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COMMON MARKET PRESIDENT WELCOMES

COMMUNITY ADVANCE TO SECOND STAGE

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WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 15 -- Professor Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community (Common Market), called the decision of the Community's Council of Ministers to advance to the second stage "conclusive proof /of the European Community's/ ability to take political decisions of the first order."

Speaking in Brussels today, President Hallstein said: "The political importance of the great result achieved by the Council in these past weeks cannot be too heavily underlined." The full text of the President's statement regarding the Community's move from the first to the second stage of its three-stage transition period toward economic union follows:

"This is a victory for the Community and for European agriculture. We are entering the second stage not only with a Community strengthened from within, but also with great new tasks and prospects before us.

"From the stage in which obstacles to trade and other distortions were being removed, the Community has taken the decisive step which brings it to the stage of a real, constructive common policy. The decision to move on to the second stage also means that the last opportunity for any one member state to delay by its veto the entire development of the Community is now past. The result will be new vigor for the further speedy development of our Community.

"These decisions have also cleared the way for the Community's great external tasks, such as the accession and association of European countries, the association of African states, partnership with the United States, development policy, and so on.

"The political importance of the great result achieved by the Council in these past weeks cannot be too heavily underlined. There are no other examples of such meetings of Europe's statesmen and officials of the highest rank lasting so long, working so intensively, and being devoted so wholeheartedly to the cause of European progress. It is a conclusive proof of the reality of our Community and of its ability to take political decisions of the first order.

"The European pact has been renewed -- the road is open to a common future."

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