

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

11331/85 (Presse 195)

1053rd meeting of the Council

- Internal Market/Consumer Affairs -

Brussels, 12 December 1985

Presidents: Mr Robert GOEBBELS,
State Secretary
for Foreign Affairs,

and

Mr Johnny LAHURE,
State Secretary
for Economic Affairs
of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Paul DE KEERSMAEKER

State Secretary for European
Affairs and Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Jakob RYTTER

Deputy Permanent Representative

Germany:

Mr Otto SCHLECHT

State Secretary, Federal
Ministry of Economic Affairs

Greece:

Mr Elias LYMBEROPOULOS

Deputy Permanent Representative

France:

Mrs Catherine LALUMIERE

State Secretary attached to the
Minister for Foreign Relations,
responsible for European Affairs

Ireland:

Mr John BRUTON

Minister for Industry, Trade,
Commerce and Tourism

Mr Edward COLLINS

Minister of State at the
Department of Energy, and the
Department of Industry, Trade,
Commerce and Tourism

Italy:

Mr Paolo GALLI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Luxembourg

Mr Robert GOEBBELS

State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Mr Johny LAHURE

State Secretary for Economic
Affairs

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Netherlands:

Mr W.F. van EEKELEN

State Secretary,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr P.H. van ZEIL

State Secretary,
Ministry of Economic Affairs

United Kingdom:

Mr David ELLIOTT

Deputy Permanent Representative

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Commission:

Lord COCKFIELD

Vice-President

Mr Stanley CLINTON-DAVIS

Member

o

o

o

Also attending as observers:

Spain:

Mr Gabriel FERRAN de ALFARO

Head of Mission

Portugal:

Mr Carlos Alberto
MARTINS PIMENTA

State Secretary,
Ministry for the Environment
and Natural Resources

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COMPLETION OF THE INTERNAL MARKET

Implementation of the Luxembourg Presidency's action programme

The Presidency drew attention to the 1985 programme which it had drawn up concerning the completion of the internal market and to the reports which it submitted to the Internal Market Council on 7 October. In implementing this programme, it endeavoured in particular to keep pace with the timetable provided for in the White Paper on the completion of the internal market submitted by the Commission, the importance of which had been recognized by the Council at its last meeting. The outcome of the discussions held in the different sectors was summarized by the Presidency as follows:

- Customs Union

As for activities concerning the customs union, the Presidency, without neglecting the demands imposed by such union, has chiefly pursued measures aimed at strengthening and completing the internal market. It then stated its satisfaction at the results obtained, in particular the adoption of the Regulation on inward processing as well as the progress made on the CD project ⁽¹⁾. Furthermore, by adopting the Regulation on the standardization and simplification of statistics of Community trade, the Council has put in place the final part of the "single document" operation.

⁽¹⁾ See page 8

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- Technical barriers

The Presidency has also put a considerable amount of work into the 20 or so proposals for Directives on technical barriers which are still being actively discussed within the Council. Eight of these Directives have been referred to the Council for a decision and agreement has already been reached on a ninth by the Permanent Representatives Committee. As for the rest, work is well advanced and further positive results can be expected in the first half of 1986.

- Services, company law and liberal professions

Very considerable progress has also been achieved as regards a common market in services, company law and the liberal professions. The Presidency welcomes in particular the adoption of the Regulation on the European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG), the Directives on the right of establishment and freedom to provide services in the fields of architecture and pharmacy and the Directive relating to undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities. Mention should also be made of the Directive on the approximation of the laws concerning liability for defective products. The draft Convention on the Community patent is being submitted for a decision to the Luxembourg Conference in December 1985.

- Foodstuffs sector

There has so far been agreement on three proposals, which the Council will be able to adopt shortly, subject to the procedure for consulting the acceding States.

= Amendments to the Directive on emulsifiers

In this Directive, the Council will lay down the status to be given to Karaya gum, oxidized soya bean oil and polysorbates for a period of three years, with a review clause. In addition, several other additives will be deleted permanently.

= Amendments to the Directive on coffee extracts and chicory extracts

In this Directive, the Council will adapt the current provisions to the general provisions of the Directive on labelling and to the requirements of technological progress and external competition.

= List of simulants (plastic materials in contact with foodstuffs)

This proposal will supplement the basic Directive on monitoring migration of constituents of plastic materials into foodstuffs, by giving a non-exhaustive list of the foodstuffs concerned, with the simulants to be used for migration tests in each case.

Two proposals are still being examined by the Permanent Representatives Committee:

= Community methods of sampling and analysis

There is only one remaining scrutiny reservation on this proposal, which is designed to establish Community methods of sampling and analysis for monitoring all foodstuffs, using the Standing Committee procedure.

= Preservatives (thiabendazole and natamycin)

1986 action programme

The Council took note of the action programme for the completion of the internal market in 1986 drawn up by the Luxembourg Presidency in consultation with the future Netherlands and United Kingdom Presidencies.

COMMUNITY PATENT

The Council and the two acceding Member States took note of a progress report on the Luxembourg Conference on the Community Patent. After a wide-ranging exchange of views, they noted the continuing difficulties in resolving the problem of the implementation of the Agreement on Community Patents.

The Council, convinced of the importance of this Agreement in the context of the completion of the internal market, confirmed its attachment to the objective which it had set itself at its meeting on 7 October 1985, viz. the swift entry into force of the Community patent. It therefore welcomed the progress achieved by the Conference in finalizing the instruments of the Agreement. Without prejudice to the final paragraph of these conclusions, the Council expects that by the time the Conference ends on the scheduled date of 18 December, it will have successfully concluded negotiations on the texts submitted to it for examination and that agreement on the latter will have been noted in the appropriate manner, for example by initialling by the twelve participating States.

In order to enable the twelve States to sign as soon as possible the texts thus drawn up, at its next Internal Market meeting the Council will continue the search for a solution to the problem of the Agreement's entry into force. It instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to prepare for its discussions on this subject.

CD PROJECT

The Council arrived at a common position on the proposal for a Decision establishing the framework within which the measures required to computerize customs procedures in both intra-Community trade and trade with third countries will be defined and decided on. The proposal is a follow-up to the action initiated by the "single document" operation and marks a significant step forward in bringing about a situation where trade within the Community will be conducted without documentation.

ABOLITION OF CERTAIN POSTAL CHARGES FOR CUSTOMS PRESENTATION

The Council examined the proposal for a Regulation on the abolition of certain postal charges for customs presentation, which is one of the measures proposed by the Commission in its White Paper on the completion of the Internal Market, and on which the Council should decide in the first stage of the action timetable (1985-1986).

The Council concluded the discussion by calling upon the Permanent Representatives Committee to resume examining the question as a matter of urgency in order to settle the final problems.

REMOVAL OF TECHNICAL BARRIERS

The Council examined the following proposals for Directives, on which reservations are still outstanding;

- 4 tractor and construction plant Directives;
- hydraulic shovels.

Having noted that it was unable at this point to settle the final problems concerning these Directives, it asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to press ahead with its discussions so as to enable it to adopt the Directives in the near future.

Asbestos

The Council signified its agreement of principle to the Directive containing a list of 6 everyday products prohibited from containing asbestos fibres, in particular: toys, paints and varnishes and asbestos flocking processes. The adoption of this Directive will mark clear progress towards improving human and environmental health protection and will thus introduce rules into certain Member States where such extensive protection did not exist in this area. This Directive represents a second measure in the field of protection against asbestos and follows up the Directive adopted in September 1983.

It is understood that work in this area will continue in order to reach a solution embracing other asbestos-based products as quickly as possible.

DOORSTEP SELLING

The Council signified its agreement to the Directive to protect the consumer in respect of contracts negotiated away from business premises (doorstep selling).

This Directive applies to contracts concluded between a trader supplying goods or services and a consumer:

- during an excursion organized by the trader away from his business premises or

- during a visit by the trader to
 - = the house of the consumer or that of another consumer

 - = the consumer's place of work

where the visit is not at the consumer's express request.

In the case of the above transactions, the trader is required to inform the consumer in writing of his right to cancel the contract within at least 7 days.

The Directive will enter into force 2 years following its notification.

SYSTEM OF INFORMATION ON ACCIDENTS IN WHICH CONSUMER PRODUCTS ARE INVOLVED

The Council reached broad agreement on the proposal for a Decision introducing a system of information on accidents in which consumer products are involved.

It concentrated its discussions on the system's objectives and the procedure to be adopted for implementing them and on the financial endowment and proposed allocation.

Winding up the discussion, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to press ahead with examination of this question on the basis of the Council's discussions and having regard also to the Opinion of the European Parliament, with a view to arriving at full agreement as quickly as possible.

A NEW IMPETUS FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION POLICY

The Council discussed the Commission communication to the Council on providing a new impetus for consumer protection policy.

It welcomed this initiative, which in its opinion formed a solid basis for continuing Community activities in this area.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Iron and steel - external aspects 1986

The Council confirmed its agreement on the directives for the negotiation by the Commission of the arrangements for steel imports into the Community with the following third countries: Austria, Finland, Norway, Sweden, South Africa, Brazil, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Japan (special understanding).

In the case of Brazil, the two existing arrangements regarding respectively cast iron and the other iron and steel products will be consolidated.

Arrangements may also be agreed, on a proposal from the Commission and after the agreement of the Council's subordinate bodies, with other countries requesting them. The Council's subordinate bodies will decide on the form and content of arrangements to be agreed.

Technical barriers

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Recommendation for a Decision authorizing the Commission to conduct negotiations to enable the European Economic Community to become a contracting party to the European Agreement limiting the use of certain detergents in washing and cleaning products.

Trade policy

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation definitively collecting the provisional anti-dumping duty imposed on imports of roller chains for cycles originating in the Soviet Union and extending the provisional anti-dumping duty imposed on imports of roller chains for cycles originating in the People's Republic of China.

Fisheries

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation allocating the 1986 Community catch quotas in Canadian waters among Member States. The allocation of fishing possibilities in Canadian waters among Member States under the EEC/Canada Fisheries Agreement is the same as that proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council for 1985.

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation opening, allocating and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for certain fishery products (1986). In the context of its external fisheries relations, the Community has been led to undertake to open Community tariff quotas for certain (frozen) fishery products throughout the duration of the Agreement concluded in December 1981 with Canada and approved by the Council Decision of 29 December 1981. The Regulation aims at applying these provisions for 1986.

Finally, the Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulations opening, allocating and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for:

- certain fishery products, salted, falling within subheadings ex 03.02 A I b) and ex 03.02 A II a) of the Common Customs Tariff (1986);
- certain fish preparations falling within heading No ex 16.04 of the Common Customs Tariff from Portugal (1986);
- cod, dried, salted or in brine, falling within subheading 03.02 A I b) of the Common Customs Tariff;
- silver hake falling within subheading ex 03.01 B I t) of the Common Customs Tariff;
- frozen cod fillets falling within subheading ex 03.01 B II b) 1 of the Common Customs Tariff.

Customs union

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation on the classification of goods in subheading 27.03 A of the Common Customs Tariff: mixtures of peat (containing not less than 75% turf by weight) and other substances such as lime, sand, rotted leaf mould, marl, farmyard manure and small quantities of other fertilizers, with a total content of potassium (calculated as K_2O), nitrogen, phosphorus (calculated as P_2O_5) not exceeding 3% by weight.

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation defining the conditions under which a person may be permitted to make a customs declaration.

Appointments

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision appointing members and alternate members of the European Social Fund Committee for the period 12 December 1985 to 11 December 1987, viz:

I. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

	(a) <u>Members</u>		(b) <u>Alternate members</u>
Belgium	Mr J. DENYS	Mr M. ANDRE	Mr P. CHEVREMONT
Denmark	Mrs B. KONDRUP	Mr H. BOSERUP	Mrs D.N. ANDERSEN
Germany	Mr O. SCHULZ	Mr SOMMER	Mr G. FAUST
Greece	Mr A. BOUGAS	Mrs M. PATOULA	Mrs V. STAVRIANOPOULOU
France	Mr BUREAU	Mr M. THEROND	Mr R. COTTAVE
Ireland	Mr P. LEONARD	Mr M. SHERLOCK	Miss M. CULLINAN
Italy	Mr G. CACOPARDI	Mr L. DE ANGELIS	Mr L. TASSONI ESTENSE DI CASTELVECCHIO
Luxembourg	Mr R. SCHINTGEN	Mr Y. MERSCH	Mr P. WISELER
Netherlands	Mr A.B. VAANDRAGER	Mrs M.E. VAN RIJN- VAN DER TAS	Mr J.W.S. PABON
United Kingdom	Mr J.S. LAMBERT	Mr R.H. NIBLETT	Mr J.H. CURRIE

II. REPRESENTATIVES OF EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS

	(a) <u>Members</u>		(b) <u>Alternate members</u>
Belgium	Mr D. DE NORRE	Mr J. BELLEFROID	Mr G. OTTENBOURGH
Denmark	Mr N.J. HANSEN	Mrs B. JOHANSEN	Mr H. MØRKEBERG
Germany	Mr G. PREUSS	Mr R. EBERT	A.F. Prinzessin zu SCHOENAICH-CAROLATH
Greece	Mr M. TANES	Mr A. SYMEONOGLOU	Mr I. STASINOPOULOS
France	Mr J.-F. RETOURNARD	Mr D. DELAGE	Mr C. AMIS
Ireland	Mr J.F. O'BRIEN	Mr C. POWER	Mr A. O'BOYLE
Italy	Mr F. MONDELLO	Mr G. CAPO	Mr M. MASELLI
Luxembourg	Mr L. JUNG	Mr M. SAUBER	Mr A. ROBERT
Netherlands	Mrs C. HAK	Mr S.J.H. HUIJBEN	Mr B.J. VAN DER TOOM
United Kingdom	Mr H.M.L. MORTON	Mr A. MOORE	Mr N. PARKIN

III. REPRESENTATIVES OF WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS

	(a) <u>Members</u>		(b) <u>Alternate members</u>
Belgium	Mr. VAN DEPOELE	Mr J.C. VANDERMEEREN	Mr A. VAN DER HAEGEN
Denmark	Mr N.J. HILSTRØM	Mr P. KARLSEN	Mr H. HINRICH
Germany	Mr F. KEMPF	Mr O. SEMMLER	Mr H.-H. RUBBERT
Greece	Mr P. EVSTATHIOU	Mr G. MAVRIKIOS	Mr G. MARTZOS
France	Mr G. COSYNS	Mr B. DIZIER	Mr A. FAESCH
Ireland	Mr W.A. ATTLEY	Mr D. NEVIN	Mr D. MURPHY
Italy	Mr G. DI PALMA	Mr G. COCCO	Mr A. SERGI
Luxembourg	Mr R. PIZZAFERRI	Mr H. DUNKEL	Mr A. GROBEN
Netherlands	Mrs K. ADELMUND	Mr G.A. CREMERS	Mr H. WEGGELAAR
United Kingdom	Mr W.H. KEYS	Mr K. GRAHAM	Mr F.A. BAKER

Bruxelles, le 11 decembre 1985

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Note Bio(85) 407 aux Bureaux Nationaux
cc: aux Membres du Service du Porte-Parole

Rendez-vous de midi du 11 decembre 1985 (E. Reuter)

Preparation of the Internal Market/Consumer Protection
Council, 12 December 1985 (E. Reuter)

The Council will be a down to earth business session and is unlikely to produce spectacular results. Pursuing its endeavours for the follow-up to the Commission's White Paper on the internal market the Council will take stock of the achievements under Luxembourg's presidency and discuss the "action programme" for the Dutch and British presidencies. The Council will also take stock of the inter-governmental conference on the Community patent currently taking place in Luxembourg.

Other items on the agenda are the "CD project" which provides for the electronic data processing of customs formalities throughout the Community and the necessary equipment for frontier posts, and a number of technical directives for the definition of standards for tractors, construction equipment, excavators and asbestos. The Council will also try to reach agreement on the abolition of postal charges for customs presentation, a Commission proposal which at present is still blocked by three member states.

Three Consumer Policy items are on the agenda (M. Berendt)

- new impetus proposals
- doorstep sales (demarchage a domicile)
- information system for accident statistics.

Ministers will have a general discussion of the proposals put forward by the Commission in June 1985 (see P-51) with conclusions to be proposed by the presidency for a new impetus in consumer policy. The essence of these proposals is to provide better protection for the health and safety of consumers.

The Council gives a further opportunity for adoption of the proposed directive on doorstep sales which has been blocked by a German reserve for more than a year. As legislation is shortly to be agreed in Germany on this subject there is some hope of reaching agreement tomorrow on the Community legislation. The German government also has problems with the Commission proposal for an information system which would collect statistics on accidents caused by consumer products throughout the Community, but there is a possibility of a compromise which would allow the new system to be established.

Animal experimentation (M. Berendt)

The Commission has proposed to the Council two measures for the protection of animals used in laboratory experiments (see P-101). The first element in the proposal calls for Community signature of the Council of Europe Convention on animal experimentation; the second element is a draft directive which would give detailed effect to the provisions of the Convention, while providing greater safeguards.

The draft directive lays down the conditions under which animals may be used for laboratory experiments and the conditions under which they should be kept. It will introduce important additional protection for laboratory animals in the member states and follows intense pressure in the European Parliament for Community action in this field.

Reunion ministerielle CEE/Etats Unis (F. Le Bail)

Nous avons indique que la reunion ministerielle CEE/Etats Unis commencerait vendredi 13 decembre en debut d'apres-midi pour se terminer par une conference de presse a 18h30. La delegation americaine sera composee du Secretaire d'Etat SCHULTZ, de Malcolm BALDRIDGE et Clayton YEUTTER. La delegation sera dirigee par le President DELORS et composee de MM. DE CLERCQ, CHEYSSON, ANDRIESEN, NARJES et COCKFIELD.

Nous avons souligne que malgre la multiplication des problemes commerciaux qui ont domine les relations bilaterales au cours de 1985, les questions commerciales ne seront pas les seules a l'ordre du jour. En effet, les secteurs de cooperation seront egalement discutes en particulier le GATT, et les perspectives d'un Nouveau Round. (Voir Memo 165/85).

Themes traites

IP 561 - Pret CECA a l'Italie
 IP 563 - Extraits du discours de M. Clinton Davis a Francfort
 P 101 - Controle plus strict dans le domaine des experiences sur les animaux
 l procedure anti-dumping
 IP 564 - Reunion a haut niveau CE-OAPEC (Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries)

Amities

G. ANOUIL COMEUR////

BRUSSELS, DECEMBER 12, 1985
NOTE BIO(85)407 (SUITE 1) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

INTERNAL MARKET/CONSUMERS COUNCIL (E. REUTER) (PART I)

THE COUNCIL ASSEMBLED AT 11.30 HRS THIS MORNING AND BEGAN BY TAKING STOCK OF THE PROGRESS MADE ON INTERNAL MARKET ISSUES UNDER THE LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY. LORD COCKFIELD, WHILE PAYING DUE TRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENTS RECORDED, DREW ATTENTION TO THE SLIPPAGE WHICH MARRED SOME OF THE DOSSIERS (VETERINARY, FOOD STUFFS, TAXATION). HE ALSO DEPLORED THE ABSENCE OF ANY DECISION ON FRONTIER FACILITIES AND THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE. THE COUNCIL TOOK NOTE OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME FOR 1986. THE GERMANY DELEGATION FELT THAT THERE SHOULD BE MORE EMPHASIS ON CAPITAL MOVEMENTS. THE FRENCH DELEGATION WONDERED WHY NEW TECHNOLOGY, TRANSPORT AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS DID NOT FEATURE MORE PROMINENTLY. PRODDED BY LORD COCKFIELD THE PRESIDENT URGED DELEGATIONS TO WORK ALREADY NOW IN THE SPIRIT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS (MAJORITY VOTING).

THE COUNCIL APPROVED THE CD PROJECT (EEC WIDE COMPUTERISATION OF CUSTOMS PROCEDURES) AFTER NEW LANGUAGE HAD BEEN FOUND TO MEET THE UK'S RESERVE WISHING TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INVESTMENTS AND EQUIPMENT CHOICE ALREADY MADE BY NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE DISCUSSION OF THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH CERTAIN POSTAL CHARGES FOR CUSTOMS PRESENTATION, LEVIED WHEN DELIVERING PARCELS, WAS INCONCLUSIVE AS SOME MEMBER STATES FELT THAT THE LOSS OF REVENUE FOR THE POSTAL ADMINISTRATION WAS TOO IMPORTANT (UK, I, GR, IRL, B). LORD COCKFIELD REFERRED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAGE CHARGE IN THE UK BY ROLAND HILL - THE ONE PENNY STAMP - AND REGRETTED THAT THE COMMUNITY APPEARED UNABLE TO ADOPT SIMPLE STEPS WHICH WOULD REDUCE BUREAUCRACY AND BE WELCOMED BY THE CITIZEN.

THE DISCUSSION ON PROPOSALS TO REMOVE A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL BARRIERS (TRACTORS, CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT, HYDRAULIC SHOVELS AND ASBESTOS) WAS EQUALLY INCONCLUSIVE. MATTERS WERE DEFERRED TO EXPERTS / COREPER WITH THE HOPE THAT SOME COMPROMISES PLACATING THE MAINLY DANISH RESERVE, PROMPTED BY ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL PROTECTION CONCERN - NOISE LEVELS OF MACHINERY - , COULD BE FOUND BEFORE THE END OF THE LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY.

OVER LUNCH THE MINISTERS REVIEWED THE POSITION CONCERNING THE COMMUNITY PATENT IN THE LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS AT THE INTER-GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE IN LUXEMBOURG (PATENT CONFERENCE NOT IGC). THE CONFERENCE HAS NOT YET PRODUCED THE SOLUTIONS REQUIRED FOR THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE COMMUNITY PATENT, IN A FIRST STAGE, BETWEEN SEVEN MEMBER STATES (THE NINE SIGNATURES OF 1975 EXCEPT DK AND IRL). THE CONCLUSIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL CONFIRM ATTACHMENT TO THIS GOAL. THE COUNCIL WILL REVERT TO THE ISSUE AT ITS NEXT MEETING.

REGARDS
HUGO PAEMEN

Bruxelles, le 13 decembre 1985

Note Bio(85) 407 (suite 2 et fin) aux Bureaux Nationaux
cc : aux Membres du Service du Porte-Parole

CONSUMER AFFAIRS (Michael Berendt) - PART II

Council agreed the directive on DOORSTEP SELLING, which was first proposed by the Commission in 1977. This measure will provide important new protection to the consumer in several member states.

The directive provides for a seven-day period for consumers to rethink their purchase after buying goods from door-to-door salesmen, whether they pay in cash or through a credit agreement. The directive will also cover other sales which are made away from business premises - at place of work, for example, or at sales parties.

Commenting on the decision, Commissioner Clinton Davis said that the legislation would restore the balance between consumer and seller where the consumer was most vulnerable. "Consumers can be exploited by doorstep salesmen. They may be caught at a disadvantage and often be persuaded to make purchases or enter into agreements on the spur of the moment, giving them no chance to compare prices with those offered by other suppliers or to consider their decision carefully. This new legislation makes a valuable contribution to our general programme of consumer protection".

Agency mail order sales where goods are sold on approval, insurance and sales of securities are not covered. Nor are regular sales of groceries, milk or other products supplied by regular roundsmen. Member States may set a minimum limit of 60 ECU for application of the cooling-off period.

The directive, although agreed, will be subject to formal approval at another Council, since there was no ministerial quorum at last night's meeting. Neither Spain nor Portugal requested consultation on the directive.

The Council came close to agreement on the establishment of an INFORMATION SYSTEM ON ACCIDENTS involving consumer products, with a strong possibility of adoption as soon as the remaining reserve (by the UK government on the financial clauses) has been lifted. The system will provide for the collection at a Community level of information on accidents in or around the home which lead to hospital treatment. It will help to pinpoint types of product which are proving dangerous in use.

In a first tour de table of the Commission's proposals for a NEW IMPETUS for consumer policy (la nouvelle impulsion), ministers generally reacted favourably to the Commission proposals, both Dutch and British delegations promising a fair wind to the programme during their respective presidencies.

Regards 
H. PAEMEN COMEUR//X//