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## MORE COMPETITION IN AIRLINE AND MARITIME INDUSTRIES A PRIORITY, SAYS COMMISSIONER SUTHERLAND

More competition in the European Community's airline and maritime industries by the end of 1985 is a priority of the new E.C. Commission, Peter Sutherland, the Community's Commissioner for Competition, said May 13 in Washington.

"Far from promoting overregulation, the adoption of (measures proposed by the Commission) will develop business opportunities and thus give a positive impetus to the European economy," Mr. Sutherland told the American Bar Association.

The Commission believes that the provisions in the Community's Treaty of Rome prohibiting restrictive business practices and abuse of a dominant position, Articles 85 and 86, can be applied to air and sea transport. If the E.C. Council of Ministers, the E.C.'s member-state decision-making body, fails to act, "the Commission will not hesitate to consider its options," Mr. Sutherland said.

The new Commission, which began a four-year term in January, has also decided to prepare guidelines covering the application of E.C. competition (antitrust) policy to joint ventures, or cooperation agreements between companies, Mr. Sutherland said.

In the area of enforcement, the Commission will encourage the national courts of its 10 member states to play a larger role in enforcing E.C. competition rules, he said. The possibility of damages being awarded in private actions would be an incentive for use of the national courts, he noted. The Commission also wants to strengthen its sanctions, particularly heavy fines, aimed at deterring future violations, Mr. Sutherland said.

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While the Commission is taking an increasingly critical approach to restrictive practices, it is also encouraging "constructive forms of cooperation among firms in a way that promotes the overall interests of the Community," Mr. Sutherland said. It supports agreements, for example, that help to disseminate new technologies or to coordinate the reduction of structural over-capacity, he explained.