

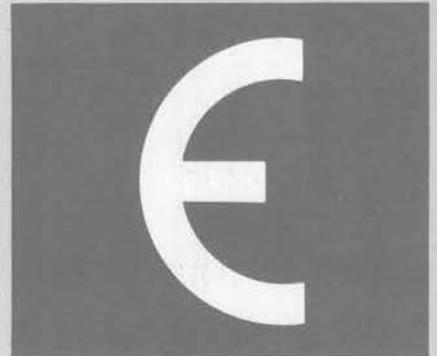
Europe 84

No. 4

April 1984



**Who says this waste
land will never
bloom again?**



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EUROFORUM is inset after page 12. Cover: aerial view of the international Garden Festival site, Merseyside, before planting began.

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Commission President Thorn condemns 'the general unwillingness to compromise'

The Ten come close to agreement – but not quite close enough



European leaders meeting at Brussels Summit in March failed to reach agreement at the last moment, despite progress in a number of areas. Basic disagreement over the level of future British contributions to the Community budget brought the process to a halt.

The irony of the crisis, as European Commission President Gaston Thorn pointed out, lies in the fact that agreement was close. The British Prime Minister wanted a 75 per cent reduction in Britain's net annual contribution to the EC budget, currently running at about £1.2 billion, and a system linking payments to the prosperity of contributors. The deal that she was offered at one point fell short by about £200 million – very little in terms of national public expenditure.

Speaking to journalists after the meeting, Commission President Thorn said that solutions to the deadlock could now lie in meetings at ministerial level, to develop other areas of general agreement worked out before and during the meeting. He condemned what he described as 'the general unwillingness to compromise', but defended the right of member states to protect their vital interests.

Other parts of the Summit package ripe for agreement include raising the Community's share of VAT

levied in the member states from its current 1 per cent ceiling to 1.4 per cent in 1986 and 1.8 per cent in 1988.

The second area of potential agreement lies in agricultural reform to curb farm spending. Farm Ministers meeting before the Summit agreed on a framework plan to cut support prices for most farm products by up to 1 per cent, to curb milk production and to end the Community's system of Monetary Compensatory Amounts (MCAs) – the subsidies and taxes designed to wipe out the effect of currency fluctuations on agricultural exports. The reforms would overstep the existing agricultural budget, but would eventually save money, according to the Commission.

Disappointingly, attempts by the Ten's Foreign Ministers to secure agreement over Britain's net annual contributions, subsequent to the Brussels Summit meeting, failed to carry the negotiations any further.

However, a meeting of the Community's Agriculture Ministers at the end of March has at last secured agreement on changes in the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), by which all member states except Ireland are to stick to agreed limits on farm production. Ireland, it was agreed, should be allowed to increase its milk production in the current year by 4.6 per cent, on grounds of overriding national interest.

Down the garden path on Merseyside

The Big Three are still there, dominating the Liverpool waterfront: the Liver Building, with famous bird atop, tethered against the south-westerlies; the Cunard Building; the Dock Offices. I remembered them from boyhood visits when, nearly fifty years ago, Liverpool was thriving and bustling, when the Green Goddesses, the majestic glass-fronted trams, converged on the Pierhead, when I used to climb the Kop (then unroofed) to watch Liverpool FC, including Matt Busby, and be taken on the Overhead Railway to the docks to see round one of the great Cunarders.

But the other day, standing on the Pierhead, I might just as well have been looking at the Pyramids. Memories apart, little remains of the Liverpool I knew. The water over to Birkenhead, at my back, was empty of ships save for one tug and a ferry. Not far away, by the tunnel entrance, the city fathers have completed the work begun by the blitz, and created acres of dereliction. If Nature abhors a vacuum, then Liverpool is not in Nature.

It is a city still stunned that economic times have changed. Its main exports now, roughly equivalent to the postage stamp output of a declining republic, are images: images of Liverpool FC and the Beatles; also—for Liverpool is nothing if not humorous—a stream of comedians from Tommy Handley and Arthur Askey to Ken Dodd and beyond.

With the shipping trade a fraction of what it was, and with other industry deserting the area like a plague-spot, it is perhaps no wonder that Merseyside has not greeted its very own Garden Festival unreservedly as the lifeline which it has been envisaged as elsewhere.

This summer, in Liverpool's stricken dockland, a multinational Garden Festival will be taking place, with contributions from Britain's partners in Europe. JACK WATERMAN has been back to see how it is coming along

The City Council, for example, has withdrawn its support; which to me, as an outsider, seems an enormous pity. With nothing to lose (or not much, because there's not much left), Liverpool could do far worse than heed the words of Basil Bean, chief executive of the Merseyside Development Corporation: 'We hope the Festival will act as a catalyst, restoring confidence in the area, and encouraging private investment.'

If what has already been achieved on the Festival site since I last reported (January 1983) is any indication of success, then trade will surely follow the flowers, and Basil Bean's hopes be turned into reality. What I saw over a year ago was the beginning of prodigious efforts to transform a derelict 125 acres of corporation rubbish, silted-up dock and abandoned tank farm into the site of the biggest festival event since the Festival of Britain in 1951.

The Queen will open the Festival in May. The three million visitors expected before it closes in October will see the astonishing

transformation of a waste land into a place of beauty—of 120,000 trees, a quarter of a million plants, and thousands and thousands of roses.

My view of it, after a year's interval, standing among scenes of huge activity in the final run-in to opening date, was that the age of miracles is with us again. But, apart from the sheer scale of physical achievement since I last saw the site, what has also happened is that the Festival has become truly international. I initially visited it to watch the first flag from a foreign country—that of Belgium—raised on the site. Since then, thirty other countries have followed; and co-operation has been particularly evident from the EEC countries.

Twenty acres are set aside for gardens representing different countries. Some of these, notably the German, Dutch and United Kingdom gardens, are well on the way to completion. Already the UK's is an eye-catching feature: a typical English garden designed by the landscape architect, Ray Bird, and sponsored by a number of bodies headed by the Horticultural Trades Association. Close by is an Edwardian glass pavilion 25 metres long (picture opposite)—the most striking building on the Festival site.

Even now, before the opening, the garden has managed to acquire a specifically English atmosphere. When the Festival is under way, it should be an immensely popular attraction.

The idea behind it, with its gazebo, dove-cote, woodland area and aquatic feature, is to demonstrate that plants can be used effectively in groups: the accent will be on association of perennial herbaceous plants, now coming back into fashion, with alpines, and ground cover and so on. From it the English amateur gardeners who make the effort to visit should be rewarded with knowledge as well as with a spectacle of great delight.

The idea is also to present, separately, a number of different English garden 'atmospheres' from the entrance, heavily scented with rhododendron, jasmine and honeysuckle, to the pool which is to be at the peaceful centre, mirroring the surrounding plants.

The Federal Republic of Germany's contribution, designed by Bruno Leipacher, is a walled garden, but modern in style, and with a woodland 'feel' to it. It has been sponsored by the Zentralverband Gartenbau, the professional body representing West German gardening and horticultural groups. But the emphasis is one which should attract many visitors: plants and shrubs, particularly rhododendrons, which are either unavailable or little known in Britain. Rhododendrons bred

A gazebo and dove-cote are among the attractions of the United Kingdom's garden. The Edwardian pavilion, opposite, is to be the headquarters for the Commissioner-General of the Festival, appointed by HM the Queen, who will open the event next month.





in Germany include *Garten Direktor Glocker* and *Hellgelb*. Backing the rhododendrons are pines from Germany, including the feathery and ornamental *Pinus Hakodensis*.

As well, there will be many irises, ferns, herbaceous plants, including primulas – which are already making a vivid bank of blue – heathers, and the honeysuckle *Lonicera Heckrottii* raised in Germany, as well as an attractive water-lily and aquatic feature.

In addition to the main garden, a separate one, the Cologne Garden, represents the relationship between Liverpool and the city with which it is twinned. It features a maple in the middle of an island between two 'rivers' representing the Mersey and the Rhine. Around it is a bench of the kind seen in German market places – built by apprentices from Liverpool and Cologne, between whom there is an exchange scheme. All the plants are supplied by local Merseyside nurseries.

Appropriately, a windmill is a central feature of the Dutch garden: not, however, the kind best known from the work of Dutch landscape painters, but a spare steel pole, over 25 metres high, surmounted by blue and white vanes, which will provide electricity to fuel the reception area. The 30,000 bulbs of all kinds, when their blooms are over, will be replaced, providing a continuous spectacle throughout the five months of the Festival.

But the particular theme of the Dutch exhibit is a 'festival within a festival': within the glass-house structure which dominates their site will be held a series of events, each lasting a fortnight, devoted to such subjects as

'Three million visitors will see the transformation of a waste land into a place of beauty'

ornamental products, energy saving in horticulture, and the influence of Holland and England in garden architecture.

The Belgians have a timber and rope swinging bridge in place on their site, which will feature a great circular bedding area displaying the Belgian pre-eminence in horticulture. The French garden is also based on a mainly plant-oriented concept, with specimens produced by the growers of Arjon and the Paris region: summer bedding plants, aromatic plants, roses and shrubs.

A garden of formal Renaissance design, featuring two smaller gardens, and with a copy of a fountain and temple from Rome, makes up the Italian display. And from Greece comes a symbolic garden, drawing parallels between living plants growing in Greece today and Greek mythology, along with a pool with sand and rock work suggesting the Greek coastline.

If this is not enough to satisfy international gardeners, there is much else in the gardens contributed from outside the European Community, for example a Temple of Isis (Egypt); a Moorish café (Turkey); a winter garden

(Austria); a Tea House and Moon View platform (Japan); as well as miniature 'Rockies' (Canada) and the recorded sound of bullfrogs (Australia).

Apart from the specifically UK garden within the international area, no less than 40 acres are devoted to other British gardens in which the visitor should delight. British rose growers are to show a superb collection in both formal and informal arrangements, enhanced by beds telling the rose's history.

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, are contributing a traditional water garden. There will be two model allotments, with question-and-answer sessions for visitors. English wine production will be represented by a model vineyard. And, as well as rock gardens, alpine gardens, wild gardens – and even a witches garden (with statue of Hecate) – Liverpool has several features of its own.

These include a Beatles Maze (the centre of which is a Yellow Submarine), a Liverpool Quiz Garden, conveying the history and personality of the city, and a Liverpool terraced street – as in the 19th century and today – to show visitors a century of changing building and gardening techniques.

On all this – and with live events ranging from a Battle of Waterloo spectacular to a Jazz Festival – Capability Brown would undoubtedly have looked in disbelief. He, however, never lived to see the fruits of his planning and work. Capability Scouse is luckier – not only seeing a great garden achievement take shape, but also, with luck, lasting benefit from it in the future. 

Voting for Europe: some voices among 200 million

When the electors of the Community member states go to the polls on June 14th they will be taking part in a major – perhaps decisive – event. The elections for a new European Parliament come at a time when the principles that led to the formation of the Community are being challenged, as well as its performance. Central to those principles is the role

of the European Parliament – the first supra-national body, answerable to a free electorate, in history.

For the Community to work, the European Parliament must also be seen to be effective. We invited a number of prominent Europeans to give us their individual views of what is at stake. This is what they had to say.

LEO TINDEMANS, Belgium



WHAT is at stake in the June elections is the idea of Europe. The Parliament will have to safeguard the ideal, and continually draw European attention toward the need to build Europe and, consequently,

make changes in the government of the member states. To quote Jean Monnet's phrase, 'Whether we want it or not, there is no future for us without further European unification.'

The European Parliament *can* increase its powers. In 1975 I suggested that it should be given the right to initiate policy. The new Commission President should celebrate his appointment by a strengthening of his position vis-à-vis the Council of Ministers and the European Council. In certain areas the Parliament should be given legislative powers.

It is at the level of the Council – in other words, in the member states – that the problem in giving the Parliament power really lies. And this brings us back to the problem of what the objective of the Parliament is. A lot of people have condemned the double mandate at national and European levels, on both practical and theoretical grounds. Wouldn't a ban on sitting in both houses rob MEPs of what power they have, since they often use it at national rather than European level?

A European Parliament with its existing powers, and composed of members with a single European mandate, would quickly become nothing more than a European Academy. The road to unification will have to be achieved through national parliaments. Changes in the Treaty, or new treaties, will have to be approved in the member states.

On the one hand, it is important that a num-

'In certain areas the Parliament should be given legislative powers'

ber of MEPs sit in national parliaments – just as, on the other, it is good that a number of members of national parliaments sit in Strasbourg and become specialists on European issues.

The Parliament must exist and remain credible. That means it must avoid fruitless bickering over draft proposals that won't help Europe. The Parliament has already had much of its work cut out for it, with words like 'enlargement', 'deepening', and 'achievement'. But the Parliament must know what it wants. It can't do everything. It can't concentrate on other people's problems (without solving them). And it can't just talk about Europe without actually doing anything.

THORKIL KRISTENSEN, Denmark



CAN the Parliament become a source of inspiration for the EEC? It can – if it speaks frankly about the serious problems of today. Let me mention two. First, the Common Agricultural Policy. It is a burden for

the budget, because EEC prices create surplus production. But why do farmers require prices that are too high for equalising supply and demand?

The fundamental fact is that agriculture is man's original occupation. Throughout history, numerous more specialised activities have developed; and these have attracted labour from agriculture, because they yield higher incomes.

It is therefore in the nature of development that work in agriculture creates lower incomes than work in other activities. But this is difficult for modern societies to accept. So agriculture is subsidised, thereby contributing to surplus production.

Since this is a common problem, the EEC should approach the United States and propose that all OECD member countries jointly introduce more realistic prices. If this were done jointly, and by so many countries, price modifications would be more modest than if the burden were carried by the EEC alone.

Now to my second point. Is European unity furthered or held back by the EEC? European countries are now split into three groups: members of the Community, those who have not joined, and those of Eastern Europe.

ANDRE GLUCKSMAN, France



EVERYONE is free to vote or not to vote. To ask people for their opinions about the outcome is to try and shift responsibility on to the elector, by implying that it is his participation that will decide the outcome of

Europe, when the determining factor is why he is being asked to vote.

The responsibility lies with those who are presenting the options: whether or not Europe becomes an empty concept, a balloon filled with electioneering hot air.

The concept has not always been an empty one. It became so with the fulfilment of the goals set by the founding fathers of the European Community. Europe has become the world's second economic power, and has attained living standards comparable to those of the United States. Amid the ruins of continental Europe in 1945, that was something unimaginable for intellectuals, politicians and the man in the street.

The second goal of the founding fathers was democracy for the whole of Western Europe. The fascist dictatorships which overshadowed Europe and the lives of Europeans have disappeared. Spain, Portugal and Greece have revived their representative and democratic institutions. So I think that Europe has been a success.

But beyond these achievements it is clear that we have not thought far enough ahead. Today there are two voids, two unanswered questions, which affect the whole of Europe. The first is how to defend it. The second is culture, the mind, ideas.

There exists a liberal materialism, just as there exists a Marxist materialism. The fathers of Europe, reasoning as liberal materialists, thought that the Community, with its

'The appeal has to be emotional. And it has to be rooted in the past'

institutions, could almost automatically create a cultural unity. Europe would acquire a cultural identity, and European integration would fall from the sky.

It was an illusion. Today there is undeniably a Community of values – democratic values, mass civilisation and consumption – common to all Europeans. But there is no cultural Community. That will mean having to create a gigantic new cultural fabric, not in terms of contacts between elites, but between a 'melting pot' of populations.

MAEVE BINCHY, Ireland



I THINK we would all vote much more enthusiastically in the direct elections if people didn't keep telling us that we should. There is a sickening air of duty and civic responsibility about it all which takes away the good, barbaric feeling of a real election. Worthy figures stand up and tell us that we should Think European, and that's all very fine. But there is an element of preaching in this, overtones of good, sensible advice about jogging and eating bran and going to bed nice and early.

When they start to explain the European Parliament, people all over the continent become dizzy. Unless you are in it, how would you know the shades, the nuances, the degrees of commitment of at least four kinds of democrat? Unless you were used to travelling with it, how could you grasp a parliament that sits in three cities? If you don't actually get on to the plane and head for Strasbourg with your MEP, how do you know what he or she is doing there?

I don't think any amount of glossy, well-prepared literature is going to help. Those of us who are not politicians read with dulled eyes definitions of the Parliament's powers; we plod through control and budgetary powers and legislative powers, nodding sagely. It is all too far away. And suppose we were there for a day? It would still be too imposing for us – seven languages, simultaneous translation, international razzamatazz. Even if a course called 'Understanding the European Parliament' was put on the curriculum of every school in every country, it would still be remote.

The appeal has to be emotional. And it has to be rooted in the past.

So sell it to us on emotion, in terms of cooperation and peace. That way, we might have a gut feeling that it is important, and send our best out there. Even though we are still not utterly sure what it is and what it is doing.

ALBERTO MORAVIA, Italy



EUROPE is distressingly weak. It has shown its weakness on a number of occasions, especially recently. But why is it weak? Europe has been at the centre of world history over the past fifty years ... and it was not a particularly glowing period of history. Europe suffers from complexes that have made it weak compared to the United States or the Soviet Union, neither of whom had anything to do with the Nazi era. Even if part of Europe reacted heroically, the experience of Nazism exhausted it.

But that is not the whole story. The thing that once made Europe great now flaws it. All institutions, including political institutions, are dying from the very thing that brought them to life – nationalism. Europe lived because of its 'nationalities' and will probably die out because of them.

The European countries, so different from one another, each had their own speciality to make up the glory of the old continent. Now, they risk destroying themselves because of those same differences.

In theory Europe is strong – even stronger than the United States or the Soviet Union, when the European countries are taken as a whole. Unfortunately, the European countries are as complex as they are divided.

Whilst we wait for a change of attitudes – and that could take some time – the existence of an institution like the European Parliament is a good thing, even if it does not have any power. Institutions are there to respond to certain needs. Needs are not permanent – they can appear at any given moment in time. So, even if the current usefulness of the Strasbourg Parliament is debatable, the long-term need for it is not in doubt.

Other institutions will have to be prepared for the time when the need for it will arise. Without it Europe may 'miss the boat' in modern history.

GUST GRASS, Luxembourg



AS A European working in the field of communication, I see the need for a European audiovisual sector and the prospects which it holds out. At present, divisions of language and tradition remain very strong in this sector. There are louder and louder cries for subsidies, for European programmes and productions, in order to hold back a flood of foreign products.

Here, more than in any other sector, it is clear that individuals and individual countries are no longer able to manage alone.

As I see it, this situation is all the more serious, since I believe that television has a vital role to play in gathering, presenting and conveying the images, ideas and values of our times, acting as the vehicle of our European civilisation.

Where are the creative geniuses, writers and artists with the will to give expression to the picture of European culture at home and abroad? We must summon these strengths to help form our new media, so that the outside world can not only read and hear our message, but also see it. It is with these best and bravest spirits that we must dare to walk abroad, if we are not to remain passive and apathetic at home. A new picture of Europe also means a new picture from Europe.

It is these creative spirits who must be motivated and mobilised for Europe, not just politicians at election times. Television is the medium which will enable them to reach the people of Europe, across national boundaries. We must have the stomach for the task, but also the heart and mind.

As democrats, we must hang on to democracy and speak out for freedom. We tend to forget all too easily what freedom, the freedom of individuals to choose (and not just in elections), democracy and an understanding of democracy mean in a world where, elsewhere, dictatorship and lack of freedom are the rule.

BARONESS EWART-BIGGS, UK



THE European elections have a formidable responsibility before them in June 1984. Their political leaders may still be at loggerheads and the Community's budgetary problems still unresolved. This will make it all the more important for those men and women on their way to the voting booths to remember that the founding fathers of the European Community had more in mind than coal and steel and the price of butter.

They saw it as a force for peaceful co-existence and social justice, young people's jobs, and equal rights between men and women. They also hoped it would provide a forum for collectively finding solutions to common problems, and through political cooperation be able to influence world affairs by speaking with a united voice.

How could those pioneers ever have foreseen the pressures and tensions world circumstances were to impose on the realisation of those principles? For many people the intractable problems and disappointments of recent years have obscured this vision and called the whole idea of the Community into question. Gaston Thorn, writing in these columns, has called for the launch of Europe's 'second generation'. He has warned that, if the Community is unable to move with the times and find new life, it will be dragged down and founder.

'The time has come to return to the procedures laid down in the treaties'

It is for this reason I believe Europe's electors have such an important duty on 14th June. It will be for them to give a vote of confidence to the launch of that second generation. Their votes will not only decide the apportionment of seats the political parties will win in Strasbourg – important as that is – but also leave Europe's leaders in no doubt that its citizens want the survival of the European community, and want to go on with the struggle towards the attainment of the ideals of its founding fathers.

JAN TINBERGEN, Netherlands



THE welfare of all citizens of the European Communities is directly related to events in the countries with which we trade. This is especially true for small countries. The value of goods and services imported and

exported by the Netherlands is about half of its national income.

It is therefore obvious that we should have a say whenever decisions affecting the economic policies of our trading partners are taken. A very large proportion of our exports go to our partners in the EEC. Decisions on EEC policies are taken by the Commission, and the European Parliament exercises a certain amount of control over the Commission.

Neither of these institutions functions as well as it might in some respects. For instance, individual member states continually attempt to put their own interests before those of other member states. Nationalised industries often give preference to domestic products, even although foreign products may be cheaper.

The European administration, and in particular the staff which prepares and carries out the work of the Commission, is another institution which does not work as well as it should.

Many of the decisions of the European Communities are taken by the Council of Ministers, in which member states are represented by their respective governments. Decisions are normally taken by majority vote, particularly where important matters are concerned. However, this is not the procedure laid down in the treaties that initially established the EEC – it was adopted temporarily, as a concession to France, under General de Gaulle. The result is that really effective decision-making is blocked.

The time has now come to return to the procedure laid down in the treaties, so that we can form a European bloc that can stand up to the USA and Japan.

WERNER WEIDENFELD, Germany

I THINK we Europeans have lost our sense of political proportion, as far as the objectives and potential of integration are concerned. Why else would we be frustrated by the Community's conflicts and compromises? Quarrels, differences of opinion and criticism are the life blood of our democracies. Why should supranational Europe be any different?

If today's Europe is anything more than a technological jungle, it is thanks to the European Parliament. However one regards the work of the Parliament, each political decision it makes contributes to its development. The issues and problems with which it deals all surmount national frontiers, and cover a dense range of social issues. The time has come to ask ourselves whether we want to leave these problems unsolved, or whether we should look for political answers and subject them to democratic controls.

If Europe is not given a political dimension, and is denied political controls, it will inevitably lose ground. This is why an effective Parliament is needed.

The basic facts of European political life are not what they were. In the early days of European integration there was a tacit, but genuine, popular consensus, supported by economic growth, and a willingness to abolish internal frontiers.

For a long time, what the Community did was hardly noticed by the man in the street. Today that is no longer the case. The Community has left the realm of political invisibility. It now influences areas of vital interest to the member states, such as steel, agriculture

'If today's Europe is anything more than a technological jungle, it is thanks to the European Parliament'

and fisheries. Community decisions can directly affect the creation, maintenance and disappearance of jobs. Consequently, people have begun to ask themselves about the legitimacy of the Commission's decision-making. And from there they have begun to look at the role played by the European Parliament in the building of Europe.

As democrats, we cannot ignore the fact that the European Parliament has not received the powers it deserves as an elected body representing the European electorate. We therefore have no choice but to go and vote in June.

Leo Tindemans is Minister for External Affairs in the Belgian Government. Thorkil Kristensen is a former Danish finance minister and secretary-general of the OECD. André Glucksman is a French philosopher and writer. Maeve Binchy is an Irish journalist and writer. Alberto Moravia, one of Italy's foremost men of letters, is a past president of PEN. Gust Grass is director-general of Radio-Tele-Luxembourg. The Baroness Ewart-Biggs is a Labour member of the House of Lords. Professor Jan Tinbergen was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1969. Werner Weidenfeld is Professor of Political Science at the University of Mainz.

And now – a market of 312 million

The largest free trade area for industrial goods in the world was created on 1 January, when virtually all remaining tariff barriers and quantitative restrictions between the European Community and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries were abolished.

With their 312 million consumers, said European Commission Vice-President Wilhelm Haferkamp in a statement to mark the occasion, the European Community and EFTA already form a bigger market than the United States and Canada taken together. Accession by Spain will add a further 38 million consumers (Portugal is currently an EFTA member), and the free trade area created will then comprise the whole of Western Europe in a European free trade zone.

Describing this as a 'milestone', Mr Haferkamp pointed out that, in 1972, when the EEC signed free trade agreements with EFTA countries, 'voices on both sides expressed doubts on the wisdom of such a vast undertaking', adding: 'If we could have foreseen the depth of the recession which began when the ink on the agreements was

scarcely dry, we might never have come this way'.

'But,' he continued, 'wise counsels prevailed. We have been able to achieve our goal against all protectionist tendencies, and in spite of serious difficulties in some sectors of our industry, such as paper, steel and textiles.'

'The results of cooperation between the EEC and EFTA countries beyond the trade aspects of the free trade agreements also deserve congratulations,' said Mr Haferkamp.

'This has created a network of cooperation, consultation and contacts going further than with any other industrialised partner,' he added.

The network now includes a wide range of areas, from consumer protection to telecommunications and the environment, together with a multiplication of contacts in the framework of international organisations such as GATT and the OECD.

Finally, regular ministerial talks have provided a further valuable opportunity to extend cooperation into the political field with those EFTA partners who so wished.

Moves towards a new constitution – if Europe's electors agree

The 'Spinelli plan' for a new treaty of union between member states has been agreed by the European Parliament. To become a reality, it will need at least two-thirds of the European Community's electorate to say Yes

On 14 February last year, the proposal for constitutional reform of the Community put before the European Parliament by Altiero Spinelli was passed with a very large majority. This new proposal was doubly important. It not only represented the culmination of the most daring undertaking of the first legislature of the elected Parliament, but it will also form one of the issues in the campaign for the forthcoming elections.

The Assembly of the European Parliament gave an absolute majority to the draft Treaty of Union put forward by Mr Spinelli on behalf of the Institutional Committee. By its vote, the European Parliament fulfilled the mandate which it had received on 9 July 1981, when the motion put by the Crocodile Club was accepted (see page 23).

Let there be no mistake – the European Treaty of Union is a proposal to give the Community a new constitution, which would result in a restructuring of the institutional framework within which the process of European integration has been proceeding up till now.

Before this can come into force, it has to be submitted for ratification by all member states. It cannot be applied unless it receives ratification from a majority of countries representing at least two-thirds of the population of the whole Community.

The *raison d'être* of this proposal can be put in a few words. The primary motivation is not so much a desire to increase the power of the European Parliament as a realisation that the process of integration is slowly grinding to a halt, and a conviction that the only institution which is competent to put forward such a far-reaching proposal for reform is the European Parliament, which represents all the citizens of the Community.

Given the declared intention of revising the

competence and powers of Community institutions in the light of the experience already acquired, and of their new tasks, as well as the firm intention of creating an organic link between the Communities, the system of consultation on international policy and the European Monetary System, the Commission realised that it would have been practically impossible to tackle the desired reorganisation by means of a package of amendments to the existing treaties and amendments. Such a package would, in fact, have resulted in a document which to all intents and purposes was incomprehensible, and quite useless as an instrument of political action.

By voting for the political content of this reform on 14 September 1983, the Parliament decided to give this proposal the form of a draft Treaty establishing the European Union 'ex novo', thus meeting the terms of the treaties themselves and the repeatedly-stated wishes of all the governments.

Parliament decided against amending the existing treaties and agreements, opting instead for the creation of a new political corpus designed to incorporate all the legal, political and economic attainments of the Community, as well as the other, para-Community organs, while still allowing for their later development by methods proper to the Union itself.

The European Treaty of Union will thus have a twofold aspect. In terms of its function it is in effect a constitution, in that it redefines the competencies and institutions which will form the new political corpus of the European Union. In terms of its form, however, it is an international treaty, in that only the member states will be competent to accept its content, subsequently ratify it, and finally implement the Union which they are invited to join.

From the point of view of its content, the draft Treaty establishes a system which, while preserving the existing Community terminology for reasons of continuity, in fact establishes a new division of powers and a new system of decision-making.

In effect, it will fall to the elected Parliament and the Council of Union (made up of representatives of the governments) to approve the principle rules of the Union and its laws. The intended procedure gives power

'A system of deadlines would prevent decisions being delayed indefinitely'

of co-decision to these two institutions, both as regards organic laws (which will require a larger majority in both bodies) and as regards ordinary laws.

The new procedure will be more effective, thanks to a system of deadlines which will prevent decisions being delayed indefinitely by either Parliament or the Council.

The proposed system maintains the central role of the Commission, which will retain its right of initiative (a right which the Parliament and the Council will also have to a certain extent) and will also take an important part in the process of drawing up legislative acts.

The Commission will also be responsible for defining the rules of application of laws; and for seeing that they are properly implemented, while at the same time respecting the fundamental principle of the Union, namely that Community law must apply at whichever level (national, regional or local) is closest to the citizens and their needs.

It goes without saying that although the Commission, the 'point of convergence' of this system, enjoys a greater degree of stability than the national governments, its legitimacy must be recognised in as wide a fashion as possible. The procedure by which the President will be nominated by the European Council (made up of heads of state and of government of the member states) is such that the presidency will be one of the Union's institutions; the appointment of the president will be subject to a vote of confidence in the Parliament, and may only be revoked by a special majority.

'The appointment of the president will be subject to a vote of confidence'

The approval given to the draft treaty marks the beginning of a period of uncertainty in the European Parliament, which those MEPs and political groups which voted in favour of the proposal will have to put to good use.

The European Parliament and the political forces represented there will have to apply a political strategy, starting now, which will enable them to motivate not only the parties but also the worlds of culture, economics, science and the professions. Ratification will be the subject of lively debate; but it will also provide an opportunity to find common ground for European society as a whole.

The campaign for the coming European elections in mid-June will offer the first chance to mobilise all the energies. It will also be the first test-bed for the proposed new European Constitution.

PIER VIRGILIO DASTOLI

□ The author is the director of the political review 'Crocodile', a letter to Members of the European Parliament.

'We must hammer home the message that there is no way towards economic recovery outside the Community framework'

As the crucial Euro-elections draw nearer, the President of the European Parliament, Piet Dankert, answers questions from Rose Moers about the Parliament's past performance, and what is at stake as the electorates of the ten member states go to the polls to elect a new one

MOERS: *The European Parliament has nearly completed its first term as a directly elected institution. Are you more or less happy with the way it has operated in the past five years?*

DANKERT: More or less is the right expression. The new Parliament had, of course, to find its way. Back in 1979 many of its members had no previous parliamentary experience, let alone experience in an international body. Often they failed to see that a given subject was not concluded as soon as a resolution had been adopted, but that the real work had yet to begin.

A continuous follow-up and soft pressure exercise is part of the way this Community operates. Some progress has been made on this point meanwhile, and there has been a notable improvement in contacts with the council of ministers, possibly at the expense of contacts with the Commission.

A striking feature of this parliament is the positive way in which it has developed its role as a watchdog, creating more openness as regards the activities of the Community. It certainly helps that, since 1979, Euro-parliamentarians have been able to devote themselves to the job full-time.

Where the Parliament has real powers, namely in the budgetary field, it has made highly responsible – and at the same time creative – use of those powers. I quote as an example the 1984 budget. The fact that Parliament has managed to freeze temporarily the British budget rebate is not just an exploit, or an action directed against the British Prime Minister, as has been suggested.

It means, for the first time, an active involvement of Parliament in the current process of negotiations – in my opinion, an important development. On top of that, Parliament has developed in recent years its role as a discussion platform for various topical issues, such as the major debates devoted to hunger in the world, the situation of women, economic recovery, and more.

On the negative side, I have to mention the loss of contact with national parliaments as a result of direct elections, which has led to a lack of information on Community matters at the national level, and lesser possibilities for Euro-MPs to influence their ministers through the national assembly. In my opinion, this is a very damaging development.

Given this overall positive balance sheet of Parliament's first term, why do you think that Europeans, according to recent opinion polls, are now less eager to vote than on the eve of the first direct elections, back in 1979?

I think the European Parliament cannot be considered in isolation from the European Community as a whole. In terms of public opinion, the image of the Community has certainly bleakened over the past few years, and especially since last autumn's policy deadlock and the failure of the Athens summit.

Another reason is related to publicity. Many Euro-MPs are not well known at home. They do not have a clear image in their national media, especially since many of the big names which originally headed the list have dropped out of Strasbourg.

There must be some more essential reason for this lack of interest. Even in countries with a traditionally pro-Europe attitude, the public now seems to be really disappointed.

Well, I must say that ministers have done all they could to provoke such a disappointment. Although there have been some positive decisions in recent times, such as the common fisheries policy, the public will mostly remember the quarrels and haggling sessions about the share-out of herring quotas.

Another example is steel policy, which has given the Community a lot of negative publicity, because it translates itself in loss of jobs and cuts in production capacity. Nobody seems to realise that it has led to a more acceptable and less chaotic situation than is currently prevailing in the textile and shipbuilding sectors, where the Community has no direct responsibility. Some of the Community's more negative aspects, the bureaucracy, butter mountains etc, have also been stressed too much by some national politicians whenever it suited them.

Conversely, they have sometimes raised expectations in regard to the Community on which their own governments were not going to cooperate, as they perfectly well knew. I would just mention issues such as employment policy or a joint approach to economic recovery, on which the very governments that have made solemn statements at home are shilly-shallying when it comes to making concrete decisions in Brussels. The effect on public opinion is, of course, highly damaging.

What about the Parliament's reputation as the home for those who like the good things in life?

In some countries, stories about money matters do indeed get a lot of publicity which, I think, is very damaging to Parliament as a whole. Of course, such stories would get nowhere if they were written in relation to national parliaments, whose members do in fact get exactly the same daily allowances when they take part in the Council of Europe or other international assemblies. Which is not to say that some tightening up doesn't need to be done. We have been working on that for some time. But the underlying thought seems to be that, as this Parliament is without powers, it should also be without money.

'The Community has hardly developed any policy that the young can identify with'

Why do you think that the young, in particular, are showing indifference as regards European unity? Recent polls show that only sixteen per cent are really interested in Europe, and a majority say they wouldn't care if the Community were to disappear.

It is very worrying indeed. But we must understand that younger people are not motivated towards European integration on political grounds, such as prevailed in post-1945 Europe. They vaguely think the EEC is all about agriculture, and fail to see the relevance of the Community to their day-to-day lives. I must admit that this relevance is difficult to pinpoint, since the Community has hardly developed any policy that young people can identify with. An instrument like the European Social Fund, useful though it may be, is doing little more than distributing crumbs to aid projects that have been set up nationally. No wonder it is hard for European citizens to identify with the Community, let alone with European deputies.

To me, it is of essential importance to hammer home the message that there is no way towards economic recovery outside the Community framework. And that the present attitude of some member gover-

ments – which is one of restraint and even back-peddalling as regards their commitment to Europe – is endangering the existence of the Community and the survival of their own countries. Only the Community can see us through the present crisis. People should not complain about EEC politicians and the Commission, but about their own national politicians and ministers, who lack the courage to take decisive steps towards the creation of a European entity.

On top of the employment and economic issues public opinion in most member states is highly motivated at present by the environment. Do you think that the creation of a European 'green list' in the forthcoming elections may help to mobilise the electorate?

In my opinion, the environment is not to be treated as an isolated issue. It should be seen as part of the global socio-economic and industrial policy. When it comes to putting the various interests in the balance, the environmental element should certainly be an important consideration. But it is self-defeating to base a campaign on just one issue, because this means certain defeat vis-à-vis existing well-established interests.

In politics, nothing can be done without a solid power base. Politics and action groups are two different things. Purposeful actions are, of course, very useful, since politicians need to be shaken up from time to time. But the environment policy must be part of a broader, integrated policy approach, otherwise it risks being swept off the table altogether.

While a separate approach may sometimes be indicated for problems

such as baby seals and acid rain, the real environment problems of our time are motor car exhaust fumes and widespread industrial pollution. In most cases, not an isolated but a broad – and preferably European – approach is indicated, since many different factors have to be put in the balance, from the extra costs resulting from modified equipment and the ensuing potential distortion of competition, to the trades unions' concern about loss of jobs.

Do you have a message to European voters that might help to get them to the polls next June?

As I said before, it is a matter of survival. More than ever we are at a crossroads in Europe. Let me illustrate this with an example, put to me recently by Australia's vice-premier: Australia, according to current criteria, is a developed country, whereas South Korea is a developing country. But if we take a close look at industrial structures and future prospects, Australia ought to be called a developing and South-Korea a developed country.

By refusing to push ahead with European unity, the Community is running the risk of ending up in an Australian-type situation. This means that the present level of wealth and social security in the member states cannot be maintained if we are not prepared to accept the European dimension – an excellent reason to go to the polls, and to make a choice among the various political alternatives.

To conclude: these elections are for the survival of our present social systems, which can only be realised through Europe. **E**

Women are still getting the worst of it, says Ivor Richard

According to European Social Affairs Commissioner Ivor Richard, things are going from bad to worse for women – the principal victims of the recession. Speaking at a European Parliament debate in Strasbourg on the situation of women in Europe, he said that the Commission intended to keep fighting alongside the European Parliament for equal opportunities for women.

After initial advances the movement towards female emancipation seems to have run out of steam. The recession is slowly eating away at the gains of the past, and bygone victories are being jeopardised. The symptoms are alarming. Unemployment among women, and in particular young women, is rising sharply.

Social outlay is falling. Public spending cuts mean fewer jobs. And new technologies are posing a direct threat to traditional female job markets. Women are still discriminated against, and rarely achieve prominence in business, unions and political parties.

The European Commission has consistently backed the fight for women's equality in Europe. But, as Ivor Richard points out, it does not have sufficient powers to impose its views on the member states.

The fact is that national governments have shown little inclination to introduce the principle of equal opportunity into their national legislations. Some have even encouraged women to stay at home, rather than increase the number of unemployed. Two reports have



'The Commission will keep fighting for equal opportunities for women'

now been published on the Commission's 1982-85 programme: on the promotion of equal opportunities, and application of the directive on equal treatment in matters of social security.

The results of the latter are not impressive.

European governments have made few changes in existing legislation. On the other hand, they have decided to introduce a number of positive measures, particularly in the form of special training programmes for women, specialist advisors on equal opportunities in employment offices, and information campaigns.

But a lot remains to be done, according to Mr Richard. Praising the work accomplished by the members of the committee of enquiry into the situation of women in Europe, he said that the Commission and the Parliament were moving in the same direction. Now it was up to the Council of Ministers and national governments to follow suit.

The committee, led by Italian Communist MEP Maria Lisa Cinciari Rodano, was presenting the results of two years' work, in the form of a 600-page report. It covered 18 specific themes, and dealt with a wide variety of aspects of women's lives. Subjects included health, employment, political representation, the rights of migrant workers and women in the Third World.

The main objectives of the motion for a resolution are listed in 99 points divided up into eight chapters. They include a defence of existing gains in the field of equal job opportunities for women, the creation of new jobs for women, and increased political, cultural and social participation.

The committee also wants the new Parliament to introduce a permanent committee for women's rights. **E**

A handshake on export credit terms

A self-destructive credit war between the rich nations has been averted with the adoption of a more permanent international agreement not to undercut each other's export lending terms.

The deal, which was struck in Paris by the ten European Community countries and the twelve other members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), is the result of five years' hard bargaining about the extent to which export credit interest rates should or should not be subsidised.

Export credit on easy terms has always been a key factor in attracting export orders. But its danger lies in persuading major exporting countries to vie with each other to offer bigger subsidies, cheaper credits and longer loans in order to boost their sales at the expense of those of their neighbours. The temptation to offer cheap credit to foreign buyers has been particularly difficult to resist at a time of world recession, when factories are lying idle and men are being laid off. OECD estimates suggest that the total cost of subsidies rose from \$2 billion in 1977 to over \$6 billion in 1980. Each additional 1 per cent subsidy cost about \$1 billion.

Broad agreement on the need to control the level of export credit subsidies was first reached in April 1978, when the OECD adopted the Arrangement on Guidelines for Officially Supported Export Credits, known as the 'Consensus'. The Arrangement, of which the new agreement is an extension, is designed to set the minimum lending terms that governments and public agencies must observe when they finance, subsidise or guarantee credits to foreign purchasers of capital goods and services.

The financial incentive implicit in an agreement not to undercut each other by offering

'A sharp divide remained between the Europeans and the Americans'

bigger subsidies in the form of lower rates, was clear. But a sharp divide remained between the Europeans, who generally wanted some kind of interest subsidy and the Americans, who preferred lending at market rates, but over longer periods of time.

The final agreement, which was agreed in October and came into effect in January, is a compromise, containing on the one hand an element of subsidy, and on the other an automatic adjustment mechanism linking the minimum interest rates charged on export credits to market rates of interest.

The new, permanent system will automati-

It took some hard bargaining – but the Community and the OECD states have at last called it quits on one sector of the exports front. CHRIS LOM reports

cally adjust the minimum interest rates of the Consensus at six-monthly intervals, according to changes in average world interest rates linked to the basket of major world currencies that make up the International Monetary Fund's special drawing rights (SDRs).

Of the three categories of borrowers, the 'relatively poor' and 'intermediate' countries will get cheaper credit under the new agreement. In the 'intermediate' category, which accounts for nearly two thirds of all export credit deals and includes newly industrialising countries like Taiwan and Brazil, minimum rates have been reduced 0.65 percentage point to 10.7 per cent on loans lasting 5-8½ years.

In the 'relatively poor' category of countries eligible for development aid, rates have been reduced 0.5 percentage point to 9.5 per cent on all loans. The minimum rates applied to 'relatively rich' countries, where per capita GNP is over \$4000, will remain unchanged at between 12.15 per cent – 12.4 per cent, with loans lasting up to 8½ years.

The third outstanding characteristic of the new arrangement is a system of special terms involving lower minimum rates for credits denominated in low interest currencies such as the yen, the deutsche mark, the Swiss franc and the Dutch guilder.

The development of the Consensus into an important and substantial international agreement has been a gradual process, negotiated largely between the European Commission, on behalf of the European Community, and the North Americans and Japan, against a background of fluctuating world interest rates and economic pressures.

The European Commission, speaking for the Ten as a whole, found itself straddling the fence, with the Community split down the middle. The Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark were all broadly sympathetic to US calls for a return to market rates. But France, Italy and the United Kingdom were all firmly in favour of keeping some sort of subsidy.

In November 1981 the Consensus as a whole agreed to a six-month compromise that involved a 2 per cent increase in minimum rates, in line with rising market rates to cut the cost of subsidies, special terms for low interest currencies like the yen, and a commitment to gradually liberalise the system to take account of the market.

In the meantime the USA, Canada, Japan

and the Scandinavian countries continued to press for an end to subsidies, and the introduction of a system by which export credits would simply be financed at the market interest rates of whatever currency they happened to be denominated in.

Determined to keep the ball rolling, the USA and Canada began to exert pressure. Taking advantage of the fact that long term credit over a period of 15-20 years is normal in North America and practically unobtainable in European capital markets, they began to deliberately offer export credits for longer periods than those stipulated by the Consensus. This posed a serious threat to European exporters, particularly when it became apparent that the longer-term option was very attractive to developing countries wanting to spread their debt repayments over a longer period of time.

The arrival of the Polish crisis further complicated the issue. The US demanded an end to cheap credits for the Soviet Union, while the European Community said that the Russians should simply be reclassified from a

'France, Italy and the UK were all in favour of keeping some sort of subsidy'

Category 2 'intermediate' country to a Category 1 'relatively rich' country. But the neutral members of the Consensus rejected both proposals on the grounds that they could only be approved as part of an overall reclassification.

By the first half of 1983, world interest rates had fallen from their 1981 levels and appeared to be relatively stable at close to minimum rates. Although the French and Italians wanted lower minimum rates and the non-Europeans wanted slightly higher market rates, the introduction of an automatic system linking the two began to look increasingly feasible. The European Commission then put forward proposals for a slight lowering of minimum rates, accompanied by the introduction of a system that would in future adjust the cost of export credit, according to change in average world interest rates.

The proposals, backed by the weight of the Community and the support of the moderate countries, were ultimately acceptable to both sides and formed the basis of the October agreement. The main advantage of the self-adjusting system is that it will remove the international tensions created by the acrimonious haggling over the level of minimum rates. However, debate will continue in number of grey areas. Among them is the issue of mixed credits, which are a mixture of export credit and development aid.

EURO FORUM

These Euroboots are made for walking

This year's March of Youth – the twelfth – will cover over 500km – and all the walkers, no matter which of the 12 different points they start from, will converge on Brussels. They will come from all over Europe and from all age groups and walks of life. What they will share is a unique feeling for and belief in Europe – an enthusiasm and curiosity about meeting other Europeans, and a certain kind of energy.

The twelve points – Berlin, Caen, Canterbury, Eindhoven, Lausanne, Luxembourg, Milan, Naples, Siegen, Strasbourg, Venice and Zeebrugge – indicate, as much as anything else, how widely interest is spread.

François Gillet – a 27-year-old teacher from Liège, Belgium – will be leading a young contingent, all of them between 16 and 26, who seem to embody the spirit with which it all began. 'They're interested in meeting other young people in Europe, not so interested in the sociological and political problems. They want to be with other young people and to talk about sport, their families, culture,' she says.

'The idea of Europe is not very clear in their heads – they feel nothing is actually seen of how it works. They're interested in the basics, the grassroots. After the march it may be possible to build something wider, to develop things further.' His group will be as international as he can make it. Marchers are joining him from France, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The generation who kicked off with the 20th century are well represented, too. Belgian magistrate Robert Deckmyn will be marching from Lausanne –

'The young contingent seem to embody the spirit with which it all began'

and he's 81. The oldest participant – as old as the century – comes from Switzerland, and plans to walk from Strasbourg. A German marcher, born in 1915, will be leaving from Canterbury – his sixth time. He likes to leave from a different place each year, so as to get to know different towns. All creeds and professions are represented – as well as that increasing European statistic, the unemployed. On the lists are housewives, engine drivers, teachers, technicians, electricians, secretaries, students, civil servants, dentists.

Paul Cliquet from Brussels, as President, is the man with responsibility for it all. He is an energetic 63-year-old teacher, whose home seems to have been taken over completely by the march and its organisation. Corners, walls, shelves are all filled and hanging with the trap-

pings – T-shirts, training gear, banners, maps, lists of details, routes – and telephones which ring insistently.

He says there will be 150 taking part this year (there were 140 last year). His enthusiasm is boundless. He has made many friends on the road over the years. It's a bit difficult at the beginning, he admits; but once it's set up it's child's play.

He holds up the newly-designed T-shirt to be admired. It's dark blue, with a large yellow 'E' for Europe and the imprint of a shoe fixed within the letter. There are 12 gold stars surrounding it. There are always 12 stars, he says. It's symbolic of many things, like the 12 stars of the Zodiac. And we are the points of a star coming each year to a gathering point in Europe.'

He remembers how it all began. He remembers the Brussels schoolchildren who first gave voice to their anxieties about Europe, following a European Week in the schools of the Brussels area. They felt it was a subject much talked about but very much removed from them, and from the reality of their lives.

Protesting their belief that there was a great difference between talk and action, six girls and 14 boys between 15 and 18, along with two of their teachers, set off on the first march to link just three capitals – Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg.

Even on that first march, reality

ON THE LINE

Toughening up on drug abuse is a top priority of the Commission, Commissioner Ivor Richard has told the European Parliament.

A major joint effort, linking the Commission with the various international health bodies, is under way in a bid to curb the problem, he told the Parliament on 15 February.

Crop substitution projects underway in the so-called Golden Triangle area of the Far East, the major source of opium in the western world, are being closely followed by the Commission. This should help prevent the harvesting of the opium poppy.

Commissioner Richard stressed that the Community's manioc diversification assistance could not be abused for opium cultivation. Such aid programmes are under way in Thailand and Indonesia at present, but in areas where opium does not grow for climatic reasons.



meant warm friendship, diversity, complementary qualities that could be shared. Together they arrived in Strasbourg convinced that left to themselves, some individuals might have abandoned the march on the second day.

Paul Cliquet's secretary, Thérèse De-france, shares his enthusiasm. This year she will start from Canterbury, cross with her group from Dover to Calais, and walk down through France. 'It's a marvellous thing,' she feels, 'and important not only for the marchers. We can see - everyone can see - how Europe works. The welcome in the towns is great - everyone takes part.'

In Canterbury the organiser and leader of the British contingent is Frank Bound. He has been involved for the past five years. As well as the home group, this year he will be leading three French participants, one Luxembourgish, and five Belgians. For him it has been 'absolutely wonderful', especially for the friendships which have been formed. On the march, he says, there's usually a celebration in each town as they go through.

Last year, 45 people left Canterbury,

'A celebration in each town they go through...'

seen off to the outskirts of the town by the Mayor, the Archbishop, and MEP Christopher Jackson, all of whom have a particular interest and strongly support the march. Frank hopes the event will snowball and spread out. 'If and when Europe takes in Spain and Portugal it should be even bigger and better.'

He is not the only one who thinks the sky's the limit as far as the march is concerned. In towns everywhere, dignitaries and townspeople will be turning out to wish the marchers well. And with support coming from such bodies as the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, European Railways, cities and towns too numerous to mention, the European Community press and information services, and sporting and commercial organisations, it seems that a great many people are concerned with doing something about a united Europe, not simply talking.



EUROPEAN REVIEW

More aid urged for Northern Ireland

The Commission is resolved to help tackle the economic problems facing areas like Northern Ireland and other depressed regions in the Community, budget commissioner Christopher Tugendhat stressed during a visit to Belfast.

This would mean an expansion of the regional development and social funds for the benefit of those who need them most, said Mr Tugendhat, though he warned that Community funds would remain 'modest' in comparison to national funding.

Major reforms in farm spending and the further opening-up of the internal trade market within the Community are urgently needed, he added.

'These decisions are bound to affect Northern Ireland. But if these decisions are not taken things cannot carry on as before.

'The money simply will not be available to do in the future what has been done in the past.'

Despite the farm spending cutbacks proposed by the Commission, farmers in the United Kingdom will still receive prices some 4 per cent higher than the community norm. And special measures are being provided by the Commission to safeguard farm incomes in Northern Ireland and other depressed regions.

Israel to be kept in the picture

The Community will keep Israel informed on the development of Spanish and Portuguese accession negotiations.

The decision came after a meeting in Brussels on 20 February between the Ten's Foreign Ministers and the Israeli Prime Minister, Itzhak Shamir, to examine links between the two parties. (Picture, page 23.)

Mr Shamir specifically dwelt on Israel's fears that her exports of fruit and vegetables to the Community would be threatened with the arrival of similar produce from the Iberian peninsula. This, he said, would worsen Israel's trade deficit with the Community, which last year reached 1.7 billion dollars.

Cooperatives shine in jobs campaign

Worker cooperatives are having a remarkable success in the fight against unemployment, social affairs commissioner Ivor Richard stressed in London recently.

'Cooperatives have a very special role to play at a time when Britain and its fellow European countries face together the twin challenge of employment and industrial regeneration', the Commissioner said.

The number of people working in cooperatives has almost doubled over the last five years - from 300,000 to 550,000 - Commissioner Richard pointed out when he inaugurated the first-ever Europe-wide worker cooperative trade fair on 21 February.

A solar future under glass

The ability of glass to act as an energy saver is often overlooked in building design, a new report financed by the Commission stresses.

Glazing has a crucial role to play in energy saving - collecting solar heat and lighting premises - the 260-page report points out.

The study is drawn up by the European Group of Flat Glass Producers, which comprises almost all Community flat glass makers. The study aims to make known the wide range of glass products available within the Community and their potential for energy conservation, comfort and safety; and also to outline a proposal for a European standardisation of glass products.

The Commission strongly backs the need to inform those involved in all stages of building construction of the wide range of products and research developments in the Community's glass sector.

Special mention is also given to the new work on 'safety glass', including shatter-proof and reinforced plate. Possible technical standards applicable on a community wide basis for such products are also outlined.

The report aims to act as a discussion document for proposed final drafting of commission directives for glass products in the Community's building sector.

Greenland settles for fishing rights

Community Foreign Ministers agreed terms in mid-February for Greenland's withdrawal from the Community with effect from next January.

The settlement came almost exactly two years after a narrow majority of Greenland's voters expressed their wish in a referendum to be independent of, yet retain close links with, the Community.

The ten-year-deal, which may be renewed for further six-year periods, remains to be ratified by national Parliaments, before Greenland's change of status may take effect.

In exchange for retaining fishing rights in Greenland's waters - primarily of interest to German vessels - the Community has agreed to provide annual cash compensation. Initially, this will total 26.5 million ECUs (£15.9 million) per year. This sum will also include any other form of aid which Greenland might have been entitled to under its new Overseas Country or Territory (OCT) status.

The agreement lays down the amount of cod, redfish and shrimps Community fishermen will be able to take annually off Greenland. These quotas will be reviewed after five years. If stocks are higher than the needs of the local inhabitants, the Community may purchase the right to increase its own share.

Greenland will continue to be able to send its fish - the vast bulk of its exports - duty free to the Community.

Help for the travelling people

Gypsies should be afforded more aid from the Community in their travels from state to state, according to MEP Johan van Minnen.

Community aid could take the form of helping local authorities provide better facilities, like properly serviced sites, he points out.

Funding from the social chapters of the Community's budget, he adds, might also be made available to set-up vocational training courses for gypsy communities.

Commission's rules would have prevented those lorry jams

The wave of lorry blockades which swept across Europe in February provided concrete proof of the financial and personal hardships involved from long delays at national frontiers.

Karl-Heinz Narjes, commissioner in charge of the internal market, pointed out that the administrative delays at customs posts and the truckers' protest action would not have happened if the Commission's proposals for cutting red tape had been adopted by member governments.

Commission President Gaston Thorn provided a telling example of the impact of these controls, when he told an audience drawn from the ranks of small and medium sized firms that the delays cost them 5 to 10 per cent of the value of their goods.

Even though customs duties and quotas have been abolished, the very existence of internal Community frontiers costs the equivalent of almost 7 per cent of goods traded annually between European countries.

A single customs document accepted throughout the Community, and payment of VAT through normal national channels, rather than at the frontier as at present are being urged by the Commission. The measures could cut delays by up to 50 per cent, it estimates.

Both items were scheduled for a meeting of government ministers in early March to examine the internal market. Their transport colleagues were due to gather later to consider further measures of benefit to the industry.

Weeding out unfair competition

A new Commission proposal is attempting to weed out unfair pricing on the Community's flower market.

Roses and carnations account for the largest proportion of flowers grown under the Community's 4,200 hectares (10,000 acres approx) of glass. Trade in these varieties alone was worth around 300 million ecus in 1982.

The Commission hopes to introduce a greater order into the market, notably in relation to imports from non-member states, with its latest proposal to the member governments. It urges a 'signal'

price system for roses and carnations applying in all member states, and daily listings of average producer prices for both varieties, with a similar detailed check on imports. This information must be forwarded to the Commission. Creation of import licences to allow the monitoring of trade with non-member states is also on the cards.

The new measures will allow the Commission a greater monitoring of the markets. Protective measures could be introduced by the Commission if unfair competition from third countries threaten Community producers.

Signal prices would be fixed by taking an average of those on offer to producers in the main producing states over a period of months. Each year these prices would be fixed by the Council of Ministers.

There has been a considerable shift towards glass-house growing in the Community over the past decade, especially in the major flower producing states like Italy, the Netherlands and France.

Closer ties with Pakistan

The Community and Pakistan are investigating updating their 8-year-old Commercial Cooperation Agreement with wider economic ties between the two parties.

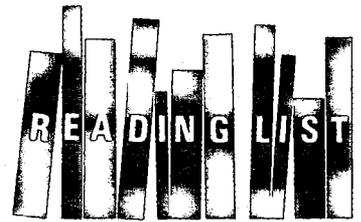
The idea was discussed at the latest meeting of the joint committee which reviews the bilateral contacts. The talks also highlighted Pakistan's exports of textiles to the Community and growing sales of industrial products under the EEC's generalised system of preferences.

Under its aid programme, the Community gave Pakistan 18 million ECUs (16 million dollars) last year for projects in connection with Baluchistan integrated area development schemes.

The planned Commercial and Economic Cooperation Agreement would broaden contacts to include the new areas of economic and development cooperation, as well as reinforcing existing trade provisions.

The Commission has suggested the following objectives be chosen: promote the development of European and Pakistani industries; contribute to scientific and technological progress; open up new markets and sources of supply; and raise living standards.

In 1982, Pakistan had a 536 million ECU trade deficit with the Community, largely through her imports of machinery and manufactured goods.



Trading within the European Community: a United Kingdom executive guide. By Dennis Evans. Tolley Publishing Co Ltd, Croydon, Surrey, £35.00 (further copies £20 each).

A lucid and business-like guide to the various requirements and systems operating in member states, by a senior executive whose experience also includes 19 years of teaching at the Management Centre Europe, in Brussels.

Communicating to Voters: television in the first European Parliamentary elections. Edited by Jay G. Blumler. Sage Publications, £7.50.

A symposium of essays, initiated by the International Institute of Communications, analysing the experience of the (then) nine member states in an 'ethnocentrically European exercise'.

The European Connection: implications of EEC membership. By Richard Bailey. Pergamon Press, £9.50.

A wide-ranging and well-informed account of the external relations of the European Community during a decade that has seen the rundown of traditional industries, laying on member states the obligation, as the author sees it, of doing more than just 'going through the motions of membership without contributing anything to Community development'.

Sun Traps: the Renewable Energy Forecast. By John Elkington. Penguin Books, £3.65

Up-to-date and wide-ranging account of solar power, where it stands and where, one day, it might take us.

Where the EIB's money went in 1983

Last year, European Investment Bank loans reached a new high – and all ten Community member states will benefit

Restoration work on the Doges' Palace in Venice, a submarine cable linking the British and French electricity grids, electrification of the Dublin suburban railway and an East-West pipeline to ship Soviet gas across the Federal Republic of Germany may not seem to have much in common.

The link between them is the fact that they were all part-funded by the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Community's bank for long-term development loan finance, as part of its lending programme last year.

Since 1958, EIB lending has grown and diversified steadily. In 1983 it reached a record £3.42 billion – 27 per cent more than in 1982. About 60 per cent of the money went to projects in depressed areas, strengthening infrastructures, modernising industry and creating jobs. Projects selected in 1983 will create an estimated 33,500 jobs and will save another 475,000.

Other key features of the programme included £958 million for energy projects designed to cut Community oil imports by an estimated 22 million tonnes a year, and a new commitment to environmental protection.

Italy was the bank's biggest borrower in 1983, with loans totalling over 3,500 billion lire (2610 million ECUs). About 60 per cent of it went to the Mezzogiorno, including special finance to repair earthquake damage in Basilicata and Campania.

Funding also went to projects as diverse as sewage treatment schemes to clean up the Gulf of Naples and the River Tiber in Rome; irrigation in Molise and South Latium; and restoration work on the Doges' Palace in Venice, Italy's third most important tourist attraction.

In France, loans almost doubled on the previous year to over 6000 million francs (895 million ECUs). About 40 per cent of the total was in the form of global loans for small infrastructure projects in depressed regions. Other infrastructure projects included funding for the Bordeaux ring-road, road improvement schemes in the West, South West, Lorraine and Corsica, and improvements to telecommunications in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, the West and South West.

The United Kingdom's borrowing rose by 40 per cent to a little over £410 million (690 million ECUs). £160 million went to infrastructure projects, including the extension of Manchester and Birmingham airports, telecommunications in Scotland, road improve-



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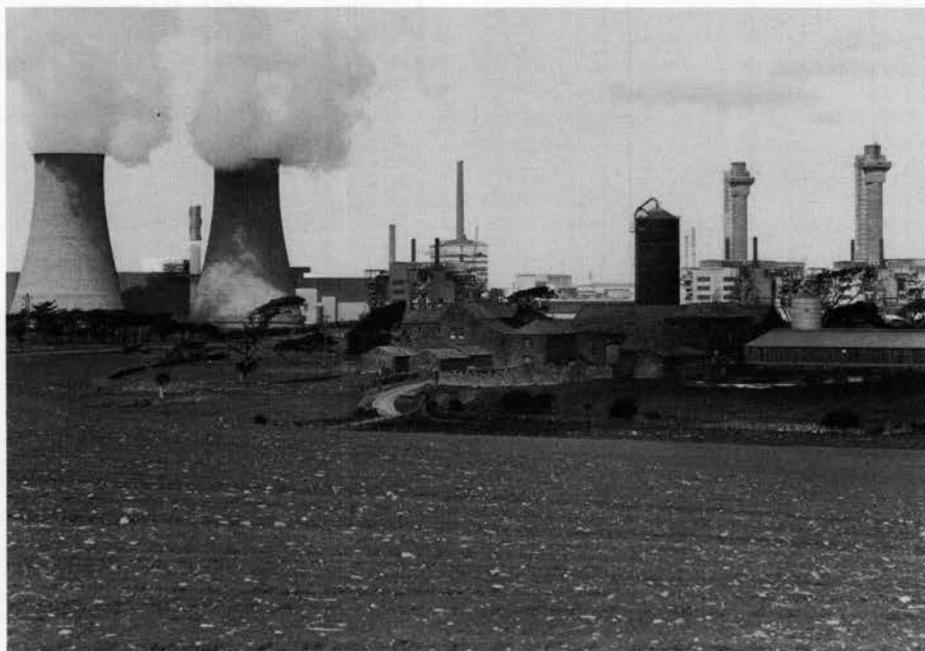
ments in Devon, Lancashire, Merseyside, Lothian, the Western Isles and South Wales, and waste disposal and recycling schemes in Hull and Newcastle.

Industrial projects included the development of a new aircraft production line and dairy modernisation in Belfast, a glassworks in Nottinghamshire, and funding for small firms worth about £70 million.

The bulk of the £180 million borrowed for energy projects went towards the development of the Magnus oil field in the North Sea, funding for the Torness nuclear power station in East Lothian, and improvement of the effluent treatment and disposal facilities at Sellafield (Windscale) in Cumbria.

Greece borrowed about 35 billion drachma (450 million ECUs) in 1983. About half of it went to infrastructure projects such as roads, telecommunication, sewerage schemes, and irrigation on the mainland and in Crete. Industrial estates in Thessaly, the Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace and the Peloponnese also received loans. Energy projects included finance for hydro-electric power stations and for a new thermal power station in Western Macedonia.

In Denmark, loans rose by 20 per cent to over 2955 million krona (365 million ECUs), most of which went to energy projects. These included the exploitation of Danish North Sea natural gas reserves. **E**



BRITISH NUCLEAR FUELS

Two beneficiaries: the Doges' Palace, Venice, and (above) the Cumbrian atomic power plant, Sellafield, formerly known as Windscale.

Action to help jobless school-leavers

More flexible teaching methods, involving education authorities throughout the Community, could do more to prepare young people for the realities of life after school

Job insecurity, uncertainty, and long spells of unemployment are the prospects facing one out of every five school leavers in the Community. In some areas as many as 80 per cent of those leaving school remain without work.

Everyone knows this is a serious problem. Governments have come up with a number of special measures to 'fill the gap'. The mixed bag includes more schooling, more training, more apprenticeship, job creation schemes. But these have had only a limited impact on the ever-rising number of youngsters joining the dole queue.

A series of EEC projects, originally started in 1978, came up with a fresh approach. The ideas being put forward challenge the rigidity of most training and education courses in the ten member countries, and suggest more flexible teaching methods to help the young to cope with today's harsh realities.

Armed with this data, the European Commission was able to convince the ten European governments to provide enough money for the projects to continue until 1986. Thirty projects have already started this year with a modest 5.3 million ECU budget.

'Secondary education has tended to concentrate on developing academic competences first, and others - personal/social, physical/manual, affective/emotional and aesthetic/artistic - second,' says the Commission. It goes on to say that, although schools agree that there is a need to develop these aspects, they have been 'hindered' by curricula organised around traditional courses and examinations.

Schools can no longer sit back saying that, although they are unable to help the young develop 'non-academic' skills, opportunities exist elsewhere - in the family, in vocational preparation and training courses and in the first years of employment. The lack of work and on-the-job training has whittled away these opportunities, leaving the educational authorities with the full responsibility.

Projects supported by the Commission tried to meet this new challenge, experimenting with new methods of learning. Some of the projects, for example, started discussion groups between staff and students to decide what should be taught in the various



BEN JOHNSON

courses, how it should be taught and ways of assessing the progress made by the pupils.

The Commission is convinced that the so-called 'learning contract' has been very effective in motivating students, and should be a central principle in all training programmes and whenever possible in compulsory education. The role of teachers was also found to be of paramount importance. 'Young people are more often tired of school than tired of learning,' comments the Commission. More discussion between staff and pupils is needed to change the relationship between the two.

The teacher must be 'more of a facilitator, rather than the giver and controller of knowledge,' the more commonly accepted role. But, as some of the projects have shown, not all the staff share this view.

Teaching the teachers was never easy. Some of the projects tried to do this through discussion groups led by a staff development officer, specially appointed for the job. Teachers were taught to become 'facilitators', seeing the relevance of their subject to the wider, non-academic context, and developing more open, non-authoritarian relationships with the young. Teachers were also encouraged to participate in schemes linking the school to the local community, so as to better understand local employment opportunities.

'Young people are more often tired of school than tired of learning'

All projects stressed the importance of involving the local community in training schemes. The help of companies could be sought to give youngsters some work experience and people from the locality could be invited to come and learn about the school or take part in specific projects.

Another area that the various projects tried to improve on was the type of counselling given to the young. All the projects came up with the same answer, ongoing counselling was necessary.

The most successful schemes were those that used informal methods providing easily readable information packages or booklets. One project even went as far as encouraging the young themselves to find and collect information that they felt was most relevant, such as how to get unemployment benefit and how to look for a job.

The projects also challenged the way traditional examinations have become the yardstick for the educational measurements of all



RAY DEAN

young people. They highlighted the 'inadequacies' of the current examination systems saying that they assess only a small part of 'learning achievement' – a limited range of academic skills that they provide motivation, only for those who are academically inclined; that failure in school exams limits access to both jobs and further education; and that school exams make the whole curriculum more rigid and cumbersome.

A number of new systems were tried out by the various projects to overcome some of the limitations, one of the most successful being the credit system, whereby students built up their points over a period of time. The system does not penalise part-time students or those changing from education to training.

The UNICAP project, for example, accredited one unit per academic year. This allowed students following a building construction course to complete each unit at their own pace, some taking less than a year, others more, and some re-starting their year without having to re-sit courses already passed.

An inquiry into students' opinions showed the majority were satisfied with the credit unit system. Some 90 per cent of them felt they understood much better what was expected by their tutors and 96 per cent considered themselves 'better trained' for their future

'Current exam systems assess only a part of learning achievement'

trades.

The results of the qualifying exam confirmed the opinion of the students – 70 per cent passed the exams, as opposed to 40 per cent in previous years. The external jury that assessed the exams was also clearly satisfied with the quality of 'credit-unit' students.

Finally, a link between the various agencies helping young people was stressed by all the projects. The Commission warned, however, that such coordination should avoid setting up new structures that 'can later prove to be cumbersome and counter-productive'. It is better for the various agencies to work informally with each other so as to avoid duplication. 'Young people are often not sure where to go for advice or information and most agencies can only help with part of the problem. So they must trek from one office to another. Even to buildings in other parts of town.' This deters 'all but the most resolute – and patient,' says the Commission.

REBECCA FRANCESKIDES

Community-wide schools project

MOST of the thirty new projects supported by the Commission and started this year are concentrating their efforts on young migrants and girls.

The projects in Limbourg (Belgium), and Mannheim and Duisberg (Germany) are attempting to provide better counselling services for young migrants, as well as a wider schooling mixed with work experience in the local area. Limbourg, as well as two of the British projects in Manchester and Northamptonshire, are tackling the problems faced by young girls.

What all the projects are stressing is the need to coordinate schools in the area more effectively with local industry, job centres and counselling services. Eight of the projects are working particularly on this problem. Schools, together with local authorities, in Copenhagen (Denmark), Kassel (RFA), Galway, Munster, (Ireland), Glasgow (UK), Powis (Wales, UK) and two projects in the Netherlands are all attempting to better coordinate local advice centres and make industry more aware of the difficulties.

Two projects in Belgium, and the Manchester project, are experimenting further with the credit system so as to come up with a more flexible method of assessing the skills of students than the present rigid examination system.

A nationwide project in France will solely look at counselling services, while teachers in Copenhagen and in Iraklion (Greece) will receive in-service training to better understand and help school leavers.

Students who have found difficulties with formal education will be at the centre of projects in Lyon (France) and Northamptonshire. In Luxembourg, teachers are being prepared to help this group make the transition to working life.

Six projects are working with local industry to train school leavers in tourism (Calabria and Sardinia, Italy); crafts (Rhodes, Naxos, Kalimos, Greece); management (Tuscany, Italy); and new technologies and small and medium sized enterprises (Piedmont, Italy). Two projects are more particularly concerned with agriculture helping school leavers to enter this field. The projects are in the Athens and Kavalas areas in Greece and Campania in Italy.

Part of the 5.3 million ECU budget has gone towards the creation of a youth and culture centre for young migrants in Berlin and towards a community education centre which will use the local area as a learning resource in a deprived area of Dublin.

How can we harmonise the music business?

DERWENT MAY reports on a seminar in London at which representatives of Europe's music industry discussed the problems of 'cultural workers' in an often discordant market

What has an Economic Community to do with music? A one-day conference was held in London on 12 March to discuss this knotty question. It was organised by the National Music Council of Great Britain, an august body with Sir Michael Tippett as its president, and many other musical knights among its distinguished vice-presidents.

Dr Livio Missir, the head of the Cultural Division of the European Commission, kicked off. He had been invited to answer a larger, prior question: what has the EEC to do with culture? He was at pains to point out that, from the start, the EEC had been designed as an economic, and definitely not as a cultural,

community. There had never been a formal meeting of the Ministers of Culture of the EEC member states, and only two informal meetings. His own division at the Secretariat-General was created only in 1980.

'Not even the Community has dared to define culture,' he declared. 'It doesn't come out in favour of specific aesthetic or ideological options.' What it does, he said, is to apply the Treaty of Rome to certain economic features of cultural life. Thus it aims to improve the living standards of 'cultural workers' and, according to its principles, tries to achieve that by establishing the freest possible traffic in 'cultural goods' (using this term rather than 'works of art', which begs too many questions).

Evidently it was because this kind of relationship with musicians is the main point in EEC policy that nearly all the 150 people attending the conference were representatives of the music industry, rather than actual musicians. There were people from music publishers, record producers, video producers and broadcasting companies.

They were concerned, above all, with the question of protecting various forms of copyright in the EEC countries, and, indeed, outside it. Would the EEC hinder this, or could it

help? One serious threat to the protection of recorded music comes precisely from the application of EEC rules about free trade in cultural goods. Those rules might actually harm musicians, by undermining copyright agreements reached with distributing companies in individual countries. A record producer might enter into an agreement giving a distributor in, say, Holland exclusive rights in a record in that country – and find that, by EEC rules, the records that were being sold in Germany could be taken into Holland and sold there at prices that undermined the agreement.

As for copyright in performances, this is even harder to keep under control, regardless of contracts and regulations. Viewers in one country can often watch the television programmes being shown in neighbouring countries without making any payment – and this will probably become even more common with the development of satellite broadcasting. It won't be only neighbours then. In any case, how can the owner of a copyright in a piece of music begin to keep track of all the possible forms of piracy that broadcasters or foreign record companies or disco-owners, say, may engage in?

An EEC lawyer, Colin Overbury, tried to answer some of these questions. (He is, to be precise, adviser on EEC Competition Law to the European Commission.) On the whole, he offered reassurance to the people attending the conference – though he stressed that he was giving his own interpretation of Community law, and was not necessarily to be taken as a spokesman for the EEC.



One acknowledged success of the Community's cultural programme is the European Youth Orchestra, seen here under Sir Georg Solti in 1982.

'There was concern with the protection of various forms of copyright'

He said that the EEC would accept national copyright laws where they gave proper and necessary protection to a producer of any kind. Such laws were proper and necessary if, without them, the producer would not actually be in a position to produce anything. The EEC did not want to see the complete drying up of production of new 'cultural goods', in this case new music or new performances of music: that, after all, would not help the standard of living of 'cultural workers'.

Where the regulations about free competition came in, however, was where attempts to apply copyright principles led to 'arbitrary discrimination' in favour of one product as against a perfectly reasonable rival. Then, he admitted, the Competition Department of the EEC could show teeth – and could impose fines. But in general he thought that the 'rule of reason' would rise up and support proper copyright protection.

The only woman to address the conference was a young lawyer, Gillian Davies. She spoke on two matters about which she has prepared reports for the EEC: piracy, and 'the private copying of sound and audio-visual recordings'. The EEC, as one of its standard activities, is attempting to harmonise national laws in these fields among its member states. For instance, in some member countries, especially Belgium, France, Germany and Holland, composers have poorer protection against the unauthorised reproduction of their music than they do in the others, and the hope is that such harmonisation will mean a levelling up of that protection.

Miss Davies's proposals in the second matter probably created most stir at the conference. Music producers are suffering particularly badly from an activity that it would be very hard to stop – namely, the copying on to cassettes of live performances, or of other recordings by private individuals. One boy buys a new rock record – and all his friends tape it for themselves. It is certainly a serious loss to everyone concerned in producing the original recording – but very hard to prevent.

Miss Davies's proposal to the EEC is that a royalty should be paid by everybody on the actual recording equipment that they buy, whether the hardware – the recorder, say – or the software – i.e. the recording tapes. The money would be collected by national 'collecting societies' like the Performing Rights Society, and handed over to the composers and musicians and production companies, along the lines that such societies have already worked out for other kinds of performance. In fact, some countries already have this kind of tax on recording equipment, and any EEC initiative will fall, again, under the heading of harmonisation of laws.

The director-general of the French 'collecting society', M. Jean Loup Tournier, spoke after Miss Davies. He said that his own organisation acted under the watchful eye of the EEC: the Commission had objected when an advertisement for a vacancy had specified that the applicants should be French – it was against the principle of the free movement within the Community of cultural workers. He wondered dryly if the Commission would rule against membership of the Academie Française being restricted to Frenchmen.

He observed that some countries in the EEC did not give musicians proper legal protection against unauthorised broadcasts, and, by contrast, that some record producers colluded with broadcasters in promoting their music at the expense of others'. Payola was still around. Such matters were appropriate ones for the EEC to take up; but he had often found it hard to get a proper answer when he had raised them with the Commission. In fact, he said, when Colin Overbury spoke in the morning, it was the first time he had ever heard anyone from the EEC speak clearly on these questions.

In some ways he confirmed what Colin Overbury had said. The network of national collecting societies within the EEC were a natural target for the Commission's hostility; yet he too felt that they might well be safe

against the Treaty of Rome if they could show they were indispensable for the proper protection of musicians.

The spokesman for the musicians themselves was John Morton, the General Secretary of the Musicians' Union. He spoke with passion of the many threats to musicians' rights. He said that, in general, musicians had been sceptical about the usefulness of the EEC to them in the early years, and were more inclined to regard it as a danger; but if it could bring in the kind of legal protection for them that the conference had been discussing, that would be a very different matter.

There was hard evidence given at the conference of only one man present actually having been a musician, and that was Basil Tschaikoff, who, we were told, played the clarinet when the Beatles made 'Sergeant Pepper'. He had an original plea to make – for the protection of the musician against being constantly watched and judged. He thought that, especially with people taking their tape-recorders into concert halls, performers felt constantly 'bugged and pinned down', and could not play as freely as they once did.

It was a touching *cri de coeur*; and, if not quite a matter for Brussels, it properly brought the conference back to the beginning and end of all music – the musician, his feelings, and his art. E

A voice that keeps forgotten airs alive



another opera rarely performed these days – or Medea in 'Corinto' by Mayr (how many people have even heard of it?) and 'Sappho' by Massenet, another of her recorded rarities.

The music in these operas belongs to a time when singers were foremost in the theatre, says Miss Andrew, and could add their own embellishments and cadenzas. Nowadays the interest is in the production. 'To maintain these works in the minds of the public we have to do everything we can to make this lovely music dramatically viable. The days when you could stand in a traditional pose and sing are gone.'

Combining this 'forgotten' music, often pegged to trivial stories, with modern theatre is no easy matter. But when neglected works are actually brought out for an airing the audiences have always been richly rewarded, according to Miss Andrew. It is singers' music, she confesses, and it can cruelly expose a singer. So there is no need for the super stars to put themselves out, when the public is still clamouring for more and more recordings of the best-known works.

A good few Tchaikovsky operas have fallen by the wayside. Ludmilla Andrew is in demand to sing Lise in one of the best known of them, 'The Queen of Spades'. Perhaps one day she can be persuaded to appear in 'The Enchantress', 'The Oprichnik', or even 'Mazeppa', which few of us otherwise stand much chance of ever seeing.

JAMES HOGAN

LUDMILLA ANDREW is one soprano who has devoted part of her career to works like Donizetti's 'Torquato di Tasso', 'Rosmonda D'Inghilterra', and 'Gabiella di Vergy', an opera which she has recorded complete. She is one of only three sopranos in the world to include the same composer's 'Maria di Rudenz' in her repertoire.

Born in Canada of Russian parents, she sings in ten languages. Between 'Tosca' with the Royal Opera or the Marschallin in 'Der Rosenkavalier' at Brussels, Miss Andrew can be tracked down to other big opera houses in Europe singing Donizetti's 'Anna Bolena' –

Safety in tour hotels — a burning problem

The idea of people plummeting to their deaths from burning tower-blocks has been a favourite media nightmare since 'The Towering Inferno' in the early Seventies.

Real-life tragedies in Seoul, Las Vegas and Zaragoza in recent years have lent substance to the idea, and left over 300 dead. All three disasters occurred because of a lack of basic fire safety precautions.

To Europe's massive tourist industry, hotel fires are a hazard that won't go away. Together, the Community countries have about 175,000 hotels, containing five million beds and employing over two and a half million people. Fire regulations vary from the excellent to the seriously inadequate.

The European Commission has now come up with a plan to introduce minimum fire protection standards for hotels throughout the European Community. Proposals listed in the plan include the installation of fire alarms, the clear marking and maintenance of exits and fire escapes, minimum construction standards, non-inflammable interior decoration and fittings, regular checks on wiring, heating and air-conditioning systems, and special fire prevention training for staff.

Hotels would be subject to inspection, and those complying with the standard would be issued with a 'Certificate of Conformity', which they could presumably display alongside their AA, RAC and Egon Ronay stars.

Existing fire prevention regulations for hotels vary widely in different Community countries. The Federal Republic of Germany is the only member state with a system roughly comparable to the Commission plan. The United Kingdom introduced a law in 1972 subjecting hotels with more than six beds to loc-

al authority inspection. France has had special construction requirements for small hotels since 1976 and for larger ones since 1982.

In the Netherlands, hotels are subject to local authority controls. In Italy, special construction requirements have existed since 1980. Draft legislation is currently being prepared in Belgium.



It's those customs men again

When a group of townspeople from Filton in the West of England set out to take a small travelling exhibition depicting their way of life to their twin town of Witzenhausen, in the Federal Republic of Germany, a web of red tape was waiting for them.

Customs officers at Ostend insisted that they should present a £50 Chamber of Commerce ATA carnet, to prove that they were not planning to sell the exhibition — which mainly consisted of photos of Filton's aerospace industry — to avid German buyers.

Failing that, said the customs officials, they could leave a £5,000 deposit...

Hours of argument, threat and counter-threat eventually resulted in the exhibit being allowed to pass, 'just to get rid of it', according to Filton's Euro-MP, Richard Cottrell.

The delegation might have been luckier than it knew. British salesman Simon Cohen claims that he was 'kicked down the stairs' by a customs officer at a Franco-Belgian border post, during an altercation over a Chamber of Commerce ATA carnet that specified a different border crossing point.

He reported the incident to the Belgian police and asked his MEP to make representations to the Belgian government and the European Commission. Officials refused to give their names, he said.

Complaints about 'regrettable and irritating' border hassles have

been arriving at the Commission thick and fast, according to officials in Commissioner Karl-Heinz Narjes' internal market directorate. Responding to Richard Cottrell's condemnation of 'petty and insensitive' border bureaucracy, Narjes says that the Commission has proposed several ways of cutting border red tape.

But a number of the proposals are still waiting for approval by the Council of Ministers.

Pessimism prevails, says report

The latest Eurobarometer report, based on research carried out in October 1983, finds that European morale was not high, even if there was slightly less pessimism than in the previous year. Of people questioned, 35 per cent thought that 1984 would be worse than 1983, and 26 per cent thought that it would be better.

Greece, Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany all had more optimists than pessimists. But the Belgians and the Irish were extremely gloomy about future prospects. Morale was highest in Denmark.

As far as social harmony was concerned, again pessimism seemed to prevail. 45 per cent of Europeans thought that strikes and social conflicts would increase in the coming months.

People were also worried about the economic situation. Negative views outnumbered positive ones everywhere except in Denmark and in Greece, where they were evenly balanced.

In response to the question 'Are you happy with the life that you lead?', 95 per cent of Danes said yes, with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Italians and Greeks were the least satisfied. The Dutch claimed to be the most happy people in Europe in general terms.

Overall, 16 per cent of Europeans said that they were 'very happy', the same percentage as in 1975. The percentage of people who said that they were 'not very happy' fell from 27 per cent to 21 per cent.

The main concern was unemployment, followed by the suppression of terrorism (Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy and the United Kingdom), environmental protection (Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Greece), energy, and reduction of inequality. At the bottom of the list, except in the United Kingdom and Greece, was aid to the Third World and defence.

MEPs call for moves against the Moonies

The activities of Sun Myung Moon, the leader of the controversial Unification Church, have again been causing a stir in the corridors of the European Parliament.

A number of MEPs have now called for an end to the tax concessions and charitable status currently given to the sect in some Community countries.

In a draft report on the issue, French Progressive Democrat MEP Daniel Vié has called for an EC convention that would apply the ban throughout the European Community.

MEPs have already tabled two motions condemning the behaviour of the Moonies, whom they accuse of posing a threat to society by their brainwashing of young recruits.



Are vitamins food or medicine?

The array of multi-vitamin bottles on your bathroom shelf may ward off winter colds, but they are not necessarily medicines — they can be foodstuffs, according to the European Court of Justice.

The Court ruling follows a case involving a Dutch businessman charged under Dutch law with the possession and marketing of large quantities of concentrated vitamins, in the form of tablets, pills and capsules.

In the Netherlands, any medicinal product in pharmaceutical form must be registered with the public

authorities, before it can be put on the market. However, defence lawyers claimed that vitamins were simply food, and therefore could not be subject to restrictions, either under Dutch or Community law.

The Court concluded that definition of a vitamin preparation as a medicine could be partly based on its strength and concentration, but that ultimately cases would have to be judged on their individual merits.

Sludge can be bad for you

Sewage sludge used as fertilizer can increase agricultural productivity, according to a European parliament committee. But untreated sludge can be a health hazard, say the MEPs.

The view is contained in a report compiled for the Parliament by French Socialist MEP Alain Bombard, following the publication of a draft directive on the recycling of human and animal wastes in agriculture. Parliamentary amendments to the draft concentrated on consumer protection measures.

The European Community countries produce about 60 million tonnes of sewage sludge a year. By the year 1990 that figure could have doubled, according to the report. Nearly 30 per cent of it is used in agriculture, particularly in Belgium, France and Scotland. The rest is burnt or pumped out to sea.

The sludge is rich in calcium and organic matter, and is good manure. But it can contain dangerous pathogens. However it is subjected to a number of processes designed to destroy dangerous bacteria. These include pasteurisation, heating and aerobic and anaerobic digestion. But none of the systems is 100 per cent reliable. There is also no way of removing heavy metals, pesticides and other toxic substances.

Careful checks, therefore, have to be made on the chemical composition of the sludge, before it can be used in agriculture. Strong doses of certain metals in soluble form can be absorbed by a number of plants including carrots, radishes, turnips and spinach, and thence into the human system. On the other hand, there is no reason why sludge should not be used in non-food related areas, such as horticulture, silviculture and forestry.

The Parliament now want the Commission to fix stricter norms and uniform obligatory procedures for testing sludges and sludge-fertilised soils.

Cash for Poland's farmers

The ten member states are to give financial aid to the Polish church to help promote private agriculture.

The decision was taken by Community Foreign Ministers at the request of the German Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Once the relevant Foundation has been set up by the Warsaw Parliament, funds from the Community and the US will be transferred. The Ten will initially finance six pilot projects.



Trade with East bloc countries nosedives

Plans for trade agreement with Hungary have been published in Brussels, as concern mounts over the Community's growing trade deficit with the Eastern bloc countries.

The agreement, which follows similar deals with Rumania and Yugoslavia, will be aimed at strengthening trade links, which have become increasingly unbalanced in recent years.

Between 1978-1982 the Community's trade balance with Eastern Europe shifted from a £201 million (352 million ECUs) surplus to a £5.13 billion (9,000 million ECUs) deficit. The Community's deficit in trade with the Soviet Union alone rose from £476 million (834 million ECUs) to £4.74 billion (8,300 million ECUs), although it fell in the first part of 1983.

The reasons for the growing imbalance centre on the serious growth problems currently experienced by

the state-planned economies of the Communist bloc countries. Economic stagnation has forced them to cut back on investment plans and introduce a corresponding scaling-down of hard currency imports from the West. Enormous hard currency debts to western banks have also forced a number of countries to adopt a deliberate policy of cutting western imports.

Until last year, all ten individual Community countries were suffering from a trade deficit in their dealings with the Eastern bloc as a whole. The bulk of the deficit was due to the Soviet Union's trade surplus. The Russians currently account for about half of all EEC-Eastern bloc trade.

Last year, both the Federal Republic of Germany and France increased their exports to the Soviet Union, moving into a position of 'moderate surplus', according to Commissioner Wilhelm Haferkamp. But other Community member states remained in deficit.

More jobs in service sector

Over 56 per cent of Europeans now work in the service sector and the percentage will continue to grow in the future, according to Eurostat.

Since 1958 technical progress has radically changed the face of Europe's economy. In those days 20 per cent of the workforce in the original six Community states worked in agriculture. Now they represent less than 7.7 per cent. The percentage of the labour forces working in industry has also declined, from 42.7 per cent to about 36 per cent.

The case of the stay-at-home doctors

European doctors have been allowed to practice in any Community country since 1975. But how many have actually taken advantage of the system?

Replying to a written question from Luxembourg Socialist MEP Victor Abens, Commissioner Karl-Heinz Narjes said that only 980 doctors had worked in Community countries other than their own be-

tween December 1976 and December 1981. The disappointing result was compounded by the fact that many of the doctors who went abroad only did so for one or two years, in order to gain additional training.

Dutch doctors were the most mobile: 464 of them set up practices in other Community countries. Next were the French (263), followed by the Italians (78) and the Belgians (72). Other member states had 46 or less. However, no reliable figures yet exist for the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece or Ireland. Additional statistics should soon be available, says Mr Narjes.

Redress for road crash victims

Community finance ministers have approved a directive that will provide compensation for victims of accidents caused by uninsured or unidentified drivers in other Community countries.

The legislation follows a 1972 directive guaranteeing minimum insurance cover for accident victims abroad, that brought an end to 'green card' checks at frontier posts.

The latest motor insurance directive establishes minimum requirements that reduce the differences in compensation provided by compulsory insurance in the different member states over the next five years. It makes it obligatory for car owners to insure against property damage, as well as personal injury caused to third parties. And it sets minimum levels of cover considerably higher than those currently existing in some Community countries.

Voluntary youth scheme by 1985?

Plans are emerging for a Community voluntary service scheme for 16 to 25 year olds, following a resolution approved by the European Parliament.

The European Commission has been asked to prepare a pilot programme to assess the cost of the operation. The scheme would last for a year, and would apply to young Europeans 'interested in serving society', starting next year.

More and more British think the Community is 'a good thing'

As the 1984 Euro-elections draw near, how do voters in the Community feel about such issues as unification, relations between the member states, and their own country's attitude towards the Community as a whole?

The latest Eurobarometer report on public opinion in the Community finds that attitudes to European unification are fairly stable in the short term, with a considerable majority in favour everywhere except in Denmark. Over the last decade, however, there has been a gradual erosion of this general support in almost all countries except the United Kingdom.

Greece is a special case: data only goes back as far as 1980, but shows the feeling of belonging has increased sharply among the general public. In the United Kingdom, for the first time since autumn 1978, there are more people who consider Community membership 'a good thing' (36 per cent) than 'a bad thing' (28 per cent).

The survey finds that, in the Community as a whole, one person in two had recently read or heard something about the European Parliament. However, it seems that knowledge of and attitudes to the European Parliament and the forthcoming elections are still very vague.

But it cannot be said they are viewed with hostility. The impression is that the dribs and drabs of information floating around in the heads of the least politically-minded voters 'crystallised' during the interview to produce a fairly positive reaction. Hence, while the public is more or less evenly divided (45 per cent to 40 per cent) on whether Parliament has the power to cope with the problems currently facing the Community, a clear majority (59 per cent) in all countries except Denmark would like Parliament to play a greater role.

These two answers, says the report, are not contradictory: they show once again that a majority of the public is willing to give a sympathetic hearing to questions concerning Europe, the Community, Parliament and the elections, and can be mobilised in support of specific objectives when what is involved is spelt out unambiguously.

As for the general mood of Europeans, the general trend seems to be less pessimistic. Europeans who expect the year ahead to be worse than the previous one still outnumber those who expect it to be better by 35 per cent to 26 per cent, but the gap is narrowing. The only countries where there are more optimists than pessimists are Greece, Denmark and Germany, while Belgium and Ireland are the most gloomy. Improvement in morale is by far the most marked in Denmark.



RETURN OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The current exhibition at the Tate Gallery, devoted to the Pre-Raphaelites, is something of a celebration. Not only does it bring together familiar and half-familiar works by the Brotherhood that have rarely been shown together, drawn from leading galleries and collections, but it also helps to confirm the triumphant return to favour of Victorian art in general.

Pre-Raphaelite painting is seen, rightly enough, as an essentially English achievement, at a time when art in Britain was at a low ebb. But art historians nowadays point to its European antecedents, notably the curious Nazarenes, a group of self-exiled Germans in Rome, who devoted themselves to a monk-like existence while working in the flat, bright colours of the medieval Italian artists, on exclusively biblical themes. They used early techniques, including fresco, with a skill that matched that of the pre-Renaissance masters, as a means of 'purifying' their national art.

This same influence, or impulse, persists in work by the Pre-Raphaelites, and in some later artists such as William Dyce, who as a

young man met the principal Nazarenes, Cornelius and Overbeck, in Rome. The PRB (their own abbreviation), in their turn, took on the task, as they saw it, of liberating English art from frivolous subject-matter and bad technique.

It did not make them popular with the critics. A respected journal of the time, *The Athenaeum*, accused them of 'an unhealthy thirst which seeks notoriety by means of mere conceit' – the sort of charge that was to be flung at the Impressionists by French critics twenty years later. John Millais was particularly hurt by a savage attack by Charles Dickens on his 'Christ in the Home of His Parents' on its appearance at the Royal Academy in 1850. Dickens called it 'revolting and disgusting', and the Christ child 'a hideous, wry-

A school 'nobler than the world has seen for 300 years'



Left: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 'The Beloved' (Song of Solomon).

Right: 'Christ in the Home of His Parents' by John Everett Millais. Below: William Holman Hunt's 'Isabella and the Pot of Basil'.

necked, blubbing red-haired boy in a night-gown, who appears to have received a poke playing in an adjacent gutter'. This painting occupies a prominent place in the Pre-Raphaelite story – it is one of the Tate's many PRB masterpieces – and the famous novelist's insults have long since ceased to matter.

It took the support of the great art pundit of the time, John Ruskin, to turn the critical tide. He foretold that the Pre-Raphaelites would lay the foundation of a school of art 'nobler than the world has seen for three hundred years'.

In fact, the school was comparatively short-lived. Its members were individualists as well as 'brethren', and after their revolutionary burst of shared creativity they each developed – as young painters do – in their own way. The Pre-Raphaelite way of painting made its way into the mainstream of Victorian art, and broadened into an aesthetic movement.

The original trio consisted of William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It was Rossetti's idea to sign their paintings with the cryptic initials which were to become synonymous, after a time, with a wider group of painters, including James Collinson, Rossetti's brother William, Frederic George Stephens, and Thomas Woolner.

Ford Madox Brown, a few years older than the others – their average age, at the outset, was no more than 20 – had studied in Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp and Paris. He and Rossetti, with William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, were to carry Pre-Raphaelite influence into the fields of decorative art and design. At the end of the century it was one of the springs of Art Nouveau, which in turn nurtured the Modern Movement.

From start to finish, therefore, the Pre-Raphaelites span a period of fifty years, with echoes – through the Art Nouveau revival of recent years – in our own times. As individual painters the Brotherhood are not well known outside Britain. However, their role in rescuing English painting from the timidity of the early Victorian era is not in dispute. And the brilliantly heightened, almost hallucinatory, realism of their work anticipates such early Symbolists as Moreau, Böcklin and Puvis de Chavannes.



For much of their subject matter the Pre-Raphaelites turned to religious and literary sources, pointing up moral significance, painted in strictly natural settings. There is an abundance of homely detail and a recognisable humanity in the figures – nearly always friends and acquaintances rather than professional models.

The 'Christ in the Carpenter's Shop' is an early example of this fidelity to PRB principles. All the figures and faces are of people in the friends' own circle. The carpenter's shop is one that Millais had seen off Oxford Street. The sheep outside are painted from sheep's heads bought from a local butcher.

What was it about Raphael, of all painters, that made him the PRB's *bête noire*? Perhaps Ruskin, a convert to the cause, expressed most vehemently the stigma which they attached to the saintly painter's name. In his enormously influential 'Modern Painters' he denounced the great man for telling 'elegant falsehoods', and warned of 'the clear and tasteless poison' of his art.

Ruskin's demand of modern painters, that they should 'go to Nature in all singleness of heart, rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, scorning nothing', fitted the Pre-Raphaelite attitude to painting very well. Shedding all influence from the recent past, refining their painterly emotions to an extent unknown in British art since the early medieval stained-glass artists and manuscript illuminators, they brought a technically stunning brilliance to themes which stirred the Victorians' regard for high-minded piety. Today, in a very different moral climate, they can still dominate the Tate like old masters.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE

Alfred Lomas, United Kingdom: 'The British Government is proposing to abolish the democratically elected Council of Greater London. Can the Commission tell me if any other capital city in the EEC has had its elected administration abolished in this dictatorial way?'

Answer by Gaston Thorn on behalf of the Commission:

'Although the Commission does take an interest in the local government procedures of member states, in particular in issues involving nationals of one member state residing in another, the Commission is of the view that the way in which local government is organised is a matter for each member state.'

Karl von Wogau, Federal Republic of Germany:

'Under Article 1 of Regulation (EEC) No. 2167/83 of 28 July 1983, university students will no longer be entitled to milk subsidised by the Community. Why do all schoolchildren and students regularly attending a school of any grade or category benefit from milk subsidised by the Community, when university students are excluded?'

Answer by Poul Dalsager on behalf of the Commission:

'The decision not to grant Community aid for the supply of milk to students at universities and other high-

er education establishments of similar status is based on the following factors. The school milk programme has an educational and a nutritional aim, and should prove more effective among primary and secondary school pupils.

In many member states, students do not attend university for a specific period each day, which makes it extremely difficult to organize and supervise the distribution of milk to them.

For these reasons, the Commission restricted school milk aid to primary and secondary education establishments. It considered it normal that pupils at these establishments should be able to go on receiving school milk while staying at holiday camps for schools.'

Bernard Thareau, France:

'Could the Commission publish information, now and at regular intervals, based on the results of the Eurobarometer opinion polls which are carried out for it twice a year, on the attitudes of the public as a whole and more particularly of farmers towards the various aspects of the

common agricultural policy in all the member states of the Community?'

Answer by Lorenzo Natali on behalf of the Commission:

'Questions relating to the common agricultural policy have appeared only intermittently up to now in the Commission's Eurobarometer surveys. The problems are fairly complex and studying the attitudes of the general public in the Member States towards the CAP would require the use of a questionnaire with sufficient detail to allow for the wide variations in circumstances at national and even local level.

In this regard, however, the Honourable Member might refer to a question asked in April 1983 as part of a survey commissioned by Parliament, and carried out in tandem with Eurobarometer No 19, relating to the effect on national farming of belonging to the Community.

Dieter Rogalla, Federal Republic of Germany:

'What is the purpose of stickers on motor vehicles indicating their nationality? On what international

agreement are they based and is the Community party to any such international agreement?'

Answer by Giorgios Contogeorgis on behalf of the Commission:

'Motor vehicles in international traffic are required to display a distinguishing sign of the state of registration, as one of the conditions of admission to other states. This obligation, laid down in Article 20 of the 1949 Geneva Convention on International Road Traffic, was confirmed in the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic.

'The Community is not a party to this Convention, but the desirability and usefulness of its becoming a party to this and other Conventions concluded under United Nations auspices is constantly under review.

'The interesting idea suggested by the Honourable Member would require a modification of one part of the above Convention, which deals with many other aspects of road traffic. It would also require changes to other international agreements relating to the designation of distinguishing signs and might have effects on the principles and methods of registering vehicles in member states, and to the provisions of both the Directives on motor vehicle insurance, which specifically refer to national registration plates.

BRITAIN'S NEW EQUAL PAY PROPOSALS UNDER FIRE

Regulations amending the law on equal pay which came into force on 1 January 1984, far from bringing UK law into line with the European Community's directive on the subject (75/117), may lead the UK sooner or later back to the European Court in Luxembourg.

This was the view expressed in both Houses of Parliament when the regulations were debated briefly, on prayers for annulment, late at night on 1 February.

The European Court began infringement proceedings against the UK Government in 1979, and its judgement in July 1982 ruled that UK law did not allow women to claim equal pay for work of equal value. The British Government had not fully implemented its obligations under the Treaty of Rome and the Equal Pay Directive, it said.

Lord Denning, in the House of Lords, complained strongly that the regulations are tortuous and obscure, that they are not good law, and that the procedures they set up will be expensive and troublesome.

There is no doubt that the complexity of the regulations will deter all but the most stout-hearted from pursuing a case. Jo Richardson MP calculated that a woman will have to go through six stages before she can establish a claim—a tall order, especially as legal aid is not available.

In claims brought by women it will be the expert who decides, not the tribunal, says Denning in the House of Lords debate

Draft regulations to amend the Equal Pay Act to enable women to claim equal pay for work of equal value were approved by the House of Commons last July.

The criticisms that remain focus on five main areas. First—and the minister appears to agree here—the regulations are too complicated. Harriet Harman MP, herself a lawyer, called them 'virtually unintelligible'. Second, the tribunal can refuse to consider a claim for equal pay for work of equal value if there are 'no reasonable grounds'; but there is no guidance on what constitutes 'reasonable grounds'. Third, a woman cannot make a claim if her job is covered by a job evaluation scheme unless she can prove that the scheme is discriminatory. Fourth, an employer's defence that a difference in pay is due to a material factor which is not the difference in sex may widen the scope of the law to include factors such as, in the words of the Minister, 'skill

shortages or other market forces'.

The most serious criticism dealt with the status of the expert witnesses, selected by the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), who may be called before a tribunal. The two sides have to argue the case before an expert witness who then reports to the tribunal. In a court of law, the expert would state his or her findings and the court would decide. Under the regulations, the expert states his or her findings and, unless they are unreasonable or unsatisfactory, the tribunal cannot reject them.

If the report is unreasonable or unsatisfactory, the tribunal must refer the case to another expert, who produces another report. The parties then come before the tribunal, which considers the report and can hear the experts, witnesses for both sides, and lawyers.

But the experts or witnesses cannot be questioned on matters of fact. Lord Denning believes this means that, since most cases depend on questions of fact, it will be the expert who decides the case, not the tribunal. It is this that is likely to give the lawyers a field-day, and may even result in cases being taken to the employment Appeal Tribunal, to the Court of Appeal and, ultimately, to the European Court.

Car prices: motor trade answers back

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) takes issue with the article in our December 1983 issue, 'Have you paid over the odds for your new car?', which referred to recent draft legislation aimed at clarifying both motor traders' rights and those of Community citizens who might wish to buy a car, made in their own country, in some other member state.

Contesting the need for any change in the present retailing arrangements, the SMMT points to a Commission report last December, which says 'one could not, in fact, realistically assume that prices could be uniform throughout the Common Market, not only because the objective factors determining price policies vary from firm to firm, but also because normal competition does not necessarily make prices uniform'.

A common market in cars, the SMMT says, cannot be created for as long as differences exist in national governments' fiscal and economic policies, nor for as long as exchange rates fluctuate between EEC member states. 'Between 1976 and 1979, for example, prices for cars were generally higher priced in sterling in Germany than in Britain, with the biggest gap in 1976. At that time, there was some resentment about low car prices in Britain compared

with Continental Europe, but the pound was at a very low ebb.'

Since 1979, sterling has been strong compared with other major European currencies and, says the SMMT, has ceased to reflect Britain's relative economic performance and rate of inflation. Handicapped by a strong domestic currency, UK car manufacturers have nonetheless succeeded in increasing their relative competitiveness, it adds.

In the SMMT's view, price differences are often unclear because there is confusion between a comparison of pre-tax and post-tax prices, and of prices to dealers and prices to consumers. 'For example, it is often said that car prices in Denmark are half those in the UK. This may be true of pre-tax prices for some models, but Danish consumers pay much more than UK consumers in post-tax terms, in some cases up to twice as much.

'Anyone with the interests of the European consumer at heart should look at post-tax prices and consider the benefits of a harmonised tax system. At present it is the pre-tax prices in the UK which attract so much attention. A change in relative exchange rates, or fiscal policies, in individual member states could put some other domestic market under the spotlight.'



Commission President Gaston Thorn was host to Israel's Prime Minister, Itzhak Shamir, at their meeting in Brussels on 20 February.

The natural history of CROCODILE

ONE DAY in July 1980, nine MEPs of different nationalities and various political tendencies met for a working dinner in the Crocodile restaurant in Strasbourg, at which they decided to launch a political initiative for the reform of the Community.

They set up a club, called the Crocodile, Club which was open to all MEPs who shared its objectives.

In October 1980 Altiero Spinelli and Felice Ippolito started a political review, 'Crocodile', - to support the Club's parliamentary action.

On 19 November 1980 the Club, which in the meantime had attracted another 69 MEPs as members, approved a proposal for a motion inviting the European Parliament to draw up, discuss and vote for a proposal for the reform of the Community, and then to submit it for ratification to the competent constitutional bodies of member states.

In just under three months, 170 MEPs had signed the motion, which was then put by the President of Parliament, Simone Veil, on 10 February 1981. The Assembly approved the motion in July. In January 1982 it was decided to set up a committee for institutional affairs, chaired by Mauro Ferri; and so the European Parliament officially began the work of framing a constitution.

In July 1982, the Assembly gave the new Institutional Committee a wide remit for drawing up the broad lines of the reform.

Accordingly, the Committee worked out the political content of a European Treaty of Union and entrusted the preparation work to a committee of rapporteurs, under the coordination of Altiero Spinelli.

On 14 September 1983, the European Parliament approved the result of the Institutional Committee work by a large majority (but not an absolute majority), thereby giving the go-ahead for the final stage of the initiative, in which Parliament instructed the Committee to draw up a draft Treaty with the aid of a Committee of jurists.

After spending five months analysing the political and legal aspects of the question, those charged with the work submitted a draft Treaty, which was approved by the Committee. On 14 February 1984, the Assembly gave final approval to the draft by 238 votes for to 31 against, with 43 abstentions.

The Common Market's butter mountain may soon have to be destroyed.

The surplus overflowing from storage space throughout Europe already totals 900,000 tonnes, with about 100,000 tonnes being kept in Britain.

Yet the EEC Commission estimates that excess production this year will be another 900,000 tonnes and it will only keep for up to two years in cold storage.

German officials say the mountain must soon be destroyed. The Commission can't afford to go on selling heavily subsidised butter to Russia and other countries outside the Market.

- Daily Mail

Butchers' claims that a decline in the quality of cattle produced in Britain over recent years has been partly responsible for a slump in beef sales are supported by the findings of a study by the UK Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC).

The MLC study confirmed that consumers were able to discern a significant difference in quality between meat from animals produced primarily for the dairy industry and those produced specifically for beef.

The beef trade has been concerned however, not simply about the increasing domination of the dairy herd but also the greater concentration in the dairy industry on cattle with high milk yields but poor meat producing qualities.

- Financial Times

Now that we've given up our crazy restrictions on the import of French poultry (we claimed the EEC inspection for fowl-pest was inadequate but in truth we were getting our own back on the French for banning our lamb), we can once again buy genuine 14-week-old poulet de Bresse or French maize-fed chickens, plump of breast, and mighty tasty - a far cry from our pellet fed eight-week-old birds renowned for thier taste-free tenderness.

Imports of French poultry are very nearly back at the pre-ban level.

- Prue Leith in The Guardian

The European Commission yesterday denied charges by the US Department of Commerce that it is subsidising wine exports to the American market worth about £200m a year.

The Commission believes that the livelihood of a million wine growers could be affected if the American industry won its case.

- The Times

France is annoying its neighbours not only by pumping ever more wine into the lake, but also by erecting import barriers against pure alcohol and subsidising its own producers.

Europe's wine lake now holds more than 2 millions tonnes (2.7 billion standard bottles) and is still rising. If 1984 is an average season, Europe is expected to produce about 1.4 million tonnes more grape juice than it needs to satisfy the demand for wine.

- Economist

For the past two years, the European Commission has been trying to draw up a directive that would cut levels of noise to 85 decibels over eight hours. This is slightly more noisy than heavy traffic, but less noisy than most factories. The Commission estimates that between 10 million and 16 million people in the EEC work in noisier surroundings.

In Britain, factories that expose workers to noise of greater than 90 decibels risk prosecution under the Health and Safety at Work Act. But there is no specific law on noise; the Health and Safety Executive has been waiting for a decision to emerge from Europe.

- New Scientist

Examination questions on the Common Market are few and far between, and those that do exist produce some howlers. For example, a 14-year-old, asked to give the location of Checkpoint Charlie, replied: 'Its the point where Prince Charles checks in when he's playing polo.'

Among other tit-bits: *ravioli* became a French wine; *escargots* were variously described, from 'a German sausage' to 'a cheese of Italian origin' and even 'very small carrots usually grown in the wet parts of countries'; *gondoliers* were transformed into the 'French police' and *boules* was said to be 'the French word for Business'.

These responses were among those made in a one-hour test leading to a European Studies Certificate which is being launched by the European Association of Teachers.

- Guardian

France had its anti-British prejudices further endorsed over the weekend when, as its newspapers reported, a Welsh referee helped Scotland to a grand slam rugby victory at Murrayfield.

- The Times

Greenland's threat to halve the EEC's land area by leaving the Community next January come what may in its drawn-out exit talks, seem to have paid off. The Commission has made a proposal which should enable the divorce to go through not only when the Greenlanders want, but with due formality.

Most of the credit is due to *clupea harengus*, the common herring. Its near extinction in the North Sea in the late 1970s was why a common fisheries policy was so difficult for the Ten to agree upon. The return of the herring en masse last year, after a six-year fishing ban, made it possible for the Ten to agree on a fisheries policy. That, in turn, has made it easier to propose a new fishing deal for Greenland with appeal to both sides.

- Economist

Fish is a great issue for the Spanish. They eat it in quantities which would make other Europeans very ill. But if Spain joins the EEC she will have to accept very considerably reduced fishing quotas, as did Britain before her. The Spanish Government recognises this, but figures have not yet been agreed.

- Daily Telegraph

There are 12,847,000 people out of work in the Common Market - more than ever before - figures out yesterday showed. The total has risen by 604,000 since a year ago.

- Sta

Italian customs officials have called off their work-to-rule here, in force since Tuesday, after meeting between their representatives and the Minister for the Civil Services, Signor Remo Gaspari.

The minister was reported to have assured them that the Government intended to apply soon EEC directives for the speedier handling of exit and entry procedures for long-distance lorry traffic.

- The Times

WHAT'S IN THE PAPERS



- The Sunday Tir