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1. SUMMARY OF THE ADDRESS BY MR ROY JENKINS, PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION, PRESENTING THE COMMISSION'S PROGRAMME FOR 1978 TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN STRASBOURG ON 14 FEBRUARY 1978

The economy: launching sectors of growth

Outlining the Commission's programme for 1978 to the European Parliament, Mr Jenkins stressed that the greatest problem now facing the Community was the state of the economy. In the shorter term, action was needed to sustain industries which were no longer fully competitive or no longer fulfilled their original purposes (steel, textiles, footwear and shipbuilding). In the longer term, in order to promote economic recovery and provide employment, the Community must launch sectors of growth by speeding up technological development in Community ventures in the fields of aerospace, data processing, electronics components and telecommunications. At the same time, it had to be recognized that the attempt to restore competitiveness to declining industries would not, in itself, or in the short term, resolve the problem of the 6.5 million currently unemployed in the Community and the 9 million young people who would join the labour force between now and 1985. "No national government offers, in my view, a long-term solution", stated Mr Jenkins, "and this in itself is a hindrance to any general economic revival. Our need is for a new economic impulse on a historic scale, and we believe that this can be given in the Community by a redefined and faster move towards economic and monetary union". "We should not", he added, "allow ourselves to be deluded by temporary economic improvements in some Member States into believing that a fundamental economic turn-round was, for the Community as a whole, simply a matter of time: in the meantime, a great many European citizens would find themselves jobless."

Energy: economy measures and new resources

In the field of energy policy, the Community's objectives for 1985 should, Mr Jenkins said, be a reduction of oil imports, more energy saving, and the development of internal sources of oil, gas and coal. In addition, he felt that there was good scope for a Community lead in the field of new energy sources - such as solar, geothermal and wind and wave power.

Agriculture: reducing of surpluses

The Community had, the President of the Commission said, still not succeeded in mastering the problem of surpluses. For several important products the long-term supply trends were still tending to move ahead of demand. This was not because the mechanisms of the common agricultural policy were at fault: it was rather because the price levels at which the mechanisms were operated had been imprudent. The policy of proposing only modest increases in the common prices would be continued for as long as proved necessary to check the surpluses. This was the only policy which could avoid the introduction of even harsher measures to bring excess production under control, or

ultimately the disintegration of the common policy itself.

In the fisheries sector, catches would have to be limited and strict conservation rules adopted. The adoption of the Commission's proposals in this field would require political courage, but the Community had the right to demand that courage.

The developing world: eliminating inequalities

The Community could not, Mr Jenkins said, allow its relations with the developing world to be falsified by any historical hangover of an approach of inequality. The industrialized countries would have to reconsider their relations with the rest of the world with a view to achieving a more equitable international division of labour and resources at a time of growing industrial development in the Third World.

Enlargement

Mr Jenkins felt that 1978 would be a crucial year for the enlargement of the Community. The aim should be to break the back of the negotiations with Greece by the end of the year. The Commission's opinion on Portugal's application should be ready by the end of March and the opinion on the Spanish application could be expected at the beginning of 1979. It was clear from this timetable that the phases of the negotiations with the three applicant countries would not be concurrent and, indeed, it was accepted that the negotiations should not be lumped together. But inevitably, similar problems affecting all three would arise. The Commission would be bringing forward ideas on these questions at the time of the presentation of the Opinion on Portugal, that is by the end of March.

Direct elections to the European Parliament

The campaign for the first direct elections to the European Parliament would, Mr Jenkins said, begin within the next twelve months. He expressed the hope that the election would be fought around the themes of the Commission's programme for 1978: the need for a breakthrough in industry and for progress towards economic and monetary union; a bold but realistic energy policy; the reduction of agricultural surpluses; justice for the Third World; preparations for enlargement. In his view the Community existed precisely to deal with problems such as these, which could best be tackled by all the Member States together.

The European reflex

Whilst admitting that there was sometimes tension between the Community institutions, Mr Jenkins felt that their relations were more often those of mutual reliance, mutual need and respect for each other's independence and competence. Recognition of that reliance, that need and that respect should, he thought, become a kind of mental reflex when problems of more than national scope arose. He hoped that this European reflex would extend not only to Governments, administrations

and parliaments, but to the citizens of the Community.

2. COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR AN ECONOMIC AND MONETARY ACTION PROGRAMME FOR 1978

1. Background

The Commission presented a communication to the European Council meeting on 5 and 6 December 1977 outlining the prospects for economic and monetary union. The Heads of Government reacted favourably to the communication, which contained proposals for a five-year economic and monetary action programme; the details would be fixed annually and regular checks would be made at the highest political level to ensure that the programme was implemented. The paper just approved by the Commission presents the broad lines of the programme for 1978.

These broad lines constitute an overall plan of action for the different sectors in the coming year (economic and monetary policy, customs administration, social, regional and structural policy, energy, etc) aimed at paving the way for economic and monetary union while at the same time attempting to come up with lasting solutions to the European economic crisis.

2. Basic guidelines

The Commission intends to launch an attack on three main fronts:

- increased convergence of economies and economic policies;
- progress in the creation of a single competitive market;
- development of Community structural and social policies.

Increased convergence of economic policies is a prerequisite of progress towards European integration. In view of the present degree of economic interdependence, any solution on the price, economic growth and employment fronts in one Member State is closely tied up with the action taken by its neighbours. With this in mind, the coordination of short-term economic policies must take on a new dimension, to become more realistic in practice and wider in application.

The Commission will therefore concentrate on working towards a closer coordination of monetary and budgetary policies and the re-establishment of monetary cohesion within the Community.

With regard to the achievement of a single Community market - a step towards integration, a growth factor and a guarantee against the temptations of protectionism - the Commission trusts that in the year ahead the Council will reflect the political will expressed at the last European Council by adopting a number of important proposals now before it, particularly those relating to tax harmonization, the elimination of technical barriers to trade and the opening of public contracts to competitive bidding.

In order to promote the free movement of goods within the Community, steps should be taken in the course of the year to encourage greater harmonization of customs regulations in respect of both internal and external Community trade.

The Commission will also endeavour in the months ahead to improve the quality of sectoral information in an attempt to obtain early warning of crisis symptoms and hence be able to define more clearly the action to be taken in this or that industry. It also intends to pursue its policy of concerted action with the national authorities to remedy existing structural problems, determine prospects for the development of the Community economy in the priority areas - e.g. growth sectors and energy - and ensure that the necessary investment programmes are carried out.

3. Methods

The 1978 action programme proposed by the Commission represents the first annual programme under the five-year plan presented to the European Council last December. It will be submitted for approval to the various Council meetings concerned [Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs, Agriculture, Economic and Financial Affairs, Energy, etc.].

The programme as a whole constitutes a coherent framework for action by the Member States and the Community to support the economy, deal with structural problems and lead Europe out of the current crisis.

It also constitutes the foundation on which to build a genuine economic and monetary union, to be constructed as progress is made in the different fields.

If this programme is to be implemented satisfactorily, it must be monitored throughout and given effective political backing; in addition, the European Council should carry out a review at the end of each year. Close cooperation with both sides of industry will also be required.

3. PAPER ON WORK-SHARING PRESENTED TO THE PRESS IN BRUSSELS ON 16 FEBRUARY 1978 BY MR H. VREDELING, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION

As part of the campaign against the prolonged underemployment in the Community the Commission has approved a working paper on work-sharing intended for the Standing Committee on Employment.

This document is one of a number of tasks recommended by the Tripartite Conference of June 1977 as part of the campaign against unemployment. These tasks also include the following:

- studying problems connected with the international environment, the relationship between investment and employment, and opportunities for creating jobs in the tertiary sector

(private and public)

- promoting special measures on employment, particularly on behalf of young people, and encouraging the development of active labour market policies.

The document on work-sharing will be examined by the Standing Committee on Employment at its meeting in March 1978. The other topics will be dealt with during the first half of the year by the Standing Committee on Employment or the Economic Policy Committee.

The Commission drafted its contribution on work-sharing after having contacted both sides of industry.

The present economic and social situation is marked by a considerable weakening in the Community's demand for labour. The number of unemployed persons has remained at around 5 to 6 million for two years. The shortage of jobs is also caused by the population situation. The number of people of working age increases by about one million each year and in some countries the numbers of those retiring are dropping considerably, though these trends will be reversed by about 1985. Furthermore, the number of women working is increasing steadily. Thus, the working population will continue to increase for 7 or 8 years, thereby creating new and difficult problems for the Community and the Member States. The measures planned to deal with this should include those designed to improve the way in which work is shared amongst the working population.

The Commission considers that a period of limited economic growth is no pretext for failing to make improvements in social policy. But this improvement demands greater solidarity between the two sides of industry and the Governments; it also means that each of the parties concerned must make its contribution towards solving the difficulties currently facing us. The aim of work-sharing is to redistribute the entire volume of work offered by the economy so as to increase employment opportunities for all workers.

According to the Commission, the measures involved must respect the right of all persons resident in the Community to have an opportunity to work. They should also take into account the requirements of social progress and the quality of life and avoid penalizing the least favoured groups in society.

The Commission does not regard work-sharing as a cure-all and it cannot replace economic policy. It offers real possibilities but also involves risks; it demands a careful and diversified approach. The Commission wishes to draw attention to a number of conditions which must be met, in particular:

- account should be taken of the costs and their fair distribution amongst the various parties concerned and society as a whole;
- there should be awareness of the dangers of sidetracking the system (for example, clandestine work) and the prevention

thereof;

- methods of work-sharing must be chosen on the basis of priorities in respect of social policy (for example, a reduction in the number of hours worked per year should favour persons engaged in difficult or dangerous occupations);
- the work-sharing policy should take into account the constraints placed on undertakings and public finance by international competition.

As a result of these analyses the Commission puts forward three groups of possibilities for examination:

- firstly, in the medium term, there should be a reduction in the number of hours actually worked per year in the Community although the rates of reduction need not necessarily be the same in all the Member States. The Commission is planning to promote negotiations on this subject between both sides of industry.
- Secondly, the Commission will investigate the following Community measures:
 1. A restriction on overtime. The Commission could study the possibility of creating an instrument designed to discourage or restrict overtime, by introducing paid compensatory rest periods to be taken throughout the year, for example.
 2. A restriction on shift work. The Commission plans to put before the Council an initial practical proposal on the regulation of night shifts.
 3. Extension of entitlement to training. The Commission is considering the possibility of creating an instrument designed to give young people greater access to training during the transition period between school and full-time work. Moreover, it would be a suitable moment for promoting an increase in educational leave and continuous training in the Member States.
- Thirdly, certain complex matters require more detailed study. These are: making the retirement age flexible, the function of temporary employment agencies, and part-time working.

Lastly, since the Commission is aware of the cost, risks, and limitations of measures concerning work-sharing, it requests the Standing Committee on Employment to compare these costs and risks with the more serious threats inherent in the present unemployment situation.

The Commission considers that work-sharing is only a partial solution to current employment problems. It must be part of the overall approach outlined by the Tripartite Conference for a plan to return to full employment and restore economic growth capable of sustaining social progress.

4. COMMISSION REPORT ON THE EFFECTS OF THE AGRI-MONETARY SYSTEM

The Commission of the European Communities recently presented a report to the Council of Ministers on the economic effects of the agri-monetary system, of which the best-known feature is the monetary compensatory amounts. In the report, the Commission reaches the general conclusion that the agri-monetary system as it has been applied has proved harmful because, instead of constituting a temporary adjustment mechanism, it has, over an extended period, protected the agricultural sector - in any case partly isolated from market influences - from the normal effects parity fluctuations have on the other sectors of the economy. The Commission therefore feels that the report reconfirms the vital need for the monetary compensatory amounts to be progressively phased out over a period of seven years, as it proposed in October 1977.

In preparing the report, the Commission did not limit itself to dealing with certain isolated cases, such as pigmeat, where problems seemed to arise. It tried, despite the difficult and complex problems encountered, to cover as wide a range as possible, as objectively as possible. To this end, it entered into consultations with Member States, trade associations and scientific research workers.

The report successively studies the effects of the agri-monetary system on the common agricultural policy, production and consumption, the allocation of resources and trade, and makes an attempt to estimate its economic and financial cost. Besides giving the background to the system and a detailed statistical analysis, it deals more particularly with three specific subjects: milk and fresh cream, pigmeat, and trade between Ireland and Northern Ireland.

In brief, the Commission reached the following conclusions:

- the application of green rates which are different from market rates has disrupted the unity of the agricultural common market;
- in so far as the production and consumption of agricultural products are determined by prices, the effect of the agri-monetary system is undeniable: it is especially marked when price disparities are great and remain so for a long time;
- the agri-monetary system partially cushions the effects parity changes normally have on that part of the agricultural sector to which it applies;
- there are no clear-cut effects as far as trade is concerned, but in certain specific cases effects have been observed and the method used for the MCAs has caused difficulties;
- it is difficult to assess the economic cost; however the agri-monetary system, accounts for a large share of EAGGF Guarantee Section expenditure [14% in 1977] and gives rise to transfers of resources between Member States.

5. EUROPEAN TRADE UNION INSTITUTE

Four years after the Council of Ministers first indicated its willingness to assist in the creation of a European Trade Union Institute, the Institute has now become a reality.

The Social Action Programme adopted in January 1974 provided that action would be taken to ensure greater participation by the two sides of industry in the economic and social decisions of the Community, help trade union organizations participating in the work of the Community to set up training and information services for European affairs and set up a European Trade Union Institute.

It therefore fell to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) to work out the role and structure of the Institute. Following the establishment of the European Trade Union Confederation in its present, geographically enlarged form, its Executive Committee clearly stated that it wished to set up an institute which would not confine itself to the consideration of problems at Community level but rather would reflect the "pan-European" composition of the ETUC itself. The European Trade Union Institute was therefore broadened to include not only the unions of the Nine but also those of EFTA, Spain, Finland, Greece and Malta.

All the ETUC's affiliated organizations were invited to express their views regarding the Institute on the basis of a report drawn up by Mr Markmann and Mr Bouladoux. This report defined three areas of activity: training in trade union affairs; information and documentation on economic and social problems; and research on these problems. Most of the affiliated organizations indicated that they would like the Institute to devote its efforts essentially to economic and social research. It was therefore agreed that priority would be given to economic and social research, that documentation would, from the start, be directed towards research and that activities in the field of training would be derived from research projects and would concentrate on those areas in which the Institute had carried out or begun research.

Initially, the broad areas of research will be as follows:

- coordination of trade union research activities, including a review of existing trade union research institutions and projects past and future;
- analysis of the development of the economy as a whole;
- employment [labour market policies, links with other economic factors, migration, etc.];
- wages and incomes [their role in the economic process].

At a later stage, the democratization of the economy and working conditions [effects on modern technology, health, safety, environment, rationalization, etc.] will also be the subject of research.

In addition, it is proposed that the Institute should study the relevant legislation and its repercussions in the economic and social fields.

This research work will be carried out in collaboration with specialists from the affiliated organizations, the Secretariat of the ETUC and other international trade union organizations.

The Institute's documentation, including its archives, library and publications, will mainly be designed to assist in research activities and will be available to European trade unionists, students and persons carrying out research of interest to the Institute and the trade union movement.

Although the original intention was for the Institute to cover a wide range of subjects in the field of education and training, its activities in this area will in fact be limited to a modest programme, consisting mostly of seminars on the main research topics.

Brussels would seem to be the obvious location for the Institute since the ETUC and its Secretariat are already located there. The Institute will enjoy the status of an International Association under Belgian Law and will be run by a Board of Directors composed of representatives of the organizations affiliated to the ETUC, and within this Board a Management Committee will be set up with the task of ensuring that its decisions are implemented. The Managing Director will be appointed by the Board of Directors. In addition to the Managing Director, the Institute will have an adequate staff rising to a total of fourteen at the end of three years. After one year of operation, the Institute's staff will be as follows: the Managing Director, two or three economists, one administrative assistant and one secretary for research, one administrator, one administrative assistant and one secretary for documentation, and one administrator and one secretary for training.

Relations between the Commission and the Institute are governed by a convention which will remain in force for six years. The Commission undertakes to subsidize the Institute to the extent of 500 000 EUA per year, which represents approximately 55% of the annual budget proposed by the ETUC. Commission representatives will take part as observers in the work of the Institute. The Institute will submit an annual report to the Commission on its activities.

The Executive Committee of the ETUC adopted the Statutes of the European Trade Union Institute at its meeting on 9 and 10 February. These Statutes will enter into force following the appointment of the Managing Director at the next meeting of the Executive Committee on 13 and 14 April 1978 in Brussels.

6. EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION CONSUMER PROGRAMME

- 1) The European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC], which comprises 31 national trade union confederations in 18 European countries, covers 39 million workers and defends the interests of these workers both inside and outside undertakings in their capacity as workers and as consumers. By virtue of the size of its membership, it is the largest existing mass organization for the protection and promotion of consumers' interests. In spite of this fact, which logically should give worker-consumers a major role in the economy, it must be admitted that they are in fact the victims of a type of development which is peculiar to capitalist societies.
- 2) In the view of the ETUC, the production of goods and services must first and foremost be directed towards improving the quality of life. However, the actual state of affairs at present is that production is mainly geared to maximum profit. Moreover, the process of concentration in the consumer goods and services sectors and the power of multinationals in the production and sale of these goods and services are liable to encroach upon the interests of consumers.
- 3) The fact that profit is the sole criterion governing production leads to the primacy of individual consumption over the satisfaction of community needs, the creation of artificial needs; the deliberate production of goods inferior in quality to what is technically feasible and therefore wear out unnecessarily quickly, the irresponsible exploitation of raw materials and the destruction of the environment by pollution. In the present circumstances, the worker-consumer has few means of influencing the orientation of production, which remains essentially dominated by those who control the means of production. Democratic planning of production and distribution is the only possible way to solve the problems resulting from the situation described in the interests of the population as a whole.

ETUC action in the consumer field will be based on the following points:

A. Purchasing power

- 1) Wage inequalities cause considerable differences in purchasing power from one person to another. This inequality is further accentuated by the persistent inflation which has prevailed for several years.
- 2) It must be pointed out, moreover, that different prices are asked for the same products, these differences are unjustified and they aggravate the inequalities mentioned above; this is the practice of multinational companies in particular.

In most cases, consumers have no means of comparison. What is more, speculation on certain goods leads to an

increase in the cost of living, the burden of which is borne by consumers alone.

- 3) The ETUC wants to obtain greater market transparency so that consumers can have genuine freedom of choice. The Confederation wants price supervision and control, and it wants consumers to have the opportunity to compare prices. The results of price supervision must be published. These measures must lead to price regulation. It is, however, equally vital to control the forces which act against the positive aspects of free competition (e.g. cartels, oligopoly). Legal and economic penalties must be imposed for infringements in these fields.
- 4) To achieve these aims, appropriate bodies must be set up or existing institutions strengthened at both national and European level, and provision must be made for worker consultation on these bodies.
- 5) The development of a common agricultural policy at European level which takes account of the real interests of consumers is an important factor which will give them access to quality agricultural produce at the most favourable prices. The abolition of tax on essential commodities would also make a substantial contribution to increasing the spending power of worker-consumers.
- 6) The provision of communal facilities helps to maintain or increase the spending power of the population as a whole as well as providing access to services for those who are at present unfairly deprived of such services.
- 7) However, it is of primary importance that the means which workers and their families have at their disposal allow them sufficient spending power to be able to lead a decent life.
- 8) Action in line with these demands will increase workers' spending power and hence mean better living standards for them and their families.

B. Legal protection of consumers

- 1) Consumers are also in a weaker position than producers where the law is concerned.
- 2) The ETUC will therefore work for far-reaching reforms in legislation which will establish and guarantee equal rights.
- 3) Every producer must take steps to ensure that goods for which he is responsible are neither harmful nor dangerous. Should a product still cause harm, the producer must be held liable, regardless of whether he is at fault or not.
- 4) Severe penalties must be imposed for infringements. Moreover, legal instruments must be introduced which enable consumers whose rights have been infringed upon to sue at no cost to themselves and in the knowledge that the case will be heard quickly. The Organizations representing consumers must have the possibility of

instituting a civil action.

- 5) It must be made the responsibility of the public authorities to establish standard contracts for sales or services so that contracts are not drawn up solely by sellers and producers.

C. Product quality

- 1) An increasing number of products on the market no longer come up to normal quality and durability standards. Not only does this lead to a waste of raw materials, it also has an inflationary effect.
- 2) To remedy this situation, it is absolutely essential that standardization institutes set up quality, durability and suitability standards. All new products which come on to the market must be subjected to quality tests by the makers. It must be proved that the products meet the standards defined by these institutes. Product labels must state clearly that the product in question conforms to the standards.
- 3) Constant style and model changes also tend to reduce the durability of goods. Not only does this create needs, it also forces the consumer to make new purchases.

D. Consumer health

- 1) Worker-consumers often handle or absorb products which are dangerous for their health.
- 2) The ETUC reaffirms the principle that the health of workers and consumers must always have priority over the interests of producers.
- 3) Basic research must be carried out with a view to replacing all substances which are dangerous or injurious to health with other products.
- 4) Until this has been achieved, all dangerous products or substances whose effect is not known must be withdrawn from the market. Likewise, the use of all additives, such as colouring agents, which do not improve the quality of goods, must be prohibited.
- 5) The use of pesticides, weed killers and fertilizers in agriculture must be strictly controlled, and research must be carried out not only into individual products but also into the effects on health and the environment resulting from the interaction of various substances.
- 6) In any case, particularly in the field of food, medicines and cosmetics, all new substances must be subjected to very strict tests to ensure that they have no detrimental effects on the health of consumers.
- 7) The constant pollution of the environment is a further important factor for the health of the population as a whole. Strict regulations prohibiting any form of pollution must be laid down at both national and European

level, and legislation must be tightened up in this field.

E. Consumer information and education

- 1) Consumers' right to be informed is a fundamental one. Informed consumers are in a better position to protect their spending power, health and freedom of choice. This right to information is inseparable from consumer education, which should begin at school.
- 2) Consumer information and education must be the responsibility of the public authorities, which should in turn call upon the services of the consumer organizations.
- 3) In this context, the training of teachers of consumer affairs is of primary importance since they must use methods and language which are comprehensible and acceptable for consumers.
- 4) Consumers must above all be in a position to know their rights and they must also have access to information about products.
- 5) One way of achieving these objectives is to give qualified consumer representatives access to the mass media. A further means of improving consumer information is to label consumer goods in a manner which is universally comprehensible.

F. Advertising

- 1) We are forced to conclude from the present situation that certain powerful financial interests have the means of controlling information. Individual demand thus undeniably takes precedence over the needs of the community as a whole.
- 2) Moreover, this establishes certain types of values which encourage thoughtless demand, and changes the value scale which the consumer would otherwise fix for himself.
- 3) The most important precondition for the elimination of misleading advertising is statutory control. There must be severe penalties for all forms of misleading advertising and anyone indulging in this practice must be required to publish a correcting advertisement in the same volume.
- 4) Efforts must further be made in this field to have the onus of proof reversed, i.e., to establish a situation in which it is no longer up to the consumer to prove that the advertising is misleading but up to the advertiser to prove the truth of his statements.
- 5) Furthermore, certain forms of publicity must be prohibited, as must any form of advertising for certain products (e.g. pharmaceutical products).
- 6) In the longer term, advertising, whose sole aim is to

make the consumer buy, must be replaced by information intended to put the consumer in a position to select.

G. Production structures

- 1) The current development of these structures is in most cases geared to profit objectives. There would be no question of a private business investing in a field in which there are no prospects of profit, even if there is an obvious community need to be satisfied - such as in public health, transport, the energy field, education, housing, etc. The responsibility of the public authorities in these sectors is thus obvious.
- 2) Moreover, a growing trend is becoming evident: the trend towards the horizontal and vertical concentration of production. The result is that the ideal market where there is free competition is gradually disappearing, or at least its role is diminishing considerably. The democratic planning of production is absolutely essential if this tendency is to be checked.

H. Distribution, marketing and sales structures

- 1) The intermediate stages through which a product passes between production and consumption do not always operate in the interests of worker-consumers. Distribution networks can be subject to speculation on certain products. The unjustified operation of middlemen increases the final prices even further. The road from production to sale becomes longer and the product is often made more expensive by the increasing sophistication of its presentation. What is more, the profit margins of these various intermediate stages can be out of all proportion.
- 2) As in the case of production, cartels, oligopolies and multinational companies can be prejudicial to the interests of the worker-consumer, as can the concentration of sales points or the development of large-scale shopping complexes.
- 3) The ETUC is of the opinion that it is essential to reform distribution and sales networks in order to eliminate parasites and guarantee the entire population equal access to goods. Democratic planning in this sector, promoting short distribution channels, should be able to remedy shortcomings in the system. However, regulation by the public authorities is necessary in the case of practices which can be harmful, such as door-to-door sales and consumer credit.

I. An absolutely essential instrument

At European level, a technical instrument in the consumer field has become absolutely essential. The ETUC will therefore work for the creation of such an instrument, in whose administration the organizations representing consumers would be involved.

J. Conclusions

- 1) The ETUC is aware of the fact that the formation of incomes and the distribution and utilization of those incomes are interdependent, and that the well-being of workers and their families can only be assessed on the basis of these three elements together. Within the framework of an economic and social policy, a policy on consumption and a policy for consumers are thus essential to a comprehensive trade union policy.
- 2) The ETUC consequently calls on all its affiliated confederations to devote even more attention to consumer problems than they have in the past and not to leave this matter exclusively to other sections of the population.
- 3) The affiliated confederations undertake to make every effort to have this programme implemented at both national and international level in the interests of all the workers of Europe.

7. MR JENKINS MEETS THE ETUC IN BRUSSELS ON 9 FEBRUARY 1978

Before the ordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation, the President of the Commission, Mr Roy Jenkins, met the members of the Confederation's Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The President of the ETUC, Mr H.O. Vetter, stressed the importance which the unions attached to the need for greater economic growth to re-establish full employment and for a better planned and more selective expansion of the economy founded in particular on increased public investment.

For his part, Mr Jenkins drew attention to the efforts undertaken by the Commission to improve the coordination of economic policies, increase the effectiveness of the various Community Funds (Social Fund, Regional Fund, etc.) and widen their scope, and make it easier to obtain Community loans.

Mr Jenkins stressed, however, that the fight to overcome unemployment would be a long one, not only because of demographic factors but also because Europe was facing a new kind of society. Economic and monetary union could, he felt, help to achieve this new balanced society.

8. ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN BRUSSELS ON 9 AND 10 FEBRUARY 1978

The Executive Committee of the ETUC, meeting in Brussels on 9 and 10 February with Mr H.O. Vetter in the chair, decided to organize on 5 April 1978 a European day of action on employment problems with the aim of prompting both individual Governments and the Community to take practical measures without delay.

The meeting reaffirmed that the ETUC regarded the redistribution of incomes and work as the first priority.

In the unions' view, one of the best methods of achieving progress in this direction would be to reduce the working week. The ETUC once again emphasized that economic policy needed to be more clearly directed towards those sectors which fulfilled needs that undertakings were often unable to meet: low-cost housing, health care and social services in general. The public authorities should play a greater role in these sectors.

In response to the Executive Committee's decision, all the affiliated trade union organizations in the Community and EFTA will organize information meetings for their members and the press on the same day - 5 April - and will make representations to their Governments demanding action to counter unemployment. Union demands will be based on the statement adopted by the Executive Committee of the ETUC at its meeting on 29 and 30 November 1977. In addition, affiliated organizations may decide at national level to organize other activities such as demonstrations, public meetings and strikes.

The Executive Committee of the ETUC also adopted a statement on the situation of agriculture in the Community.

In this document the ETUC states that agricultural policy must take into account: the needs of people working in agriculture; the importance of not taking workers away from the land to swell the ranks of the urban unemployed; the needs of consumers; the need to contribute to the fight against inflation and to open the market to disadvantaged producers - in particular to the Third World. The ETUC considers that the common agricultural policy must be complemented as soon as possible by strengthened structural, social and regional policies.

With this in view, the ETUC calls for the organization at an early date of a conference bringing together at Community level representatives of Governments, farmers' organizations, trade unions and the Commission to consider the future of the common agricultural policy.

In the field of energy policy - in particular nuclear energy - the Executive Committee was unable to concur with the resolution submitted by the ETUC's Energy Working Party, adopted in Copenhagen in November last. It was decided to set up a standing committee on which all the affiliated organizations would be represented to deal with this area.

The Executive Committee also decided to support the stand of the TUC [United Kingdom] on the temporary employment subsidy paid in the UK to preserve existing jobs and encourage the creation of new jobs, which was currently under investigation by the Commission pursuant to Articles 92 and 93 of the Treaty.

In this connection, the Executive Committee recalled the demands voiced at the 1977 Tripartite Conference, stressing that employment subsidies should be encouraged as a means

of combating unemployment.

Finally, the Executive Committee adopted a motion condemning the policy of apartheid in South Africa and a statement condemning the repression of the trade unions in Tunisia.

9. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE INTER-REGIONAL TRADE UNION COUNCIL OF THE SAAR, LORRAINE AND LUXEMBOURG MEET THE FRENCH MINISTER OF LABOUR, MR BEULLAC, IN PARIS ON 23 JANUARY 1978

In his capacity as President of the Interregional Trade Union Council of the Saar, Lorraine and Luxembourg, Mr Manfred Wagner, President of the DGB in the Saar, was received by the Minister of Labour, Mr Beullac, on the evening of Friday 20 January 1978.

Mr Wagner was accompanied by Mr Antoine Laval, Federal Secretary of the Force Ouvrière (French trade union confederation).

The aim of the meeting was to inform the Minister of the Inter-regional Trade Union Council's activities and, in particular, to draw his attention to union conclusions demanding the cooperation of the Governments of the three countries involved.

The problems raised were those connected with employment, the preservation of traditional industries (iron and steel, mining, textiles) and the development of new activities in industry and the services sector capable of creating additional jobs.

With this in view, the unions called for a "social plan" to be drawn up for the region under the auspices of the European Community.

Steps should, in their view, be taken to harmonize measures of a social nature.

On the economic plane they advocated joint or coordinated investments to support traditional industries in difficulty, better use of coal production capacities to satisfy energy needs, infrastructure improvements and the development of new activities.

Within the context of these economic and social requirements, the Inter-regional Trade Union Council laid particular emphasis on the urgent need for joint action in the field of vocational training for young people.

Mr Beullac assured Mr Wagner and Mr Laval that each of the problems raised would be kept under close review by all the relevant Ministerial departments.

10. RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Youth employment

Supplement 4/77 to the Bulletin of the European Communities brings together a number of documents relating to youth employment. The first is the communication of 17 October 1977 from the Commission to the Council on youth employment, containing an analysis of the problem of unemployment amongst young people and suggestions for strengthening Community action in this field. The Supplement also includes a detailed review of the measures taken by Member States to counter youth unemployment and extracts from the press releases stating the conclusions reached at the Council meeting on 28 October 1977 [Social Affairs] and the meeting of the Standing Committee on Employment on 24 November 1977.

Community action in the cultural sector

Supplement 6/77 to the Bulletin of the European Communities states the aims of Community action in the cultural sector, its principles and the methods to be used.

Shipbuilding - Reorganization Programme

Supplement 7/77 to the Bulletin of the European Communities describes the economic situation in this sector - a decline of around 46% in Community production between 1975 and 1980. In the programme, the Commission stresses that any reorganization must be based on market realities and must aim to adapt production capacities both quantitatively and qualitatively to those realities. Since this is bound to have social repercussions, the Commission also recommends parallel action to redeploy workers affected by reorganization.

European Union - Annual reports for 1977

Supplement 8/77 to the Bulletin of the European Communities includes the report prepared by the Commission on this matter on the basis of the decision taken by the European Council at the meeting in The Hague [1976].

The European Community and the Third World

This publication, prepared by the Spokesman's group and the Directorate-General for Information of the Commission of the European Communities, includes the following chapters:

- an introduction by Mr Claude Cheysson, Commissioner for Development;
- a chapter on the Third World, divided into 3 parts:
 - (i) the emergence of the Third World,
 - (ii) the Third World today,
 - (iii) the Third World's demands;

- a chapter on the European standpoint;
- a chapter describing what the Community is doing in this field.

1977 Report on the Agricultural Situation in the Community

The Office for Official Publications of the European Communities has recently published the third Annual Report on the Agricultural Situation in the Community. An original publication, the report contains information not available from any other sources. It gives a complete view of the evolution of agriculture and agricultural markets in 1977.

The report's 500 pages contain both a written commentary and very detailed statistical material [261 tables] on agriculture in the Community. The handy size of the report [16 cm x 23 cm] makes it a convenient and valuable tool for all those involved or interested in agriculture.

The report is published in the six official languages of the Community [Danish, Dutch, English, French, German and Italian]. It can be obtained from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Boite postale 1003, Luxembourg [Grand Duchy of Luxembourg] and its Sales Offices in the Member States and other countries.

Eleventh General Report on the Activities of the European Communities, 1977

The General Report on the Activities of the European Communities is published annually by the Commission pursuant to Article 18 of the Treaty of 8 April 1965 establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities. This report, which is presented to the European Parliament, gives an overall picture of Community activities during the previous year.

The Right of Initiative of the Economic and Social Committee

This publication first outlines the Economic and Social Committee's scope for action during the period 1958-72, when it was unable to consider questions relating to European integration on its own initiative.

The main part of the text describes the possibilities of exercising influence which the Committee gained with the recognition of its right of initiative. In conclusion, relations between the Committee and the European Parliament are outlined.

Social Indicators for the European Community

The Statistical Office of the European Communities has recently published a selection of statistics on social conditions and trends in the Member States.

The volume presents data on the following areas: demography, employment, working life, standard of living, social protection, health, education, housing and a comparison between developments in the Community and those in other main regions of the world.

The aim of the "Social Indicators" is to present, for the period covered, chronological series for the nine Member States with the maximum degree of international comparability possible within the framework of the available statistics.

Those indicators which take the form of indices start from base year 1970 = 100 except where no comparable data is available for the three new Member States. In this case, the base year is the first year for which comparable statistics are available for all the member countries.

This publication can be obtained from the Sales Offices in the Member States or directly from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities in Luxembourg.

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