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DELEGATION OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
PRESS AND INFORMATION

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

MICHAEL PETERSEN, CHEF DE CABINET TO JUDGE OLE DUE OF THE  
COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,  
LUXEMBOURG

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Michael Petersen was born on April 25, 1947, received his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1972, and was then appointed to the Danish Ministry of Finance.

From 1972-75, he was a lecturer in European Community Law and public International Law at the University of Copenhagen.

In 1975, he was appointed Chef de Cabinet to Judge Max Sorensen of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, succeeded by Judge Ole Due on October 6, 1979.

Mr. Petersen has written many articles on European Community Law and is the author of EF-Karnov (Danish Community law reports) and of the EF-Lovregister (Community law index).

Mr. Petersen lives in Luxembourg.

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March 1982



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BC-DENMARK-PETERSEN (MAN IN THE-NEWS)

EC EXPERT PETERSEN BECOMES DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER

COPENHAGEN, Jan 25, Reuter - Niels Helveg Petersen, a Danish expert on European Community affairs with a dry sense of humour, was named Foreign Minister on Monday at a sensitive time in Denmark's relations with the EC.

Petersen, a 54-year-old former economics minister and a leading member of the centrist Radical Liberal party, immediately becomes head of the EC's Council of Ministers -- Denmark took on the EC presidency for six months from January 1.

He takes on a major responsibility in a campaign to encourage Danes to vote "yes" to the EC's Maastricht treaty on European political, economic and monetary union in a referendum due this spring.

A passionate sportsman, he succeeds veteran Euro-enthusiast Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, foreign minister since 1982 in a string of governments headed by Prime Minister Poul Schlueter.

Schlueter resigned last week, paving the way for a Social Democrat-led four-party coalition formed by new Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen on Monday.

Petersen has expert knowledge of the EC affairs stretching back to the 1970s, when he worked for three years in Brussels as chef de cabinet for Denmark's then EC Commissioner Finn Gundelach.

In the current Danish parliament, he has been a key member of the powerful parliamentary EC Committee which steers Denmark's policy in Brussels.

Danes voted "no" last year, creating turmoil throughout the EC, but won exemptions from key treaty aims last month and polls show they are likely to vote "yes" second time round.

Petersen, who likes British Monty Python or Goons-style humour, is an avid sportsman. He plays a good game of tennis as well as chess, billiards and cards and is also an ardent soccer fan.

Head of the Radical Liberal's parliamentary group from 1978 until 1990, he resigned after the fall of the three-year-old Conservative-Liberal-Radical Liberal minority government in which he was minister of economics from 1988 to 1990.

The Radical Liberals, with seven seats in the 179-member parliament, have played a pivotal role in Danish politics for decades as they hold the balance of power between the right and left-wing blocs.

In the 1980s, their support guaranteed a decade of Conservative-Liberal rule under Schlueter. This month they switched allegiance to the Social Democrats.

Born in Odense on January 17, 1939, Petersen has a law degree from Copenhagen University and later studied political science at Stanford University, California. He speaks fluent English.

He has been member of the Danish parliament since 1966.

In 1984, Petersen married his second wife, Kirsten Lee, a doctor of medicine and later Radical Liberal member of parliament.

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EC, GCC TECHNICAL COMMITTEES DISCUSS CARBON TAX

By Christine Hauser

ABU DHABI, Jan 25, Reuter - Gulf Arab and European Community experts discussed oil exporters' concerns about a proposed EC carbons tax on imported energy, officials said on Monday.

Technical committees set up to aid negotiations on a free trade agreement between the EC and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) met in Abu Dhabi on Sunday for the first time this year to discuss energy issues, principally the proposed tax.

The carbon tax, which may add \$10 to the cost of an imported barrel of crude, has been a source of friction since the European Commission proposed it as an environmental protection measure that would cut energy consumption.

The proposal did not appear too threatening until recently because Community governments had insisted they would consider it only if a similar tax was imposed in the United States.

But GCC concern revived recently because U.S. President Bill Clinton appeared to support the idea of such a levy during his election campaign.

"The major issue discussed yesterday was the carbon tax...the tax will be an obstacle to trade. It needs continual dialogue between the EC and the GCC," said Anwar Abdulla, Director of the Oil and Gas Department at the GCC.

The GCC is comprised of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait.

Majid al-Munif, head of the GCC's energy group and chairman of the meeting, said the EC imports about one-third of the GCC's total 10 million barrels per day of crude exports.

"As for the tax, we reiterated the GCC position set out in the ministerial meeting in May in Kuwait," he said, referring to talks last year between GCC and EC foreign ministers.

Those discussions were dominated by Gulf concerns that the tax could severely hit their crucial oil export revenues.

The committees do not take decisions but are intended to keep discussions open, Munif said. They met twice in 1992 and were due to reconvene in Brussels in October, he said.

The GCC ministers also said at last year's Kuwait meeting they wanted duty-free access for their petrochemical products before they agree to a free trade agreement with the EC.

The EC, which began talks on a free trade agreement with the GCC in October 1990, is eager to gain a greater share of wealthy Gulf markets but complains of problems posed by the GCC's inability to unify customs tariffs.

Abdulla told Reuters the two sides also discussed technical cooperation in energy research and the development of Qatar's North Field, regarded as the world's largest natural gas field.

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