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- ** THE EXPERTS OF 15 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (the six Community countries, Great Britain, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland), invited by the Community to prepare the ministerial deliberations with a view to organizing EUROPEAN SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION on the basis of the "Aigrain Report" (see "Research and Technology" No. 46), will hold their first meetings in the presence of experts of the Commission in Brussels on 15-24 April.
- ** On 31 March 1970 there were 41 STUDENT TRAINEES AND 48 SCIENTIFIC GRANT-HOLDERS in the laboratories of the Commission of the European Communities or its associates.
- ** The Commission of the European Communities has asked four highly-placed persons in the Community to draw up, by May, a report on THE ROLE TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE in the general context of the research activities carried on in Community countries, in order that the Centre may contribute fully to the scientific and technological development of the Community. These four persons are Mr Ailleret (Electricité de France), Professor Casimir (Philips), Professor Maier-Leibnitz (Institut Max von Laue - Paul Langevin) and Dr Ruffolo (Banco di Roma).

For further information please apply to the

Commission of the European Communities
Directorate-General for Press and Information
Scientific and Technological Information Service
200, avenue de la Loi
Brussels 4 - Tel. 35 00 40

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** FR&D AND COMPETITION WITHIN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES" is the title of an important international colloquium organized by the European Documentation and Research Centre of the University of Grenoble and CEDECE, with the help of the Commission of the European Communities, to be held at Grenoble on 16-17 April.

The ANNEX summarizes the subjects to be discussed at this colloquium, which will be attended by many European personalities including Mr Hellwig, Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities, and Mr Aigrain, Delegate General for Scientific and Technical Research in France.

** In reply to a written question from Mr Couste, a French member of the European Parliament, the Commission of the European Communities recently confirmed that it has had a COMPARATIVE STUDY carried out on the legislative, regulatory and administrative provisions within the Community relating to THE FIGHT AGAINST WATER POLLUTION. On the basis of the conclusions reached in this study the Commission intends to draw up a programme of work which it will carry out in collaboration with the responsible authorities in the Member States. While welcoming the many initiatives taken in this matter by the Member States and other countries, the Commission is concerned about the need to ensure within the Community ADEQUATE COORDINATION OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS, and to STIMULATE - particularly by active cooperation at European level - the work which must be done in order to guarantee short and long term progress.

** The first preliminary draft of a CONVENTION ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN SYSTEM FOR THE GRANT OF PATENTS has recently been published in the three languages of the Conference (German, English, French).

The first preliminary draft of a CONVENTION ESTABLISHING A EUROPEAN PATENT FOR THE COMMON MARKET has recently been published in the four languages of the European Communities (Dutch, French, German and Italian).

These two publications are on sale at the European Communities Publications Office (37 rue Glesner, Luxembourg).

** In a motion which it has adopted on the future activities of Euratom, the Union of the Industries of the European Community (UNICE) expresses the wish that these activities should be reoriented in line with the present state of development of nuclear techniques and the NEEDS OF THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY. In particular, by a system of industrial promotion and multipurpose research programmes, Euratom should boost those reactor types which are likely to ensure the competitiveness of nuclear power stations. This campaign of encouragement should be accompanied by the formulation of an industrial policy in the nuclear field. Lastly, UNICE desires the maintenance of the joint scientific infrastructure which the establishments of the Joint Nuclear Research Centre represent, and thinks that the Community should continue to perform certain public service tasks.

** EXCHANGES OF RAILWAY ROLLING STOCK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AMOUNT TO LESS THAN 3% of the apparent consumption of Community countries: this emerges from a reply recently given by the Commission of the European Communities to a written question put by Messrs Oele and Vredeling, Dutch members of the European Parliament, on the difficulties encountered by the Netherlands consortium Verenigde Machine Fabrieken/Stork/Werkspoor.

The market in railway rolling stock thus remains largely a national one, mainly owing to the attitude of the railway companies. Generally speaking, and seen from a medium-term angle, it seems that the market is still relatively limited, so that constructors will be obliged to reorganize their means of production in order to ensure the profitability of their activity by sufficiently large production series.

** Replying to a written question put by Mr Vredeling, a Dutch member of the European Parliament, on the proposed establishment of a research centre in Europe by the firm of Westinghouse, the Commission of the European Communities recently stated that the increase in scientific and technical potential and also the international cooperation implied by the creation of such research centres can

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constitute a FACTOR FAVOURING THE COMMUNITY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. In view of the importance of R&D in the development of new techniques and industries and because of the indissoluble link between such centres and the producing industries, the Commission considers that it is also necessary to ENSURE THE MAINTENANCE AND EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY'S OWN INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH FACILITIES, particularly in order to enable Community industry to hold its own and to grow in conditions comparable to those of its major external competitors. The problems raised by the take-over of certain Community firms by concerns in non-member countries should in each case be the subject of CONCERTED STUDY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY in order to arrive at a common attitude.

** Having been consulted in conformity with Article 41 of the Euratom Treaty, the Commission of the European Communities recently handed down a favourable opinion on the construction of the HIGH TEMPERATURE EXPERIMENTAL NUCLEAR POWER PLANT on the Elbe at GEESTHACHT, Germany. While welcoming this project, the Commission regrets that it led to no Community industrial cooperation and earnestly hopes that there will be cooperation at the operational stage between persons and firms within the Community concerned in the development of this type of reactor.

** Almost 300 specialists from the Community and other countries (western and eastern) will attend a meeting on TECHNIQUES AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COKING FIELD to be held at Luxembourg on 23-24 April by the Commission of the European Communities. It is well known that the Community has for some years now been encouraging research in this sector, such research being all the more necessary in view of the tightness of supplies on the coke market.

** The latest issue of EURO-SPECTRA, the scientific and technical review of the European Communities, contains the following articles: "Concrete reactor pressure vessels - 1969 assessment", "A computerized information faces its customers", "Isotope

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generators - a review of the present state of development" and
"A technique for vapour deposition under vacuum".

A free specimen copy of this issue can be obtained on request.

ANNEXConference on"Research, Development and Competition in the European Communities"(Grenoble, 16-17 April 1970)

It is not only in large-scale projects manifestly beyond the resources of the largest European countries that a Community approach is imperative; it is equally necessary at the level of the economic, legal and social conditions that govern more modest research and development activities. In regard to those activities, the primary concern of a consistent scientific and technical policy must be to avoid the difficulties inherent in unduly small markets and the problems liable to be encountered when structures are being altered. Government participation must be of a kind that will promote and assist certain activities or mitigate certain deficiencies.

These are the themes which will be discussed by the participants in the conference international on "Research, Development and Competition in the European Communities" which the European Documentation and Research Centre, Grenoble, aided by the Commission of the European Communities, is to hold at Grenoble on 16-17 April 1970.

The purpose of the conference is in fact to define the relationship between two approaches to the same goal, namely, the best use of the competitive capacity of the technological potential. The aim of the structural approach is to divide up the research and development operations in the most rational manner. The competitive approach has to ensure that this apportionment of R&D tasks cannot be made a pretext and an instrument for closing the national frontiers again; it must likewise facilitate the development of industrial structures capable of meeting the demands of competition which often extends beyond the national and even the Community range.

Hence the first question participants at the conference will be called upon to consider will be a firm's size as a factor in R&D. The optimum size varies according to the nature of the activity; but at the same time, each size has its own scope for action - specialized programmes for the small and medium-sized firms, diversified projects linked to a main theme for the major concerns, and, lastly, R&D work in all fields and efforts in completely new sectors, which are clearly suitable

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only for the very large cross-frontier firms.

The result is that enterprises frequently have to seek the aid of other firms in order to secure the best structures for carrying out their R&D projects. Competition policy can, without deviating from its principal objectives, be adjusted in such a way as to facilitate certain cooperative schemes of this kind.

The conference will also examine the role of intervention by the national and Community authorities in firms' competitive capacity. If the stimuli provided by the governments pull in different directions within the Community, they may distort the conditions of free competition between the Six. Convergence is needed in the various choices and at each level of action - fundamental or applied research; new or traditional sectors; geographical concentration or decentralization. Similarly, as regards the forms of organization, will the government stimuli be directed towards large-scale research centres or numerous highly specialized centres, and will these centres be preferentially public or private?

In the view of Professor Reboud, the author of the introductory report, the conclusion is inescapable: if we are to avoid wastage and cut down the risk of imbalance inside the Community, the only way is by harmonization, and indeed coordination of the research and development policies. To establish a European policy in the scientific field, it is necessary to have a common determination such as can already be found, at all events in embryo form, in certain enterprises operated on a Europe-wide scale.