

European Community News

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BRITISH DEMAND RENEGOTIATION, THREATEN WITHDRAWAL FROM EC IF PROPOSED TALKS FAIL

British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan told an EC Council of Ministers meeting in Luxembourg, April 1, that the newly-elected British Labour government wanted to renegotiate some of the terms of its membership in the Community. If this could be done successfully, Labour would put the new terms to the British people by referendum or election. If negotiations failed, the British electorate would be asked to approve British withdrawal from the Common Market.

In a statement which caused shock-waves throughout Europe, Callaghan scored the Community's common agricultural policy and Britain's high share of the EC budget as two principal British objections to present terms. He also questioned EC trade and aid policies with the Commonwealth and developing countries.

Callaghan appealed for the Community to work more closely with America. "Only if the Nine (EC countries) work harmoniously with the United States on economic issues in the framework of the Community, and political issues in the framework of political cooperation, shall we surmount the difficulties to which President Nixon and Dr. Kissinger have recently drawn attention," he said.

GEORGES POMPIDOU 1911-74

The Commission and the European Parliament have both expressed their condolences on the death of French President Georges Pompidou on April 2. In its message to acting French President Alain Poher the following day, the Commission said Pompidou "did much for the idea of Europe...in which he profoundly believed."

"EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE, NO ALTERNATIVE TO EUROPE"

"The Community has usually only advanced because of crisis," Commissioner Albert Borschette told the International Chamber of Commerce in Frankfurt, Germany, on March 22, 1974. He pointed out three main reasons for the current crisis: the priority of national interests over Europe; the lack of faith in Europe, and the fact that Europeans are now running into the issue of national sovereignty in the fields of monetary and foreign policies. Borschette also stressed the need to renovate the EC's institutions so that the work of creating a European Union can begin by 1980. For the future, the will of Europe's people to form a united Europe is established, he said, adding: "The European countries have no alternative to Europe!"

GERMANY, FRANCE WILL LEAD IN NUCLEAR FUEL

Germany will overtake Britain as Europe's leading nuclear energy producer during this decade, according to a Commission answer to a question put in the European Parliament by a French member, Bernard Couste. Couste asked for comparative figures of present and future nuclear capacity in the Community and elsewhere.

Britain now leads in fissile power with 14 nuclear stations yielding 5.6 gigawatts, (GWe), followed by France with 11 stations (2.8 GWe) and Germany (11 stations, 2.3 GWe). Italy has three stations, the Netherlands two and Belgium one. By 1980, the figures should be: Germany, 30 stations (20 GWe); France, 23 stations (13.5 GWe); Britain, 19 stations (11.8 GWe), and Italy, nine stations (6 GWe).

Tentative figures for 1985 show Germany with 46 stations (40 GWe), France with 47 (37 GWe), Britain with 38 (30 GWe), Italy with 21 (18 GWe) and Belgium with nine stations (6.8 GWe). By then, the Netherlands hopes to have six stations, Denmark and Ireland two each. Luxembourg plans to stay with one reactor.

By 1985, the remaining countries in Western Europe hope to have increased nuclear power production from seven stations to 70. The Soviet Union, which currently has nine reactors, plans 25 by 1980. The rest of Eastern Europe should have increased nuclear stations from three to 19 by that year. Comecon country projections for 1985 are not available.

For comparison, the United States currently has 54 reactors producing 32.4 GWe. By 1980, the figures should be 155 and 130 GWe, with 310 stations yielding 300 GWe planned for 1985. Japan's seven reactors should be increased to 40 by 1980 and 65 (60 GWe) by 1985. Canada has six reactors and plans 13 (7.5 GWe) by 1980. Latin America should have five reactors by 1980. Non-Japanese Asia should have 12 reactors.

COMMISSION PROTESTS ARRESTS IN GREECE

The EC Commission said it had learned "with indignation" about recent arrests and deportations in Greece. In a statement issued in Brussels on March 28, the Commission also said that it considered "the present situation in Greece...very far removed from the democratic principles on which the European Community is based." Thus, "the Association Agreement with Greece must continue to be strictly confined to routine business," the Commission concluded.

APPEAL FOR CONTINUED MEAT EXPORTS TO EC

Representatives of Uruguay, Argentina, and Paraguay stressed their need to retain orderly access to the Community beef market in a March 20 meeting with Petrus J. Lardinois, EC Commissioner responsible for agriculture. Any disturbance in meat exports to the Community, the delegation stressed, could cause hardships to Latin American meat industry workers. The South-American delegation, which included representatives of meat industry, was led by the ambassadors to the Community from Argentina and Paraguay and the charge d'affaires of the Uruguayan mission in Brussels.

COMMISSION SUGGESTS RECYCLING USED OIL

A March 20 Commission proposal would ban disposal of used oil in lakes, rivers, and canals throughout the Community.

Some member countries allow the unsupervised disposal of 20-60 per cent of all used oil. This accounts for about 20 per cent of all industrial water pollution. The Commission suggests burning or purifying dirty oil.

The draft directive includes provisions for licensing companies to collect used oil, and for inspection systems.

US FARM EXPORTS TO EC UP 67 PER CENT

US farm exports to the Community hit \$4.5 billion in 1973, a 66 per cent rise over 1972, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

The March 4 issue of Foreign Agriculture reported that grains accounted for most of the increase in US exports to Western Europe. Other gains were noted in exports of soybeans, soybean cake and meal, cotton, meats, turkey parts, and fruit and vegetables.

EIB LAUNCHES DOLLAR ISSUE

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has concluded a contract in Luxembourg for a \$40 million bond issue denominated in dollars. The issue has been underwritten by an international banking syndicate and will be listed on the Luxembourg, Milan, and New York Stock Exchanges. The bonds have a maximum term of 12 years and bear interest at 8.75 per cent payable annually. The EIB will use proceeds of the issue to finance ordinary lending operations.

SEMINAR IN BRUSSELS FOR YOUNG DIPLOMATS

Twenty-five young diplomats from Belgium, Britain, Ireland, and Luxembourg attended a training seminar organized by the EC Commission during the last three weeks in March. The seminar was conducted at the request of the four governments, following a similar seminar for young Belgian diplomats last year. A course for Italian diplomats will be held in Brussels from May 14 to June 14. In future, the Commission plans to organize these seminars on a twice-yearly basis, probably in spring and fall.

COMMISSION PRESENTS 1972 EAGGF FINANCIAL REPORT

The EC Commission's second financial report on 1972 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) expenditures, covering 1972, was sent to the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament this month.

The fund's guidance section

spend 2.44 billion units of account (UA) for export subsidies and price support. (One UA equals \$1.20635 at current rates.) Cereal and dairy sector expenditures amounted to 66 per cent of the total. Of the UA 997 million spent in the cereals sector, UA 616 million went for export subsidies. Dairy expenditures totalled UA 611 million.

The guidance section spent UA 22 million to help finance 723 projects, most of which concerned structural improvements. Since 1964, the guidance section has allocated UA 709 million for 2,932 projects costing a total of UA 3.3 billion.

COMMUNITY DROPS CASES AGAINST MUSIC GROUPS

The Commission has withdrawn "abuse of a dominant position" charges against French and Belgian associations of authors, composers and music publishers, after the two groups agreed to change their rules. The French and Belgian organizations are known as SACEM and SABAM, respectively. Earlier this year, action against a similar German association, the GEMA, was withdrawn after Commission pressure had forced amendments in that group's rules.

The three groups were accused of: discriminating against members from other Community countries, monopolizing their members' world rights, imposing unreasonably long contracts (50 years in the case of the French association), and preventing the creation of a "common market" in music publishing. The groups dropped the restrictive clauses.

INFLATION HASN'T HURT SAVING RATE

Consumers are still saving their money, despite inflation, according to the EC Commission.

Answering a written question from Bernard Couste, Vice President of the European Parliament, the Commission said on March 22 that household income has risen considerably even though money is worth less. Inflation seems to have stimulated investments in dwellings, included in savings statistics, the Commission added.

EC AIRLIFTS MILK TO NIGER

Emergency supplies of powdered milk were airlifted to the Republic of Niger by several EC Member States at the Commission's request. A 305 ton supply of the milk was flown to Niger between March 8 and March 28 in answer to an urgent appeal for European Community aid from Niger's president Diori Hamani. The shipment is part of the 3,200 tons of powdered milk allocated to Niger under the 1974 EC food aid program.

VOCATIONAL CENTER BLUEPRINT READY

A blueprint is ready for a European Vocational Training Center to promote a "European dimension" in this area. Its tasks and organization are outlined in a draft regulation which the Commission sent to the Council of Ministers on March 22.

The Center would be a main means of aligning vocational training standards. It will gather and disseminate information on new developments and research and help to coordinate research.

The Center would be authorized to:

- organize courses, conferences, seminars, and pilot experiments
- conclude research contracts and grant financial aid to researchers or institutes for specific projects
- edit and distribute a Community bulletin on vocational training.

Creation of the Center was one of the priorities set by the Council of Ministers for the first stage of the Community's social action program.

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