

European Community NEWS

PUBLISHED WEEKLY *The contents of this newsletter may be quoted or reproduced without further permission.*

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NO. 20 MAY 30, 1975

US-EC HIGH LEVEL TALKS IN BRUSSELS

The European Community hosted the biannual US-EC high level consultations in Brussels May 29-30. On the agenda for discussion were overall US-Community relations; energy, in light of the recent International Energy Agency meeting in Paris; North-South relations and raw materials; policies toward developing countries, and bilateral issues such as wine, cereals, and relations with third countries. The US delegation was headed by US Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs Charles W. Robinson, who was also the delegation leader to the recent Paris preparatory talks for a world energy conference. Commission Vice President Christopher Soames, responsible for external affairs, lead the Community delegation. The last US-EC high level meeting was held in Washington, DC in December.

DENT REVIEWS GATT PROGRESS IN BRUSSELS

The current status of the "Tokyo Round" of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) multi-lateral trade talks was reviewed by chief US trade negotiator Frederick B. Dent, Commission President Francois-Xavier Ortoli, and Commission Vice President Christopher Soames in Brussels May 22. Dent stressed the need to speed up the negotiations, which have made little

progress since their opening in Tokyo in September 1973. He added that working groups from various negotiating teams have been studying mainly procedural issues.

HEATH AFFIRMS UK FUTURE IN COMMUNITY

"Our friends and partners look to us to make a constructive and imaginative contribution to the development of the European Community," said former British Prime Minister Edward Heath, speaking at a National Press Club luncheon in Washington, DC, May 23. In reviewing Britain's recent political and economic history, Heath noted that although Britain has been going through a difficult transitional period since the end of World War II and is currently undergoing a crisis of confidence, "If I were you, I would put my money on Britain's future." Referring to the upcoming June 5 referendum, which will determine Britain's future in the European Community, the former Prime Minister said "A decisive 'Yes' will confirm that our membership of the Community...opens up a new and noble chapter in our history."

EC FORGES STRONGER LINKS WITH PORTUGAL

The Community's trade-and-aid relations with Portugal will be intensified, following agreement by the EC foreign ministers meeting in Dublin May 26. Portugal and the Community are currently linked by

a free trade agreement, in force since January 1973, but will re-open negotiations to enlarge the scope of the agreement on June 11. The negotiations will embrace conditions for improved trade opportunities, financial aid, industrial cooperation, and better benefits for Portuguese migrant workers in the nine Community countries. Garret Fitzgerald, president in office of the EC Council of Ministers, will travel to Lisbon next week to discuss conditions for an upcoming meeting between Community and Portuguese foreign ministers.

COMPUTER PLAN TO SAVE COMMUNITY LIVES

A plan to save lives by computer has been drawn up by the EC Commission and submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval. The plan involves a data processing system, costing approximately \$1,380,000, which would speed up the exchange of information between hospitals in search of blood or kidney donors in the nine member states. Every year, up to 12,000 patients in the Community would die if transplants or dialysis were not available. If adopted by the Council, the plan could be extended into other branches of medicine.

DRAFT DIRECTIVE ON CLEAN SWIMMING WATER

European Community citizens may enjoy safer swimming conditions, thanks to the EC Commission. On May 13, the European Parliament approved a proposal for a directive concerning pollution of sea and fresh water used for swimming. The directive would prohibit swimming in natural waters where pollution exceeded limits set by the directive. The purity of water in swimming pools would be regulated by local authorities.

EC UNION, EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES MEET

Delegates representing both EC member state labor unions and employers met jointly with the Commission for the first time, in Brussels May 22. Both sides expressed hope for a speedy economic recovery in Europe, and stressed that national economic policies must be coordinated at Community level for renewed and stable economic activity. During their Commission meetings, delegation representatives conferred with Commission Vice President Wilhelm Haferkamp, responsible for economic and financial affairs.

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