



**European  
community**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY COMPLETES ITS COMMON TRADE POLICY;  
COMMON MARKET COMMISSION GIVEN NEW TRADE NEGOTIATING POWERS

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 27 -- The Common Market Council of Ministers yesterday added the last two blocks to its common commercial policy. The Council, meeting in Brussels, also gave the Commission general authority to start negotiating "housekeeping" tariff adjustments without getting Council approval in each case.

The two commercial regulations adopted -- one establishing a common system for imports from third countries, the other a common procedure for handling quotas -- replaces three provisional measures that were adopted on December 10, 1968.

#### A Common Import System

The common system for imports into the Community covers all countries except state trading countries (East European countries and other Communist regimes), which were covered by a regulation passed last December 19.

The new regulation consists of:

- . a common liberalization list of products that have been freed to date

by each of the member states. This list of imports may be lengthened by future Council decisions.

- . an information and consultation procedure to allow the Community to keep track of import trends

- . a Community surveillance procedure which would cover products if market conditions started to cause severe damage or threaten Community producers

- . possible safeguard measures which could consist of removing certain products temporarily from the liberalization list. These could be applied only in conformity with Community procedures and in the event of serious damage or threat of serious damage to Community producers. Such measures, if taken, must respect the Community's international obligations, especially within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In an emergency, these measures could be put into force by the Commission provided the Council is immediately notified. The Council reserves the right to give final approval to these measures or make other provisions. If it takes no action within six weeks, the measures must be withdrawn. In special cases, certain stopgap safeguard measures may be taken by a member state for a limited period of time.

#### Common Quota Management

The second regulation sets up a common system for managing quantitative import and export quotas for trade with third countries -- either set unilaterally or as a result of negotiations. The system establishes a procedure for dividing the quotas among the six member states and sets rules for granting authorizations and for cooperation between national and Community authorities. Import licenses will continue to be issued by the member states, but in accordance with Community rules. A quota management committee will be formed of representatives

from each member state and presided over by a representative of the Commission.

These two new regulations, together with previously adopted measures, complete the basic foundation of a Community commercial policy. The other principal elements already in operation are the system for imports from state trading countries, and a decision adopted on December 16, 1969, providing that trade agreements between member states and third countries gradually be made uniform and that such agreements finally be negotiated by the Community.

Commission Gets "Housekeeping Authority"

The Council also authorized the Commission to negotiate or consult with third countries, after consultation with a committee on commercial policy set up by the Common Market Treaty, if any of these countries wishes to modify or withdraw a tariff concession or other commitment. This general mandate allows the Commission to take the necessary adjustment actions authorized by the GATT without having to ask the Council's permission in each case.