

Europe and the Environment: Cooperation a Distant Prospect

Over the past 2 years, Europe has been prodded by the United States into paying more attention to the worldwide environmental crisis. But the antipollution movement has been slow in gathering momentum, and already the usual stumbling blocks to any common European policy inhibit progress. Cost escalation, disorganization, and pettiness have characterized most cooperative ventures between Europeans, on either a bilateral or multilateral basis. Meanwhile, each European nation, carefully safeguarding its independence, adopts legislation which is slightly different from that of its neighbors.

Europeans have dallied with the possibilities of common environmental action through a number of supranational institutions. These fall into two groups: the "Atlantic" organizations—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)—which include the United States and other non-European countries; and the three strictly European communities—the European Economic Community (EEC or the Common Market), the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

Countries like France and Britain, which are reluctant to surrender a shred of their independence, should, in theory, be more tempted to participate in the work of the Atlantic organizations, whose final recommendations are not binding. Yet France and Britain have in fact resisted venturing too far along the paths so vigorously advocated by the United States in OECD and NATO, where its influence has been predominant.

On the other hand, most member countries do not want the EEC to get too deeply involved in environmental matters because, once its recommendations are adopted, they are binding and thus restrict the scope of national legislation. The Treaty of Rome states that the EEC should ensure the welfare of

citizens and ensure the harmonious growth of its member countries. But unfortunately, it has failed to take the lead in organizing real cooperation on environmental issues. As M. Carpentier, the head of the small EEC environmental division, puts it, the real issue is whether the EEC will go beyond the strictly economic area and have some responsibility for ecological, urban, and health problems.

But prospects for a vigorous environmental policy have long been weakened by the continued struggle in Brussels between the commission, which is the executive body of the three European communities, and the council of ministers, which is the watchdog of national interests and independence. The commission has always advocated a wider scope of action and some supranational role for the Brussels institutions. Yet, even on seemingly clear-cut issues, the commission's advocacy is not always effective. When the commission recommended rapid action to curb the pollution of the Rhine and the creation of a basin authority, the countries ignored it.

Last March, without deluding itself with false hopes, the Brussels commission came up with an environmental program which is barely more than a very ambitious list of the main problems that a coordinated European policy should try to solve, including, in particular, the setting of water and air quality standards.

Lack of Common Standards

Many studies are needed before a more detailed program is submitted to the council of ministers, in June 1974. And there is little chance that such a program could be adopted. It is remarkable that the only common standards which have been adopted so far by the EEC members have been proposed not by the environmental group, but by the group responsible for dismantling nontariff barriers. Because of the lack of public pressure, EEC members are not paying as much attention to the health hazards of pollution as

they are to the economic distortions that may result from different national regulations.

Except for the president of the commission, Sicco Mansholt, whose ideas have been too farsighted for most Europeans, Europe has had few prophets of ecology, and the three communities have had a hard time convincing their member countries that a common policy must be set up rapidly. The ECSC has concentrated on air pollution and the safety of workers in coal mines and steel factories. Euratom has set standards for the concentrations of radioactive products in air and water and has monitored radioactivity in the atmosphere, thanks to data provided by national laboratories.

In NATO, where a Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS) was created at the end of 1969, the emphasis has tended to fall on topics that are of principal concern to the United States. Each NATO study is financed by one or two countries that are particularly interested in the subject. Belgium has been working on sea pollution by oil waste and pollution of the North Sea. The United States is studying the clean motor and the safe car, as well as, in conjunction with Germany and Turkey, air pollution. Canada is working on road safety. New subjects have recently been added, such as the recycling of urban waste water and city transportation. Twice a year the NATO members review the progress of these studies, two of which are almost completed. But the final recommendations have been so vague that they hardly induce member countries to take action. The only way the governments can be persuaded to act would be under threat of censure from the commission.

Like NATO, OECD has only been looking at the problems of rich industrial countries—and mainly from an economic viewpoint. An OECD environmental committee was created in 1970, and two main themes of study were chosen: air and water pollution caused both by the use of natural resources such as wood, aluminum, coal, and fuel oil, and by the use of products such as pesticides and detergents; and the policy of urbanization in relation to environmental protection and the upgrading of social life.

Four OECD subcommittees are now examining the problems of solid waste disposal; pollution caused by the paper industry and thermal power stations;

automobile exhaust gases; and motor vehicle noise.

Almost every European organization has tried to play a role and recommend action to improve the environment. Yet efforts and actions have often been surprisingly ineffective. An outstanding example is the Commission on the Rhine, which has representatives from Germany, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

The Rhine commission has been in existence for 10 years, but pollution of the river has steadily increased. The Rhine commission's suggestions for improvement have been consistently ignored, despite the evidence of several scientific reports on the alarming condition of the river. The Rhine carries 110 kilograms of sodium chloride per second in Mannheim, and 268 kilograms per second when it reaches the

frontier between the Netherlands and Germany, nearly half of which is caused by salty waste waters from the potash mines in Alsace. It has also been calculated that the Rhine brings 80 tons of arsenic to the Netherlands each month, 300 tons of copper, 20 tons of cadmium, 10 tons of mercury, and 900 kilograms of pesticides.

Another failure to coordinate environmental policy is evident in the variety of positions adopted toward the automobile and its problems.

It is quite revealing that the concluding chapter of a not-yet-published OECD report on automobile pollution stresses the diversity in economic, industrial, social, and meteorological situations of the member countries. This diversity is one reason given for not adopting common standards for air and water quality. The argument goes:

since the real dangers of the noxious gases emitted by automobiles have not yet been really assessed, it is hardly worth adopting severe product standards. It is a time for studies rather than for action, and European organizations had best define the environment in its strictly physicochemical sense and not in the social or cultural sense.

The OECD report clearly displays the mixed feelings of Europeans toward environmental problems. Industry is still skeptical about the urgency of cleaning up the environment and is fearful of the cost, while governments carefully safeguard their independence by trying to restrain the scope of action of European organizations. A typical consequence of this footdragging is that, although carbon monoxide emissions of 1972 models of European cars are to be 40 percent lower than those

Nadar's Profiles Aimed at Voters, Not Headlines

Any expectations that Ralph Nader's study of Congress would leave little to choose between Capitol Hill and the Roman Senate during the reign of the emperor Elagabalus must have been disappointed by the release this week of a major part of the project's output, the profiles of some 490 members. To judge from those of the congressmen most directly interested in scientific and health affairs, the profiles are factual descriptions, short on evaluations but long on voting records, ratings by interest groups and much other sober data.

Reactions on Capitol Hill seem to be mostly favorable, several offices commenting on the fairness and accuracy of their member's profile. A staff aide to Mike McCormack (D-Wash.), the only scientist in Congress, complains of some misquotations but says the tone of the profile was "probably reasonable." Representative L. H. Fountain has not seen his profile but from his staff's description fears it may give an "incomplete and somewhat misleading picture." Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.) has only praise for the talent of those who researched him. At a recent press conference held to discuss the profiles, several reporters commented that they appeared to contain little new, and that some profiles could almost be used as campaign literature. Nader, questioning the press's idea of what is new, said the profiles brought together both old and new information, their purpose being for citizens "to understand and to measure members of Congress against standards citizens believe are significant." The profiles, each about 20 to 40 pages in length, are the second phase of Nader's Congress project, which began earlier this month with publication of the paperback *Who Runs Congress?* (*Science*, 13 October). Salient features of particular profiles* are:

* Individual profiles are obtainable from Grossman Publishers, P.O. Box 19281, Washington, D.C. 20036, at \$1 each.

► John W. Davis (D-Ga.), chairman of the House subcommittee on science, research, and development. The profile (written by Claudia Townsend) emphasizes Davis's efforts on behalf of Lockheed (the C-5A transport aircraft is produced in Davis's district) and notes that he nevertheless voted against the SST. As much attention is given to Davis's absences from the House Foreign Affairs Committee, of which he is a recent member, as to his activities as chairman of the science, research, and development subcommittee.

► Paul G. Rogers (D-Fla.), chairman of the House public health and environment subcommittee. Jan Juran, Rogers' profile writer, lucidly describes the complex mass of health legislation that Rogers has engineered through Congress and analyzes the reasons for Rogers' effectiveness. There are sideswipes at "Paul's Practice of Porkbarrel Politics" and Rogers' efforts on behalf of the 60,000 migrant workers in his district.

► L. H. Fountain (D-N.C.), chairman of the House intergovernmental relations subcommittee. Fountain's hearings on the Food and Drug Administration are considered as "among the best prepared and persistent efforts by any congressional committee," although they get little attention in the weekly column Fountain writes for a home district newspaper, profile writer Eileen Franch notes. Probably for lack of space, Franch does not really make clear why Fountain's subcommittee is so successful.

► Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.), chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee that controls the funding of NASA and the NSF, among other agencies. Like most other profile writers, Robert C. Schwartzman puts together a readable and wide-ranging sketch of his man's character and political career. But there's nothing said about Boland's views on science or space or the desirability of funding same.—N.W.

of 1970 models, and hydrocarbon emissions 37 percent lower, this is barely enough to offset the increase in emissions caused by the number of new cars. Likewise, the EEC adopted a 83 dbA noise limit for cars, a 85 dbA limit for light trucks, and a 90 to 92 dbA limit for buses and heavy trucks. The standards are very easy to meet and will have to be made more stringent later on. But these timid steps have not prevented the member countries from adopting divergent policies. Britain intends to lower the noise limits for automobiles from 84 dbA to 80 dbA after September 1973, the limits for light trucks from 85 to 82 dbA by the same date, and the limits for heavy trucks and buses from 89 to 86 dbA after September 1974. Another mismatch is that Germany will limit the lead content of gasoline to 0.40 gram per liter in 1972 and 0.15 gram per liter in 1974, while France will limit it to 0.45 gram per liter in 1976.

European countries are, in fact, in a situation similar to that of the United States 2 or 3 years ago, when the Environmental Protection Agency was created. Ministries of environment have recently been set up in Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Norway, and each government is gradually working out a program of its own.

Individual European countries, of course, have launched antipollution programs, in some cases original and effective ones. Switzerland, for example, has sponsored the creation of a private facility that has been collecting waste waters from electronic and watchmaking plants for 3 years, in order to abate the pollution of some rivers by heavy metals. Since 1968, the Bonn government has subsidized several industrial undertakings whose task is to collect and recycle or burn waste oil. The costs are raised through a tax on fresh oil, and the salvage firms have to collect waste oil whenever the service is requested, but charge a price which depends on the degree of pollution involved. In 1970, 225,000 tons of oil were thus recovered, of which 190,000 tons were recycled.

Germany was also the first country in Europe to set up a regional water authority, to curb the pollution in the Rhine. France followed suit, dividing the country into six regional water basins in 1964. Since 1969, the regional water authorities have been collecting a tax based on the volume of water used and the amount of pollutants discharged into the waters, both by

municipalities and industries. So far, 542 million francs (\$110 million) has been raised and lent to help the users build treatment plants at a total cost of Frs 1,800 million (\$360 million). But the point is that measures taken so far to solve some of the most glaring ecological problems in the larger cities and in industrial zones have been largely uncoordinated and mainly on a national scale.

Should this trend continue, varying standards will undoubtedly be applied to major products and equipment, thereby constituting significant barriers to free trade. There are already signs that, if the EEC does not take action rapidly enough, industries will try to agree among themselves on standards. The representatives of the most important industries in Europe met in Paris last July to see if they could harmonize their policies and make suggestions to their governments.

Cooperation will also be needed, and is already needed in fact, to harmonize product standards and thus avoid non-tariff barriers that may disturb the free flow of goods, especially within the EEC. Whether European cooperation on environmental problems can be achieved more easily than has been the case with nuclear and space affairs remains to be seen.

—DOMINIQUE VERGUÈSE

Dominique Verguèse is a member of the science news staff of the Paris daily Le Monde.

APPOINTMENTS

Lois A. Lund, director, School of Home Economics, Ohio State University, to dean, College of Human Ecology, Michigan State University. . . . **Burton J. Williams**, chairman, history department, Central Washington State College, to dean, School of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the college. . . . **Robert W. Ellis, Jr.**, professor of engineering, University of South Florida, to dean, School of Technology, Florida International University. . . . **Herman N. Weill**, dean of arts and sciences, Johnson State College, to dean, Graduate School, Marshall University. . . . **Clarence L. Coates, Jr.**, professor of electrical engineering, University of Illinois, to director, School of Electrical Engineering, Purdue University. . . . **Robert V. Jelinek**, program director for engineering

chemistry, National Science Foundation, to dean, School of Environmental and Resource Engineering, State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. . . . **Julian H. Fincher**, chairman, pharmaceuticals department, University of Mississippi, to dean, College of Pharmacy, University of South Carolina. . . . **Oscar S. Rothaus**, professor of mathematics, Cornell University, to chairman, mathematics department at the university. . . . **Arthur E. Bergles**, professor of mechanical engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, to chairman, mechanical engineering, Iowa State University. . . . **Paul C. Heckert**, chairman, sociology department, Catawba College, to chairman, sociology department, Frostburg State College. . . . **Lester Breslow**, chairman, preventive and social medicine department, University of California, Los Angeles, to dean, School of Public Health at the university. . . . **Glenn R. Driscoll**, chancellor, University of Missouri, St. Louis, to president, University of Toledo. . . . **James G. Bond**, vice president, Bowling Green State University, to president, California State University, Sacramento. . . . **Jack S. Goldstein**, professor of astrophysics, Brandeis University, to dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the university. . . . **Sidney A. Ewing**, head, veterinary parasitology and public health, Oklahoma State University, to dean, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota. . . . **Harry J. Hartley**, associate dean, School of Education, New York University, to dean, School of Education, University of Connecticut. . . . **Robert A. Dentler**, professor of education and sociology, Teachers College, Columbia University, to dean, School of Education, Boston University. . . . **Vincent S. Haneman, Jr.**, associate dean of engineering, Oklahoma State University, to dean, School of Engineering, Auburn University. . . . **Richard L. Dobson**, professor of dermatology, University of Oregon Medical School, to chairman, dermatology department, School of Medicine, State University of New York, Buffalo. . . . **Malcolm A. Bagshaw**, director, radiation therapy division, Stanford University School of Medicine, to chairman, radiology department at the medical school. . . . **Vahe E. Amassian**, professor of physiology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University, to chairman, physiology department, Downstate Medical Center, State

(Continued on page 434)