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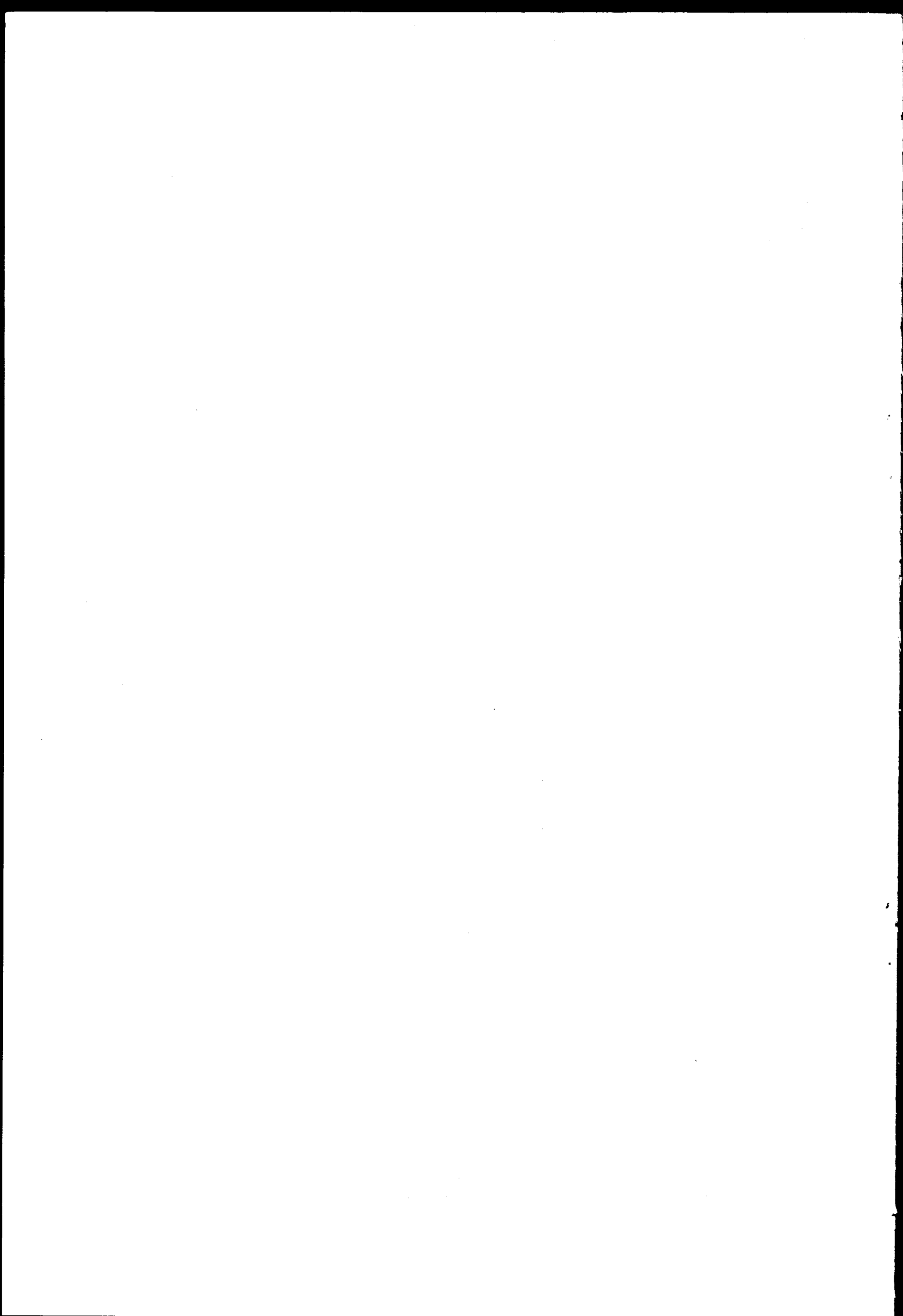
SECOND REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

on the progress required in Community research and on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 89/74) for the revision of the multiannual research programme

Rapporteur: Mr G. FLÄMIG

PE 37.139/fin.



By letter of 7 May 1974 the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for the revision of the multiannual research programme.

On 13 May 1974 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology as the committee responsible and the Committee on Budgets and, on 6 June 1974, the Committee on Public Health and the Environment for their opinions.

On 24 May 1974, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology decided to ask Mr Flämig, who had been appointed rapporteur on progress required in Community research on 17 May 1973, to prepare a second report, at the same time as the opinion on revision of the multiannual research programme for 1974, as part of this work and further to his interim report of 13 November 1973 (Doc. 219/73).

It considered this draft second report on 17 and 24 June 1974 and on the latter date unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement with two abstentions.

The following were present: Mr Springorum, chairman; Mr Leonardi, vice-chairman; Mr Flämig, rapporteur; Mr Burgbacher, Mr Covelli, Mr Delmotte (deputizing for Mr Kater), Mr Giraud, Mr Jakobsen, Mr Krall, Mr Lagorce, Mr Lautenschlager, Mr Memmel, Mr Willi Müller, Mr Noè, Mr Normanton, Mr Nørgaard, Mr Petersen, Mr Pintat, Mr Schmidt (deputizing for Mr Van der Hek), Mr Van de Wiele and Mr Vetrone (deputizing for Mr Andreotti).

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached. The opinion of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment will be distributed separately.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
A. MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION.....	5
B. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	7
I. Introduction	
II. Proposed revisions	
III. Appraisal of the proposed revisions	
IV. Conclusions	
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS	13

The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for the revision of the multiannual research programme.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for the revision of the multiannual research programme (COM(74) 500),
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 89/74),
 - having regard to former resolutions on research activities and in particular
 - the future of the Joint Research Centre and the establishment of a multiannual research and training programme¹,
 - the proposals for the environmental action programme of the European Communities together with draft measures in this field², particularly paragraph 7 thereof,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and the opinions of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment and the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 161/74),
1. Welcomes the proposals for the revision of the multiannual research programme, particularly with regard to research activities in the EEC, since they represent a contribution to the progress required in the research sector;
 2. Notes, however, that it was not consulted early enough and as a result once again suffered from a shortage of time even though the Council and Commission, knowing the deadlines, could have acted differently;

¹ OJ No C 112 of 27 October 1972, p.19

² OJ No C 62 of 31 July 1973, p.16

3. Disapproves of the confused and unmethodical way in which the document was compiled, resulting in an unusual degree of difficulty in examining the political implications of the projects, and urges the Commission to draw up its 1975 revision proposals more clearly and to submit them in good time;
4. Approves, subject to material and political reservations, the Commission's proposals without amendment only because it does not want in any way to hinder the Community research that it has repeatedly called for;
5. Reserves the right, therefore, in view of the circumstances under which it was consulted to subject the Commission's proposals to a closer subsequent examination and to state its conclusions in another motion for a resolution in which it will enumerate its wishes in respect of the second revision of the multiannual research programme;
6. Draws the attention of the institutions of the Community responsible for consultation to the fact that they must bear the consequences if at the time of the next revision of the research programme Parliament should again be faced with a shortage of time;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution and the report of its committee to the Council and Commission of the European Communities.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT1. Introduction

1. The four-year programme for the Joint Research Centre with its four establishments at Ispra, Geel, Karlsruhe and Petten was adopted by the Council in two stages on 14 May and 18 June 1973.¹

Provision was made for annual revision, with all the programmes to be revised for the first time at the beginning of the second year, i.e. 1974.

2. In addition, in February 1973 the Council rejected the Commission's proposal that the Petten establishment should be closed. The European Parliament had also expressed its disapproval of the suggested closure of this establishment by calling on the Commission to avoid any measures in the proposal it was expected to make shortly for a multiannual research programme which would have deprived Member States of existing Community research establishments, in that such a measure would only have favoured the politically undesirable centralization of research.²

3. Finally, on 14 January 1974 the Council adopted a resolution on an initial outline programme of the European Communities in the field of science and technology,³ in which it undertook to take a decision within nine months of the submission of appropriate proposals by the Commission. This EEC-oriented programme is governed by Article 235 of the EEC Treaty. In its resolution of 15 November 1973 Parliament, acting on a report by Mr Flämig (Doc. 219/73), approved this proposal (Doc. 166/73).⁴

¹See OJ No L 153 of 9 June 1973, pp. 1 ff and No L 189 of 11 June 1973, pp. 30 ff.

²See paragraph 7 (d) of the resolution on the future of the Joint Research Centre and the establishment of a multiannual research and training programme of 10 October 1972, OJ No C 112 of 27 October 1972, p. 19.

³OJ No C 7 of 29 January 1974, p. 6

⁴OJ No C 108 of 10 October, 1973, p. 58

4. The Commission has now submitted its proposals for the revision of the multiannual programme of the Joint Research Centre, including measures for improved utilization of the Petten establishment, which was one of the principal objects of the resolution of 10 October 1972. In this connection, the Commission's document contains proposals for the implementation of the abovementioned Council resolution of 14 January 1974.

5. There must of course be criticism of the fact that this proposal was submitted at a relatively late date, since the Commission was obviously attempting to make up for time lost by allowing Parliament virtually no time for deliberation. Whilst making every possible allowance for the situation, Parliament must - and not for the first time - reject the idea that its consideration of a document is merely a formality. On the other hand, this committee does not wish to obstruct the revision, which it regards as a contribution to the progress required in the sphere of research policy. In its consideration of the proposal it must therefore reserve the right to keep an internal record of deficiencies and improvements required and to draw attention to these in an appropriate manner in a second supplementary report, when indicating its wishes for the second revision to be made in 1975.

II Proposed revisions

6. The implementation of a long-term research and development policy must find expression in the establishment of programmes forming a coherent whole and in line with the Community's objectives. As the underlying circumstances are subject to constant change and the basis for the revision of these programmes can only be derived from experience gained during implementation, the principle of periodic proposals for revision is justified. It is now being applied for the first time.

7. In Doc. 89/74 the Commission has submitted the following six draft legal acts of the Council (see Annex XII of the English version of COM(74) 500 final):

- (a) a proposal for a Council decision amending the research and training programme for the EAEC, based on Article 7 of the EAEC Treaty, with effect from 1 July 1974 and comprising funds of up to 38.145 m. u.a. and a staff complement of 412 officials;
- (b) a proposal for a Council decision adopting a research programme for the EEC, based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, applicable from 1 July 1974 to 31 December 1976 and comprising funds of up to 4.75 m. u.a. and a staff complement of 72 officials;
- (c) a proposal for a Council decision amending the research programme of the EEC in the remote sensing of the earth's resources, based on Articles 41 and 235 of the EEC Treaty, with effect from 1 July 1974 and comprising

funds of up to 1.8 m. u.a. and a staff complement of 19 officials;

- (d) a proposal for a Council decision revising the staff required for the implementation of the research programmes of the EEC and the EAEC (direct action) adopted by the Council on 14 May and 18 June 1973, based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty and Article 7 of the EAEC Treaty, under which the staff complement would be increased from 880 to 1,836 officials. This would also entail the recruitment of 108 full-time established staff at present in the service of undertakings contractually bound to the Community, for the implementation of the abovementioned programmes;
- (e) a proposal for a Council decision amending the upper limits for amounts to be allocated to the EAEC and EEC research programmes adopted by the Council decisions of 14 May and 18 June 1973, based on Articles 7 and 176 of the EAEC Treaty and Article 235 of the EEC Treaty; the maximum amounts for expenditure commitments fixed in the Council decisions of 14 May and 18 June 1973 will be increased by an overall reserve of 21.2 m.u.a.;
- (f) a proposal for a Council decision amending the EEC research programme on the protection of the environment (indirect action), based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty and taking effect on 1 May 1974. Expenditure commitments of up to 6.3 m.u.a. and a staff complement of 8 officials will be required;

Details of the implementation of these Council decisions are contained in 11 annexes which precede the Council decisions. A second volume consists of an annex containing basic decisions taken by the Council in 1973, as well as 14 other annexes dealing with various programme items with details of the proposed revision. The whole document is somewhat difficult to follow for the uninitiated.

III. Appraisal of the proposed revisions

8. The political aspects are bound to dominate our appraisal of these proposals, with the technical side receiving relatively little attention. This has been emphasized by your committee on many previous occasions. In the circumstances it is somewhat difficult to follow the structure of the important basic document, having to wade through the various programme items before coming to the proposals for the legal acts. The Commission is therefore asked to arrange its proposals for revision in such a way as to facilitate understanding by politicians who do not possess expert knowledge of the subject.

9. Of the six proposed legal acts only the first is exclusively concerned with the EAEC. The second, third and sixth refer only to the EEC and thus, in application of Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, to the Council resolution of 14 January 1974. The fourth and fifth proposals concern both the revision of the EAEC programme and research projects under the EEC Treaty on which decisions have already been taken as well as others that are now being implemented.

10. The amendments to the EAEC multiannual research programme concern direct actions connected with waste processing and storage, reactor safety, training, closing down of the Ispra-1 reactor with the transfer of the Euracos convertor to the University of Pavia and the installation of a pneumatic irradiation facility in the ESSOR reactor, research in the fields of chemistry, kinetics, materials and chemical process engineering in relation to hydrogen production, and finally the continuation of research into thermonuclear fusion.

All this work is to be done at Ispra and is also to include, under the heading of 'training', technical and post-graduate courses and a summer school in physics as of 1975.

11. The EEC research programme comprises scientific and technical support for the Commission in the administration of the customs union and studies on raw materials derived from coal.

The first-mentioned activity concerns classification problems connected with the Common Customs Tariff, the approximation of methods of analysis and control used by customs laboratories, appropriate training of the staff concerned and also appropriate support for developing countries.

The second activity concerns the utilization of coal as a raw material; the question arises whether the ECSC Treaty, and in particular Article 55(1) thereof, could not have formed a legal basis for this project, even if the increase in coal consumption would only have been minimal. As can be seen from Article 3 of the proposal, these activities are to be carried out at the Petten establishment.

12. The programme on the remote sensing of the earth's resources may be of great importance for the future, especially if deposits of raw materials and in particular of sources of energy should be discovered on Community territory.

13. The proposals amending the staff complement and upper limits of expenditure follow on logically from the adoption of the preceding programmes. The adoption of the proposal to change the staff complement might help to solve the problem of the workers on temporary contracts at Ispra, which has long had a detrimental effect on the atmosphere there. During an on-the-spot visit the committee became convinced of the urgency of a solution.

14. Finally, the proposal for a Council decision amending the EEC research programme on environmental protection constitutes an appropriate adjustment following the Council decision of 18 July 1973, with due regard for Parliament's resolution of 3 July 1973 on the proposals for the environmental action programme¹. The amendments concern the establishment of a data bank on chemicals likely to contaminate the environment, the toxicity of lead, epidemiological surveys of the effects of air and water pollution, the effects of micropollutants on man, research into the ecological effects of water pollutants and the remote detection of air pollution. All these actions will be indirect, the surveys and laboratory work being contracted out.

15. This Council decision is to come into force with retroactive effect from 1 May 1974. The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, which has only limited competence for environmental protection, first saw this document in three of the official languages in Ispra on 6 May and could not express an opinion at that meeting, at which other items were on the agenda. It was not able to discuss the contents until its meeting of 24 May 1974.

16. In the circumstances, your committee must draw the attention of the Council and Commission to paragraph 7 of the abovementioned resolution of 3 July 1973, which was moved by the Committee on Public Health and the Environment. This deals with the procedure for examining the environmental action programme and reads as follows:

'Explicitly reserves its final opinion on the implementing provisions and expects the Council to consult it on time in each case in order to avoid having to deliver its opinion under pressure of time';

We have been bitterly disappointed in this expectation. Reference is further made to the opinion of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment on this subject which is attached to the report; pressure of time did not, however, allow it to be fully incorporated in it.

17. The lack of clarity in the structure of the document under discussion has already been criticized. It is strange indeed to find one of the most important consequences of the proposed measures, namely new activities of the Petten establishment, relegated to Annex X of the volume of Annexes.

However, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology notes with satisfaction the allocation of the implementation of the direct EEC research programme to the Petten establishment, which is a step in the right direction. It assumes that, as stated in Annex X of the volume of Annexes (New activities of the Petten establishment), the number of staff on 31 December 1972, i.e. 160, will be considered as the minimum which can ensure the effective overall operation of the establishment.

¹ OJ No. C 62 of 31 July 1973, p.16; see also report by Mr Jahn (Doc. 106/73)

18. The committee would not, however, agree to this minimum becoming a maximum figure. It sets great store by not only the maintenance of the Petten establishment but also an increase in its activities and expects the Commission to allocate further projects to it at the latest within the framework of a second revision of the multiannual research programme.

19. Finally, the committee wishes to point out that it regards the attached opinion of the Committee on Budgets as a part of its own report. It has refrained from incorporating details of that opinion in its report simply to meet the Commission's request for speedy adoption. It must, however, stress that neither the Commission nor the Council can expect us to be as accommodating if such haste is again requested at the time of the second revision of the multiannual research programme. The institution responsible is asked to note now that it would have to bear the consequences of any such situation.

IV. Conclusions

20. Subject to the above remarks, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology approves the proposals for six Council decisions because it does not wish to bear responsibility for delay of any kind in the resumption of Community research following so many obstacles.

21. Approval does not, however, imply agreement with the manner in which Parliament has been consulted. The committee objects to the method of seeking retroactive approval of a research programme where there is no need for this. The Commission is aware that the European Parliament will give every possible support to the Commission's research projects. It should take account of this with regard to procedural matters in the future.

22. Approval of the six proposals does not therefore mean that no improvement is needed. The committee explicitly reserves its final opinion in this regard. It will present this in a supplementary report on the four-year research programme as the basis for progress required in Community research early enough for it to be considered by the Commission during the second revision of the multiannual research programme due in 1975.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Draftsman: Mr A. TERRENOIRE

At its meeting of 19 June 1974 the Committee on Budgets appointed Mr TERRENOIRE draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 2 July 1974 and adopted it unanimously with one abstention.

The following were present: Mr Durand, acting chairman, Mr Terrenoire, draftsman, Mr Fabbrini, Mr Maigaard, Mr de la Malène, Mr Petre, Mr Pounder, Mr Radoux, Sir Brandon Rhys-Williams and Mr Schmidt.

INTRODUCTION

1. The vital importance of energy to the well-being of the Community was highlighted by the crisis which arose over the past year because of the increase in the price of hydrocarbon oils. This development in regard to a prime source of energy has added appreciably to the significance of research into the other sources of energy - notably the new and growing sphere of nuclear power. Member States are giving greater attention to the practical use of nuclear energy and, during recent months, there have been announcements which indicate far wider future use of nuclear energy in the production of electricity. The rising cost and scarcity of raw materials give a new impetus also to the study of carbon technology.
2. These factors have added to the importance of ensuring that the research programme is of maximum benefit to the Community because study in this broad area - long recognized as being valuable from the aspect of evolution of science and technology in Europe - is now of real practical significance to industrial development, growth prospects and the general welfare of the population as a whole.
3. It is desirable, too, that the Community should be in a sufficiently advanced position in this technological field to be able to assist developing countries, whose energy needs are vast and growing, to utilize the results of nuclear research for peaceful purposes, over the years ahead. This potential would be enhanced if the programme for the Joint Research Centre and its establishments is kept under constant review so that most promising lines of research are pursued and apparently less practical ones are abandoned.
4. In reviewing a research programme of the kind now under consideration, the main criteria to be applied are of a highly technical nature. Because of the importance attaching to the factors outlined in the paragraphs above, the more traditional budgeting approach does not lend itself to being applied to arrive at a determining assessment of the case. Of course, this is not to say that discriminating care must not be taken to ensure selection of the most viable schemes and economical use of available resources.
5. A further consideration is the need for research into safety and environmental factors which take on a new importance in view of the increasing movement and use of radioactive material, the problem of disposal

of dangerous waste and the density of population of Member States which puts more people in risk of contamination.

Technical nature of proposals

6. The highly technical nature of the proposal under consideration is brought out, for instance, by two comments in regard to particular points in the document. The opinion of the General Advisory Committee of the J R C (13 March 1974) stated that the Committee "feels that it needs more information on solar energy and therefore recommends that an ad hoc meeting be held of experts from all circles concerned in the Community in order to formulate a technical opinion on the JRC's proposals". The Scientific and Technical Committee, in their Opinion drafted following meetings on 27 February and 29 March 1974, stated in their general comment that they wish "to be informed as quickly as possible of the conclusions reached by the group of experts which is to examine the promotion of a concerted policy for recycling on a Community scale". These quotations are indicative of the complex nature of points touched on in the proposal.

Draftsman's approach to the proposal

7. The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology examined and appraised the proposed revisions and, subject to the reservations set out in Mr Flämig's report of 5 July 1974 (PE 37.139), has approved them. In view of (i) the position adopted by the Committee primarily concerned with energy, (ii) the general considerations outlined in paragraphs 1 - 6 above, and (iii) the extreme pressure on his time resulting from the late arrival of the proposal from the Commission, your Draftsman will confine himself to making observations on certain salient points.

Layout of the proposal

8. Your Draftsman feels compelled to comment on the exceedingly complicated layout of the proposal. He fully appreciates the technical nature of the considerations but is convinced that this should not rule out a more lucid presentation. Indeed, in preparing a highly technical document, a special effort should be made to present the issues involved as clearly as possible for the uninitiated. In glancing through different versions of the proposal, your Draftsman noted a transposition of totals (Ispra Establishment Annex XI) which added to his difficulties in attempting a

rapid gauging of the possible range of budget choices. Your Draftsman protests that the format of the document simply does not allow him to reach a rapid and comprehensive budget view of the different courses that might be pursued.

General Comments

9. The introductory note states that "it was decided by the Director-General of the JRC, in order to reduce the financial deficit as far as possible, to keep the JRC below establishment, in addition to a number of economy measures, in particular by deferring recruitment of nationals from the new Member States". Your Draftsman wonders whether (i) this staff curtailment had any adverse repercussions on the economic execution of operations, and (ii) the authorities in the States concerned were involved in the arrangement.

10. In regard to the fusion reactors programme, the reference to JRC collaboration with the study groups on reactor design is to be welcomed. The fullest cooperation with all other industrial and research interests is essential if maximum benefit is to be drawn from the Community's efforts in this field which promises to be of major future importance.

11. It is disappointing to read in Annex IV of the document, dealing with the remote-sensing programme, of the lack of progress with the ERTS-B satellite which resulted in data having to be obtained by balloon or aircraft. One is also struck by the prominence given to research and survey work involving rice, poplar plantations and beech-forests. While rice is a crop of some significance in Italy, one wonders whether the work on poplar and beech is a particularly meaningful exercise in the European context where other techniques could be applied to the relatively inextensive stands of these trees; have these exercises a special training value, is a practical application envisaged or is there an element of potential aid to developing countries intended?

12. The training activities outlined at Annex V, Part III, do not appear to be excessive, while filling a very useful role. Your Draftsman would like to establish, however, whether the construction of the lecture hall is included with the other modifications of building and facilities in the estimate of 70,000 u.a.

13. Your Draftsman is pleased to note that there is a readiness to admit, as in Annex VII, that certain studies are of doubtful value and that these are to be abandoned.

14. Your Draftsman hesitates over the numerous activities of the Petten establishment, outlined at Proposal 1 of Annex VIII, which stem, in part, from "the especially extensive requirements of the Administration of the Customs Union Department". Could it be that this additional outlay is caused by an over-elaborate bureaucratic approach by the department in question? While it is all very well to point to the Common Customs Tariff as a complicating factor, the possibility of simplification here should be explored. Active cooperation between the Commission and the competent authorities in Member States could help to make the situation less involved and save taxpayers money.

15. The future activities outlined under proposal No. II of Annex VIII are recommended as ideally suitable fields of Community activity. In these days when scarcity of raw materials is becoming more evident and costs are rising rapidly, projects such as studies on the raw materials derived from coal are of major importance and could produce really worthwhile results.

Cooperation with services of Member States

16. As already suggested at paragraph 10 above, your Draftsman recommends that, in carrying out the research work envisaged, every effort be made to involve all interested firms and organizations in the Community so as to maximize benefits, avoid overlapping work and reduce outlay.

Report of the Audit Board

17. In the most recent report of the Audit Board - that covering the financial year 1972 - a number of criticisms were made, in the part dealing with research and investment, regarding delays in the transmission of supporting documents, the lack of information on the criteria applied for the secondary charging, complications caused by hundreds of transfers of appropriations and other difficulties. The Commission in its reply took up the various queries with commendable thoroughness. However, it is not at all clear that the various points of difference have been fully resolved; therefore, it would appear desirable - and your Draftsman so recommends - that special attention be paid to the implementation of the operational budget and the charging of expenditure in this general sphere, in the context of the 1972 discharge decision.

CONCLUSIONS

18. Your Draftsman protests at the inadequate time-span available for the consideration of this important proposal. It is most inappropriate that

Parliament and its Committees should be faced with excessively short deadlines for clearing important and complicated documents. The Commission should be advised of the need for more timely consultation, in future, for similar documents.

19. Your Draftsman also considers that the proposal, which is commendable in many respects since it represents justifiable revisions of earlier outlines and deals with areas that have recently acquired heightened importance for the Community, could have been set out more lucidly with budgetary choices more clearly indicated.

20. The complicated nature of some of the sections of the proposal can be appreciated from the quotations at paragraph 6 above. Your Draftsman therefore considers that a detailed analysis of all its aspects is not within the compass of this Committee; he considers, however, that clarification should be sought on the points raised in earlier paragraphs and that the need for the extensive work in relation to the Administration of the Customs Union should be queried. He also recommends a careful examination, later this year in the context of the report of the Audit Board, of the accounting procedures used in connection with the research programme.