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## EUROPE'S JOBLESSNESS BEGETS GENERATION OF DESPAIR

By JON NORDHEIMER, SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

As the rain-soaked day slips into dusk, young women gather behind the wet plate-glass windows of a Government-sponsored youth center in downtown Amsterdam.

They are among the 250,000 people under the age of 25 who are out of work in the Netherlands, a group that accounts for 40 percent of the nation's jobless. A storm of anger boils up at the center, even among those who are continuing their studies.

"We study for jobs that don't exist," says 23-year-old Nicolette Steggerda. Marlies Goosens, also 23, says, "We know if we stop school, we would have no work."

### Feelings of Helplessness

Interviews in recent weeks in Britain, Ireland, France and West Germany as well as the Netherlands suggest that swelling unemployment in Western Europe is giving rise to a new generation under the age of 25 that increasingly feels powerless to control or even influence its future.

After three decades of prosperity, unemployment among the nine member nations of the Common Market has exceeded 11 percent, affecting a total of 12.3 million people, and the number is climbing.

Forty-two percent of this total belongs to the under-25 age group, and this figure does not include the hundreds of thousands of 16- to 18-year-olds who are in some form of Government-subsidized training. Nor does it include the even larger groups in schools or universities.

For the moment, it appears, the anger of the young is not being translated into political action. Those interviewed showed apathy or outright contempt for politicians, and many expressed pessimism that conditions would improve quickly enough to rescue the young - particularly the unskilled or semiskilled - from bearing the full brunt of the changes in economic structures in Western Europe during this decade. The largely silent legions of dissatisfied young pass the time of day in video arcades or government make-work programs, measuring their lives in idle hours or an aimless search for meaning.

The resentment long expressed by British youths is creeping across the Continent. The title of the punk rock anthem "No Future" can now be seen as scrawls of English graffiti on the brick walls of closed factories in Belgium and France. 'A Recipe for Disaster'

Outwardly, at least, the generous social welfare systems of Western Europe have kept the young off the streets and undercut public outcry. But a career counselor in Britain, where nearly half the 3.5 million unemployed are under 25, warned that "unless the economy can be restructured to find work again for the less skilled it will be a recipe for disaster." The counselor, Joseph Witherspoon, works with youths in Leicester, which is in the center of England's hard-hit industrial region.

The recession came late to the Continent, gripping West Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and other members of the European Economic Community especially hard in 1981 and 1982.

The European Trade Union Institute has estimated that to restore full employment on the Continent by the end of this decade it will be necessary to create 15 million new jobs in Common Market economies that were unable to bring about any net increase in jobs over the last 12 years of boom and bust.

Contributing to the malaise of European youth has been the increasing debate in the last few years over the deployment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization missiles and the possibility of nuclear war. Recent surveys have found that the impact of both issues on the young has clouded their confidence in the future. 'I Don't Even Care'

"I've reached the point where I don't even care what the Russians and Americans do," said Francois Chevallier, an 18-year-old student, as he sipped coffee in a Parisian cafe. "I cannot influence them so it is not important for me to worry about them. What is important to me is what I am doing for myself."

Or, as a student here in Amsterdam put it, "Four hundred thousand turn out to protest against missiles in Holland, but you pick up the papers and they say the missiles will come anyway."

"Who listens to young people?" she asked. "No one." One form of protest crossing generational lines tends to put the blame for a country's economic troubles on the presence of large numbers of "guest workers" from third-world nations, people who were welcomed in Western Europe in the years of prosperity.

Louk Lagensdoorn and Jacques Janssen, professors at the Psychology Institute of Katholieke University at Nijmegen, conducted a survey late last year of 5,000 Dutch 16- and 17-year-olds. They found that 27 percent of those questioned advocated the expulsion of foreign workers from the Netherlands and 8 percent favored "national purity" as a goal. A New Phenomenon

"What is alarming is that these feelings are completely new for Holland," Professor Lagensdoorn said in an interview. "In the past,"

Professor Janssen added, alluding to West Germany, "we always looked to our neighbor when we considered right-wing phenomena. . We can stop that kind of thinking and find it right here at home." In fact, young West Germans are considered among the most liberal of Europeans, with recent research showing extreme right-wing views held by only about 6 percent of young voters.

But Robert Diekgraf, a 20-year-old soldier in the West German Army, said in an interview while on a weekend pass in Hamburg that "too many Germans have been trained since the war to hold their tongues about what they really think."

In this century, Americans were said to have a different perspective on life because they enjoyed more material goods than Europeans and also had no experience with the horrors of war in their homeland.

Now, Europeans under the age of 25, reared in an extended period of prosperity and general stability, seem to resemble Americans more than they do their own parents. And material prosperity has given them a sense of expectation, even entitlement, to a standard of living that they see around them. A Loss of Heroes

Like many young Americans, many young Europeans seem to suffer from a loss of heroes. The European landscape appears bereft of role models and figures of authority who command respect or any significant following from young people.

Asked whom she admired most in life, Christa Petersen, a 24-year-old West German nurse, said after much thought, "Good people." But she said she knew of no one in public life that she "would put in that category."

A poll conducted by The Daily Mail of London found that 1 in 5 young Britons believed that a war would kill them. Just three years ago, in a similar poll, only 1 in 50 thought so.

The Lagensdoorn-Janssen survey in the Netherlands found that 36 percent of the teen-agers interviewed expected a catastrophe for the Dutch population, and an equal number said they lived only for the present because the future was so uncertain. Reagan Blamed for Troubles

Many of the young blame Americans - the White House and Wall Street -for much of what is believed to be wrong with their world. President Reagan, because he came to power at about the same time that the European economy cooled off, is often seen as the single biggest cause of tension in their lives, according to many young people interviewed.

"I am frightened that one big man in America could flip out and destroy the world," said Sonya Gill, a 20-year old West German. "The Americans are more reckless than the Russians."

Anne-Claire Louvet, 17, an honors student in Paris, said, "I try not to think about it because I cannot do anything about it, but inside I know that one day something may fall on my head."

"And so we pass the days at the discos, or meet people at the cafe, and sit and stare," said a friend of hers, Isabelle Gault. "There is usually not much conversation. You look for happiness. Sometimes you even find it."