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PRESS RELEASE

Joint communique issued following meeting of President Johnson and Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, in Washington,

March 18, 1965

The President met today with Dr. Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community. During his visit in Washington Dr. Hallstein is also having talks with the Vice-president, the Secretaries of State, Defense, Agriculture, and Commerce. The President's Acting Special Representative for trade negotiations, Senator Fulbright and Representative Boggs.

The President and Dr. Hallstein agreed on the high value of existing close relations between the United States and the Common Market. They agreed that continued progress toward European integration strengthens the free world as European partnership with the United States grows closer.

President Johnson assured Dr. Hallstein of the continued strong support of the United States for the goal of European unity.

The President extended his congratulations on the recent decision to merge the executive bodies of the three European Communities, which the President sees as another significant step in the process of European integration.

The President emphasized the importance of the Kennedy round of trade negotiations. He noted their significance for less-developed as well as industrialized nations. He told Dr. Hallstein of the importance which the United States attaches to the liberalization of trade in both industry and agriculture.

Dr. Hallstein emphasized his wish to see an increasingly united Europe assume an important role in the developing Atlantic partnership. He affirmed the intention of the European Commission to work for the successful completion of the Kennedy round.

The President and Dr. Hallstein agreed to maintain continued close contact on matters of joint concern to the United States and the European Economic Community.

Annexe II

Following his meeting with President Johnson, President Hallstein met the press. The following is a summary of his statement and his answers to the questions:

I am not here in the United States to negotiate. Though I have met the President before, this is the first time that I have met him as President. I have also met a number of other people here. My overall impression, confirmed by my talk with President Johnson, is that the fundamental orientation of U.S. policy toward Europe is unchanged. This is basic for Europe.

There is no need for the U.S. to choose between Atlantic partnership and support for a united Europe. A strong and united Europe is an essential element of Atlantic partnership. This was confirmed here. Now it must be translated into action, for example in the area of trade, balance of payments and in other sectors of economic policy. This is well understood here.

European economic integration is not economic. What we are doing is political, part of a political process of outstanding importance. This is the first volume of a 2 volume work called political union. The first volume is domestic policy -- economic and social. We are in the midst of the transition period in creating this first volume. When we are in the final stage of this period, we will have half of political unification. The second volume is foreign policy. This political volume must be added.

Question: What is your view on the problem of the French attitude toward a European Europe ?

Answer : You know our views on this. We favor the federal concept in a united Europe.

Question: Did you discuss the Kennedy round ?

Answer : It was alluded to. We are strongly committed to do our best to make it a great success.

Question: Did President Johnson indicate that he would visit Europe ?

Answer : No.

Question : Are the British getting closer to joining the European Community ?

Answer : That depends on them, they must take the initiative. There are also other conditions to be fulfilled. Our main effort is to bridge the gap by seeking practical, pragmatic solutions and working together.

Question : Is the U.S. gold outflow a threat to the European Community ?

Answer : No.

Question: Is there any chance for improved EEC relations with the East bloc ?

Answer : These countries have not recognized the EEC. However, trade has been going on with them for a number of years.

Question : Will the European Community expand eastwards ?

Answer : The fundamental point is that the European Community is accessible to all who have the freedom to express their political will.

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