starters never finished. And where else in the world would the other 13,000 have made it?

The winner of the race, Evert van Benthem, a farmer, became an instant national hero. His name will be carved on the monument of the Elfstedentocht in Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland, where it will join those of other winners in the long history of the event.

He could make a fortune out of it. But, he says, he wants none of it. He owns 40 cows; and they, he says, are enough for him.

And the population at large? They remained glued to their TV sets for the 14 hours of the event – unless, that is, they were among the half million or so who massed along the canal banks to cheer the heroes on. Not much work was done in Holland that day. But then, nobody knows when – or even if – they will ever get the chance again.

How to get high-tech into the classroom

To help the modern generation of school-children to master such innovations as microprocessors, videotexts, and interactive videodiscs, the Commission has introduced a new programme, which is outlined in a document titled 'New Information Technologies and the School Systems in the European Community' (Com 84 722).

It looks first at the introduction of new information technologies (NITs) into teaching practices and the school curriculum, where the most obvious issue is the nature of the lessons which teach children how to use the new technology. What should the teaching involve? Should the lessons be compulsory or optional? At what level are lessons to be geared? Should computer lessons simply cover technological know-how, or should they also include the more controversial issues of the impact of these new technologies on our society?

NITs, however, are not only used in the computer studies lessons. Just as they are already impinging on social aspects of life, as well as on science and technology, so they can be a teaching aid in mathematics, science, history, geography, economics and language lessons. Manuals are therefore being prepared on NITs in secondary schools, and on their use at primary school level.

NITs are said to make it easier to understand basic concepts like time and numbers. There is therefore a special investigation into how far, and in what way, they actually help children learn by themselves. A more specialised study examines how NITs can help in the education of handicapped children, the deaf and blind especially.

When introducing NITs into schools, the logistics of the problem must also be considered. Soon, schools will not simply have one or two microprocessors – they will also be equipped with computer rooms, simulation facilities, internal and external data bases giving access to programme libraries etc. How is time to be found to supervise the new equipment, and where is the extra space to come from? A number of case studies are currently being conducted to look into these organisational problems.

The second major difficulty in introducing NITs into schools lies with the teachers, who may have had only limited experience in the field. They will not only need to learn the technical aspects, but will also have to acquire the relevant teaching skills. To overcome the problem in the most cost-effective way, exchanges for teacher trainers are being arranged.

It is not, however, only the teachers who need assistance and information on introducing NITs to school. Manufacturers also require information on gearing their products to the classroom. What sort of software, 'courseware' – computer-speak for educational software – and hardware are suitable for educational use? Investigation into these aspects will tie in with

The latest information technologies are making their way into business and industry. But their use in schools poses problems of method and accessibility. A newly-announced European Community programme sets out to help

work being done in the Esprit programme.

Again, in what languages should the NITs be programmed? At the moment, the BASIC language is generally used for teaching; but as this computer language was originally developed to facilitate scientific calculation, teachers and students with little interest in technical and mathematical matters find it stodgy and esoteric. A revised computer language needs to be worked out, especially as other computer languages, such as LOGO, are often daunting.

The Commission wants to introduce some sort of quality control on courseware which would facilitate exchanges. If the courseware were of a consistently high standard, it would be possible to set up 'didactheques' – courseware banks. Similarly, costs could also be kept down with the introduction of a single computer language, as the use of so many computer languages makes the transferring of courseware from one installation to another very expensive.

Discussions with industry will also be held on what sort of hardware is suitable for education. The market is being flooded with new computers for the home and the small business, but these are not always ideal for teaching.

So far, little has been done to consider NIT design from the educational viewpoint. The Commission, in its desire to change this situation, is looking at the possibilities of enlarging man-to-machine communication – talking to the computer through acoustic signal recognition, using touch screens, and other means of bringing the technology within the competence both of teachers and children.

SARAH FOOT



'A revised computer language needs to be worked out.'

EURO FORUM

How to overcome 'Euro-sclerosis': a report on the Davos Symposium

European leaders and heads of business, meeting at Davos, have been debating the best way to deal with the economic disease dubbed 'Euro-sclerosis'. Experts, politicians and businessmen all have their own approach. But they all amount to the same thing: the entrepreneurial spirit must be reawakened everywhere.

'Europeans are starting to emerge from Euro-pessimism, now they must emerge from Euro-sclerosis'. This formula of Herbert Giersch, President of the World Economy Institute of Kiel (West Germany) summarises very well the questions which dominated the last Symposium, organised by the EWF Foundation (Economy - World - Forum) and chaired by Raymond Barre.

Davos, at the end of January and beginning of February, represents a particularly important moment in the rhythm of European and international political and economic life. Nearly 1,000 participants and guests came, among them about 100 prime ministers, including Chancellor Kohl, ministers and leaders of large international organisations, and some 150 representatives of the world media. Among the guests was the new Commissioner, Willy de Clercq, and several Commission directors. Above all, an unusually intense reflection, exchange of ideas and all kinds of contacts took place in an exceptionally informal environment.

By comparison with previous years the Symposium opened in a more optimistic atmosphere. As Professor Klaus

'Last year's assurance of optimism has been replaced by the will to act'

Schwab, President and founder of the EWF Foundation, underlined at the opening: 'Last year's assurance of optimism has been replaced by the will to act.'

In the first place, it is clear that the world economic climate has distinctly improved. Thanks to the vigorous American recovery all the Western economies are doing better, with increased growth and reduced inflation. Even the developing countries are experiencing improved growth.

However, there are still disturbing imbalances. The budget, trade and payments deficits in the United States are reaching dimensions which bode ill for the future. Japan's large trade surplus is also worrying. These imbalances are a serious threat to free trade, and increase tensions and temptations to protection-

'Young people ask themselves what our planet will look like in 50 years...'

ism. Insidiously, protectionist measures are on the increase everywhere.

More than ever, the United States continues to play an economic role of crucial importance. In view of its own very strong economic recovery, the US is even less hesitant about moving forward on the conviction and strength of its dynamism.

Simultaneously, Japan is also advancing with its extraordinary gift for transforming its problems into opportunities. Thus, today, Tokyo is trying to become one of the world's leading financial centres.

Faced with these developments Europe is improving but it is still held back by sclerosis. Both its structures and its attitudes are in great need of modernisation. As much in the area of supply as of demand, the European market remains fragmented and is still not a true market. Europe must reinforce its monetary cohesion, as Karl Otto Pohl, Governor of the West German Central Bank, emphasised. It must enlarge its role and consciously back research and innovation.

Cutting down on regulations and state control, which has been stimulated by the American example led by President Reagan, followed by Mrs Thatcher, is on the increase throughout the world. All governments are becoming aware of the importance and the necessity of the entrepreneurial spirit. From now on their new role will be to create the conditions which will guarantee maximum business dynamism.

So Chancellor Kohl has taken a stand against 'the cultural pessimism which is much too rampant in Europe'. For him, also, the moment has come to try 'Schumpeterism'. For him, the future lies with four basic principles. First, a society cannot consume more than it produces. This is a truth which has too often been forgotten. Second, state intervention must be reduced, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Renewed privatisation and 'de-bureaucratisation' must be aimed at. Third, performance must be encouraged and rewarded. It must be recognised on the psychological and the material levels, notably by tax cuts: 'democracy needs elites based on performance and competence'.

Lastly, everything which is possible does not necessarily suit human beings. Young people ask themselves, with reason, what our planet will look like in 50 years: the arms race, genetic en-

gineering, the environment, are problems which must be taken into account.

Chancellor Kohl also emphasises European unification once again. For him 1985 will be a decisive year: a free trade zone is not enough, the impetus must be accelerated. But is everyone ready to participate, he wonders? Certainly, Chancellor Kohl does not envisage excluding anyone. But for him it is not possible, either, to wait until everyone makes up their minds. Political integration must really move forward.

For Mr Kohl, finally, reducing regulations means an increase in the responsibilities of management. The managers' first task is to manage their businesses and make them effective.

Thus today, every country must consider itself a 'developing' country. The accepted priorities are lightening the administrative bureaucracy and the regulations, reducing the tax burden on individuals and businesses, rendering economic and financial mechanisms more supple and dynamic. Lothar Spath, Prime Minister of the state of Bade-Wurttemberg, laid great stress on these points.

Yet in many countries these concepts remain at the level of words and speeches, and have great difficulty being translated into decisions and concrete facts.

Beyond the state, the entrepreneurial spirit must spread everywhere, even into businesses. Businessmen often tend to proclaim freedom and competition when it suits them, and then reject them if they are in danger of being hampered by them. Opening up of markets and competition must work both ways. Japanese dynamism is to a large extent due to very lively competition between Japanese businesses themselves. The entrepreneurial spirit must also spread inside businesses of all sizes. Businesses must 'de-bureaucratise' explains John Akers, President of IBM Corporation (United States).

The entrepreneurial spirit also implies confidence between people. Delegation, decentralisation and flexibility must become the guiding rules for running a business. This implies putting confidence in people, recognising their right to make mistakes and meet setbacks, and giving them a second chance. This approach must permeate all businesses at all levels. It is the essential precondition for motivation, dynamism and success in big as well as small businesses.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) also play a major role at this stage. It is, above all, SMEs which are creating jobs and innovating, as Bert Twaalfhoven, President of NV Indivers (Netherlands), has shown. They are the

'Businesses must not forget their social responsibility vis-à-vis young people'

driving force of competition. It is important to recognise their role, and do everything possible to encourage and stimulate them. Europe's backwardness is largely due to its inadequacies in creating and developing SMEs.

In addition, a new race of entrepreneurs and leaders must emerge. The 'Schumpeterist' businessman must set an example. A businesses' success relies, first and foremost, on the leadership qualities of its management. To have a clear, foresighted vision of their objectives, to know how to communicate their belief, to be voluntarist, reliable, coherent and a 'winner' are the main qualities necessary for leaders.

In fact, inventiveness and creativity must win in all sectors. Even if we are talking about a state enterprise, it must

certainly be creative, innovative in its products, marketing, organisation, people. But the state must also be inventive in its policies, its taxation system, its initiatives. Innovation is at once technological, economic, financial and social.

Certainly, businesses must not forget their social responsibility vis-à-vis young people, the unemployed, the environment and the Third World. This is what the former British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, and again Carl Hahn, President of Volkswagenwerk AG (West Germany) urged forcefully.

On the whole, the Symposium's president, Raymond Barre, said, if Europe is to escape from Euro-sclerosis we need innovative and dynamic businesses. States must create an environment which is stable and stimulating for businesses. They must also be careful to create clear international rules of the game which can lead to stability in economic, financial and commercial relations. This requires will-power from economic decision-makers and governments.

PHILIPPE HEYMANN

Feeding the hungry: the facts about the Community programme

At a press conference on 28 February, Vice-President Lorenzo Natali, the Commissioner responsible for co-operation and development, sought to refute criticisms of the Community's aid programme to the Sudan and Ethiopia.

He pointed out that in mid-February the Council of Ministers had approved the 'Dublin' plan of aid to the drought and famine stricken regions of Africa. The plan was proposed by the European Council meeting in Dublin last December, and included an offer of 1.2 million tonnes of cereals to the hungry countries, already supplemented by a further 255,000 tonnes. About two-thirds of the 1.2m tonnes will be supplied by the



Community itself, and the remainder offered bilaterally by member states.

Mr Natali said that growing desertification represented a major cause of famine in Africa and one to which Lomé III was paying special attention. New technologies, such as satellite surveillance, would make it possible to detect and combat drought more easily, he said, and Spanish permission to allow an American observation satellite to be placed in the Canaries would be of great help.

The Lomé Convention, he added, was confirmation of Community interest and concern in the area. The damaging effect of the present drought would, however, not easily disappear.

The Community has been concerned with drought problems in Africa since April 1984, long before TV brought the horrors of famine to the eyes of the

Western world. In recent months it has contributed to the stricken areas in company with other international agencies and a host of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

On a recent visit to Sudan, however, Sir Anthony Kershaw MP found much to criticise in the Commission's work, complaining that Community aid lagged behind that of the USA, and suffered from inefficiency and 'arthritic bureaucracy'. Mr Dietrich Frisch, Director-General of the Community's development division, swiftly pointed out that at the end of 1984 the Community made a special effort 'to draw all available means from all corners of the Community budget' for emergency aid, and that so far it had allocated 430m ECU (over £260m) to a special programme, of which Ethiopia will receive about £90m and the Sudan over £30m in the shape of food and other emergency aid.

As far back as April 1984 the Community launched an 83m ECUs (£51.5m) emergency and food aid programme, followed in October 1984 by a further 60m ECUs (£37.2m) which, besides money, offered about 20 countries allocations of cereal, skimmed milk powder and butteroil. These contributions could be expected to feed 3 million people until the end of last December, Mr Natali said.

'The Dublin plan was launched to step up Community cereal allocations'

At the European Council meeting of heads of state and governments in December, the Dublin plan was launched to step up Community cereal allocations to 1.2 million tonnes. Despite some early budgetary fears, the cost to the Community budget is expected to be 175m ECUs (£108.5m), of which 80m ECUs (£49.6m) will come from the Lomé Convention and 95m ECUs (£59m), by Commission decision last December, from the 1984 budget. The plan involves 500,000 tonnes as Community emergency aid, 300,000 tonnes as normal EEC aid, and 400,000 tonnes furnished by the Ten. The figure has since been enlarged by 255,000 tonnes to take account of 20 African countries listed by FAO as affected by drought.

The addition is despite the fact that in 1984 drought-stricken countries ranging from Benin to Mozambique received normal food aid from the Community amounting to 126m ECUs (£78m), with further special aid to Mali, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Niger and Kenya intro-

duced between the April and October plans.

Mr Frisch felt that Sir Anthony's criticism of the Commission's 'arthritic bureaucracy' in the Sudan was 'very hard to accept'. He pointed out that in 1984 delivery delays had been cut to the minimum. He could prove that in certain cases there was a period of only 40 days between the decision to send in food and its arrival at Ethiopian ports. When sea transport alone occupies about 30 days, he reckoned the Community's achievement would be hard to challenge. The Community also had a team of very committed civil servants who were working hard to make the aid effective, but there were continual difficulties at ports and with transport.

Regarding the Sudan, Mr Frisch noted that the US was making a special effort to help the Sudan for its own reasons, so that it was sensible for the Community to concentrate its resources elsewhere. Even so, in 1984 the Community delivered 12,000 tonnes of

'Each member state is free to handle bilateral aid in its own way'

cereals to the Sudan, and some 42,000 more tonnes are to be delivered in the next few months. On top of that, about 20m ECUs (£12.4m) has been allocated to NGOs, the Sudan government, and as far as the refugees are concerned also to the UNHCR (UN High Commission for Refugees).

Mr Frisch corrected the view that member countries were inhibited from sending their own contributions because of Community aid. The UK, and every other member, he said, is absolutely free to handle bilateral aid in its own way above that sent by the Community, but preferably in co-operation on a broad front.

Where the Community's money went

Community aid to the main drought sufferers can be summarised as follows:

Ethiopia: a grant of about 147m ECUs (£91m) for victims of drought, refugees and repatriates, of which 64.84m ECUs (£40m) was allocated in 1984 and 82.15m ECUs (£51m) will be implemented in 1985. Under normal food aid programmes the country has received over 100,000 tonnes of cereals, 5,150 tonnes of milk powder, 2,290 tonnes of butteroil, 100 tonnes of sugar and 2,400 tonnes of beans. A further 45,000 tonnes of cereals will be sent in 1985, with 2,000 tonnes of beans, and quantities of butteroil, dried fish and sugar.

Under emergency aid of some 23m ECUs (£14.3m) the Community has sent money to UNHCR for refugees in Gambella and repatriates in Haraghe; to Unicef for the purchase of tarpaulins, blankets, utensils, grinding mills and stoves; to the Red Cross for medical programmes; to several NGOs like Oxfam and the Catholic Secretariat for transport relief; and to UNDRO (UN Disaster Relief Organisation) for the local purchase of seeds and for inland transport of grain.

Eritrea-Tigray: A grant of 10.5m ECUs (£6.2m) in 1984-5, channelled through the Red Cross (ICRC) and several European NGOs, such as Dutch Interchurch Aid, Via Caritas Germanica and Oxfam. The money has supplied over 15 tonnes of cereals, 130 tonnes of skimmed milk powder, 2,400 tonnes of

beans, 150 tonnes of vegetable oil, 100 tonnes of sugar, and 100 tonnes of fish.

The Sudan: A total of 52.75m ECUs (some £33m) has been granted for victims of drought and refugees, of which 14.5m ECU (£9m) was allocated in 1984 and 38.6m ECUs (£24m) will be spent in 1985. Under normal food aid Sudan has received 12,000 tonnes of cereals and over 3,000 tonnes of dried skimmed milk. As noted the Community has also sent funds to the Sudan government, the UNHCR and several NGOs to assist with medical and feeding programmes. Aid in 1985 will include a further 66,000 tonnes of food supplies.

Mozambique: A total of 43.5m ECUs (£27m) has been allocated to help drought victims, of which 21.3m ECUs (£13.2m) was spent in 1984 and 22.2m ECUs (£13.8m) has been allocated for 1985. Apart from 50,000 tonnes of cereal, Mozambique has also received quantities of skimmed milk powder, butteroil, and rice, with 100 tonnes of sugar and 50 tonnes of haricot beans to be included in 1985. The Community has also helped to fund the purchase of suitable seeds from Swaziland and Zimbabwe and to equip medico-nutritional programmes.

The Community has also provided both normal and emergency aid in Mauritania, Niger, Chad and Mali. A certain amount of this help has been directed at drought control, the purchase and transport of local seeds, and medico-nutritional development.

Youth Forum calls for jobs

The Youth Forum of the European Communities, which represents youth organisations throughout the EEC, has called for an increase in the European Social Fund and greater emphasis on job creation for young people.

The Forum, which held its sixth General Assembly in Luxembourg in March, also demanded the establishment of an 'integrated policy for education, training and employment' to mark 1985, the UN's International Youth Year.

Special measures for young people in the areas of legal rights, housing, health – including action against drug abuse – and efforts to improve the situation of young women, immigrants and ethnic minorities were also needed, it claimed.

Other proposals include demands for the creation of the EEC Youth Exchange programme, proposed by the European Parliament in 1983, and greater participation by youth groups in the decision-making processes of the Community.

Old tyres for oil?

Community-funded scientists at a French research institute have developed an industrial process to get fuel oil from old tyres. The project is one of a number sponsored under the Community's research budget, according to European Commission vice-president, Karl-Heinz Narjes.

The project, which is jointly financed by the French Petroleum Institute and the Commission, consists of a pilot factory to 'depolymerise' used tyres.

According to the scientists, the recipe is fairly simple. You put between 100 and 300 kg of used tyres in a special reactor, together with about 600 litres of heavy oil. You then heat it up to about 300 degrees, so that the rubber melts. And – hey presto – you have fuel oil. All that is left are the metal rims, which can also be recycled and re-used.

The process, which was first thought up about ten years ago at the University of Compiègne, was first tested in a pilot plant in 1979. Its success led to the setting up of a second full-scale plant, supported by a French tyre-maker and a public body, the National Agency for Waste Recovery.

According to EEC estimates, Europe accumulates about a million tonnes of used tyres a year. About 4,000 tonnes a year could be processed in a single factory; and if the whole million tonnes

were recycled, we could save the equivalent of between 70,000 and 150,000 tonnes of oil a year. Commercial plants could be operating in four years, EEC officials say.

The transition to commercial operation will be assisted under the next research and development programme in the field of energy saving. The programme, which runs from 1985-88, and was recently approved by the Council of Ministers, comprises six similar projects, and will cost about 175 million ECUs.

Iron ore is in decline

Europe's iron ore mining industry is dying out, and the Ten are now 80 per cent dependent on foreign imports of the ore, according to a report drawn up by an MEP.

Iron ore production in Europe has fallen to about 17.4 million tonnes, 14 million of which are produced in France's Lorraine Basin, from 113 million tonnes in 1960, says Ernest Muhlen, who drew up the report for the European Parliament's Industry Committee.

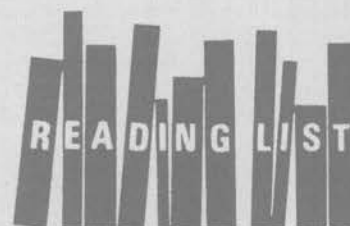
The low iron content of Community ores – between 25 per cent and 40 per cent compared with the 60 per cent content of imports from Brazil and Australia – means that the trend in EEC iron ore production is economically irreversible.

But some mines adjacent to iron and steel industries, as well as being more reliable sources of supply, are also economically viable and should get European Coal and Steel Community aid to improve their competitiveness, the report claims.

Since the closure of mines in Luxembourg and on the Italian island of Elba, only four EEC countries now produce iron ore. The bulk of it comes from 13 mines in the Lorraine region of France. Other French mines are located in Normandy and the Pyrenees.

The United Kingdom has three mines, located near Scunthorpe, Alkerton and Bekermest; the Federal Republic of Germany has one at Leonie Auerbach; and Greece operates one at Larymma. All the mines are 'captive' rather than 'commercial', supplying adjacent blast furnaces, says Mr Muhlen.

But interest in investing in the mines may be limited in the light of falling world demand and prices, and the massive reserves available. Last year ore prices fell 10-15 per cent. And in recent years new extraction methods, together with the discovery of huge open-cast mines in Brazil, South Africa, Australia and Mauritania, means that estimated reserves now exceed 100 years' output, he admits.



Television in Europe: quality and values in a time of change. By Anthony Pragnell. Media Monograph 5. European Institute for the Media, University of Manchester.

Latest in a series of reports on aspects of European culture, especially relevant following the Commission's Green Paper, 'Television Without Frontiers'. It recommends 'fair' competition; new kinds of domestic TV programming; licence fees geared to quality of programmes rather than audience size; and sponsorship, in the form of patronage, to help with the costs.

Has the Cavalry Arrived? A report on trade liberalisation and economic recovery. Trade Policy Research Centre, £3.00.

A pithy paperback bringing together contributions by a study group, chaired by Brian Scott, arising from the Seoul Trade Conference, and outlining ways to a less restrictive trade policy by the major mercantile powers.

Ten European Elections. Edited by Karlheinz Reif. Gower, £16.00.

Analysis of the campaigns and results of the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979/81. The Conservatives' domination of the incoming UK group is attributed to the election's following hard on the heels of their victory at the General Election. Only 32.1 per cent turned out, which the report calls 'derisive'.

The Times Guide to the European Parliament. Edited by Alan Wood. Times Books, £15.00.

An up-to-date reference book on who's who in the European Parliament, with photographs and biographies of the MEPs elected last June, accounts of the campaigns in the member states, breakdowns of the voting, and reviews of where the political parties stand on the issues facing the new Parliament.

At last – Europe joins the front-runners in the technology race

In adopting the Esprit programme, the Community has well and truly joined the biotechnological race. At last it has a strategy worthy of the name.

At the moment, information technologies (IT) are in the lead. The current objective is to 'tame' the microchip. This is why the Esprit programme is important, since it aims at restoring Europe's competitiveness compared to the United States and Japan.

In ten years, the technological gap should be closed. Around the year 2000, economists predict that IT will be replaced by biotechnology. The focus will then be on domesticating enzymes and micro-organisms, and it is on this technological battleground that the industrial nations will confront each other. Thanks to the biotechnology programme adopted by the Council of Ministers on 19 December 1984, the Community will be on the scene.

Esprit will swallow up some 750 million ECUs between January 1984 and December

1988, and biotechnology only 55 million ECUs in five years (from January 1985 to December 1989). But, even allowing for this disproportion, important similarities can be observed between the two programmes. Both aim essentially at increasing the synergy of European efforts, and at producing a 'multiplier effect'. Apart from their role as catalysts, they must also give a transnational dimension to actions carried out within the Community.

The second common point is that Esprit and the biotechnologies programme both result from close collaboration between industrialists and the Community: a good sign for their joint futures.

Do these initiatives indicate the end of the 'technological nationalism' which has been Europe's main handicap? It is too early to judge; but if the spirit of Esprit extends to all economic sectors, Europe may remain master of its own destiny. The two programmes are of the type which could change behaviour in the economic

There is nothing wrong with Europe's scientific brainpower. What has been lacking is co-operation on a scale that matches that of Japan and the United States. Now, with the electronic giants of Europe getting together with the EEC, the picture has begun to change. **ADELINE BAUMANN reports**

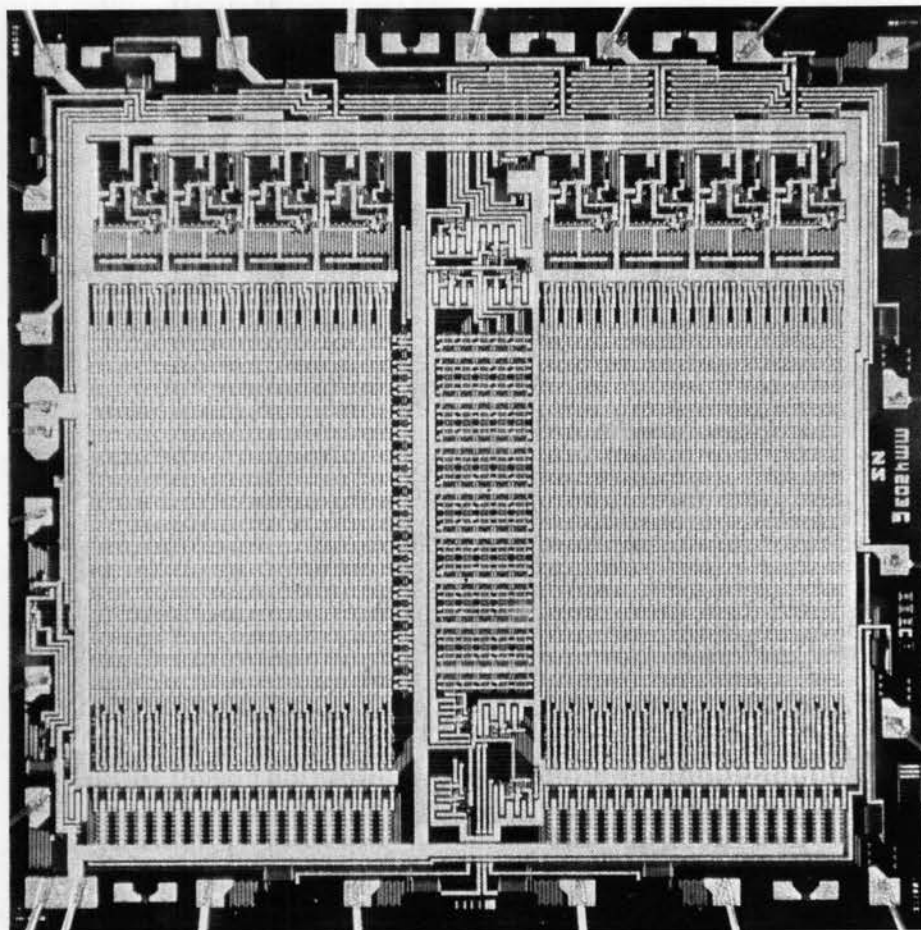
sector, since they should encourage breaking down barriers in the European market, adopting common technical standards, and opening up markets.

The first results are said to be encouraging. But the programme is, first of all, 'a way of organising Europe', said Michel Carpentier, Director of the Task Force Information technologies and telecommunications on 24 January. 'We set up the framework. It is up to the contracting parties to do the rest.'

For 1984, 104 projects with joint funding were approved. The Community's financial participation amounted to some 180 million ECUs, to which was added the equivalent sum put in by the contracting parties – research institutes, universities, small businesses, and big industrial groups from the member states. Acting as go-between, the Community encourages the creation of transnational projects. A kind of marriage bureau helps partners with common aims to get in touch with each other. On average, the 104 projects bring together five partners from different European countries. In total, more than 500 people are already working in the programme: they will reach an estimated 1,000 at the end of 1985 and 2,000 next year.

There are five technical areas on the agenda: advanced microelectronics; technology; advanced treatment of information; office technology; and computer-aided manufacturing. At present, the Community only holds 10 per cent of the world market and 40 per cent of its own internal market. The toll of non-European competition can be measured also in terms of loss of jobs. Between 1970 and 1980 the United States created 19 million jobs, Japan 5 million and the Community barely 2 million. Unlike their main competitors, the Ten did not back the creation of new products which meet new needs soon enough, according to Etienne Davignon, Euro-

'A kind of marriage bureau helps partners with common aims to get in touch with each other'



The current objective is to "tame" the micro-chip.

'Must we accept that Japan is the United States' only serious competitor in biotechnology?'

pean Commissioner responsible for industry and research in the previous Commission. One result is that the Community has just passed the level of 13 million unemployed.

Conscious of the need to reinforce the technological base of the old Continent, 12 big European companies in the electronics sector – Siemens, AEG, Nixdorf, CGE, Thomson, Bull, Olivetti, STET, Philips, GEC, Plessey and ICL, sponsored the Community initiative from the beginning.

The success of the first call for proposals, launched in March 1984 by the Community authorities, is a sign of the interest the European programme has aroused. In reply to the 7,000 information packs sent to potential participants in Esprit programmes, 441 transnational research projects were sent to Brussels. After evaluation by independent experts, 114 projects have been chosen for Community backing.

When the Ten pool their resources of intelligence and know-how the results are immediate. In September the Esprit 'technical week', organised by the Commission, brought together more than 500 people. It was an occasion for taking stock and presenting the results of cooperation: a new silicone compiler and the setting up of a common programming environment.

Parallel to the Esprit programme, a new system for exchanging information was born. Eurocom is a network which electronically connects the 500 participants in the programme. If it is applied to internal Community commercial transactions, this technology could bring about a considerable reduction in both costs and time, it is believed in Brussels.

As for the 1985 work programme, it was approved on 19 December 1984 by the Ministers for Industry and Research of the Ten. The

'Esprit aims at optimising research, reducing waste and duplicated effort'

Community has significantly increased its financial commitment for the 1985 phase: 215 million ECUs, compared with 180 million for 1984.

As in the past, Esprit aims at optimising European research, reducing waste and duplicated effort and maximising the return on investment. The main innovation for 1985 will be the priority given to projects oriented to industry. This should redress one of the structural weaknesses of the Community's research and development sector, ie the difficulty in translating the knowledge acquired by research into industrial production.

The transition to the new Commission should not have a major impact on the programme.

Karl-Heinz Narjes, European Commissioner responsible for the industrial sector, shares his predecessor's enthusiasm for the Community initiative. 'Esprit allows the introduction of the European dimension into the management of businesses,' he said during a recent interview, underlining the need to perfect the internal market. There is no disquiet about the future of Esprit: the only uncertainty comes from the Community's budgetary difficulties.

Must we accept that Japan is the United States' only serious competitor in the biotechnological field? This severe judgement came from a report of October 1983, made for the American Congress. So as not to remain a negligible factor, the Community has just adopted a common research programme, Esprit's little brother.

The decision, which was taken on 19 December 1984, takes the form of a five-year programme (1985-89) in which thermonuclear fusion will get the lion's share – some 690 million ECUs out of a total budget of 1,225 million. Among the sectors which will benefit from Community support are biotechnologies, research on non-nuclear energies, management and elimination of radioactive waste.

Backed by a budget of 55 million ECUs over five years, the biotechnology action programme proposed by the European Commission should remedy the main weaknesses of Europe of the Ten, by setting up a research and training infrastructure adopted to the needs of new biotechnologies by encouraging the transfer of knowledge gained to industry and analysing future developments in the sector.

Biotechnology is the multi-disciplinary field *par excellence*. According to the European Biotechnology Federation's definition, it consists of the 'combined use of biochemistry, microbiology and engineering', and aims at exploiting the capacities of micro-organisms and of cells from cultivated tissues and their constituents.

Enzymes and micro-organisms at the service of humanity, programmed bacteria – these biotechnologies will one day solve the most burning problems of our era: sickness, malnutrition, pollution, the energy equation and many others. Once again it will be important to translate the promising results of pure research into industrial products.

For the Community, 'a strong biotechnology takes on a decisive strategic importance in order to guarantee the competitiveness of agriculture and industry and to improve people's quality of life and natural environment.' Concretely, its application will make possible the selection of cultures and micro-organisms, to create new living entities, to perfect bio-industrial methods and to produce new vaccines and other antibodies.

It is estimated that 40 per cent of manufactur-

ing production in industrialised countries is biological in nature, and that biotechnological evolution should influence and transform this. A future driving-force for innovation, this sector is already a testing ground for international competition. The stakes are high, since in the year 2000 the biotechnologies markets will represent a volume of 50 to 100 billion dollars.

In this area, American activity far outstrips all Europe's. And 10 years ago Japan launched a specific programme on life sciences and their industrial and medical applications.

The Community's main handicaps in the biotechnological race are a fragmented market, lack of qualified researchers, an inadequate scientific infrastructure, over-expensive agricultural products.

These factors are sufficient to explain the wretched European performance – reduced exchanges and fewer patents taken out than in the United States or Japan.

These specifically European constraints are also the underlying cause of the 'brain-drain' across the Atlantic, since the US offers researchers a much more favourable environment. If

'It is the British Government which is most concerned about scientists' emigration'

the report mentioned above is to be believed, it is the British government, and to a lesser extent, the German, which is most concerned about scientists' emigration.

At present, the Ten have pure research of a very high level – the best in the world, it is said. In effect, all the member states have taken initiatives to reply individually to the challenge of modern biotechnology. Currently going on in the big national laboratories are cloning oil-palm cells (Unilever, UK) and production of semi-synthetic penicillins (Bayer, West Germany).

Rhône-Poulenc (France) is the world leader in the production of vitamin B12; Gist-Brocades (Netherlands) the main European producer of penicillin; and Novo (Denmark) dominates the world market in industrial enzymes.

Co-operation, however, is lagging. So from 1985 to 1989 the Community will carry out joint actions, in the form of joint-funded projects with the European laboratories. The efforts will relate to research in the strict sense, collaboration across frontiers, access to primary products like sugar and starch, setting up a regulation for food and pharmaceutical products, and for foods destined for animals and patents laws, as well as training of scientists and financial aid for laboratories.



'La Marcha' takes over in Madrid.

An end to the pain in Spain

It was fitting that Spain should have applied formally for EEC entry shortly after democratic elections were held in 1977. Those elections, held 18 months after the death of Franco, represented the first free vote held in Spain since a shortlived experiment with republican government in the 1930s.

Prior to the 1977 vote, political parties and trade unions, banned during the *franquismo* period, were legalised, and electoral law that ensured universal suffrage within a proportional representation system was drawn up. The elections paved the way for the framing of a democratic constitution by the newly-created two-chamber parliament in 1978. With the advent of democracy, Spain moved swiftly to consolidate its ties with the European Community.

The Spanish transition from dictatorship to democracy was marked by general euphoria, both within and outside Spain. The whole process was held to be a model of political toleration. Public opinion in Spain believed that, now the country had shown its democratic credentials, it would be welcomed with open arms into the European Community.

This belief had at least two components: Spain had a right to take its place in Europe, and Europe had an obligation to accept Spain. Gov-

Clearance to enter the Community was a long time coming. But it found Spain better prepared than if she had been invited to join the moment the Franco years were over. TOM BURNS reports

erning the enthusiastic pro-Europe movement in Spain was the interaction between the themes of democracy and dictatorship and of membership of the Community. *Franquismo* had barred Spain from its rightful place among the developed, Western societies, and the onset of democracy had removed the barriers. There was, in addition, a sub-theme. Membership of the European Community could serve to shore up and consolidate the democratic process.

With the benefit of hindsight, it appears that much of the ensuing anguish in Spain, as negotiations to join the EEC became interminably bogged down, resulted from the initial political

implications and perceptions with which Spain approached the membership issue. From the beginning, the emphasis was on political union. The economic complexities were never clearly explained to the Spanish public, nor, much less, understood. If French farmers, for example, blocked the entry of Spanish produce, this was interpreted as an attempt to keep Spain in backward isolation.

The economic complexities posed by Spanish entry were considerable from the start. It was not completely understood in Spain that they were of a two-way nature. Overall, there was excessive stress on the competition that Spanish horticultural produce would involve for Community members, and in particular France; while it was often forgotten that the Community would itself make inroads on other sectors of Spanish agriculture.

The complexities were, however, of a double nature, particularly because European entry involved the tearing down of the protectionist system which formed the very basis of Spanish productivity. The prevailing view in Spain in the early years of the negotiation process, once it was digested that membership was not automatically assured along with democracy, was that Europe was stalling on Spanish entry be-

'If French farmers blocked Spanish produce, it was interpreted as an attempt to keep Spain in backward isolation'

cause it feared the impact of Spanish produce.

Informed opinion in Spain knew perfectly well that the delays were due to the Community's own budget problems. But even when this was admitted there was usually an aggrieved tone amongst Spanish officials, who argued that there was little use in Brussels sorting out the problems of the Nine or of the Ten if the Community was to consist of 12 members.

Such attitudes reflected both Spanish impatience and an ignorance, albeit an understandable one, of Community procedures. There were other blind alleys as well. For a time there was a virtual blind belief in government circles that France represented the main hurdle to entry, and that this obstacle could be circumvented by gaining the good offices of West Germany, which would, metaphorically, slip Spain through by the back door.

The attempted diplomatic liaisons, seriously argued by senior officials, were, at the very least, reckless. They rested on two main misconceptions: that France was the obstacle that Madrid held it to be, and that West Germany would willingly forego an understanding with France, which was, after all, a cornerstone of post-war European diplomacy. It was not until December 1982, when a socialist government took office in Spain, that a measure of realism was injected into Spain's relations with its hoped-for Community partners. At this point, the new administration turned the diplomatic wheel by 180 degrees, and decided that, if Spain were ever to enter Europe, it would be with France making the introductions.

The long negotiating process, blamed on the Community as a whole or on France in particular, was certainly frustrating for Spain – there were innumerable false starts, with hopes suddenly raised only to be quickly dashed as the entry target date was forever pushed back. But it was, at the same time, a blessing in disguise. The slow approach to the doorstep in theory allowed Spain to prepare itself fully in advance of reaching the Community's threshold.

The need for preparation was not an issue that could be treated lightly. Had Spain entered the EEC, as was widely hoped and expected, in the wake of the 1977 elections and the formal request for membership, the effect could have been shattering on several levels. The effect of value-added tax, for one, would have sent earth-tremors through the Spanish financial structure, as it was not until the first democratically elected governments began a thoroughgoing overhaul of the fiscal system that Spaniards began to pay taxes in a manner comparable to other European societies.

Unfortunately, the early years of the negotiating process coincided with the progressive

consolidation of Spain's democratic transition. It could hardly have been otherwise, since the two were intimately linked. In practice, this meant that there was high political premium in Spain on industrial peace, and that necessary restructuring and austerity programmes went by the board. Public money was poured in to maintain 'smoke-stack' industries; the government and the private sector fought shy of forcing through layoffs; and wages skyrocketed, triggering an inflationary spiral that peaked at year-to-year increases of close on 30 per cent.

It is, in reality, only in the last two years that determined attempts have been made to streamline the Spanish economy, and have it in shape for Europe. The budget policy of Spain's socialist government has tackled the deficit and the inflation index with a strict monetarist approach. The deficit has been contained, and even brought down by half a percentage point, despite a sharp rise in expenditure. Revenue has risen, due more to increased measures against fraud than to further fiscal impositions. Real income has dropped as wages were pegged to below the inflation rate.

On the threshold of European entry, and after two years of austerity, a case could be made for a degree of preparedness. In December 1984 the inflation rate stood at 9.5 per cent – down from 12.2 per cent the previous December and from 14.4 per cent in December 1982, when the socialist government took office. This was a key psychological victory. It was the first time that Spain had had single digit inflation since the mid 1970s.

There were other optimistic indicators. At the end of last year Spain enjoyed a current account surplus of two billion dollars. This was a stark contrast to a 2.3 billion dollar deficit at the end of 1983, and it was in fact the first time Spain had recorded a current account surplus since 1979. The improved external account, together with an inflow of foreign investment and tourism income up by 1 billion dollars on the previous year, meant that reserves rose by some 4.6 billion dollars to stand at 15.7 billion dollars. Spanish finance ministry officials claim that the reserves at the end of last year represented 50 per cent of the total foreign debt and that this was the highest ratio within the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development.

There are less satisfying indicators, however. The chief among them is an unemployment total of 2.8 million, which is nearly 500,000 up on the end of 1983 figure and represents the staggering statistic of just over one in five of the labour force out of work.

The jobless total has meanwhile been aggravated by tough, albeit necessary, streamlining in loss-making sectors, particularly those in the steel and shipbuilding industries. Reduced inflation and a clampdown on wages, however, have failed to trigger domestic investment among Spaniards – and, indeed, one of the more distorting and dangerous characteristics overall of the Spanish economy is that government borrowing requirements to meet the deficit have tended to soak up an evidently surplus liquidity. The deficit has been contained, and even

marginally reduced; but it remains a cancer eating on Spanish economic health.

A consequence of Spain's depressed domestic market is that Spanish producers have been forced to export as never before. They have been helped in this by the slide of the peseta against the dollar; but more than half of Spain's exports go to the EEC, and the peseta has remained mostly stable against the West European currencies. Spanish exports last year rose by 20 per cent in real terms.

The competition for export markets has had an undoubted beneficial effect on Spanish business, all the more so since the collapse of the country's traditional export market in Latin America meant that Spanish exporters geared themselves to trading in uncharted waters.

'Only in the past two years have determined efforts been made to streamline the Spanish economy'

Spain genuinely wanted to join Europe from the very moment its political system turned it into a bona fide candidate for entry. It wanted to join because Spaniards had a deep-rooted desire to break out of isolation, and become an accepted member among developed societies. More than just a formidable geographical barrier, the Pyrenees mountain range forms a psychological block that Spaniards alternatively hide behind or yearn to break out of.

But, in the process, Spain has had to undergo major adjustments in its economic structures. This was inevitable given the protectionist characteristics of the economy. Spanish industry has grown in the greenhouse of protectionism and, according to the European Commission's own calculations, Spain's acceptance of the Common External Tariff and of VAT will be equivalent to halving the present effective level of trade protection for Spanish products.

The more visionary of Spain's economists have in the past years stressed the growing urgency for adjustments. A radical overhaul of the economy was crucially necessary as worldwide recession a decade ago brought the so-called Spanish economic miracle to a summary halt. Fortunately, the necessity coincided with the application for European entry. This meant that a direction and a purpose were lent to the whole adjustment process.

In retrospect, the delays were all to Spain's advantage; and it is unfortunate, if explicable, that Spain did not use the opportunity to greater effect. Spain cannot afford to waste any more time during the transition period if it is to hold its own in the Community and avoid a situation in which, as one Madrid wit puts it, 'Spain doesn't enter the Common Market, the Common Market enters Spain.'

□ Tom Burns is *Newseek* and *Washington Post* correspondent in Madrid.



Portugal has a second date with history

With a total population less than London's, but with a past that helped to change the map of the world, Portugal is well qualified to join the Ten in an enlarged Community of equals

A celebration in ornate stone of Portuguese navigators who charted new worlds in the 15th and 16th centuries, the cathedral of Jeronimos looms near the River Tagus – the waterway that rises in Spain, meanders across Portugal's highlands and flatlands and just west of Lisbon spills into the Atlantic, the ocean that shaped Portugal's destiny.

Lisbon, the capital, sits like Rome on seven hills. Like Rome, too, it was once the heart of an empire – one that spread even further over the globe than the outposts of the Caesars. Jeronimos, symbol of that empire, shelters the tomb of a hero of the golden age, Vasco da Gama.

Driven to seek an identity independent of their domineering neighbour, Castile, and moved by the energies of Europe's Renaissance, avid for riches not to be found within their country's modest boundaries, Portugal's navigators opened routes which were later to be exploited by more powerful European nations.

Nevertheless, by the late 18th century Portugal ruled a dominion with huger resources than those of the motherland. From Brazil,

whose gold and coffee paid for stately Portuguese palaces, across the Atlantic via the islands of Cape Verde and Sao Tomé into Africa, over the Indian Ocean to Goa, on the Indian subcontinent, to the doors of China and Macao, south-east to the island of Timor, Portugal held sway.

The empire is gone. But the Portuguese language is still spoken by millions in Brazil, which chose independence in 1823; in Africa, where former colonies battled for independence from 1961 to 1974; in parts of Asia; and on all continents where five million emigrant Portuguese live and work.

By the 1960s, Europe's post war boom and eruption of war in Africa had heightened the lure of the old continent. Able-bodied men and their families poured into France, the Low Countries, Germany and Scandinavia, seeking jobs – modestly-paid by European standards, but lucrative for labourers used to much less at home. Some 1.5 million Portuguese now live in Western Europe.

This migration, and the overthrow in 1974 of a 50-year-old dictatorship depending on colonial power, strengthened Portugal's European *persona*. Today Portugal has 10 million inhabitants – fewer than Greater London – and a falling birthrate affected by migrations and stricter birth control (despite the Catholic Church's disapproval). The language is Latin, laced with Arabic – a heritage of Roman and Moorish occupations that also fashioned structures, cities and industries. Roman marble quarries and clay potteries still work; Moorish palaces, and polychrome tiles and architectural features, still adorn areas from the centre of the country to the southern Algarve – 'Al-garb', the Arabic

for West – the west of their realm.

The land is richly varied. The coast is marked by white sands, capes, and hills rolling to the sea. The hinterland is crossed by rivers and mountains scattered with boulders. There are tiny farms still worked by ancient implements, vineyards and wheatfields, olive and cork groves, and pine forests interspersed with eucalyptus groves.

Portugal became independent 840 years ago, when noblemen, aided by the Crusaders, ousted the Moors. But for 500 years after that Portugal was obliged to ward off Castile, with the help of Europe's oldest alliance, signed with Britain in 1383. The Alliance did not save Portugal from annexation by Spain from 1580 to 1640 or Portuguese forests from being decimated to build the Spanish Armada.

That blow to national pride, and the toll taken by an Inquisition introduced in 1520 that drove Christian and Jewish thinkers, artists and merchants into exile, left scars on the national psyche that still show.

Strewn over hills, old Lisbon houses friendly, sturdy people who have outlived disasters, wars and revolutions with obstinate resilience. The oldest quarters, kaleidoscopes of little houses draped in washing, geraniums and caged birds, crammed along steep lanes and steps, team with people, cats, dogs and poultry, dark taverns and overstuffed shops.

They are as complex as the ethnic music, the *fado*, sung to two guitars by men or women with powerful voices. The *fado* speaks of disappointment and survival, pain and the past – marks of a nation that has never been sure of its future.

Habits are also changing through more exposure to the modern world. Younger Portuguese are into blue jeans, pop music and rock groups rather than the traditional three-hour lunches.

'Habits are changing through more exposure to the modern world'

They are also freer-spoken and more adventurous in the arts and business than those of a generation ago.

Professionalism is creeping into working hours. Competition, understood as providing better goods and services rather than undercutting rivals, is gradually taking root. Again, like other nations the Portuguese seek distraction from their worries: three-quarters of them watch two TV channels, serving up a *potpourri* of domestic and imported material.

The Portuguese have evolved a quirky humour, and a talent for ironic political anecdotes and graffiti, that have been safety-valves for centuries. The humour has permeated works of such witty observers as Eça de Queiroz, and left its legacy in a 1975 graffiti in Lisbon: 'The Indians were red, too. Remember what happened to them.' What happened to Portugal led democratic leaders to ask for the key to Europe.

DIANA SMITH

The Ten are importing more coal

Coal imports by the Community rose sharply last year. Aid to Europe's coal industry also increased per tonne of coal produced, according to Eurostat, the EEC Statistical Office.

A key factor in the decline was the fact that EEC coal was more expensive than competing coal from the US, South Africa, Australia and Poland, partly because of the British miners' strike.

Coal imports from third countries rose to 80 million tonnes in 1984, 30 per cent more than in 1983. EEC production fell by about 30 per cent, creating increased demand for imported coal.

The decline in production was not solely due to the miners' strike, although British production did slump to 49.3 million tonnes from 116 million tonnes in 1983. German and French production also fell slightly to 84.3 million tonnes from 89.6 million in the FRG and to 16.6 million from 17 million in France. Belgian production, on the other hand, rose slightly, to 6.3 million tonnes from 6.1 million.

All the member states with the exception of Ireland increased their non-EEC imports. The UK nearly doubled its imports from third countries in response to the miners' strike, with supplies of imported coal rising by 97 per cent.

The Netherlands increased them by 41 per cent, Belgium by 40 per cent, Denmark by 34 per cent, Luxembourg by 31 per cent, France by 29 per cent and Italy by 21 per cent. All six countries normally buy British coal.

European production costs, already high by world standards, continued to rise. Consequently, the EEC allowed member states to extend existing subsidies. In 1984 state aids to the industry amounted to 2.7 billion ECUs, or 17.4 ECUs per tonne of coal produced, compared with about 3.2 billion ECUs, or 13.8 ECUs per tonne, in 1983.

R&D to get more cash

The EEC is to spend 1.225 billion ECUs (£757 million) over the next five years on seven research and development programmes.

The programmes, which include major efforts in the fields of biotechnology and nuclear fusion, will make 'a vital contribution' to Europe's economic growth and future competitiveness, according to Industry and Research Commissioner Karl-Heinz Narjes.

Speaking to journalists in Brussels, Mr Narjes said that approval of the programmes by the member states showed an acceptance of the need to carry out and finance research activities at Community level, which, while they may be costly, are considered indispensable.

But he noted that the programme eventually adopted by cost-conscious ministers was markedly lower than the 4 billion ECUs originally proposed by the Commission.



Fair dos for the Kangaroos

A number of member states import fairly large quantities of kangaroo meat from Australia. According to the European Commission, the relatively humane way in which the animals are killed is not sufficient grounds to ban imports.

Rejecting calls for a ban from Dutch Socialist MEP Eisso Woltjer, officials said that, in 1983/84, the Federal Republic of Germany imported only 80 kilos of kangaroo meat, while France imported 22.8 tonnes. The previous year the Germans imported 344 tonnes and the year before that over 1000 tonnes. In 1981/82 the Dutch also imported about 135 tonnes.

Most recent estimates of Australia's kangaroo population are in the

region of 20 million. When the climate is right, they breed extremely fast and, according to farmers, can cause serious damage to pasture and grazing land. Culls are necessary to control numbers, according to the authorities.

There are 48 different kinds of kangaroo, only seven of which are culled. None of the seven is a threatened species. The culls are carried out by licensed hunters, who sell the meat and the skins to commercial firms.

Opposition to the cull from ecological groups and the general public, who do not like the idea of killing Australia's national symbol, means that the government does not directly intervene at the taxpayers' expense.

This year the authorities set a cull quota of just under 2 million – down from 3.1 million in 1983. Meat for human consumption is separated from meat destined to become pet-food, before it is exported.

In the member states, rules on kangaroo consumption vary widely. In Britain it has been banned since 1972. In the Benelux countries it is banned for human consumption for veterinary reasons; and in Germany there are no restrictions on its sale or use.

Seals are still in danger

MEPs have called for new measures to protect seals. They include an unlimited extension of the existing EEC ban on imports of seal-pup furs, and measures to save the European monk seal from extinction.

The import ban, which was agreed by EEC ministers in March 1983 and came into effect in October of the same year, appears to have been extremely effective. Seal-pup hunting stopped almost immediately in Norway and by this year club-wielding Canadian hunters have also given up due to the lack of customers prepared to buy the white furs.

But the ban expires in October of this year. And, according to a report drawn up by Dutch MEP Hemmo Muntingh, if Europe reopens its markets to the pelts the killing will begin again. MEPs voted unanimously for an extension of the ban for an unlimited period.

The Muntingh report also condemns the hunting of adult harp and hooded seals for their pelts, and warns that in European waters certain species face extinction.

According to the report, there were over 15,000 common seals in

the Baltic in 1900 – now there are barely 200. In Dutch waters there were 3,000 seals in 1930 – and now there are only about 750, it claims.

The European seal most at risk is the Mediterranean monk seal, says Mr Muntingh. Although it is already close to extinction, its fur is still sold in Greece. The last recorded monk seal in Sardinia was killed last year, he claims.

The European Commission has already set up information programmes in the Greek islands and coastal areas, to make people aware of the monk seal's plight. Studies are also under way to set up conservation areas for the seals.

The European Parliament called for renewed efforts to save the animals, and for permanent EEC funding for conservation schemes. It also called on the French and Greek governments to set up conservation areas as soon as possible.



The honey business gets stung

Beekeepers have appealed to the Commission to speed up its investigation into ways of combating the varroa mite, a parasite that is attacking growing numbers of beehives.

According to officials, the parasites are already in evidence throughout Greece and most of Italy, except the north-West. Damage to hives in Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Lazio is considerable, and honey production in Tuscany, Campania, Sardinia and Sicily has also been affected.

Most of France has been affected to a limited extent; and about a quarter of hives in the Federal Republic of Germany, with the exception of the North and South East of the country, have been hit by the disease, according to the European Commission.

Concern about the problem led the Commission to set up a meeting between interested groups in 1983, which in turn led to a joint research project, involving 12 research institutes, from member states.

Computer-based education 'disastrous'

Europe can profit from the computer revolution in education, but the shift away from general education it implies could be 'disastrous', according to Education and Social Affairs Commissioner Peter Sutherland.

Speaking to a British seminar on training in new technologies, he said that young people 'are now being pressured into thinking that without "hands on" knowledge of computers, they have little hope of employment in their adult life.'

'It would be disastrous if education and training systems begin to see themselves responsible for turning out custom-built man- and woman-power, ready-trained at an early age to slot into the jobs being created in the growth sectors of the economy,' he said.

'Not only does industry have its own responsibilities for training specialised personnel, but education systems have continuing responsibility to ensure that the whole population receives the broad-based general education necessary for survival in an increasingly complex society,' the Commissioner added.

German importers on thin ice

A German skate manufacturer's complaint that cheap skates were being dumped on EEC markets by Eastern bloc producers has been thrown out after Commission officials discovered that it was selling the imports itself.

LICO, which is the EEC's biggest skate manufacturer, claimed that cheap skates from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary were being sold at below cost price and damaging its business.

An investigation showed that LICO was importing Czech skates and selling them in EEC member states at the same cut-prices as other importers, undercutting its own skates. It also revealed that LICO doubled its market share between 1980-83, the period when it claimed its business was being undermined by the Eastern Europeans.



Who'd be a battery chicken?

Battery chickens, known to resort to cannibalism because of their cramped living conditions, should get a 12.5 per cent increase in living space, according to EEC vets.

About 240 million of the estimated 290 million hens in the ten member states currently live in battery cages that average 400 sq cm a bird. According to the Commission, the area should be increased to an average of at least 450 sq cm, whilst scientists investigate the possibility of improved cage design and equally efficient but more humane methods of egg production.

Up to now the adoption of an EEC code stipulating larger cages has been resisted by farm ministers, because the extra space would mean a related 12.5 per cent increase in costs for building, equipment and land, amounting to about 1.3 ECUs (or 65 pence) per hen place.

Currently only three member states - Denmark, France and the Netherlands - have minimum cage sizes for battery hens laid down by law. Denmark offers the best conditions, allowing between 600 sq cm and 900 sq cm per bird. The Netherlands allows 425 sq cm and France 400.

Other member states apply voluntary codes that vary according to the size and weight of each bird.

Belgium, Luxembourg and Ireland allow between 400 and 450 sq cm. The Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom allow between 420 and 450 sq cm. Italy has a recommended minimum cage area of 400 sq cm. Information on the situation in Greece was not available.

But, although a more humane system is desirable, officials admit that reforms will be difficult to implement without increasing egg prices. The battery system has been developed over the years as, they say, the most efficient way of producing cheap eggs for the consumer.

Dutch are out of step over TV

Belgians should be allowed to watch Italian TV programmes offered on cable, and Dutch viewers should be offered the same choice of any European cable channel, regardless of its country of origin, according to the European Commission.

In recent weeks, Industry and New Technology Commissioner Karl-Heinz Narjes and Information and Arts Commissioner Carlo Ripa di Meana have both defended the principle of freedom to broadcast in Europe, in the light of European Court of Justice rulings.

But rules adopted last July by the Dutch Government appear to be going in the opposite direction. The legislation banned all 'foreign' TV channels using Dutch sub-titles, and advertising specifically aimed at Dutch viewers. Under the rules, foreign channels will also have to be transmitted to all cable subscribers or none at all.

In a written reply to a parliamentary question from Dutch Euro-MP Gijsbert de Vries, Mr Narjes said that the new Dutch rules completely contradicted the EEC treaties. The Treaty of Rome specifically bans restrictions on the freedom to provide services in the ten member states. In 1980 the European Court of Justice ruled that services included television broadcasts.

Merchant Fleet is on the slide

A European Commission report that identifies the threat to fleets posed by the recession, and calls for improved cooperation between employers and unions, could save jobs, according to Transport Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis.

Commenting on the proposals, he said that, for merchant shipping to survive in Europe, there had to be a strengthening of the dialogue between employers and unions. 'The industry is made up of shipowners, shippers and seafarers. Each has to comprehend the problems of the other; each has to be mutually supportive', he said.

The proposals touch on key areas that could halt the slide of the Community's merchant fleet. They in-

clude draft legislation that would give the EEC powers to maintain competitiveness in world markets, whilst enabling it to police abuses such as the use of flags of convenience to employ sub-standard ships and crews.



Commuting is bad for your health

Jostling to and from work on crowded trains and buses, negotiating frustrating traffic jams, and dealing with noise and exhaust fumes are things that millions of European commuters put up with every day.

But, according to a report issued by the European Foundation for the improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC), they could be a key factor in employee sickness, absenteeism, job dissatisfaction and family problems.

The EFILWC study, based on two surveys carried out in Italy and the Netherlands, describes commuting as 'potentially stressful and disruptive', particularly for workers unable to make trade-offs between the strain of commuting and the advantages of living in better surroundings.

According to the study, an estimated 71 per cent of workers in the member states live within 10 km of their work. About 22 per cent have to travel between 10 km and 25 km and 7 per cent have to go more than 25 km. Some 75 per cent of workers take less than half an hour to get to work; 20 per cent take less than an hour; and 5 per cent take over an hour.

Commuters questioned complained of a far higher incidence of tiredness, irritability, lack of concentration, sleeplessness, headaches, digestive disorders, backache, motion sickness and general discomfort than non-commuters, the survey showed.

Inefficient transport systems that require several changes of vehicle, air pollution and a frequent lack of seating, all contributed to greater pressures on commuters.



The sound of music – from 4,000 voices

In Strasbourg this summer, from 17 to 28 July, choirs from all over Europe will take part in a festival of song – 'Europa-Cantat'. The Choirs, all members of the European Federation of Young Choral Singers, meet every three years. This time, they are being joined by choirs from America, Asia, Africa and Oceania as well.

Coinciding as it does with European Music Year, this year's event includes special performances of works by Bach, Handel and Scarlatti, whose tercentenaries are currently being celebrated, as well as works by Penderecki, Xanakis, Halter, and other contemporary composers.

Every morning, from 50 to 300 choristers will rehearse under the direction of the leading European choir-masters: Pierre Cao (Luxembourg), Jean Sourisse (France), Willi Gohl (Switzerland), Oriol Martorell (Spain), Helmut Rilling (Germany), József Maklari (Hungary) and others. Every afternoon, the participating


One of the biggest events in this, European Music Year, will be 'Europa-Cantat', to be held in Strasbourg in July

choirs will give concerts – more than 100 programmes in all. Every day, as a choir of 4000 voices, they will sing together the choral masterpieces of Europe, both traditional and classical. In the evenings, in the enormous Rhénus Hall in Strasbourg, which has been transformed into a concert hall by the city of Strasbourg, they will give concert performances.

The Federation was set up as a legal entity in Bonn in February 1963, in response to promptings from European choirmasters and choral societies in France and Germany, all of whom believed in the value of such an enterprise in encouraging closer understanding between peoples through choral performances by young sin-

gers. The Federation promotes exchanges between choirs, organises musical weeks, seminars from choir-masters and composers, and helps familiarise people with the entire European repertoires.

The Federation draws its support from national organisations. Its member-choirs belong to 19 European countries, from both Western and Eastern Europe. It also has associate members in Argentina, Israel, Japan and the United States. Its executive committee meets several times a year, and carries out the resolutions and the programmes approved by the General Assembly, which is held every three years.

This year's venue, Strasbourg, symbolises European Music Year. In Strasbourg Cathedral, in public squares, in the town's main buildings, around the monuments, in the temples and churches, on the banks of the Rhine, in the surrounding villages – for ten days the best of European choral culture will resound in song. 

A closer look at Lear...

The man who left his mark on literature as a humourist was also one of the foremost watercolour artists of his time

For a man who combined so many talents in one personality, Edward Lear remains less well-known, outside the British Isles, than he deserves to be. For the reason, one only has to consider the intensely private personality that was his defence against the world—he suffered from epileptic fits—and his uniquely native type of humour.

It would take a genius to translate, say, 'The Jabberwock' into any other tongue (though it has been tried). And there is no character in any foreign culture whom university professors of comparative literature can liken to the Quangle Wangle, the Dong with the Luminous Nose, the Atery Squash, the Bisky Bat, and other members of Lear's immortal menagerie.

His humorous poems and drawings (in which there is often an underlying pathos, born of his own wretched childhood) have given him an undisputed place among the great Victorians. But the talent he valued most, and which provided him with his living, was for painting. Starting at the age of 15 as a commercial artist, he showed such aptitude for illustrating birds and animals that the Earl of Derby invited him to his country seat, Knowsley Hall, to paint the creatures in his private zoo.

In the evenings Lear would amuse the children of the household with the made-up rhymes and verse-stories later published as his *Book of Nonsense*. It should have made him rich (it went through 19 editions in his lifetime); but he had sold the copyright for a pittance.

He was invited by Queen Victoria, in due course, to give her drawing lessons. But the paintings from his foreign travels were slow to sell. Undaunted, he would set off again, going everywhere on foot, braving bandits and lesser discomforts, in parts that rarely saw a visitor, let alone one who was stout, short-sighted, ill-equipped, and given to sitting on rocks to paint crumbling antiquities in desolate—though to him beautiful—landscapes.

Luckily for later generations, for every one of his big, worked-up landscapes in oils there have survived hundreds of small drawings or watercolours. It is in them that Lear's true genius as an artist lies—discounting the pot-boilers which he sold for ready cash, as his only means of subsistence, to English visitors to the conventional 'sights'.

At his own expense he published books covering his travels in Italy, Greece, Albania, and Corsica. He met Alfred Tennyson, attached himself briefly to the young Pre-Raphaelites



Right: Amalfi, 1838. Victoria and Albert Museum. Below: Mount Athos, Greece. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

and late in life earned the good opinion of John Ruskin—though for his writings rather than his art.

In his last years, living in San Remo with his cat, Foss, for company, he occupied himself with a series of drawings illustrating Tennyson's poems.

Foss died, and Lear soon followed. In one of the last entries in his diary he wrote:

He only said 'I'm very weary,
The rheumatiz' he said.
He said, 'It's awful dull and dreary,
I think I'll go to bed.'

His plan was to publish 200 such illustra-



tions, rather as Turner had done with his 'Liber Studiorum'. But he could never be satisfied with the way his drawings turned out as printed plates, however hard he tried to draw them in ways that would enable the printer to do them justice. A mere 22 of them were eventually published in a limited edition, each signed by the eminent poet and inscribed 'for the sake of my old friend, Edward Lear'.

DENIS THOMAS

□ An exhibition of the work of Edward Lear, in the Private Rooms of the Royal Academy, London, continues until 14 July.



QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE

Poul Møller, Denmark:

Can the Commission state whether the provision contained in Article 48(4) of the Treaty of Rome, limiting freedom of movement of labour in the Community in connection with employment in the public service, entitles the French authorities to discriminate against, for example, a Danish primary school teacher wishing to take up a teaching job in France on the grounds that French nationality is a condition of employment?

Answer by Peter Sutherland on behalf of the Commission:

Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Article 48 of the EEC Treaty lay down, among other things, the principle of equal treatment for workers of the member states as regards employment within the Community. These provisions do not, however, apply to employment in the public service.

This principle is normally applied in France in private schools, where French nationality is not required. However, it is a condition for access to jobs in the State education sector.

The derogation from the rule on freedom of movement for employment in the public service has been the subject of two Court of Justice judgments in Case 149/79 (Judgments of 17.12.1980 and 26.5.1982). Among other things, the Court felt that the derogation should be interpreted in a restrictive manner and could not apply to all public sector posts. In particular, the Court stated in its interim judgment of 17.12.1980, that the provision referred to above applied only to posts which involve direct or indirect participation in the exercise of powers conferred by public law and duties designed to safeguard the interests of the State or of other public authorities.

The Commission is currently carrying out a detailed examination of the exact scope of this interpretation, and is devoting particular attention to the specific problems of teachers in the State education system who have the status of civil servants in almost all Member States. Only on the basis of the results of this examination will the Commission be able to give a final ruling on whether the French legislation in question is compatible with Community law.

Hugh McMahon, United Kingdom:

Two constituents of mine opened a shop selling Scottish goods in Lippstadt in West Germany. As a result of incompetence and malpractice of the German Legal system in the area, their rent contract was terminated and their German partners gained control of the business.

What measures is the Commission taking to safeguard the interests of Community citizens opening businesses in the German Federal Republic and will the Commission

give an indication of how many cases involving foreign businesses have been held in the Lippstadt area of West Germany?

Answer by Lord Cockfield on behalf of the Commission:

Articles 52 (freedom of establishment) and 59 (freedom to provide services) of the EEC Treaty are directly applicable in all member states, who are obliged to treat nationals of other member states in the same way as their own. The Commission has no information that could lead it to believe that these provisions are not being respected in the Lippstadt area.

If, however, the Honourable Member considers that there has been a breach of these provisions, in law or practice, by German public authorities, and can furnish the Commission with sufficient details, it will willingly investigate.

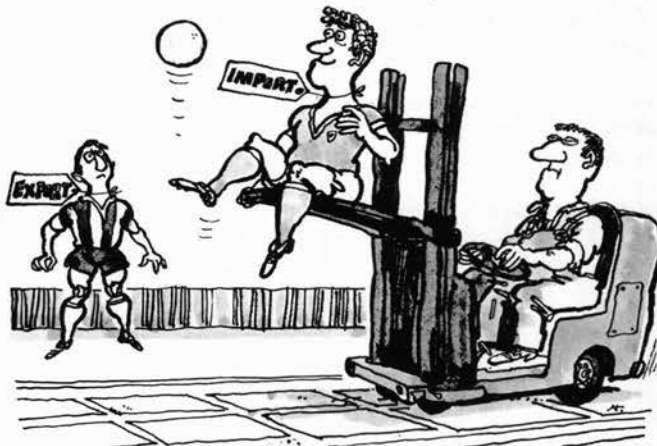
Mrs Marijke Van Hemeldonck, Belgium:

Could the Commission state what position it has taken in the talks with UEFA on freedom of movement for

possible legal bases for the introduction of directives in the field of health. Thus, national measures taken in the field of health, which directly affect the functioning of the common market, may be harmonised under article 100/EEC. Other articles of the EEC Treaty could also provide a legal basis in appropriate circumstances.

Although the protection of health and life of humans is mentioned as a ground for exception to the rule of the free movement of goods, and although public health is a ground of exception to the principle of free movement of persons, these exceptions do not create an area of reserved competence for member states – a position confirmed in the Council's practice and in the Court of Justice.

The Euratom Treaty expressly provides, in article 30, for the Community to lay down basic standards of protection against ionising radiation applicable to the general public as well as to workers. The Council has already adopted directives on these bases. Thus, the Commission cannot provide the confirmation



footballers as regards the role of agents in the transfer of star footballers, exorbitant and completely uncontrolled transfer fees, and the fact that the players themselves have no say in these transactions?

Answer by Peter Sutherland on behalf of the Commission:

At the meeting of the Commission and the UEFA on freedom of movement for footballers, the questions referred to were not discussed.

Jens-Peter Bonde, Denmark:

Would the Commission confirm that there is no basis in the Treaty of Rome for the introduction of directives in the field of health?

Answer by Jacques Delors on behalf of the Commission:

The EEC Treaty provides a number

sought by the Honourable Member.

Dieter Rogalla, Germany:

Is the Commission aware that extraordinarily large numbers of border officials enter trains travelling between Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany? On 23 November, eight border officials (six members of the Federal Border Police and two customs officials) mounted the express train from Ostende to Köln at Verviers. Was this some kind of training exercise?

Answer by Lord Cockfield on behalf of the Commission:

The Commission was unaware of the facts reported by the Honourable Member. It naturally expects that member states will extend the system of spot checks referred to in the Re-

solution of 7 June 1984 to trains as well. The proposal for a Directive adopted by the Commission on 4 January 1985 (1) also makes provision for the easing of controls in trains.

Mrs Vera Squarcialupi, Italy:

Can the Commission say what stage has been reached in the GATT negotiations designed to combat the counterfeiting of scores of products, not only articles such as designer clothes but also chemicals for agricultural use, spare parts for cars and medicines which, apart from constituting a fraud because of the forging of original trademarks, can endanger human beings and the environment? And what sanctions will be imposed on the countries – mostly in the Pacific Ocean area – which are parties to such fraudulent activities, if they do not undertake to put an end to them?

Answer by Willy de Clercq on behalf of the Commission:

The Commission is aware of the serious threat to legitimate producers, exporters and importers, as well as the health and other risks to consumers and environment, which the growth of international trade in counterfeit goods presents. The threat is, unfortunately, not confined to the sectors referred to by the Honourable Member, and there are few areas of manufacturing which can claim to be immune from the problem of counterfeiting.

For this reason the Community and its member states have worked hard to achieve greater international cooperation within GATT on this issue.

As a result, at the Annual Session of the GATT Contracting Parties of November 1984, agreement was reached to set up a special Expert Group to pursue as a matter of urgency the examination of the issue. The Director General of WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) will also be invited to nominate an expert to participate in the work of the Expert Group. The Group has a mandate to report back to the Contracting Parties within the year on the results achieved.

This indication from the Community's partners in GATT that they are now prepared to cooperate in a multilateral examination of the problem is welcome progress.

The objective is to achieve a much greater deterrent to international trade in counterfeit goods. The precise methods by which this is achieved are naturally matters for discussion with the Community's trading partners. However, the Honourable Member will wish to know that the Commission recently transmitted to the Council a proposal for a regulation in this field, also designed to combat imports of counterfeit goods.



Abraham takes to the road

Out of a total Dutch population of 14.5 million people, 11.5 million own a bicycle, according to official statistics. Riders range from three-year-old tots to nonagenarians. Dutch bicycle manufacturers produce about 1 million a year, a quarter of them for export.

Bicycles are produced in various sizes and shapes, but none so far with the nonagenarian in mind. In addition to conventional bicycles with upright handlebars, the Dutch make sport and racing bicycles – elongated versions where the rider is crouched over – as well as small ones for children.

Now, a new model, the 'Abraham', named after the Old Testament patriarch, has come on the market. It is aimed at the 2.4 million Dutch men and women over 60 whose knees are getting rusty, and whose reactions are no longer as quick as they used to be.

The new bicycle is the idea of Hans Bakker, a country doctor who advises his patients to bicycle for exercise. After some of his patients had cycling accidents, he got together with technicians and designed a specially adapted bicycle for the elderly.

The result is a bicycle with the saddle placed farther to the rear, although it remains the same distance from the pedals. In addition, the saddle is mounted low enough for the rider to be able to

place both feet on the ground, while remaining seated, when he comes to a stop. The bicycle also has battery-operated turn signals and headlights, which stay on even when the bicycle is stopped.

Book of the month

The amount of information produced by, for, and about the EEC amounts to a veritable word-mountain. A new compendium, detailing sources of such information and how to reach them, contains a wealth of valuable material, of practical use to the reader, contributed by specialist writers who know the systems and sources inside out.

The first part includes chapters explaining the policies and practices of the EEC institutions. The second part concentrates on the users of such information, notably groups within business; local authorities; universities; and polytechnics. The book, *European Communications Information; its use and users*, is edited by Michael Hopkins, and published by Mansell Publishing Ltd, price £22.50.

letters

Denmark leads

It was interesting to read the article dealing with transport of dangerous drugs in the January/February issue.

It is well known in the industry that Denmark possesses an extremely expensive, modern and sophisticated treatment centre for flammable and toxic wastes, thus countering fears that small countries cannot make such commitments. It may well be leading in the EEC in the transport of hazardous wastes, with a network of collection sidings and rail tankers providing a safe and efficient service to industrial waste producers.

David Hodgson
Stirling

Europe's second language?

The single customs document referred to in your March issue must be very welcome to traders. No doubt, however, the problem of language will be troublesome.

Why not let the text be in the language of the issuing country and let each question be accompanied by a translation in Esperanto, to act as a reference point?

The use of the neutral language Esperanto would make it easy to compare an English and Esperanto text with, say, a Danish or Greek and Esperanto text. There would be no necessity for users to be able to speak Esperanto.

W.J. Nesbitt
Ambleside, Cumbria

High-tech English?

I am always pleased to receive my copy of EUROPE. It is always informative, interesting and, above all, fairly easy to read.

However, as a non-economist, probably like the great number of readers, I get bogged down by some of the economic terms relating to Europe that are bandied about in the press, such as 'the Snake', 'green pound', 'basket of currencies', 'European Monetary System'.

Many people like myself need to understand, in simple language, what these terms actually mean. In future issues, could you include, in a fairly modest-size paragraph, an explanation of such terms, please?

Vivian P. Thomas
Sea Mills, Bristol

☐ We do our best to keep technical jargon out of the magazine. But, alas, it would be impracticable to provide a glossary whenever necessarily technical terms appear in articles contributed by specialists.

New laws to curb experiments on animals are being prepared by the Common Market following demands by British Euro MPs.

Draft plans will be presented to the European Parliament during the summer, Brussels officials have told Sir Jack Stewart-Clark.

'It's wonderful that action is at last being taken,' said Sir Jack, Tory Euro MP for Sussex East.

'While some experiments are necessary, it is terrible that too much pain and distress is caused to innocent animals when possibly other methods could be used.'

Brussels will now examine all possible steps that can be taken in the use and sale of animals for experiments and factory farming, he added.

—Daily Express

Duty-free shopping may not be made available to users of a Channel tunnel or bridge, the British and French Governments say in a warning to promoters of the various schemes to be considered later this year.

They are being told that two sets of estimates of traffic and cash flow must be submitted when they apply to build a fixed crossing.

One includes income from duty-free shopping, and the other excludes it. On traditional ferries, the sale of duty-free goods accounts for about 20 per cent of income, making it a very significant factor.

—Daily Telegraph

In February, EEC ministers agreed to a new directive enabling subsidies for agriculture to be switched to protect the landscape and to encourage alternatives to farming such as crafts and tourism. The help will go mostly to the 'less favoured areas', mainly land over 800 feet above sea level. This covers 75 per cent of Scotland, 70 per cent of Wales, 61 per cent of Northern Ireland and 14 per cent of England.

But 'environmentally sensitive areas' can be anywhere. The result could be the biggest extension of rural conservation since the designation of national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty, now covering 20 per cent of England and Wales in the 1950s.

The subsidies are likely to be flat-rate ones, more acceptable than those available under the management agreements set up under the 1981 Countryside Act, which involved compensating farmers for hypothetical loss of profits from not destroying the landscape.

—Economist

Milk production in England and Wales at the end of the second week of the new quota year (to April 13) was running about 2 per cent below the dairy quota set by the EEC, according to the Milk Marketing Board.

Cumulatively, the shortfall against quota from April 1 to April 13 is estimated at 8 litres or 1.7 per cent. In the final month of the first quota year output was 1,172.4m litres, 4 per cent lower than the previous year's figure of 1,221m. Output for the year as a whole was 7.2 per cent lower than in 1983-84 at 12,601.1m litres.

Sales of milk for manufacturing in March, at 646.4m litres, were 5.9 per cent lower than the previous year. Liquid sales of 524.7m litres were 1.4 per cent lower, but for the whole year were down by 1 per cent on 1983-84 at 6,077m litres.

—Financial Times

Nearly half of the Common Market areas listed as having the most serious regional problems are in Britain, and include Northern Ireland, the Government disclosed yesterday.

The list, given in a Commons written reply by Foreign Office Minister of State Mr Malcolm Rifkind to Labour Foreign Office spokesman Mr George Foulkes, includes depressed industrial areas such as Northern Ireland, Merseyside, most of Scotland, Wales, the north-east of England and the west Midlands.

However, also appearing alongside Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Campania and other European economic blackspots are English shire counties, including Avon, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Lincolnshire and Shropshire.

—Belfast Telegraph

More than 1,450 dairy farmers in England and Wales have decided to leave the industry because of Common Market milk quotas imposed a year ago.

Encouraged by the Government, they will take compensation and their quotas will be re-distributed among other herds to make them more profitable.

Britain's 45,000 dairy farmers were ordered to cut production last April by 6 per cent, or one million tonnes a year, in order to curb EEC farm spending.

The Government then set up a £50 million compensation fund to try to persuade smaller producers to leave the industry.

—Guardian

Of the 10 EEC countries, only the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK provide no parental leave. Internationally, the most impressive provision is outside the EEC—in Sweden, which now offers 12 months' paid parental leave for each family, the last six months of which may be taken as part-time leave at any time until a child is eight.

Working parents are also entitled to 60 days' paid leave each year for each child under 12, to care for sick children, take them to medical appointments, visit nurseries and so on.

If adopted by the Council of Ministers, the draft EEC directive would set minimum standards of leave for all EEC states. The directive is a priority for implementation by the Italian Government during its current spell as president of the Council.

A House of Lords committee has supported paid parental leave, because 'it will promote equal opportunities for women and will also improve child-care.'

—Guardian

In Britain, the water authorities do not recognise aluminium as a risk to health.

New European limits on the presence of aluminium in tapwater, which British authorities say are set for 'aesthetic' reasons, are widely exceeded. In Yorkshire more than 20 per cent of the water supplied to homes breaches the limit of 200 micrograms of aluminium per litre of water.

In many parts of northern Britain, water contains more than 1000 micrograms per litre. Published water-quality records show samples with up to 28,000 micrograms, more than 100 times the EEC limit.

At many water-treatment works the problem is made worse because aluminium sulphate is added to moorland water during its treatment.

—New Scientist

The British Government must stop insisting that certain manufactured goods be labelled with their country of origin, the European Court of Justice ruled yesterday.

West Germany, France and the Irish Republic had complained about the labelling requirement on such goods as shoes, clothes and cutlery.

The European Commission had said that the regulations put importers at a disadvantage and prevented free trade, which is one of the fundamental principles of the EEC.

—The Times

WHAT'S IN THE PAPERS

India is seeking European Community support for a massive 'cow lift'—a transfer of dairy cattle to farms on the Asian sub-continent.

This follows behind-the-scenes lobbying by Princess Irene of Greece, the follower of an Indian guru, and a sister of Queen Sofia of Spain.

If the cow lift is approved, up to 200,000 European cows could be sent to India by the end of this year. The Indian authorities have let it be known that 20,000 can be accepted immediately, most of them for dairy farms near Bhopal, where there were huge losses of animal life after the gas leak from the Union Carbide chemical plant.

France, West Germany, Belgium and Holland have so far agreed to give sympathetic consideration to the Indian request.

—Observer