

Europe 85

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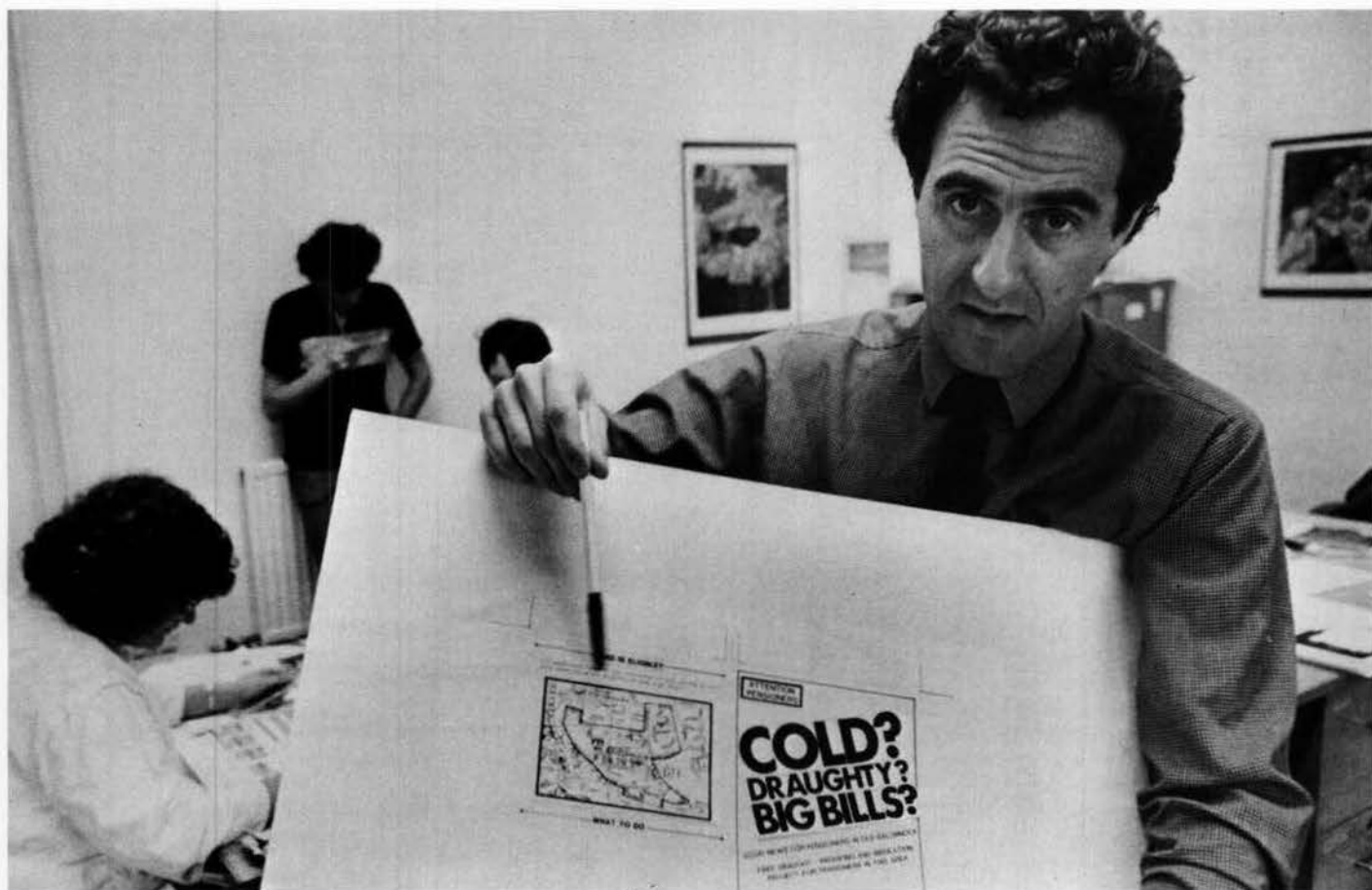
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PICTURES BY NICK GEORGES

Warming up with Heatwise

Chick has been out of work, apart from various casual jobs, since he was made redundant in 1980, when Chrysler car factory near Glasgow closed down. Now aged 28, and married with a young family, Chick felt there was never any hope of him learning new skills that would equip him for a decent job.

Yet now he is learning basic joinery skills and, more importantly, developing a new expertise in the field of home insulation and draught-proofing, as part of a 230-strong team, partly funded by the European Social Fund, which is working on houses in deprived areas of Glasgow.

The scheme, Heatwise Glasgow, is innovative and unique. It combines the twin aims of energy conservation and vocational training for the long-term unemployed, both issues of vital concern in modern times. And, because its work is concentrated in deprived council housing estates, it is also helping some of the poorest sections of the community.

Heatwise is the result of concern, about the problems faced by old people, single parents, and the low paid, in meeting the heating costs of their homes. Over 60 per cent of tenants in Glasgow receive housing benefit help, because of low income, and the city has one of the highest rates in the United Kingdom of people paying off fuel arrears.

Seven Glasgow families a day, on average,

In the poorer parts of Glasgow, a scheme for making council homes snuggler places to live in, at the same time providing work for young people in the locality, provides another example of how the European Social Fund finds its way to where it can do most good. EVELINE HUNTER reports

have their gas or electricity supplies cut off because they cannot pay their bills. The problem is compounded by Glasgow's damp weather conditions and the design of many council houses. More than half of Glasgow's housing stock is over two storeys high, often in exposed hilltop areas; and 40 per cent of Glasgow's council houses suffer from problems of dampness and condensation.

The solution was seen to be some method of

Above: Alan Sinclair, director of Heatwise, supervises the unit's publicity.

cutting down in householder's fuel costs by draughtproofing and insulating each vulnerable house. But where would the voluntary organisations concerned get the money for such a project?

Says Alan Sinclair, director of Heatwise: 'The answer was staring us in the face. The areas of Glasgow with the highest fuel arrears were also the areas with the highest rates of unemployment and with large numbers of disaffected young people with little chance of learning these new skills.' So Heatwise was born. In essence it is a simple idea - remedy the insulation problems of hard-to-heat houses tenanted by low-income householders by using the talents of local unemployed people to do the work, and at the same time train countless other young people in the skills of modern insulation methods so sought-after in the private sector.

Set up in October 1984, Heatwise Glasgow now has funding from the European Social Fund for its vocational training; from the Manpower Services Commission for taking on workers under the UK Community Programme scheme for the long-term unemployed; from the UK Department of Energy; and from Glasgow District Council. It also manages to point householders in the direction of grants, either from the Department of Health and Social Security or from the local authority, for essential draught-proofing work.

That is how it is able to employ 230 people, ▶

'Heatwise is able to employ 230 people, 220 of whom were previously out of a job'

220 of whom were previously out of a job and who are now receiving training in a wide variety of skills. Heatwise intends completing the draught-proofing and insulation of its first 10,000 houses by the end of this year.

All employees are given three weeks' induction training when they start the job. After that, they have to go through further training, for up to three weeks at a time, during their year of employment. All these courses are provided at Heatwise's main workshop premises in Elliot Place, in the centre of Glasgow, which are directly paid for by the European Social Fund. In addition, as an optional extra, the workers are offered further time off work to learn more about joinery, graphics or computers.

Freda McMurty, co-ordinator of one of 16 Heatwise projects in disadvantaged areas of Glasgow, says: 'I expect the workers to treat it as a permanent job. They must arrive on time, take only the allotted time for their lunch breaks, and they don't get off early unless they have finished their workload for the day. I would be doing them no favours if I let them think that punctuality and high standards were not essential.' Diane McGowan, 19, one of two girls working on the scheme, says she is determined to learn more about joinery. She has had 'literally hundreds of jobs' since she left school, from office work to dental surgeries and working for Butlins. Her present job is one in which, for the first time, she feels she 'got her teeth into something'.

I would have laughed at anyone who suggested I might be doing this kind of work in a few years' time. But I love it. I'm not afraid of getting my hands dirty. It's a load of nonsense to suggest that girls can't get on alongside men doing this kind of work. The tenants are sometimes surprised when I turn up to insulate their homes, but that only makes me try to do a better job'.

Proving themselves in a man's world is not the only reason why Diane and her friend, Julie Twigg, aged 18, are working for Heatwise. Julie, who previously tried her hand at gardening and working as a nurse in an old peoples' home, is under no illusions about the future: 'I've gained much more confidence than I had before,' she says. 'We have to knock on peoples' doors, and some of them are less than keen to see us. We also have to measure up the work, and later go back to do the job. I was always rather shy before, but I can't afford that in this job. I think - I hope - these skills will help me get a permanent job in the future'.

Julie, like Diane is undecided about whether to concentrate on computer skills or joinery. Computers would help her, she says, if she wanted to go into an office, but she thinks



perhaps joinery would be more useful if she wanted to continue doing the kind of work she is doing now.

Heatwise offers three kinds of optional vocational training, in addition to its in-service training for employees - including graphics and photography, computers and joinery. Joinery is by far the most popular choice, but computers come a close second. Frank Harkins, the new technology instructor, says: 'It's surprising how useful a knowledge of computers is when look-

Freda McMurty, above, co-ordinates Heatwise projects in one of Glasgow's most needy areas. Diane McGowan, opposite, is one of two young women at present working on the scheme, which provides workshop training (below and opposite) in the city.

ing for a job. Only last week I noticed an advertisement in the newspapers for a storeman. It said the person required would have to be able to operate a computer-based stock control system. Many jobs, from shops to libraries to





offices, now demand some sort of computer literacy from their staff.' Vocational training is only of use if it helps people find a place in life afterwards, and these are early days for Heatwise to assess its performance in this respect. The first hundred workers were taken on last October, and are not due to end work until October this year. The bulk of employees were not taken on until May. Alan Sinclair is determined that the newly gained skills of these young people not be lost. He says: 'Gaining skills for life is one of our main concerns, and we are all too well aware of the pitfalls in temporary jobs and vocational courses. All employees here are trained in basic job-search and interviewing techniques, to help them get a job when they finish with us.'

'We are also able to provide references to employers. These references are completely honest. We would be doing Heatwise no service if we automatically gave good references about a worker, however good or bad they were. And I think that's also an incentive for our workers to do well.'

Heatwise is now opening a unit which will encourage ex-employees to use their skills in the private sector. The unit, a commercial offshoot of Heatwise, will use selected ex-workers to carry out similar insulation work in privately-owned homes, and return the profits as a donation to Heatwise.

It is too early to assess how many workers will be able to use their new skills to find permanent work, but the benefits for the community are already apparent. Martin and May Gaughan, pictured above, who live in the Possilpark area of Glasgow, have recently had the doors and

windows of their council flat draught-proofed by Heatwise and they are in no doubt about the advantages. Martin, aged 52, is on an invalidity pension, and his wife, May, suffers from rheumatism. She used to have to sit with a blanket around her legs, she says, because of the draughts, both summer and winter.

Now the place is much more comfortable to live in. The couple are very satisfied with the standard of work. 'The job was done in one day, and the young men doing it were very pleasant

and kind,' they told me.

'We have also been able to advise people about the various heating benefits and allowances they are entitled to. Up to 90 per cent of the people we see don't know anything about heating grants, or don't understand them.'

'It is ridiculous, in this day and age, when fuel costs are so high, that energy conservation is still such low priority. Most householders and government agencies are still blundering along in the dark - or should I say the cold.'



'Prices can no longer function as support for the CAP and for farmers' incomes'

The Common Agricultural Policy has reached a state of crisis. Now, only urgent reform will satisfy its critics among the Ten member states. The latest discussion paper on the CAP, however, makes no firm policy recommendations – it simply sets out current and future problems and a number

of policy options. The Commission stresses that agricultural production is growing faster than consumption, and will continue to do so unless there are drastic changes. Frans Andriessen, the Commission's Agriculture Minister, answers questions put to him by journalist Ian Geoghegan

GEOGHEGAN: *How do you think the CAP has come to its present crisis-point?*

ANDRIESSEN: One of the most important things to remember about the CAP is that it was established and developed at a time of deficit for most products. Now, it has to be applied to a situation where the Community is in excess for most products. This has changed the very nature of the application of the policy.

The intervention mechanism today means enormous cost to the Community budget, as it attempts to pay for huge structural surpluses. We must get farm spending back under control.

It is quite clear that the Community itself is at a crossroads. What kind of Community are we going to create? One based on agriculture, or one in which technology, industry and other very important sectors will be developed as well? If agriculture continues to take most of the resources available, from 60 per cent to perhaps 80 per cent, then there will be enormous criticism from other sectors – the Social Fund, the Regional Development Fund, and technology. Agriculture will not only be threatened by the market situation, but also by other competing sectors. It is for this reason, and in the interests of agriculture, that we must reform the CAP.

Do we continue surplus production with all its difficulties, or do we try to find ways to master our production and find new outlets for our produce? In my view, we must have a restrictive prices policy. This will mean prices can no longer function as support for the market and for farmers' incomes.

So we have to discuss the possibility of direct income support. At the moment, prices alone are not sufficient to bring about a reasonable income for farmers. To protect the social structure of farming, we have to help the small farmer and keep him on the land. This may well mean a certain degree of differentiation of measures, according to different types. Community farming is heterogeneous, and we have to adjust the policy to the different types of farming in the Community. This has already been done; there are special aid measures for mountain farming, and in the less-favoured areas some 37 per cent of the total farmland in the EEC is receiving this kind of aid.

A pre-pension scheme is one option, offering farmers over the age of 55 a specific annual sum to leave farming. The money involved has to be a real incentive: a previous, unsuccessful, scheme offered farmers only 1,000 ECUs – £600 – a year. This was not enough.

Some people say we have opened a Pandora's Box by stimulating this



Commissioner Frans Andriessen.

kind of discussion. Maybe they are right. But this is a real problem, and if the situation worsens due to other farm policy changes that we have to introduce, then we shall have to open that Pandora's Box.

Would you agree that this Green Paper is not as hard-hitting as perhaps we had been led to believe by earlier promises and statements?

The basic approach of the paper has not been changed. It has always been an 'options' paper. The delay was merely procedural. Any draft report drawn up by Commission officials is changed during the lengthy process of consultation and deliberation. Amendments have been made in the presentation of the Green Paper. But the basic analysis and objectives of the paper remain exactly as they were.

So where does the Green Paper go now?

This document has been submitted to all the Community institutions. We want discussion with everyone concerned. At the national level, ministers must discuss the options with their own professional bodies and political advisers. By November, I shall prepare a paper bringing in all the views of all the groups. This will then go to Council. Following that, I shall put forward concrete proposals, many of which will be included in the 1986/87 farm prices package. Specific proposals for the cereals market, the beef sector, and a buying-up scheme for milk quotas are to be submitted in September-October.

What are the Green Paper's chances of success, when past attempts have failed?

The procedure of this one differs from other papers. But the most important difference is the urgency now required. We have offered a clear analysis of the problems. We have recommended price restraint and an incomes policy, and we have put forward a number of options for dealing with the problems. We are now discussing the paper with professional groups, political parties, committees and the European Parliament. We hope this process will lead to us putting forward a set of concrete proposals. The circumstances in which this paper has been presented are also different. Everybody agrees that we should do something, but there are differences in views of what to do. Most ministers accept the need for a restrictive prices policy. I am optimistic that some kind of compromise agreement can be reached.

The crux of the issue seems to be that your Green Paper recommends, on the one hand, a restrictive prices policy, but on the other hand you and the ministers have spent five inconclusive months haggling over a cereals price cut of just 1.8 per

'A pre-pension scheme is one option, offering farmers over the age of 55 a specific sum to leave farming'



'The Green Paper says the cereals market policy should be reformed.'

cent. How can you justify talking of price restraint, when it is clear that ministers cannot agree on even the smallest of cuts?

The price proposals were an isolated operation, part of a concept of guaranteed thresholds. If output exceeds a certain fixed ceiling, then prices will be cut automatically. But this concept is not part of an adjusted cereals policy. The Green Paper says that the cereals market policy should be reformed, and gives certain options. The German problem and their veto remain to be discussed. They are a complicating factor, because Germany does not regard price restraint as the answer to the CAP's problems. Mansholt created the Common Agricultural Policy, his successors developed it, and I now have to restructure it.

If price restraint cannot be achieved, are cereals quotas a viable proposition?

In principle, we have two basic choices. Either we master output under a mixed policy of price cuts, co-responsibility, adjusted export policies, lower refunds and export credits, or quotas are unavoidable. I have never liked quotas.

In milk we were too late, therefore quotas became unavoidable. After just one season under quota, a series of adjustments has been needed. And the quota itself is far too high. So are the quotas for sugar, tomatoes and other commodities. This implies that, when farm ministers have to implement quotas, they are under political pressure. This leaves us with the administrative problems of quotas, and over production.


The whole issue always seems to return to the same base. Without price restraint, will we have to settle for all the alternatives – no biotechnology, quotas and other market management adjustments?

This is quite true. The administration of cereal quotas would be virtually

'Everybody agrees that we should do something, but there are differences in views of what to do'

impossible. The Community has almost three million grain producers, and cereals do not pass a dairy or a refinery. Most cereals are for on-farm use. How can we control production? It will not be impossible, but it will be extremely difficult with added costs and added bureaucracy. New outlets must be found, along with price restraint. Or we could have a price freeze, in nominal terms, for a number of years, which would effectively depress real prices. Or we could have producers helping to finance export through a co-responsibility tax, or levy. But in the longer-term, price cuts are unavoidable, even if quotas are implemented for a short period.

Finally, there have been calls for the Commissioner for Agriculture to resign over the handling of this year's negotiations. How do you react to that?

It is not at all easy. Mine is a very complicated job. Community agriculture is not just one agriculture. There are at least four types – the large cereals, beef and dairy farms, the smaller farms, and the part-time units. And there are ten member states, with ten currencies and ten rates of inflation. Then there is the budget, and the international situation with competing trade partners, some of whom deliberately attack our position on the world market. Saying 'yes' to one minister means 'no' to another, so I have to adopt a comprehensive approach. So I have a very heavy job. That is one of the reasons why I like it very much. So I shall not be resigning. 

On the way to 'television without frontiers'

The national organisations which at present provide us with our TV programmes face a challenge from what could grow into a pan-European network, says ANTHONY PRAGNELL

For more than thirty years, television has been essentially a national medium. Even where viewers are able to see the services of other countries, they tend to regard themselves as eavesdropping on their neighbours.

This situation is changing: 'Television without frontiers' is now commonplace for many European viewers – and the European Commission published a substantial Green Paper under that title only last year, it suggesting ways of working towards the establishment of a Common Market for broadcasting, especially by satellite and cable.

Its importance lies not only in its contents, but also in the lively debate which it has stimulated, in which the senior officials responsible for the Green Paper have joined through a series of hearings, seminars and colloquia.

Until recently, the ideal of European television has been realised by the exchange or co-production of programmes. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has played a leading part in this. In addition, the television organisations, independently of the Union, buy and sell programmes and make co-production arrangements among themselves. These activities are frequent between those services broadcasting in a common language; but the United Kingdom is an important programme supplier to other European countries. There are some – Denmark and Norway, for instance – which take more programmes from the United Kingdom than from the United States.

With increasing competition from new services, existing ones will face the erosion of their audiences. This will have a direct financial impact upon systems which are dependent on advertising. However, licence-funded services may be adversely affected if those who fix the fee prove less willing to maintain it at the accustomed level if viewership shifts significantly to new services.

In these circumstances, the broadcasters of Europe are looking increasingly to international measures to reduce overall costs of production. These include not only taking more material from other European countries, but also formalised arrangements for the co-operative financing and production of programmes.

To take two examples: the BBC and RAI (Italy) last year entered into an agreement providing for Italian investment in natural history and science documentaries; and, more recently, Channel Four has joined with French, German, Austrian, Italian and Swiss services in establishing a group for the encouragement of the production of programmes to be broadcast by its members.

The traditional form of European television is no doubt capable of some further development, but this will be limited in scope, depending as it does on institutions which are national in their control, on programme objectives and, in many cases, on coverage. Satellite broadcasting, using transmitters in space to rebroadcast programmes sent up from ground stations, introduces a new dimension. It is impracticable to limit such transmissions to exact areas. Satellites, therefore, constitute an ideal medium for beaming programmes across frontiers.

Satellite broadcasting is of two kinds. Low-power satellites provide programmes for reception and distribution by cable services (this form of transmission is called 'satellite to cable'). Higher-powered satellites convey programmes which can also be directly received by individual viewers if they have a special receiving aerial and associated equipment ('direct broadcasting by satellite', or DBS).

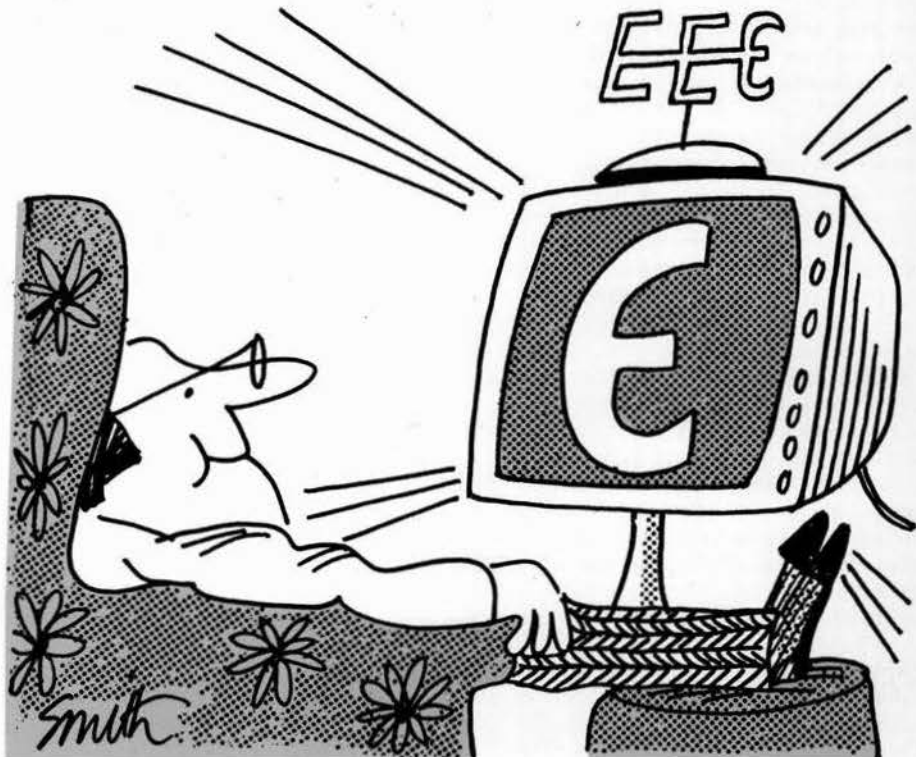
Satellite-to-cable broadcasting is in use at the moment for more than a dozen services in Europe. Two of these come from groups of

public broadcasters, TV5 and 3 Sat. TV5 is a francophone service, jointly provided by the three French television chains and by the Belgian and Swiss French-language services. 3 Sat is a service of German-language programmes provided mainly by ZDF (the second West German television service) and the Austrian broadcasting services, with a small contribution also coming from Switzerland.

Other satellite-to-cable services are commercially financed from advertising, or from charging a subscription fee to cable services which wish to distribute them, or by a combination of both these methods. The UK-based Sky Channel is so far the most widely available of the commercial services; it reaches nearly four million households in 12 European countries.

Direct broadcasting by satellite has not yet begun in Western Europe. France and Germany are, however, expected to have transmitting capability in 1986, with the possibility of further services following later. The extent to which DBS transmissions will succeed in attracting viewers in addition to those served by cable is as yet uncertain. The cost of individual domestic aerials and ancillary equipment will be an important factor.

To many, the full flowering of European television will come with the introduction of a 'pan-European' service – one which is European in its control and management, in coverage, and in programme content and aim. A number of reasons can be put forward for creating such a service. The European Parliament has seen its value as lying in the ability to spread authentic information about Community policy and in developing the public's awareness of its own European identity. The broadcasters will also see a pan-European programme as a logical development for public broadcasting, as competition grows from new services which may not



'Broadcasters will see a pan-European programme as a logical development'

be able to reflect their transnational coverage in their programmes and which may have to rely on the United States for much of their output.

The EBU and its members have for a number of years been considering the establishment of a pan-European service. In 1982, the Union mounted a five-weeks service of pilot programmes in an attempt to show what a service would look like on the screen and to find out the problems of running it. As a successor to this, there has emerged the Olympus project. For more than a year now, a small group, based at the studios of the Netherlands Broadcasting Foundation at Hilversum, has been planning a service, to start later this year, still experimentally, on a satellite-to-cable basis, before being transferred to DBS in 1987.

The new service is being financed and run by four EBU members from Holland, Ireland, the Netherlands and West Germany, with several other countries being expected to participate later. It will carry advertising in five blocks during an evening's transmissions. Advance programme details indicate a policy of drawing widely upon the output of the members of the group, and of taking material from other European sources, including Eurovision. News will be an important feature, reflecting a European perspective, but not aiming to create an artificial one. All opinions and points of view among the nations will be covered, with no intention of putting forward a consensus where none exists. If a good newspaper is, as has been said, a nation talking to itself, then Olympus should correspondingly aim to be Europe, in all its diversity, doing just that.

Our television, in short, is becoming diversified and less geographically constricted. The existing landscape will eventually be permanently changed. We are moving into a more open age of broadcasting, and out of the period when scarcity of frequencies has meant that the right to use the airwaves has had to be carefully bestowed and responsibly used.

It is right to welcome, in principle, the additional choice which will come from services different from those to which we are accustomed. But there will be a price to pay for such choice if it leads to losses in the quality and range of programmes originating from the existing public services, which will remain a central feature of the European scene for a considerable number of years yet. The challenge is to make the transition to the new age of broadcasting in ways which preserve what is best in what we have at the moment.

□ Anthony Pragnell is author of a recent monograph, 'Television in Europe: Quality and Values in a time of Change', published by the European Institute for the Media, Manchester University.

Women on women on the box

Women who make it to the top in television work harder than their male colleagues. Some 60 per cent of all women employees in the industry are in administrative jobs. And their potential to influence policy or bring about changes is negligible.

These are some of the facts revealed at a seminar on 'Women in Television' held in Brussels recently, organised by the Institut de Sociologie of the Free University there, and sponsored by the European Commission as part of its Equal Opportunities programme.

Margaret Gallagher, of the City University, London, which runs post-graduate training courses for men and women aiming at careers in broadcasting, told the seminar that her own researches covering employment of women in TV organisations within the European Community showed that, across 24 such companies in nine countries, women accounted for only six per cent of the top three grades of management – only one out of every 150 women in European television, in other words, is to be found at senior management level.

The ratio for men is one out of every 25 employed. Numerically, in all Europe's TV networks, only 134 of the top people are women – about five in each.

Our correspondent at the seminar, Rose Doyle, reports that an Italian delegate who works for RAI said she saw the world of news on TV as 'a mesh through which only some events escape'.

The aim, she said, should be to change the rules of how TV news works. 'We ought to have an alternative, which would give a better representation of women in the world at large.'

One of the few men who attended, from the

'Women's work is usually portrayed on TV as being of little consequence'

BBC, maintained that the Corporation recruited as many women as men, adding that he could not detect any difference in the news and editorial judgements of women as opposed to those of men. 'They go along exactly as their male counterparts,' he said.

A survey undertaken for the seminar showed that women's work was usually portrayed on TV as being of little consequence. Women characters were rarely shown as having a man or group of men working under them. This report, looking at women in three main areas, found that, in news broadcasts, women were seriously under-represented, but that in series and serials there was a better balance. Women

occupied the centre of the stage more often in commercials, however.

This report was the work of Gabriel Thoveron, of the Free University. It aimed, he said, to show how women are portrayed in certain programmes produced by the European television organisations.

For example, the report shows that women represent a mere 14.5 per cent of journalists who appear on screen, and that women journalists were on the whole more sedentary than men.

It also showed that women seen on the screen in news programmes have a very specific image. Three-quarters of them appear to be in their thirties, 90 per cent are under 40, and none appear to be over 50 (although men were found in this category). Nor, mysteriously, did any of them wear glasses, though 35 per cent of male journalists did.

When the report came to look at advertising, it found little change. Men advise, women buy, it appears. The women are silent; or, if they talk, it is always to a man. Men are seen talking to other men. People portrayed at work are mostly men; those shown in the home are mostly women.

As for TV serials (the report studied 29 episodes from these), it also found that women, as portrayed, talk less than men and mainly to their partners, with men conversing mainly with their colleagues.

Sylvia Meehan, of the Employment Equality Agency in Ireland, said Margaret Gallagher's report was 'highly relevant' and that TV chiefs should be made aware that women's affairs are 'part and parcel of what society is about'. A Danish delegate said she felt it very important that men should be seen in more emotional, caring roles.

Lone Kuhlmann, a manager editor on TV news in Denmark, said her main objection was that being a man was 'presented as the normal thing, whereas being a woman was the first deviation'.

The general feeling of dissatisfaction she said, was due to women feeling they were being told things they had known for years – and, moreover, were being given a man's view of things. 'But,' she staunchly continued, 'We are not the problem. Men are. Let us have seminars on them. Let us discuss part-time work for them. I am tired of women victimising themselves. If women in the home cannot get their husbands to take them seriously, how on earth can they expect their bosses to do so?'

Bob Collins, of Ireland's RTE, paid a tribute to the EEC. He said his country would not have passed any favourable legislation for women had it not been for the Community's rulings on the matter. He suggested that the Margaret Gallagher report be adopted as a code for action – 'to ensure there is at least a starting point'. ☐

A course on the Idea of Europe

ALEC HARGREAVES, of Trent Polytechnic, describes a degree course that initiates students into the notion of a European identity

If you had to define Europe, what would your answer be? Every year, this question is put to applicants being interviewed for the BA (Hons) Modern European Studies at Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham.

The answers we receive vary enormously, sometimes bewilderingly so. Everyone has an image of Europe; but no two images, it seems, are identical. First-year students enrolling on the degree this term will be trying to make sense of these images through a new package of teaching materials, specially developed for use on the core course of the programme, entitled the Idea of Europe.

This is a team-taught course, involving ten colleagues from a variety of disciplines under the leadership of Dr Jeff Hill. Basically, it aims to pinpoint and account for the kinds of images which Europeans have constructed of their collective identity at different times and in varying circumstances. In running the course over the last 11 years, we have been hampered by a lack of suitable teaching materials available in the English language.

There is no shortage of general histories or geographies of Europe, but most of these assume that their (often different) demarcations of Europe's boundaries can be taken for granted. There have been comparatively few scholarly attempts at defining Europe systematically, and still fewer at analysing and explaining what the concept has meant at various times to ordinary Europeans themselves. Hence our decision at Trent Polytechnic to present our students with a package of materials specifically designed to illustrate the highly complex network of factors which are involved in the notion of European identity.

In compiling our materials, we have benefited from the cooperation of international organisations ranging from the United Nations and the World Bank to the Council of Europe and the European Commission. But we are in no sense bound by any party line. The data we have assembled for use by our students in the first term are designed to provide a basis of inquiry, rather than a set of ready-made answers, from which they can move forward into the remainder of the three-year programme.

In addition to the Idea of Europe, students follow a range of other subjects, specialising in two chosen from among History, Geography, International Relations, Politics, French, German and English. Most of those taking a foreign language intercalate a year abroad between the

second and final years of formal study. The Idea of Europe course itself accounts for only about a fifth of the total study programme, but it runs across all three years of the degree, serving as a forum in which students come together to synthesise and distil what they have learnt in their main subject work.

With applications running at a high level, we use admissions interviews to help identify the most suitable entrants, while at the same time giving them a foretaste of the issues which are explored in the degree. Few of those we interview are able to say clearly what they understand by the word 'Europe'. All have some sort

'Some candidates include Sweden but exclude Spain, while others do exactly the reverse'

of image in their minds, but it is often no more than semi-conscious and very fragmentary in nature.

When asked to define the concept, most interviewees describe Europe as a group of countries, then quickly dry up. Sometimes they are invited to elaborate by listing examples of European countries; on other occasions, a random list of countries is put to them and they are asked to say which ones they consider to be part of Europe.

We receive all kinds of replies. While there is general agreement that France and Italy are in,

we encounter considerable uncertainty over countries such as Yugoslavia and Austria. Some candidates include Sweden but exclude Spain, while others do exactly the reverse. Spontaneous offerings commonly include Germany and Switzerland; but in ten years of interviewing I have yet to hear a candidate mention Albania or Finland.

It is clear that the most common assumption shared by prospective students is a rough equation between Europe and the EEC. Those who volunteer Switzerland as an example of a European country often retract when informed that it is not an EEC member. Only when Greece entered the Community did interviewees begin to mention it spontaneously. Prior to that, they frequently expressed surprise, and sometimes outright disagreement, when it was suggested to them that Greece might reasonably be regarded as part of Europe – the Greeks did, after all, invent the word!

If so many of our applicants assume that Europe and the EEC may be regarded as more or less the same thing, this is clearly because the equation has been used as a kind of shorthand in the journalism of countless newspaper and television reports. The media, obviously, have a key role in shaping a mass idea of Europe, so they come under scrutiny in the course.

Another important factor is the educational system itself. A recent survey of European Studies syllabuses prescribed by GCE and CSE boards found an overwhelming emphasis in favour of West European (particularly EEC) countries over those of Eastern Europe. In the Modern European Studies degree programme at Trent, we have consciously tried to avoid



Students on the course are encouraged to study European magazines and newspapers.

straitjackets of this kind. Instead of attempting to inculcate a preconceived notion of Europe, we engage our students in a critical examination of how the concept has evolved and varied under the influence of social, intellectual and other factors.

Thus, through the course, we submit the overall legitimacy of a Modern European Studies programme to genuinely open-minded scrutiny. We are asking whether – and if so, how – Europe may be said to constitute what Toynbee called 'an intelligible field of study'.

The one thing on which the whole course team agrees is that Europe cannot be defined satisfactorily in terms of physical geography. Geographers themselves acknowledge that the Ural mountains, which by convention demarcate European from Asiatic Russia, are not really of any great physical significance. If Europeans during numerous generations have drawn an eastern border in their minds where none exists in the Eurasian landmass itself, this is because they have felt themselves to be distinct *as people* from those living beyond what has been essentially a cultural divide, in the widest sense of that term. The objective and subjective constituents of that culture – which are as much political and economic as artistic and intellectual – are at the heart of the Idea of Europe course.

In our new teaching package, we therefore begin with some basic indicators on lifestyles and belief systems in the contemporary world. If we compare material living standards,

'At a popular level, is there really such a thing as European culture?'

Europe is clearly seen to be on the rich side of the North-South divide. But so too are Japan, the USA and non-European states, Europe has a long history of Christian belief, but in the contemporary world, Christianity has at least as many adherents in North and South America. On their own, statistical indicators of this kind seem unlikely to yield a convincing picture of a distinctly European identity.

The second part of our introductory package looks at various forms of contact, both institutional and personal, in which Europeans are engaged. In what sense does the pattern of contacts permit us to speak of Europe as a coherent and distinct community? There is no shortage of international organisations calling themselves European (the EEC, EFTA and the Council of Europe are obvious examples), but their membership involves a different set of countries in each case. In addition, many European states belong to international bodies which include non-European partners, such as NATO.

In more personal terms, while tens of millions of television viewers share in the Eurovision song contest once a year, they participate nightly in American soap operas and feature

films subtitled or dubbed into their various national languages. So at a popular level, is there really such a thing as European culture, or is the main framework of collective identity for most people national and, in a more general sense, Western?

Despite these (and many other) complications, numerous individuals have, on various occasions, spoken or written of a sense of Europeanness. It is conceivable that, by comparing such statements, recurring features or themes may enable us to perceive a set of parameters within which European identity has been collectively experienced as a lived reality. This provides the basis for a third set of data in our package. It includes comments by figures ranging from historians A.J.P. Taylor and Leonard Schapiro to journalist Jill Tweedie and Greek politician Helen Vlachos. We also examine evidence concerning mass consciousness of European identity, as revealed by public opinion polls.

The emphasis in this introductory package is on Europe in the 1980s. During the remainder of the first and second years, students look at earlier phases of the European experience, and in their final year they have the opportunity to specialise in particular aspects of European consciousness. The whole programme offers a unique attempt at integrating European studies around the central – and highly problematic – concept of Europe itself. It is a difficult and demanding course, but we have found it richly rewarding for staff and students alike. 

Renewed political will to complete the internal market must be matched by a stronger commitment to help exporters, according to business author and publisher Jim Hogan. But the signs are, he says, that services to exporters will be cut back at a time when they really need a boost.

Hogan and partner, David Hale, (right), have launched a new company, World Trade Intelligence, to publish guides to exporting to Britain's major overseas markets. * The first three guides, covering exporting to West Germany, France and the Netherlands, will be published this month, followed by guides on Spain, Portugal and Italy. Within a year, Jim Hogan says, WTI will have covered the whole of the EEC.

After more than twenty years working in the British Overseas Trade Board and on the Department of Trade and Industry's magazine, *British Business*, he believes that the time is right to take the provision of export information 'very seriously indeed', by rationalising it on a grand scale and publishing the results country by country. 'Exporters need the facts now, and enough to enable them to grasp the full measure of the job of selling

HELPING EXPORTERS TO SELL



in overseas markets before they even lift up the telephone to ask for help. The new guides will run to about 250 pages,

providing information for new and experienced exporters, and also serving as a practical aide memoire to business travellers. They will contain names and addresses of contacts in the UK, as well as buying groups, franchise companies, mail order houses, and other useful contacts.

Another feature of the guides is the inclusion of names of hundreds of importers, in all European markets, who have been individually asked for details of the goods they are interested in buying from the UK. Says Hogan: 'The guide on West Germany, for example, will contain around 600 names of importers who have made it plain that they are very interested indeed in hearing from UK manufacturers.'

He reports that WTI's contacts with trade organisations has given him an insight into the standard of help and advice that British companies at present receive. 'Reactions to our requests for detailed information have ranged from intense enthusiasm to downright indifference,' he says. 'It's up to exporters to stimulate the experts by asking the right questions from the start, instead of throwing themselves at the mercy of people they haven't briefed properly, or who don't understand what they are looking for.'

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Help for Europe's 12 million migrants?

More than 100,000 immigrant children in the European Community end their compulsory schooling each year without qualifications, leading to increasing employment problems in their adult life. When one realises that, of the total 12 million migrant population, 40 to 50 per cent are under 25 years of age, it is clear that, without positive action, the Community is brewing up a difficult situation for the future.

Migrants include Community citizens who are able, under the Rome Treaties, to move freely within the Community states. But they also include people from Third World countries, mainly encouraged to come and work during the boom years of the Sixties and early Seventies, as well as large numbers of refugees. The second or even third generation of these early migrants now form large minorities within Western Europe. Despite their birthright within the host country, these people are often still considered as foreigners. Today, with high unemployment throughout Europe, their presence creates racial tensions in certain areas. How can they be properly integrated into the host community?

In 1974 the Council of Ministers adopted an action programme in favour of migrant workers and their families, which was later fleshed out by direct legislation. But since then the situation has changed. At the Fontainebleau summit of the European Council in June 1984, there was general agreement on the need for a new medium-term programme. In March this year the European Commission drafted a background paper and Resolution setting out a programme concerned with the social and other rights of immigrants, certain educational needs, harmonisation of migration law, and an information campaign against racism.

Under Article 48 of the Rome Treaty, free movement of Community nationals was established among the six founder members in 1968, and was extended to Britain, Denmark and Ireland when they joined the Community in 1973. The Article comes fully into effect in Greece on 1 January 1988. Community nationals not only have the right of free movement within the Community, but cannot be discriminated against in employment, remuneration, and other conditions of work, except for employment in the public services and certain restrictions regarding the rights of establishment in some professions.

The definition of a 'national' is a matter for Community governments over which the Community itself has no jurisdiction, and the rights which citizens of the Ten enjoy do not automatically apply to the millions of foreign immigrants and their families who entered the Community in the expanding post-war years. Even though, since the recession of the mid-Seventies, countries have tended to close their doors to third country immigration, those who entered 20 or 30 years ago have largely opted to stay. The Commission regrets that there has been no har-

Interest in our article on the plight of Europe's Gypsies (April issue) prompts us to publish a background report on the Community's policy on immigrants, and on what can be done to assure them of a less stressful future

monisation of immigration law among the Ten. But in the last decade or so, there have been several efforts to adopt positive common policies towards the new minorities.

Now that migrants are into their second or third generation, the Commission stresses that minority communities are today a permanent part of Western European life. Even with encouragement of voluntary repatriation, the majority of immigrants will stay. It is essential, therefore, that they should be allowed the same opportunity of free movement as Community nationals, that they should have proper legal status, and that there should be no obstacles imposed against their equal treatment.

Integration into mainstream society can, however, be a delicate matter, and will depend on immigrant behaviour as much as that of the host country. The Commission believes, in line with views expressed at the European Council last June, that a revised programme of common action would help in defusing tension. The Community's medium-term social action plan confirms the importance of migration problems. But this should, it believes, be supplemented by further legislation supporting social security and political rights, by better consultation regarding banning illegal immigration and black markets, and by supporting information campaigns against racism.

Taking account of the ignorance of Community law in many courts and administrative departments, the Commission will sponsor training courses for magistrates, civil servants, local authority staff, social workers and others who deal with immigrants, to acquaint them with the legal position. There are lapses in social security provision which need to be reviewed; and the political rights of immigrants need to be reaffirmed allowing them to participate fully in local elections and to assemble, publish and propagate political opinions within the confines

of national law without being subject to expulsion for exercising these freedoms. Here, the requirements of frontier and seasonal workers, workers in the cultural sector, seamen, nomads and refugees, need special attention.


There needs to be better consultation on migration policies where there is wide variation among the Ten. The Commission considers that it would be helpful if all Community governments ratified the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, drawn up by the Council of Europe, which could provide a common basis of policies. A Commission proposal on harmonising of laws, combating illegal migration and clandestine employment awaits adoption. It suggests appropriate penalties for transgression, but also offers some protection to workers regarding employment rights.

The Commission also emphasises that repatriation of immigrants must be voluntary, and that those who find it difficult to adjust to their original homeland should be able to return to the Community without difficulty.

There is also need to review the rights of children of immigrants – almost half of whom are under 25 – regarding residence and access to employment, whether born in the host country or allowed entry as part of a family reunion. Here, the nursery school assumes great importance in the teaching of the host language, without which a child's future education progress is in jeopardy.

There is also, as the Women's Action Programme of 1981 pointed out, a great need to ensure that older women, particularly mothers, are encouraged to learn the new language, otherwise they lead increasingly isolated lives. Legislation already allows for teaching of the mother tongue in the schools within the normal educational framework. It is clear, nevertheless, that many immigrants are unaware of the facilities that should be available, so that information campaigns are necessary to alert both immigrants and nationals of what the law expects.

The Commission considers that the present situation requires not only the spread of factual information, but also positive measures to combat an unpleasant racism that can be found in the undercurrents of Community society. It suggests adopting at Community level a declaration against racism and xenophobia, and developing, in liaison with immigrant organisations, some experimental schemes for free legal assistance to enable immigrants to express their requirements and defend their rights.

The Commission does not see in this programme any call for greatly increased expenditure. The European Social Fund, under its present rules, can offer help over a wide range of activity, and is already involved in educational and training projects for immigrants. The draft resolution would take in an undertaking to publish, as soon as possible, an annotated manual of Community legislation already in force. 

'There are lapses in social security provision that need to be revised'

EURO FORUM

Funding the Community: a 'new generation' budget

The complicated knot of political and budgetary problems created over these last few years was finally unravelled within ten days at the end of March, although not without difficulty. On 21 March the Council was able to agree on financing the 1985 budget, covering the deficit by granting, for a second time, intergovernmental advances amounting to 1981 million ECUs, and by giving a constitutional basis to British compensations for 1984, which will be written in to the 1985 budget.

Then, on 29 March, negotiations for the third enlargement, which had been requested eight years before, were concluded. Finally, on 30 March, an agreement was reached on financing the integrated Mediterranean programmes (IMPs) during the 31st European Council meeting, held in Brussels. Once these three agreements were finalised, other decisions followed quickly: that granting new own resources to the European Community on 7 May; the signature of the accession act on 12 June; and agreement on the normal budget for 1985 on 13 June.

The decision of the Council of 7 May, 1985, relating to the 'own resources' system of the Communities, is, with the six Treaties, an element in the constitutional framework of the Community. If it is compared with the first decision, dated 21 April 1970, only the customs duties and agricultural levies keep their character of 'own resources of the European Community'. In effect, the new decision changes the 'own resource' character of VAT, by modulating it so as to regulate the budgetary imbalance of the UK.

From now on the British Government will receive no more cheques, as in the past; but it will be compensated, from the 1986 budget on, for two-thirds of the

DANIEL STRASSER, Director-General of Budgets, outlines the draft proposals for making ends meet in 1986

difference between its participation in Community spending and its VAT scale.

Since Germany will only have to support one-third of the cost of this compensation to Britain, three different VAT rates will be applied. It has also been decided that the highest VAT rate will serve as a reference to establish if the ceiling, which has been raised from 1 to 1.4 per cent, has been reached. In the 1986 budget, Britain's tax relief will be 1,400 million ECUs, or 1,978 million ECUs including the VAT collection (+0.11 per cent).

However, the 7 May decision allows financing of research activities by national financial contributions – set according to political criteria, notwithstanding the classic budgetary principle of universality, which holds that receipts should entirely cover all expenditure.

The 1986 budget is the first of a new

generation, and also a 'first' in other respects. The Community institutions and the member states have clearly shown the political will to ensure that the decision on 'own resources' should be applied on the 1 January 1986, even if retroactively. For the first time in several years, the Community will be able to plan its budget without being wholly occupied with remaining within the limit of the 'own resources' which it has been allowed.

It should be remembered that, despite the constraint thus imposed, the budget for the 1983 financial year was finalised with a deficit of 368 million ECUs, and the budget for 1984 with a deficit of 619 million ECUs. Nonetheless, the Community's margin for manoeuvre for 1986 is still limited, since the 1985 budget was to a certain extent based on an assumed VAT rate of 1.22 per cent. One of the most visible results of the difficulties in the recent past is that the budgetary authorities – the Council as well as the European Parliament – have underbudgeted in payments credits the commitments which they authorised the Commission to make, notably under the structural funds (Regional Fund, Social Fund, Agricultural Structure Fund). This charge of 4,409 million ECUs on the 1986 budget will weigh heavily.

The procedure for authorising the ratification of the decision on 'own resources' to allow for new own resources, and that of the act of accession, must be managed in parallel, firstly because certain member states made this a prerequisite, but also because there is a profound logic in this association. So 1 January 1986 must also mark the real membership of Spain and Portugal and entail drawing up a budget which takes their participation in the income and expenditure of the Community into account.

Forecasts are, therefore, far from easy, and the risk of errors, even perhaps major ones, is great. As on the budget, it was clearly stated in the negotiations on membership that, for the two countries, a balance in the flow of finances resulting from the budget must be achieved: and the Commission has tried to guarantee this assurance (through a reserve for unforeseen expenses).

The Council on 4 December 1984 fixed a number of rules of conduct for what has been called, rather inaccurately, budgetary discipline. What it really involved was budget austerity. Given the way in which it was expressed, this intention has aroused the hostility of the European Parliament and deep suspicion from the Commission. The latter has declared, since its propositions of 6 March 1984, that it is anxious to maintain the agricultural guarantee spending (EAGGF/Guarantee) within the

'For the first time in several years, the Community will be able to plan its own budget without being wholly occupied with remaining within the limit of the "own resources" which it has been allowed'

financial guidelines, which aim at ensuring that spending does not grow at a faster pace than the growth of own resources. In contrast, it has always refused the other aspect of budgetary discipline, that is, the maintenance of non-obligatory spending within the limits of the maximum statistical rate observed. This situation has led it to propose payment credits at a reasonably necessary level, and commitments credits corresponding to the legitimate ambitions of the European Community.

Lastly, but not to underestimate its importance, let us mention that the Commission, in agreeing its draft budget on 14 June 1985, could not but take account of the framework programme which its President outlined to the European Parliament on 12 March last, on the budgetary priorities. Among other things, the Commission's ambition to include its policies and actions in a medium-term programme must be taken into consideration.

The receipts and expenditure in the 1986 draft budget must be distinguished. The potential receipts of the Community will make a double 'jump' in 1986. On the one hand, the maximum VAT level is raised to 1.4 per cent (33,121 million ECUs—an increase of 24 per cent in own resources (+6,523 million ECUs); and, on the other hand, enlargement, with the two Iberian countries, will help to increase the potential revenue basis by 10 per cent (+3,432 million ECUs).

The level of expenditure having been fixed in payment credits at 35,050 million ECUs, the uniform VAT rate to cover them is 1.244 per cent. But because of the new sliding scale, three rates have been set: 0.821 (Britain), 1.308 (Germany) and 1.354 (the other ten member states). This last is the official rate, leaving a narrow margin of about 800 million ECUs under the new ceiling. Among the 'own resources' attributed to the Community, the share of VAT in the



Commissioner Strasser: 'The Council will have to find a happy medium'

financing of the budget is growing, and now represents nearly two-thirds of this (63.9 per cent) which is a total reversal of the situation which existed on 1 January 1971, when the first decision on 'own resources' was applied.

The four-fold constraints under which those who drafted the budget worked must be kept in mind when analysing the expenditure. The first of these was to respect the financial guidelines for the EAGGF/Guarantee. While stressing cuts in stocks—4,120 million ECUs are allocated to that in the 1986 budget—the Commission was able to leave a slight margin of 238 million ECUs over the qualitative guideline fixed at 20,450 million ECUs with an amount of 20,688 million ECUs, given that the effects of the decisions on prices for the 1986-87 season have not yet been evaluated.

The second constraint was to allow old policies to be continued by guaranteeing them a certain development in real terms. Thus the expenditure on the major structural funds is increased in commitments credits by a percentage higher than the average rate of inflation in the Community, independently of enlargement: the Regional Fund and the Social Fund (+5 per cent), EAGGF/Guidance Fund (+22 per cent). These percentages should allow the 'weight of the past' to be lightened for the financial years following that in 1986.

The third constraint was to determine the financial needs of the new policies. So 260 million ECUs could be allocated to the IMPs, in addition to the 190 million which will be taken from the three structural funds. In the same way, credits are allocated to the new actions in the area of research and a reserve for

'The Commission must try to obtain the credits it has asked for, in particular for enlargement and food aid'

emergency food aid is created.

The fourth constraint was to release the means necessary to fulfill the obligations undertaken by the structural funds. To do this the Commission has written in to certain lines in the relevant chapters, credits amounting to 1,384 million ECUs to carry the weight of the past.

When the budgetary procedure opens according to the calendar fixed by the Treaty—the pragmatic calendar could not be followed on account of the delays in finalising the budget for the preceding financial year—the three institutions with budgetary responsibilities face difficulties. The Commission must try to obtain the credits it has asked for, and, in particular, the reserves whose creation it proposed in order to guarantee adequate suppleness in applying the budget, by creating a reserve of 400 million ECUs for enlargement and emergency food aid, and by recognising that the reserves earmarked for honouring old commitments must not be included in the problems of non-obligatory spending.

The Council will have to find a happy medium between those who want to keep strictly to budgetary discipline and those who do not wish to subject non-obligatory spending to this restraint.

The work of the ECO-FIN Council of 8 July should clarify this double tendency. In any case, it would be wise to recognise that 1986 is enlargement year, and to profit from the fact that the new VAT ceiling is coming into force in order to partially wipe out the 'weight of the past'.

If these two obvious facts are recognised, everyone must admit what Mr Henning Christopherson, the Danish Vice-President of the Commission and Budget Commissioner, told the Euro-

pean Parliament on 9 July – that the Commission's draft budget is a proposal inspired by a healthy budgetary discipline.

As for the European Parliament, it must get its priorities met. These are still very general, in so far as can be seen by reading the resolution of 9 May, and must be met within the margin for manoeuvre which is quite limited (295 million ECUs in commitment credits and 218 million in payments credits, that is half of 7.1 per cent corresponding to the

maximum statistical rate). The non-obligatory spending which represents 29 per cent of commitments and 25.7 per cent of payments in the budget, are increased by 27.2 per cent and 47.1 per cent respectively, but only by 6 per cent and 39 per cent if enlargement is not taken into account.

The Budgets Committee and its rapporteur, Mr Christodoulou (EPP, Greece), will therefore have to exercise all their talents of persuasion, along with the Commission.

A plan to restore the health of Europe's poorest regions

The Integrated Mediterranean Programmes are different from other Community actions supporting a particular region: the objective is more ambitious, and the stakes are high. What is involved is neither more nor less than consolidating the links between the Mediterranean part of the Community and overall European integration.

Greece, the Italian Mezzogiorno and France's Midi have been somewhat at loggerheads with the construction of a united Europe, not because of political reservations but as a result of their perception of the Common Market as designed mainly for the northern industrialised regions, which are generally the most prosperous.

In spring 1983 the Greek government set out its claims in a memorandum, emphasising that the disparity between its economic structures and those in the rest of the Community made exceptional intervention and some temporary waiving of the general Community rules vitally necessary. For years, southern Italy has been demanding that special measures be taken to prevent its farmers paying the main price for concessions made by the EEC to third Mediterranean countries in the agricultural sector. Plums, olive oil, fruit and vegetables such as peaches and tomatoes, are often imported to the detriment of farmers in those areas, which are already the poorest in the Community.

On the whole, the Midi has adapted well to the requirements of the Common Market. But when Spain joins the present situation will change, and the majority of the population in the Midi have opposed Spanish membership because they fear an invasion of Spanish products in direct competition with their

'If enlargement of the EEC implies efforts and sacrifices, they must be fairly shared'

traditional products.

Some of their fears were exaggerated, since the conditions for Spanish membership have been very carefully negotiated so as to take account of the concerns of the Community's Mediterranean regions. But the shock of enlargement will undoubtedly be felt mainly in those regions, for obvious geographical reasons.

So what can be done? There can be no question mark over enlargement, since Spain and Portugal's membership meets basic political needs. At the same time, the Community must take these concerns into account. If enlargement of the Community implies efforts and sacrifices, at least at the beginning, these must be fairly shared. So the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes (IMPs) were born. They reply both to the Greek memorandum of Spring 1983 and to the economic repercussions of enlargement.

The three words of their title define these initiatives by summarising both the objectives and the lines of action. First, they are programmes and not pro-

'The gap between these regions and the rest of the Community has not been narrowed – in certain cases it has widened'

jects; which means that the Community intends stimulating and financing not isolated projects but real, coherent programmes for economic development. These programmes will be 'integrated', which means that their objective is not to develop agriculture in one place, tourism in another, and industrialisation in a third: the aim is overall economic development, with all its different elements, because experience has shown that this is the most effective way to bring about overall progress.

When it proposed the IMPs in 1983, the Commission carried out a realistic analysis of the situation in those regions. It noted that they were among the least developed and, in the majority of cases, among the poorest in the Community. They are geographically peripheral to the main industrial centres; their agricultural sectors are still important, often predominant in employment terms. They are characterised by the weakness of their industrial fabric, high unemployment and a low level of economic activity. Their agriculture is dependent on the products aptly called 'Mediterranean', and suffers from handicaps which result not only from natural conditions but also from backwardness in the productive, commercial and processing infrastructure. For example, oranges flourish in these areas, yet the main producer of orange juice is Dutch, and the most famous manufacturer of marmalade is in the United Kingdom.

The IMPs will be carried out over seven years, starting in 1986. So long as the three countries concerned present their projects within the framework defined by the Community rules, the funding procedures will be quite simple, in the sense that the Commission has obtained a major delegation of powers, in liaison and consultation with representatives of national administrations. The IMPs appeal, above all, to the entrepreneurial spirit and will to act. Without their cooperation and enthusiasm nothing can be done.

FERDINANDO RICCARDI

After the Milan summit: can the Community systems deliver?

The European Community is now committed to a wide-ranging series of reforms which will have the effect of a decisive movement towards a market of 12 countries and over 300 million people – without frontiers.

At their summit meeting in Milan at the end of June, EEC leaders gave general, though not ungratified, approbation to an internal market programme drawn up by the Commission in the form of a White Paper. It contains some 300 measures, ranging from systems for reducing frontier checks to a minimum, through the development of a common transport policy and specific suggestions for apparently obscure standards like brucellosis in ruminants, to the harmonising of national tax laws.

The Milan summit brings to an end the first stage of a push for movement on the internal market, which started at the Copenhagen summit of December 1982, when the European Council instructed Ministers to decide on priority measures proposed by the Commission to reinforce the internal market.

There have been other declarations since; but now Community leaders want 'a precise programme of action based on the White Paper and the conditions on the basis of which customs union had been brought about,' and conditions for a single market by 1992.

There are doubts about whether this can be achieved. Inevitably, they are tied up with the sluggish decision – making procedures inherent in a system which, for the most part, demands that decisions are taken unanimously. Even if this difficulty is cleared up, at inter-governmental level – the technique chosen in the Community to promote institutional reform – the programme would remain heavy.

A backlog of measures, built up over nearly 30 years, have all been pulled together by the Commission, and new measures have been added. Some of the steps in the White Paper – those dealing with transport, for example – were laid down for action when the Treaty of Rome was signed and the Community originally established.

A catalyst for this new interest in the internal market has been the desire, at all levels, to stimulate economic growth. The correlation between the leaps and bounds of the US economy and the existence of a single American market has been widely made.

At the same time, it could be argued

Community leaders have called for 'a precise action programme' for a single market by 1992

that what the Community is now seeking to achieve is a domestic version of a wider international movement to promote trade liberalisation.

The lengthy process which set off the current preparations for a new round of international trade negotiations under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade really started just a few days before the Copenhagen declaration. A further parallel: the international moves, like the Community programme, will go on into the 1990s.

The Commission has argued that, if the Community can pull off its internal market programme, it will be a leap towards economic integration on the same scale as the formation of the customs union in the 1960s. That carries with it the corollary of enhanced political integration, because the closer the national economies become, the greater will be the pressures for combined action.

In that sense, the internal market programme halts the fragmentation of the Community which appears to have been taking place over the last decade. The oil crises, and the shock of recession, have resulted, in some cases, in a more nationally introspective approach towards the struggle for recovery.

So the succession of summit statements since the end of 1982 signals willingness to move towards greater economic cohesion. Strengthening the internal market is the most obvious manifestation of this. There has, in any case, been a trickle of internal market decisions moving out of the internal market Council of Ministers, and of other specialised Councils associated with the general process, even as the Commission was urging the adoption of new programmes.

A new technique of settling standards by cutting out specific product negotiations and paring down the Community legislation to the bare essentials of health and safety has this year been adopted, with unaccustomed speed. And old problems, dating back two decades,

like settling Community norms for the weights and dimensions of trucks, or settling a standard for the mutual recognition of architects, have been sorted out.

But what is now envisaged goes much further. The approach is more systematic, and it will be linked to a timetable, for which the Commission White Paper will serve as a basis.

Great stress is laid on the question of services. A common market in them is 'one of the main preconditions for a return to prosperity', asserted the Commission. They already account for nearly 60 per cent of the value added in the Community economy. Industry accounts for just 26 per cent. But greater freedom in both the services and industrial sectors demands legal changes which facilitate cooperation between companies.

Proposals for a European company statute have been on the books for longer than most people can remember. Cooperation would be helped by lining up national trade mark laws and having a Community trademark.

The Commission also believed that it would be necessary to remove fiscal barriers, the third category of its programme for action. Here, the Commission is arguing that 'the harmonisation of indirect taxation has always been regarded as an essential and integral part of achieving a true common market'. In fact, it is seeking 'approximation', and suggests that, on the basis of American experience, there can be variations of up to five per cent without undue adverse effect. It therefore proposes a target norm with the ability to diverge plus or minus 2.5 per cent.

From the early stages of discussion of the White Paper it became clear that the Commission in this area was running into rough waters. Certainly there appears to be no great enthusiasm in the national capitals. The British Government has poured cold water on the scheme, arguing that tax measures are not a priority. Even Luxembourg has threatened a veto. So here there is no commitment to action from the Milan summit, only an instruction to Finance Ministers to examine the question.

Regardless of the merits of the proposal, the reactions to it point to one of the political problems associated with achieving the end of a single market without frontiers by 1992.

It is the question of impetus towards the agreed end. The Ten, soon to be the Twelve, could find themselves in a welter of detailed argument if the national capitals want not the internal market *table d'hôte* but the internal market *à la carte*.

PAUL CHEESERIGHT

Can we harmonise the book trade?

What should be done to help publishers and booksellers to ensure that their wares are economically, as well as culturally, accessible to the public at large?

The Commission has adopted a communication to the European Council on the creation of a framework system for book prices, which supports measures to regulate book prices, in the interests of culture in general.

Books are both a commercial and a cultural product, and as such present special difficulties. Many sell only slowly, so that publishers are obliged to offset the risks inherent in publishing them by making adequate profits on the more popular sellers. Book retailing, however, has its own constraints, among them the activities of distributors who, for commercial reasons, do not handle books which, in their terms, are unlikely to sell well.

In the light of these facts of commercial life, there exist, in the majority of the member states, retail price maintenance schemes, either statutory or based on private agreements concluded between publishers and the other parties concerned. In some cases these schemes are mandatory, and in others they are optional. However, in the Community, the fact that the book market is organised at a purely national level, gives rise to serious difficulties.

The unavoidable disparities between national schemes may be responsible for instances of failure to comply with the pricing rules through the carrying-out of import or re-import operations. States or undertakings wishing to remedy these difficulties by taking measures affecting imports and re-imports would hardly be able to do so without breaching their obligations under the Treaty, whether under the rules on the free movement of goods or the rules of competition.

Could the creation of a Community framework system for book prices overcome these difficulties and, at the same time, fulfil the requirements of the Treaty? What is involved is

'Fixed prices could either be a minimum, or ones on which retailers could grant a discount'

that the pricing rules should no longer apply on a strictly national basis, but should be extended to the Community as a whole. This would remove any advantage inherent in artificial commercial channels, and would also eliminate barriers to trade, since the measures laid down would apply without distinction in each member state to books published in that state, and to imported or re-imported books.

If the idea of creating a Community-wide system were to be adopted, two types of approach could be envisaged, depending upon whether

Publishers and booksellers, like other businesses, have to cope with the economic facts of life. The European Commission would like to lend them a hand

the rules were applied. On the retail prices of books, provision would be made for the mandatory or optional fixing, by the publisher, of the retail price to be charged by booksellers throughout the Community for a clearly defined period. To enable competition to continue to operate as between booksellers, the fixed price could either be a minimum or a prescribed price on which retailers could grant an appreciable discount.

As to the prices publishers charge their buyers, the publisher would be required to sell a particular book—in principle at the same price—to all his customers throughout the Community. The member states would retain the right to maintain, but only at a national level, the systems under which retail prices for books may be fixed in order to protect booksellers.

Whatever system may be adopted, its scope could be made subject to certain limits: certain types of books, for example, could be exempted on the ground of their particular characteristics. Likewise, more flexible arrangements could be envisaged for certain markets, in which, on account of their particular characteristics, the rules would not be applied (books whose potential distribution area is limited to the member state of production).

The Commission will take part in detailed consultations with all the business interests concerned before finally expressing its opinion. Meanwhile, in most member states, resale price maintenance is imposed by law. In France, publishers and importers are obliged to fix resale prices for books which they publish or import. For books published and reimported in France, the resale price to be fixed by the importer has to be at least equal to the one fixed by the French publisher.

A modification of this law is being prepared to take account of the consequences of a Court of Justice ruling which provides that the rules on retail price maintenance should not apply to reimported books, insofar as the exports and reimports were not aimed only at evading such rules. The bill has been adopted recently by the French National Assembly. However, its consequences for imports are not yet clear.

For books published outside France a distinction should be made between those published in other member states and those published in third countries. For books published in other member states, the resale price fixed by the importer may not be inferior to the resale price imposed, or recommended, for France,

by the foreign publisher, or, if such a price does not exist, to the resale price imposed or recommended by the foreign publisher in the country of publication.

In Denmark, prohibition of retail price maintenance on books has been exempted by the Monopolies Control Authority. Prices are fixed by the publisher or, for foreign books, by the principal or exclusive importer. Of the total turnover of Danish books, 85 per cent are covered by the retail price agreement.

In Germany, general prohibition of retail price maintenance agreements is in force, except for 'vertical' agreements on retail price maintenance for publications, whereby the publisher fixes resale prices of his publications. Most publishers concluded such agreements with their retailers, who are obliged to respect the fixed prices.

In Belgium, a retail price maintenance agreement exists for the Dutch-speaking area. Publishers and importers which are members of the organisations concerned are obliged to fix resale prices for Dutch-language books for at least two years. More than 75 per cent of those books are imported from the Netherlands. In the French-speaking area, no retail price maintenance agreement exists.

In Ireland, as far as books imported from the UK are concerned, the British Net Book Agreement applies.

More than 80 per cent of Irish book sales concern imported books, of which most come from the UK. On account of fluctuations of exchange rates, the maintenance of this agreement in Ireland however, seems rather difficult. In Italy, according to information supplied by the Italian booksellers association, no retail price maintenance agreement exists, except for schoolbooks. In Greece, retail price maintenance is prohibited. Exemptions have not been granted, even for books.

Luxembourg imposes a general prohibition of retail price maintenance, but an exception for books has been provided for. Such agreements are not, however, applied to imported books, which represent much the greater part of total book sales in Luxembourg. In the Netherlands, a collective retail price maintenance agreement has been exempted by ministerial decree, obliging publishers and importers who are party to the agreement to fix resale prices for books for at least two years. Following Dutch Courts' decisions since 1979, the agreement is, however, not applicable to imports and genuine reimports.

Britain still prohibits retail price maintenance agreements on books. An exemption, however, has been given for the Net Book Agreement by the Restrictive Practices Court, following which publishers and importers who are parties to the agreement, may fix resale prices for their books (which they may select to that end). These also apply to exports to Ireland. Some 35 to 40 per cent of the production of UK book publishers is exported, of which some 20 per cent is to other EEC countries.

A square deal for Europe's consumers

The European Commission is pressing for a new impetus to the Community's consumer protection policy. It is now ten years since the Community committed itself to a specific policy to safeguard the interests of consumers.

Progress has been slow, and the Commission believes that the time has come for new initiatives.

It has three main objectives: that products traded in the Community should conform to acceptable safety and health standards; that consumers should be able to benefit from the common market; and that their interests should be taken more into account in other Community policies.

Special emphasis will be given in the programme to improving child safety, and to the introduction of better procedures to safeguard the consumer in product safety legislation. Measures will also be proposed to protect the consumer's economic interests – for instance, against unfair contract terms. Appropriate proposals will also be submitted relating to sales through videotex systems and electronic fund transfer.

The Commission is studying the operation of guarantees and warranties on goods bought in another member state, and intends to publish guides for consumers on buying goods in Community countries other than their own.

These measures will complement the actions envisaged in the Commission's programme for the completion of the internal market. As a first step, the Commission is preparing proposals for amendment of existing legislation on food labelling, for the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances used in the household, for the regulation of package-tour contracts, and for the introduction of consumer education in primary and secondary schools.

The consumer has the right to know that goods circulating freely within the Common Market are safe. So product safety is a basic re-

'Priority areas include motor vehicles, food, pharmaceuticals, toys, household chemicals, cosmetics and textiles'

quirement for establishing a completed internal market. Although the case-law of the Court of Justice has succeeded in eliminating some trade barriers masquerading as consumer protection, the Court has acted with caution when national barriers are felt to be justified for reasons of health and safety. In such cases, Community legislation is necessary to ensure common standards.

This will involve the extension and updating of existing legislation, and coverage of products

Latest proposals by the Commission for common codes of consumer protection include child safety, defence against false labelling, and unauthorised access to people's bank accounts

not yet the subject of Community rules, as listed in the White Paper on the internal market. As far as consumers are concerned, the priority areas are motor vehicles, food, pharmaceuticals, household chemical preparations, toys, cosmetics and textiles.

The Commission will be considering action at Community level to facilitate or improve procedures – which already exist in some member states – to impose restrictions or prohibitions on the marketing of goods which are found to be unsafe, and introducing a general obligation on manufacturers to produce and market goods which are safe.

In a major effort to improve child safety, the Commission will ask European standardisation bodies to examine equipment for children, such as prams, cots, playpens, drawing and colouring materials and handicrafts equipment, where avoidable hazards have been revealed. Proposals will also be put forward to prohibit the manufacture of toys, or similar products, which have properties such as smell or shape which could allow them to be confused with food-stuffs.

Special action will be undertaken to protect children, including a conference on poison risks to children and a Community-wide campaign on children's accidents. The Commission will study the need for tougher standards – for example, on safety closures and warnings on dangerous chemicals and medicines.

About one in four of all consumer accidents is caused by sports equipment. The Commission will be examining whether Community action would be appropriate to cut down these risks. There will also be initiatives to counteract the dangers of counterfeit goods.

For the common market to be fully effective, it must be made easier for the consumer to buy goods in other countries for use at home, to have them repaired as if they were purchased domestically, and to know that any complaints will be handled effectively. The consumer needs protection against unfair contract terms, which may well be drafted in an unfamiliar language, and the Commission will be making proposals to provide the necessary safeguards.

The consumer credit directive, already under discussion in the Council, will mark a step forward in offering consumers freedom to buy goods on credit in other member states. This

will be supplemented by a new proposal to standardise the way in which the charge for credit is expressed, allowing consumers to compare competing offers of credit: for example, by providing a standard way of expressing monthly credit terms as an annual rate.

The Commission is also considering a proposal dealing with unfair and comparative advertising, and is looking at the implications of new information technology. These include the problems presented to the consumer by videotex shopping, where the consumer needs to be sure that the information provided at the home terminal is accurate; and electronic fund transfer, where legislation may be necessary to protect the consumer against incorrect charging, non-delivery of goods ordered electronically, delivery of defective goods, or unauthorised access to the consumer's bank account.

Guarantees and warranties for consumer durables should be honoured in the consumer's country of residence, even if the goods were purchased elsewhere. The Commission will be submitting proposals on the operation of guarantees and after-sales service, including requirements for indicating the prices of services.

The Commission sees parallel imports as a valuable agent in reducing excessive price differences for similar products in different member states. But it finds that few people are aware of their rights to buy in other countries, so it intends to publish guides on these consumer rights. These will be accompanied by regular

'The Commission envisages common legislation on package tours and a charter of tourist rights'

information on prices, advice on what to buy and where, and a comparison of national price averages.

As part of its action programme on tourism, the Commission envisages harmonisation of legislation on package tours, standardisation of information on hotels, and a charter of tourist rights. A recommendation on fire safety in hotels is now being discussed in the Council. The Commission is making efforts to encourage the staggering of holidays, and is pressing for lower air fares.

The Commission will help the process of consumer education through organisation of conferences, preparation of publications, co-operation with the media, and by aiding the educational initiatives of the consumer organisations.

As for adoption of these measures by the Council of Ministers, the Commission's target dates have been set between 1988 and 1990. **E**



Famine in Africa: seeds of a solution?

The huge amounts of money and food which are now being poured into Ethiopia and its famine-stricken neighbours are going a long way towards alleviating hunger and saving lives. But is it enough?

In the short term, it certainly saves lives. But one British charity – SOS Sahel – is concerned that, while tackling the immediate plight of the people of the area, longer-term needs will be ignored. The British Committee of SOS Sahel International, however, intends to do something about it immediately, with EEC financial backing.

The Sahel is a 4,000-mile belt of advancing arid land which stretches across Africa from Mauritania and Senegal, on the west coast, to Ethiopia on the east, separating the Sahara Desert from the continent's tropical regions. At least eight months of each year are dry. So, at the best of times, it is difficult for the meagre

ROY STEMMAN reports on a tree-planting scheme which, with help from EEC funds, aims at a long-term solution to the famines that have devastated the arid regions of Africa

harvest to satisfy the needs of a growing population. When the rains fail to come, as has happened in recent years, the resulting drought puts the lives of its 30 million inhabitants at risk.

After several years of drought and famine, a group of Sahelian countries founded SOS Sahel International in Dakar, Senegal, in 1976, as a non-government organisation. Its aim is to

assist in a range of development projects including afforestation, well-digging, water management, and nutritional programmes.

The principle behind SOS Sahel is to raise funds from public and private sources in the developed world, particularly within the EEC, to help alleviate the appalling conditions of life for many of the world's poorest people. The British Committee was established in 1982, under Baroness Ewart-Biggs' presidency, with the aim of giving priority to afforestation and water management schemes that seek to increase agricultural production in the poorest communities and reduce their reliance on outside aid, especially food.

It was the harrowing BBC TV news reports in October last year which first focused international attention on the Ethiopian famine and provoked an immediate public response. Subsequent fund-raising efforts, particularly the

'What worries many experts is that public interest may wane'

British and American pop record ventures such as Live Aid have added millions from public donations to the international contributions of cash and food, of which the European Community's have been among the largest.

However, not everyone in need in Ethiopia has felt the benefit. Because of internal strife, 'rebel' areas saw little. Many of the inhabitants of Tigré, weakened by famine, had no option but to wait for death. Others – as many as 70,000 at any one time – had the strength to embark on the three-week trek to Sudan, where they knew food was available. Many did not make it.

Those who crossed the border are now being cared for by relief agencies in huge camps, such as Wad Kauli, the largest in Africa, with a population of 100,000. But Sudan, with 5 million people at risk from drought and famine, has its own problems. For as long as the situation is highlighted by the media, the international relief agencies can expect generous assistance. What worries many experts, though, is that public interest may soon wane. They fear that they are still facing 'the world's worst natural disaster'.

Even the return of the rain will not solve the Sahel's problems. For years its people have been courting disaster by stripping the land of trees to provide fuel and fodder, only rarely replacing them with seedlings. Already, deforestation is seen as a factor in the situation. Unless drastic action is taken soon, there is every possibility that the Sahel will suffer even greater famine in the years ahead.

In the Sudan, hundreds of thousands of acres of trees are being cut down each year, yet only 7,000 hectares are being planted in their place. This is because the population at large sees reforestation as a government responsibility, and the government feels its priorities lay elsewhere.

But trees are essential to the Sahel. They act as wind breaks, keeping sand and hot, dry air from crops. As well as providing shelterbelts for their crops and homes, they can also capture nitrogen from the atmosphere and return it to the soil. Their roots will penetrate deep underground and pump up nutrients which other crops can use. They also help bind the soil, so that it is not washed away when it rains. They provide shade, as well as fuel, and they can be used as timber for building and fencing.

Recently, the lack of trees and rain have combined to produce desert-like conditions all over Africa at the rate of six million hectares every year: an area about three-quarters the size of Scotland. An influx of people into urban centres has resulted in ever-expanding treeless belts around many cities, some of which are now tens of miles across. It is not a problem that is confined to the Sahel: the World Bank estimates that 50 million hectares of land needs to be planted with trees, in Africa and Asia, at a cost of \$50 million, to rectify the situation.



For some, relief has come in time. Others must simply wait.

The British charity's plan is minute in comparison. But it is making a very useful contribution in showing those affected by deforestation how to overcome their problems.

The area selected for the £1½ million four-year scheme is Seyel, near Shendi, in the Nile Province, about 100 miles north-east of the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. Desert encroachment in this area of 90,000 inhabitants is becoming ever more serious. It has covered entire villages and vast areas of what was once the world's most fertile soil.

To assist local farmers, who are involved in government agricultural schemes, SOS Sahel has taken over and revised a Village Extension Scheme which was originally devised by Green Deserts, three years ago. Nigel Cross, a director

of the British Committee, spent three weeks in the Sudan earlier this year discussing the scheme with the Northern Region's Government and making final arrangements for its implementation. He secured governmental approval in February, which has been confirmed by the country's new leaders. 'We chose Sudan,' he told me, 'because afforestation is seen as a priority there and Seyel is a prime growing area. There have been other tree-planting schemes before, but not at village level, which is where our initiative is aimed.'

At the suggestion of Roelf Smit, agricultural adviser to the EEC mission in Khartoum, the British Committee of SOS Sahel made an application to the European Commission for half the funding for the first year's pilot phase. This

IT COSTS £1 TO PLANT A TREE

Like all charities, the British Committee of SOS Sahel International needs as much help as it can get. It costs just £1 to plant a tree in the Sudan. It hopes that British schools will give their support by sponsoring the work of Sudanese schools which will be involved in the project. SOS Sahel will be pleased to establish links between the two, as well as providing regular reports of progress.

For more information contact SOS Sahel, 31 Radnor Walk, London SW3 4BP.

was approved in May, and amounts to £69,000, which the charity says will enable it to develop the project in full consultation with the people of the area, and hopes to receive further Community help for the subsequent three years. The Overseas Development Agency and UNICEF are among the other bodies who are helping with the funding.

The core of the project combines non-formal education and educational entertainment, with more formal slide and film shows, posters and technical demonstrations, aimed at the local farmers. Not that they need persuading. They know the desert is taking over their land. In the space of three years several houses in one village have been buried by sand, and further acreage has been lost to the desert. What they do need is help and advice.

'The seedlings for the project are being gathered now,' Nigel Cross told me when we met in London in July. 'These will be distributed free, starting this October, in 12 villages in a season, each of which has a population of about 5,000. The target is to establish tree growing in 48 villages at the end of the four years.'

Having learned what is required of them, the villagers – with the assistance of forester Stephen Bristow, recently-appointed field director, his Sudanese counterpart and other local experts – will aim to grow 5,000 seedlings each season, creating at the same time nurseries for future plantings. The seeds will first be planted in pots, then transplanted along irrigation canals which are little more than mud trenches for much of the time, but where the roots will benefit from water seepage. Because of its nearness to the River Nile, trees grown in the area will soon be able to tap the high water table with their roots.

At the end of the four-year programme, SOS Sahel hopes that some 600,000 seedlings will have been planted out, and that, between them, the 48 village nurseries will have a production capacity of a further 240,000 seedlings a year.

The trees are being carefully selected for special properties. Fast-growing varieties, such as *Leucaena leucocephala*, are likely to be most popular. Properly coppiced, each mature tree will provide £2.50 of fuel wood and the equivalent of £2 of fodder, so the value of cropping could be as much as £1 million a year – more than double the total cost of the project. **£**



For years, the people of the Sahel have been stripping the land of its trees to provide fuel and fodder. Below: SOS Sahel is making use of puppet shows to educate villagers in the need to change their ways.



Eureka — that's the way to get together

Eureka, the European technology cooperation programme launched in Paris on 17 July could mean a new leap forward and increased dynamism for Europe.

In the Commission's opinion, this French-inspired programme has allowed European countries to take stock of the problems they all face in the advanced technology sector.

The next meeting, to decide on new initiatives, will take place in Germany, and will be attended by ministers from the ten Community member states plus those of Spain, Portugal, Austria, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.

Eureka is just one of Europe's replies to the challenges presented by Japan and the United States in the high technology field. European countries have realised that they must join forces by pooling their knowledge, their scientific capabilities and their financial means. The scheme includes non-Community countries and was established by national governments. But Commission President Jacques Delors still believes the Community can play an important part. A considerable market for products created through Eureka will be available from 1992, the target date for completing the Community's internal market. With 12 member states, that market will count 320 million inhabitants, excluding the other western countries which have associate status with the Community.

The Community will also be able to provide financial aid to Eureka, chiefly through the European Investment Bank. It also has considerable experience in coordinating the work of research scientists and in organising transnational projects.

At the same time, the European Commission is preparing its own technology project, limited to the member states, and will follow the guidelines laid down at the recent Milan summit.

A voice for Europe's 200 regions

The regions of Europe have finally found a voice through the creation of the Council of European Regions, founded in Louvain La Neuve (Belgium) on 15 June.

The new body includes all the regions of the Community member states, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Austria, and handles their interests in dealings with the Community institutions and the Council of Europe, which itself represents all the non-communist countries in Europe.

The regions of Europe frequently encounter difficulties in making their particular problems known and appreciated, and when they attempt joint action they are often thwarted by national governments unwilling to cede authority to them. At European level, however, they need to be able to communicate directly with the EEC authorities, in order to take greatest advantage of the Community loans and grants available.



Keeping an eye on baby

A series of proposals recently prepared by the European Commission could, if adopted by the member governments, lead to tighter controls on the production and sale of baby foods and breast milk substitutes.

The proposals call for approximation of the member states' national legislation on the contents of baby foods and breast milk substitutes. National rules on labelling and advertising for these products would also be affected by the planned directive.

At the same time, the Commission has presented a report on baby foods and the application of the existing international code on the marketing of breast milk substitutes. It has also

drafted a resolution for the Council of Ministers, calling on the food industry to respect the code of conduct when operating in developing countries, which are a prime export market for European producers of these products.

The protection of consumers' rights played a central role in the drafting of the proposals, with particular attention being paid to the content of baby foods. In order to fulfil the high nutrition requirements of babies such products must have minimum levels of minerals, vitamins, amino acids and other nitrogen compounds. Minimum and maximum levels for calorie and vitamin content are laid down in the draft rules as well as a list of permitted carbohydrates.

As far as labelling is concerned, it would under the new rules become illegal to use wording which might imply that substitute milks are in any way superior to breast milk. In fact, containers would have to indicate that breast-feeding is preferable, and that artificial products should be used only under advice from pharmacists, doctors or nutrition specialists.

That would be in line with the findings of several non-governmental aid agencies, which at the end of the Seventies reported that advertising of breast milk substitutes had discouraged breast feeding, particularly in the developing world, and that this in turn had become a risk to the health of babies.

Although Third World governments are responsible for ensuring that the industry's code of conduct on marketing practices is respected in their countries, the Commission is willing to offer its services in cases where the rules are broken.

Plight of the jobless immigrants

Figures released by the Commission in June show that foreigners have been particularly hard hit by unemployment in several of the member states. Immigrant unemployment is worst in Luxembourg, where 44 per cent of the jobless are foreigners, according to figures for March 1985.

Several other countries show a high incidence of unemployment in immigrant communities: in Germany 11 per cent, in France 12.1 per cent, in Belgium 13.1 per cent and in the Netherlands 8.1 per cent.

In both Germany and France, about one-quarter of unemployed foreigners were less than 25 years

old; and in all countries for which figures are available, it is clear that women are less affected than men.

Only Denmark comes out with a better rating. There, immigrants account for only 4 per cent of the jobless, with men only marginally worse off than women. Young immigrants are also less affected in Denmark than in other countries, accounting for only 18 per cent of jobless foreigners.



Shopping: the message behind the bars

You see it on just about everything you buy in the shops, from bottles of lemonade to boxes of matches — that tell-tale bar code, a small white rectangle with vertical black bars of varying thickness.

Europe invented it. And, as it becomes more and more international, it seems to multiply.

Every product on the supermarket shelves has its own bar code to distinguish it from others. The idea is to do away with the need for the check-out assistant to read the price ticket on every purchase — a job that can now be done electronically. The assistant passes the article over a device to read the bar code, and a computer instantly identifies the product and rings up the price. In some systems, the assistant reads the code with a light pen connected to the computer.

The system has advantages for both the customer and the store. It makes passage through the check-outs faster and easier — though you still have to wait for the customer in front to find a pen to write his or her cheque — and it removes the possibility of assistants making mistakes and overpricing.

As well as this, the till-slip can be produced with details of the individual purchases, making it easier to verify when you get home.

For the store, it becomes a fairly simple matter to keep up to date with stocks. If the computer can recognise

everything you buy, it can also keep a note of how many of each article are being sold, and send out warning signals when stocks are running low. Some sophisticated systems can even call up the warehouse computer and order more.

The code consists of the bars for the computer to read, and an array of 13 numerals below, the first two for the country, the next four for the manufacturer and the last for the product itself.

The European system was started in 1977 by manufacturers and large store owners from 12 countries – France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Britain, Italy, Denmark, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Switzerland. It is run by the European Association of Numbering, based in Brussels.

At the beginning of this year, 1440 stores in the EEC alone were equipped with bar code readers – 200 more than in October last year. Over 7,000 shops across the world used the system, 5,000 of them in Japan. An American system, called UPC, is used by 11,000 shops in the US and Canada.

Cheaper cars for Italian motorists

Italian motorists will be able to buy cars imported outside the official distribution networks once again, thanks to a ruling by the Court of Justice of the EEC. The decision of the Court means cheaper cars for Italians.

In Germany, the Netherlands, France and Belgium, the price of cars is usually considerably lower than those charged by Italian dealers – sometimes by as much as 20 per cent. This makes it worth while to buy from so-called parallel importers bringing cars into the country outside the arrangements of the official network from these other countries. Some 80,000 vehicles were bought in this way in 1984.

In July last year, however, the Italian authorities imposed special registration restrictions on these parallel imports, in an effort to discourage them. The aim was to strengthen the restrictions bit by bit, and block the parallel system completely by 1 March this year. The Commission then took Italy to the Court of Justice to get them to drop the special restrictions. The Treaty of Rome, the Commission argued, forbids the restriction of imports from other member states of the Community.



A 'first' for Dominique Rambure, seen here settling his account at the Hotel Amigo, Brussels, with the inaugural ECU travellers' cheque.

The Court verdict supported the Commission's point of view, and ordered Italy to go back to the system in force before July 1984. They now have also to keep the Commission informed on the situation of registrations. These provisional measures are intended to protect the consumers and importers concerned while a final ruling is awaited.



French top the take-home pay league

After deduction of tax and social security contributions, a salaried employee in France can expect to take home nearly three-quarters of his gross salary. His counterparts

Paying for your holiday in ECUs

Last-minute price supplements could be averted if the travel trade made greater use of the European Currency Unit (ECU), according to the Commission.

In reply to a question from a British MEP, it said it would pursue the idea when it next meets representatives of the travel trade.

The problem of last-minute price

in other European countries are not so lucky, with wide differences between them.

This information comes from recent calculations by the Commission in answer to a question from a Belgian MEP, Jaak Vandemeulebroecke.

A married employee with two children earning £19,000 can, if he works in France, take home 80 per cent of his gross salary after deductions have been made. An employee with the same family, and earning the same wage, in Britain takes home only 73.62 per cent, and in Ireland 60.99 per cent.

The Danes and Greeks have the worst deal. After deductions, they are left with only 42.8 per cent and 43.9 per cent respectively. After

increases arises because tour operators frequently pay in dollars in advance for hotels, excursions and travel and then have to ask for an additional payment if their national currency weakens against the dollar.

But the problem could be partially removed if transactions were carried out in ECUs, since experience has shown the unit to be much more stable than most individual European currencies.

That is because the value of the ECU is based on the collective value of a 'basket' of European currencies. The Commission claims that use of the ECU would also simplify the tour operators' accounting procedures.

France, the United Kingdom and Luxembourg offer the best conditions, leaving their employees with 73.6 per cent and 72.7 per cent. German employees get 71 per cent, Italians 69 per cent, and Dutch 63.6 per cent.

The Commission made similar calculations for employees earning £38,000. Again, the French are best-off with 72.4 per cent, followed by the British with 63.7 per cent, the Germans with 61.2 per cent and Italians with 60.5 per cent. The Danes and Greeks are still the losers, with only 34.6 per cent and 38.8 per cent respectively. Belgians are left with 44.8 per cent, the Irish with 47.5 per cent, the Dutch with 51.2 per cent and Luxembourgers with 57.7 per cent.

MEPs call for soccer controls

At its July session in Luxembourg, the European Parliament backed demands for tougher measures to clamp down on violence at soccer matches when it passed a resolution put forward by Dutch MEP Mrs. J. Larive.

The resolution followed the disaster at the Brussels Heysel stadium on 29 May. The move also closely followed publication of the report prepared for the Belgian parliament, which was critical of inadequate precautions taken at the stadium to tackle possible violence.

In particular, the European Parliament motion stressed the need for greater cooperation between match organisers, police forces, local authorities and governments. It also advocated a complete ban on the sale of alcohol in and around stadiums and on trains and coaches to matches, and better means of separating rival groups of supporters.

Rules on new car guarantees

New rules which came into force on 1 July should make it even more attractive for consumers to buy new cars from dealers in the Community country offering the best prices.

The main feature of the new rules is that manufacturers will no longer be allowed to restrict the validity of their guarantees to the country of purchase.

Although a special exemption from EEC competition rules has been made for the car industry, to allow it to maintain its selective distribution agreements with dealers, the new rules ensure that these agreements do not undermine the consumer's freedom of choice within the Community.

Going through the roof with Apollo

Lengthy documents could soon be transmitted the length and breadth of Europe in microseconds, thanks to a scheme recently proposed by the Commission.

The plan, drawn up in collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA), calls for the establishment of a satellite station to link national and international institutions, including those of the Community.

The so-called Apollo system would allow some ten information providers to transmit documents via Eutelsat-1 to a large number of recipients. Even very long texts could be electronically 'bounced' off Eutelsat-1 – a satellite launched by the 11-nation ESA in August 1984 – and reach their destination in record time.

The Apollo scheme would attract a large number of users, because they would be able to install relatively cheap office or roof-top receivers. Apart from the Commission and the national post offices of the ESA, other participants in the scheme would include the members of Eutelsat (the European satellite telecommunications organization) and a special group of the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations.

The Commission already co-finances ten projects covering electronic document transmission.

It's women who have the part-time jobs

Some 13 million people in the European Community have part-time jobs – the majority of them women, according to a survey carried out by Eurostat, the EEC statistical office.

Throughout the Community, 12 per cent of working people have a part-time job. Only 3 per cent of working men are involved, but for women the figure rises to 28 per cent. In fact, in all the member states the majority of part-time workers are women.

The highest incidence of part-time work can be found in the north of the Community. In Denmark and the



Holiday makers turn out for the Community's round-Europe yachtsmen during their call at Torquay.

Netherlands, more than 20 per cent of the workforce are in part-time employment, including respectively 45 per cent and 50 per cent of working women. In the United Kingdom, part-time jobs account for more than 15 per cent of the working population and 42 per cent of working women. Germany also stands just above the Community average. But in Italy and Greece only 10 per cent of working women are employed part-time.

The survey shows that 70 per cent of women in part-time employment are married. It can be assumed that many of them are working mothers, since in all member states half of them are in the 24-49 age bracket.

Three-quarters of part-time jobs are in the service industries, where they account for 16 per cent of jobs in the sector, compared with 15 per cent in agriculture and 5 per cent in industry.

As far as full-time jobs are concerned, after collective bargaining in 1984 the average working week was 38 hours in Belgium and the Netherlands, 38.5 hours in Germany, 39 hours in France and the United Kingdom, and 40 hours in the other member states.

A stiff one for the car industry

A proposal to allow the addition of alcohol to petrol for cars could be adopted soon, according to a Commission answer to a question from an MEP.

The directive, which has already been submitted to ministers for approval, would allow the addition of 5 per cent ethyl alcohol to petrol as a fuel-saving measure.

Ethyl alcohol for this purpose can be made from a variety of materials, including waste and residues, and surplus products such as cereals and sugar beet. It may also be made from surplus wine, which is at present distilled into alcohol.

This, the Commission pointed out, would remove the danger of wine alcohol distorting competition with other alcoholic drinks. On the other hand, wine is one of the most expensive sources of ethyl alcohol.

Local government is feeling the impact of Brussels

Whilst the European dimension is not always immediately apparent in British local politics – particularly at the level where ratepayers are making temporary use of the village school to select their representatives on parish and district councils – it has become an increasingly influential factor.

For, as the European Community has begun to develop a system of legislation with binding effects on the member states, and as the partners in the Community have moved hesitatingly towards their avowed goal of true union, several constitutional and political effects have followed. Not least among these, according to a report* recently published by the Economic and Social Research Council, has been a change in the balance of authority between central and local government.

In Brussels there has always been a strand of political thought and action which has fostered the concept of 'Europe of the Regions'. Its many advocates recommend that not only should powers be removed and/or devolved from national capitals upwards to a nascent European Federation, but also downwards towards regional and other sub-national units of public management. They suggest, among other things, a rational division of governmental functions into those which logically demand a supranational authority; those which could be best carried out by national government; and those best left to regional or local authorities nearer to the grass-roots.

Interestingly, part of the involvement of British local authorities in a European dimension came several years ahead of the UK joining the Community in 1973. During the 1950s and 1960s, representatives of British local government, along with observers from some of our nationalised industries, played an active role in the work commissioned by the Council of Europe in promoting international co-operation, and the exchange of ideas, in several areas of public policy. Coincidentally, several of the areas in which the Council of Europe became active – among them urban and regional planning, education and the arts – are ones for which responsibility in the UK is shared between Whitehall and local authorities.

British representatives or observers working actively with their Continental colleagues were, therefore, able to offer practical experience of what the Europeans had in mind; even if their

RON BARRY reviews a new study of the ways in which actions and policies of the European Commission are making themselves felt at local authority level

critics suggest that they simultaneously failed to take proper political or tactical advantage of their know-how.

Nevertheless, their participation in Council of Europe studies and joint activities served to illustrate that a European Union, whatever character it may develop over time, needs the contribution of public authorities at local, central and 'European' levels.

Whilst the benefits of such grass-roots co-operation may be obvious and worth fostering, the more immediate preoccupation of those controlling public pursestrings is: how much money can we extract from Brussels? To which the reply must come: the purse is not bottomless, for the Community's total budget represents only about one per cent of the GDP of member states, or approximately two per cent of their individual public spending. As two-thirds of this budget goes to agricultural price support, only a small amount is left for the regional, social and other programmes emanating from Brussels to be shared out among the member states.

In 1983, for instance, Britain's main receipts from the annual budget were £320.8 million from the Social Fund and £262.7 million from the Regional Development Fund. Whilst such resources may have an impact in Britain, they

'The immediate preoccupation is: how much money can we extract from Brussels?'

represent only a small percentage of the public spending of our local authorities overall.

In any case, the European impact on a homespun central-local administrative balance has to be seen in terms not only of the resource element, but also of the formulation and implementation of Community legislation and the grander political design of creating a European 'polity' embracing supranational, national and sub-national levels of public authority.

Such an impact on local affairs is not


welcomed in all quarters. By and large, central governments jealously guard their own hot-lines to the Community institutions – especially those linked to the European Commission, its departments, and its coffers. However, the Commission, and those of its members directly responsible for regional policy, have always sought to loosen that tie, and maintain as far as possible direct contact, however informally, with the regional and local authorities of member states.

The European impact is found, first, in areas of local statutory responsibility, including trading standards, environmental protection and environmental health, education, and some aspects of local transport policy.

Secondly, Community legislation has extended, or is extending, into a very wide range of policy areas, with possible direct impacts on local employment prospects, notably the Common Fisheries Policy, the Common Agricultural Policy, tourism, rural and regional development, ports and transport. Local authorities seek to influence the formulation of such legislation, and to defend local interests, by making representations to central government departments and even directly to the Community institutions.

Finally, local authorities are affected by Euro-legislation in their role as major employers and purchasers of goods and services. The international advertising of public contracts above a certain value is a prerequisite for payments to be made by the European Commission under Regional Fund rules. Preferential purchasing from national suppliers is also frowned upon by the Commission, which has considered proceeding in the European Court of Justice against the British Government regarding a case of local authority purchasing of British vehicles and the licensing of British taxis.

Some functions and responsibilities cross the boundaries of these three categories: for instance, in transport policy and roads, where administrative functions are clearly divided between different levels of government, yet each area is interconnected. Central government claims responsibility for arterial roads, and for fixing the axle-weights of lorries which use them. Yet it was argued in vain by district councils that such weight increases, proposed by the European Community, would cause damage principally to the minor roads and bridges for which they are responsible.

In other words, what were previously local government functions have to become national government functions the moment they fall within a Community policy, since the Community cannot deal with local government or other such agencies. This raises the paradoxical point that a Community which in some ways seeks to challenge the authority of a nation-state in some cases winds up reinforcing it. 

*'The European Community and Central-Local Government Relations: A Review', by Caroline Bray and Roger Morgan. Published by the Economic and Social Research Council, and available from the School Government Publishing Company, Darby House, Bletchingley Road, Merstham, Redhill, Surrey RH1 3DN, price £3.00.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE

Alfred Lomas, United Kingdom:

According to a recent EEC report, by 1990 the European Community will have massive surpluses of almost every farm product. It was forecast that there would be a surplus of 33 million tonnes of cereals, 200,000 tonnes of beef, 1.5 million tonnes of sugar, and 3,000 million litres of wine. There will also be millions of tonnes of butter in storage and further millions of tonnes of fruit and vegetables destroyed.

What action is the Commission taking to ensure that these surpluses are distributed in a socially beneficial way, rather than destroyed or sold cheaply to non-Community countries?

Answer by Frans Andriessen on behalf of the Commission

The Community has adopted several schemes for the marketing of agricultural products at reduced prices. The beneficiaries include not only users within the Community but also persons in the poorest countries in the world, receiving food aid.

As an example on the internal market, there is support provided to make low-priced butter available to consumers and food processors. The Commission has also adopted a set of measures for the disposal of beef stocks. A consumption aid scheme is operated for olive oil. In 1983/84, 255,700 tonnes of fruit and 3,200 tonnes of vegetables were distributed free, either fresh or after processing, to charities, hospitals, schools and other groups.

As for the external market, the EEC has helped to alleviate food shortages in developing countries – especially the least developed – which cannot afford to import in the normal way the products they need to ensure proper nutrition for their populations.

Giovanni Starita, Italy:

What are the technical obstacles to expenditure under the Community budget being effected in ECUs (paying employees' salaries, paying suppliers of goods and any other persons to whom money is owed from the budget)? How is the Commission trying to persuade the national monetary authorities to set up multi-lateral machinery for inter-bank payments in ECUs?

Answer by Jacques Delors on behalf of the Commission:

There is no legal obstacle at Community level to the Community's regular supplies being paid for in ECUs; indeed, some of them already are. However, under a provision in the staff regulations, the Belgian franc has to be used for paying salaries. Furthermore, the fact that member states pay over Community own resources in national currencies means that the Commission does not have to carry out exchange transac-

tions for the bulk of budgetary expenditure, notably agricultural expenditure.

From the outset, the Commission enthusiastically supported the move to set up the working party of banks operating on the ECU market. It has actively participated in the working party's deliberations, and encouraged the opening of negotiations with the Bank for International Settlements on the establishment of an ECU clearing system. It has also kept the national monetary authorities regularly informed of progress in the working party's deliberations, emphasising the importance of that initiative. The negotiations have reached an advanced stage, and the BIS is now simply waiting for the banks to set in place the technical and logistical facilities necessary for ECU transfer operations.

Gerhard Schmid, Federal Republic of Germany:

African killer bees have caused a substantial drop in honey production in Central and South America as they threaten other domesticated bee col-

tral and South America. In view of the different climatic conditions in Europe it can, however be safely assumed that any appearance of this species of bee in Europe will not expose either the European beekeeping industry or human beings and animals to imminent danger.

David Morris, United Kingdom:

Is the Commission satisfied with the way cheap EEC butter has been distributed in the UK? In particular, has it investigated allegations that the packagers of the butter responded to pressure from the large retail chains to ensure that they received supplies before their small, independent competitors? Is it true that in some cases the cost of packaging the EEC butter in the UK was twice that normally charged?

Answer by Frans Andriessen on behalf of the Commission:

The Commission is not aware of any complaints from independent retailers regarding the supply of subsidised butter from the packagers. Supplies take longer to reach independent retailers because they are



onies. Their aggressive behaviour is also a threat to humans and animals. In view of their high level of resistance to the Varroa mite, we cannot exclude the possibility that this species of bee could be imported into Europe. Is the Commission aware of this problem? What measures does the Commission propose to take to prevent the spread of this species of bee in Europe?

Answer by Frans Andriessen on behalf of the Commission

The Commission is aware from press reports of the penetration of the so-called African killer bee into the tropical and sub-tropical regions of Cen-

tral and South America. In view of the different climatic conditions in Europe it can, however be safely assumed that any appearance of this species of bee in Europe will not expose either the European beekeeping industry or human beings and animals to imminent danger.

The cost of packaging special-sale butter is slightly higher than for brand-name butter, but nowhere near twice the cost. The additional expense arises from the need to prepare the intervention butter for the market and from the specific packaging requirements.

Luc Neyer de Ryke, Belgium:

Recent press reports refer to the difficulties faced by the European tyre industry, and particularly the market leader, Michelin. The effects of

Japanese penetration of this sensitive market are becoming more and more evident.

What does the Commission plan to do in this situation? What are the prospects for maintaining and developing this industry?

Answer by Lord Cockfield on behalf of the Commission:

The Commission is aware that the European tyre manufacturing industry is currently undergoing structural change, and that ownership of certain parts of the industry has been transferred to non-European companies. It does not feel that this situation calls for any particular measures by the Community at the present time.

John Tomlinson, United Kingdom:

During the last Commission period, it apparently became necessary, in the view of the Commission, to nominate two new vice-presidents in the month of December 1984. Can the Commission indicate all the financial consequences of the decision to nominate two of its members as vice-presidents for periods which in practice covered no more than a few days or weeks? Does the Commission believe that the financial consequences of these decisions are in line with good financial management of taxpayers' monies, and if so, what has been the justification for the decision?

Answer by Jacques Delors on behalf of the Commission:

Under the combined provisions of the first paragraph of Article 14 and the first paragraph of Article II of the Treaty of 8 April 1963 establishing a single council and a single commission of the European Communities, it is for the governments of the member states to appoint the vice-presidents of the Commission by common accord.

As provided for in the second paragraph of Article 12 of the above Treaty, the Commission was informed by the Chairman of the Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the member states of the intention to appoint Mr Pisani and Mr Burke as vice-presidents. It endorsed the proposed appointments.

The emoluments of former members of the Commission are governed by Council Regulations.

The three-year transitional allowance to which Mr Burke and Mr Pisani are entitled will only be increased by a reduced amount as a result of their period as vice-presidents of the Commission. The effect on their pensions will be minimal.

The Commission has no plans to amend the rules in force, which were adopted by the Council under Article 6 of the above-mentioned Treaty without a Commission proposal.

Picasso in the round

After long delays and frustrations, the Musée Picasso, France's national collection of the master's works, is to open this autumn.

Its home is the Hôtel Salé, a classically elegant mansion in the Marais district of Paris. There, a hand-picked collection of over 2,000 works by Picasso, including the best examples of his prints, sculptures, pottery, as well as paintings, constructions and drawings, will give scholars and the general public a chance to study in detail the most dominant and many-sided artist of this century.

Until now, the only remotely comparable collection has been the Museo Picasso, in Barcelona, to which the artist himself made an important donation of works in 1970. It is particularly rich in his very earliest work – portraits of his family, and juvenile sketchbooks which reveal his extraordinary precocity. For all its richness, the Museo Picasso is noticeably unbalanced, a brilliant miscellany rather than a definitive collection.

At last, in Paris, we can see Picasso in the round. The preview of the collection held at the Hayward Gallery, London, in 1981, was astonishing enough; now, in a permanent home, supported by archive material and scholarly documentation, it will surely become a national treasure to rival even the Impressionists in the Jeu de Paume.

It owes its existence to the decision by the French authorities, after Picasso's death in 1973 (he died intestate), to claim the state's one-third share of his fortune not in cash but in kind. Accordingly, after a careful sifting of Picasso's own Picassos – well over a billion francs' worth, according to reckonings at the time – the French state and people now own 240 million francs' worth of the most highly prized art of modern times.

Many of Picasso's admirers had hoped that this, his greatest monument, would be housed in the roomy, if none too comfortable, premises in the rue des Grands Augustins, where in 1937 he painted the mighty *Guernica*, and where he spent the bitter years of the Nazi occupation. Instead, the rooms were turned into municipal offices, much to Picasso's vexation, and the opportunity was lost.

However, as Dominique Bozo, keeper of the Musée Picasso, has made clear, Picasso's work and the architecture of the building where it is now installed will be seen as highly appropriate. 'The contrast will provide a synthesis of art history on lines which Picasso himself was one of the first to trace. We should remember that much of his work was itself created in such time-honoured surroundings, where he liked to juxtapose his own art with that of the great masters of every age.'

DENIS THOMAS



Above: Sculptor and Model. Etching, from the Vollard Suite, 1933. Right: Self-portrait, 1906.
Below: Le Repas Frugal, Picasso's first etching, 1904.



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