

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY NEWS

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SIMONET AIRS VIEWS ON ENERGY IN WASHINGTON

A "game between states," EC Commission Vice President Henri Simonet, responsible for energy, called oil market operations. He urged oil producing and consuming nations to "decide whether or not they want a dialogue, whether or not they want to avoid confrontation," speaking at a Headliners Club luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on May 15. Simonet noted a lack of solidarity on all sides, especially among the industrialized nations. Simonet cited the "politicizing of the whole dialogue" as the main problem in producer-consumer talks and said that the solution to a number of basic energy-linked problems can be "sought only through cooperation."

HILLERY IN CANADA FOR SOCIAL TALKS

To strengthen Community ties with former British Commonwealth nations, EC Commissioner Patrick J. Hillery, responsible for social affairs, paid an official visit to Canada on May 20-23. Meeting with Canadian ministers and officials in Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal, Hillery discussed social questions of common interest and in this context the workings of the Canadian federal system and its relationship to provincial administrations.

SIGNING OF LOME CONVENTION COMPLETED

Guinea-Bissau became the last of the subscribing nations to sign the Lome Convention on May 16, in Brussels. Forty-six African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries have signed the Community's February 28 trade-and-aid accord. The convention must now be ratified by signatory countries, in conformity with their respective constitutional rules. Nigeria was the first to do so, on March 21.

EC EMERGENCY AID TO NEEDY COUNTRIES

Seventeen countries will receive \$100 million in Community aid, following the European Parliament's approval of the Community's supplementary budget funding the second installment of the "Cheysson Fund." The Cheysson Fund provides financial aid to developing countries hardest hit by rising oil and raw materials prices. Of the \$100 million, \$33 million will go into a special United Nations fund and \$67 million will be divided and sent directly to the needy countries. Beneficiaries of the second installment of Fund aid are: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ghana, Cameroon, the Voltaic Republic, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Ethiopia, Honduras, Senegal, Central African Republic, and Chad.

The Community has pledged \$500 million in aid by June under the Cheysson Fund. A total of \$250 million were paid in the first two installments of the Fund; the remaining \$250 million are being contributed by national member state operations.

**GROUP TO STUDY
EC-ASEAN LINKS**

The continuing dialogue between the EC Commission and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was furthered by an exchange of letters setting up a joint Commission-ASEAN study group, in Brussels May 7. The study group is designed to facilitate information exchanges, consultation, and cooperation on common problems. The study group will meet twice a year but more often if necessary. The ASEAN member nations are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

**EUROPEAN CONSUMER
SURVEY PUBLISHED**

European consumers feel that the economic situation in Europe has deteriorated since the last quarter of 1974 but demonstrate a gradual growth in confidence in economic developments. These were among the conclusions drawn from the results of the Commission's ninth European consumer survey of 40,000 representative households in all EC member states except Luxembourg. In general, consumers were increasingly optimistic about employment prospects, prices, and personal finances. Consumers

complained that prices had risen too rapidly last year but were conscious of the first results of inflation-curbing measures. Most Community consumers are trying harder to save but planned to buy more cars and other consumer durables than reported in last year's survey.

**MORE SOCIAL FUND AID
FOR WOMEN CALLED FOR**

The European Social Fund is not doing enough for women in the employment field the Commission agreed, answering a written question from female members of the European Parliament on May 5. Women make up a larger part of the Community's total work force than they do in operations employing both men and women, and the Social Fund does little to rectify this imbalance, the Commission noted. The Commission is trying to inform public and private institutions about the availability of Social Fund aid to raise female employment but has to count on member countries to relay this information to local agencies that could use it.

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