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**EC AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER FINN GUNDELACH DIES**

Finn Gundelach, the 55 year old European Communities Agriculture Commissioner died suddenly of a heart attack on January 13th in Strasbourg, France. The Danish Commissioner's death, coming only days after he was confirmed in his post for another four years, shocked members of the European Parliament and inspired tributes from EC and Danish leaders.

Gaston Thorn, President of the Commission, extolled Gundelach's "courage, his knowledge, his entire devotion to his task."

"It is no understatement to say that he gave his life to the cause of Europe," he said.

Denmark's Prime Minister, Anker Joergensen, said Gundelach's death was "a major loss for the Community as well as Denmark. His election as Commissioner recently was a declaration of confidence in his abilities."

Roy Jenkins, former Commission President, cited Gundelach's exceptional abilities and termed him a European of great stature. "He has fallen victim to his own tireless and selfless devotion to his work and to the European cause," Jenkins said.

Gundelach held a doctorate in economics from Aarhus University. His career included many years in the Danish Foreign Service as well as posts in international organizations, such as GATT. Gundelach was a member of the EC Commission since Denmark became a member in 1973. From 1973 to 1977 he was responsible for administration of the Internal Market and the Customs Union. For the past four years,

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Gundelach has been the Commission Vice President responsible for Agriculture and Fisheries.

Prime Minister Joergensen said Gundelach's work at GATT and in the EC had made Denmark a respected country in international affairs.

The Committee within the Danish government charged with EC matters has today appointed Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Poul Dalsager, as successor to Mr Gundelach. However, it is by no means certain that he will take over the farm portfolio. Rather now that the Danish Commissioner is named, negotiations may begin on who should get the agriculture post.

Mr Dalsagar was born in 1929 and his educational background is in the banking field. He was a member of and Vice President to the European Parliament during the period 1973-74. He was Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries from 1975 - 78 and was again named to the post in 1979 when the present government again came to power.

Danish Prime Minister Joergensen said yesterday "We attach great importance to having a Dane responsible for the agricultural question in the future." He re-emphasized this statement today on Danish national television.

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