



WE/2/91

17 January 1991

### THE WEEK IN EUROPE

EC efforts to avoid war in Gulf. As we go to Press allied air attacks on Iraq have begun. An emergency meeting of EC Foreign Ministers was taking place this afternoon (Thursday) in Paris. It was to coincide with a parallel meeting of Ministers belonging to the Western European Union. EC efforts to free Kuwait and to enforce UN resolutions peacefully continued until the last minute. A French peace initiative emerged after EC Foreign Ministers, meeting in Brussels, ruled out a further approach to Iraq's President Saddam Hussein. On his return to Paris from his abortive mission in Baghdad, UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar briefed Jacques Poos, Luxembourg Foreign Minister and current Chairman of the European Community Council. John Major, UK Prime Minister, met President Francois Mitterrand of France in Paris. What emerged from all this political activity including at the UN Headquarters in New York was solid support for UN demands for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

EC warns Moscow over Lithuania repression. EC Foreign Ministers meeting in Brussels on Monday warned that continued violence by Soviet troops in the Baltic Republics could lead to an immediate end to cooperation and the suspension of EC economic aid. The Soviet leadership was told that technical aid worth 400m ecus (£280m) would be at risk if it continued to use force rather than negotiations in Lithuania. Jacques Poos appealed to the Soviet Union to "return to the path of dialogue" with the Baltic and other Soviet Republics. At the same time Commission President Jacques Delors delivered a combined protest and warning to the Soviet Ambassador to the Community, saying the first casualty of any continued Soviet crackdown would be technical aid and a meeting between EC and Soviet officials to discuss it, set for 24 January. Last month the EC agreed on the programme of technical assistance for this year as well as up to 750m ecus (£500m) in food aid (one third in the form of grant, and two thirds in credit). Jacques Poos said of the Vilnius violence that it had "evoked memories of Budapest and Prague, though the situation was not exactly the same and more complex."

Papandreou on Social Charter. Speaking in London on Monday before meeting UK Secretary of State for Employment Michael Howard, Commissioner Vasso Papandreou, responsible for Social Affairs, said social cohesion of the European Internal Market could be placed in jeopardy by a continued negative stance by the UK over measures within the Social Charter. "The economic benefits of the Internal Market can only be fully assured if the social dimension of this market is taken into consideration", she told an Industrial Society conference on European Employment. Papandreou supported the idea that social issues did not need the support of all member countries. Some required only qualified support, but a number of key developments - including directives on part-time working - required unanimous support, she said. In a letter published in The Times today, Howard said the UK had not blocked any proposals under the EC's Social Action Programme. The UK Government would continue to take an active, constructive part in the discussions, he said.

Brittan on competition and the EC. Speaking at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, USA, on Monday Commission Vice-President Sir Leon Brittan stressed the importance of competition policy in the development of EC markets and in relations with the United States. EC competition policy had been in the Rome Treaty from the beginning. He went on to say that competition policy will always be needed in imperfect markets. There should be no rivalry between the EC and the USA in competition policy, he said. The Community was committed to the maintenance of open, competitive markets and had shown in implementing its 1992 programme that it favours liberalisation of competition both internally and externally.

Copyright and piracy. In the light of new technologies which have emerged in the course of the 1980s, the Commission has once again been considering the complex field of copyright and "neighbouring" rights. These comprise the copyright-related rights held by people such as performers, record producers and radio and TV broadcasting organisations. On the initiative of Vice-President Martin Bangemann and Commissioner Jean Dondelinger, the Commission has just approved a package of proposals for submission to the Member States. The package takes the shape of a working programme for action from now to the end of 1992.

Bruce Millan in Leeds. Regional Policy Commissioner Bruce Millan visits Leeds tomorrow (Friday) at the invitation of the City Council. The Commissioner will fly directly from Brussels to Leeds airport to spend the day in the region looking particularly at problems of the inner city.

SPUR. The Commission has decided to approve the British state aid scheme entitled SPUR (Support for Products Under Research). This regime provides for contributions for R & D projects put forward by enterprises with fewer than 500 employees. Aid intensity is 25% of the eligible costs to a maximum of £150,000. Total UK budget for the programme is £16m.

Brittan speaks on GATT talks. As efforts continue to restart GATT talks which broke down before Christmas Sir Leon Brittan said in Washington DC on Tuesday he was convinced that the European offer on agriculture represented a basis upon which it should be possible to forge a compromise. This would accelerate the fundamental restructuring of the Common Agricultural Policy which was already under way. A failure of the GATT round would not only be a tragedy for both Europe and the USA because we would lose a unique opportunity to strength and extend the liberal world trading system, he said. But also because it would set back the cause of agricultural reform in Europe to which he was personally committed and to which the United States attached such importance.

European Environmental Yearbook 1991. 2nd edition. 1,100 pages. £60 p&p £3.15. From Docter International UK Ltd, 27 Kensington Court, London W8 5DN. Contact Colinette Craig. Tel: 071 937 3535. Fax: 071 937 1639.

"Social Work, Education and 1992". Author Hugh Barr. The UK social work profession is urged to prepare for some of the consequences of the EC Directive on Higher Education Diplomas and the proposed Directive covering other professions aimed at securing greater mobility between Member States in this new paper from the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work. Price £3.00 post free. Available from CCETSW Central office, Derbyshire House, St. Chad's Street. London WC1H 8AD. Contact George Smith on 071 278 2455 ext. 348.

European Affairs Coordinator. The Building Employers Confederation is looking for one. Applications forms from Lynne Elliott, Building Employers Confederation, 82 New Cavendish Street, London W1M 8AD. Tel 071 580 5588.

Building a Citizens' Europe. Seminar organised by the European Commission next Monday (21 January) to publicise our Citizens' Europe Advisory Service; venue 8 Storey's Gate, London SW1 at 10.30am. Admission free.

A consensus conference for nurses, organised by the European Oncology Nursing Society (EONS) and supported by the Europe Against Cancer programme, will be held in Kensington Town Hall, London 23-25 January 1991. Aim of the conference: to gain consensus agreement on the content and implementation in all Member States of a core curriculum for the training of nurses in oncology. Participants will include cancer nursing experts and educators from throughout the Community, professional nursing bodies and representatives from the European Commission. Further information contact: Phylip Pritchard 071 376 3623.

New Directions after the Uruguay Round. Seminar organised by the European Centre for Public Affairs at Wiston House, West Sussex, 20 - 22 February. Details from Adrienne Pratt, Administrator ECPA, Templeton College, Oxford OX1 5NY. Tel 0865 735 422. Fax 0865 736 374.

Vision for London Conference. European experts will present papers and lead six workshops on the main themes from the EC's Green Paper on the Urban Environment. Key-speech by Environment Commissioner Carlo Ripa di Meana. Venue - Church House, Dean's Yard, London SW1 - 14 March. Details from Judy Monahan - Tel: 071-829 8349.

Conference and Diary Dates.

Agricultural Council	21-22 January	Brussels
European Parliament Session	21-25 January	Strasbourg
ECO/FIN Council	28 January	Brussels
General Affairs Council	4-5 February	Brussels

Our next briefing will take place on Thursday, 24 January at 11.30 am.