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CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE PORTE-PAROLE

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RENDEZ-VOUS DE MIDI - 7 March 1988 (N. Wegter)

We referred to the visit of Vice President Andriessen to Washington which took place in the second half of last week. We have qualified that visit as very useful since it provided a good opportunity for meeting high ranking American delegates (Mr. Yeutter and Mr. Lyng) plus making a round-up of the main problems at stake as far as the International agricultural debate is concerned.

A series of problems of mutual importance have been discussed, but the meetings concentrated in particular on the Uruguay Round including what is to be expected in the coming year. We have not hidden our disappointment in the way the Americans interpret our efforts to come to better grips with our own agricultural production. In fact, Washington has great difficulties in recognizing the substantial sacrifices we are asking from our farmers in this context, and it cannot accept our thesis that it is now up to our main trading partners to follow that example by giving "credit" to us for what we have done already.

The American administration is underlining systematically that highest priority should be given to those measures which bring about the long-term solution pursued by Washington i.e. the total de-coupling as of the year 2000. This means that they stick to their thesis that all classical farm support (import levies, export, refunds, internal market support etc.) should be completely deleted by the end of this century. On the other hand, they have difficulties on concentrating on measures to be agreed upon internationally which will bring about immediate effects. In particular, they are very reluctant regarding our proposals to agree on emergency action for the three main international commodity markets i.e. cereals, sugar and dairy.

For our part, we have stressed the need for not isolating agriculture from the other sectors dealt with in the Uruguay Round, although we do not exclude certain particular agreements as described above.

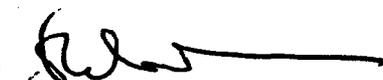
In fact, the Community is noting that there is contradiction between the long term de-coupling objective claimed by Washington on the one hand, and their short term policy which is characterized by important "coupled" measures (like the export enhancement programme (EEP)) which is resulting in considerable financial consequences which the Community has to match anyway.

We have underlined the importance of the next world summit in Toronto next June, where agriculture will certainly be an important topic, as well as the mid-term stock-taking, which is going to take place in Montreal December next. However, we have made clear that those dates cannot be considered as deadlines for final discussion about agricultural issues.

Discussions with Washington and with our other main trading partners are certainly going to be continued in 1988. In that context, Vice President Andriessen is meeting tonight in Geneva an American delegation in which representatives of the Administration as well as the Congress are represented to discuss international problems related to agriculture. No doubt Mr. Andriessen will again underline the important measures taken already by the Community in particular those agreed upon at the last summit, and that it is now up to the others to follow the same line.

Matériel distribué

MEMO 34 Données économiques
IP 126 Droit anti-dumping sur certaines machines à écrire et balances électroniques.

Regards, 

C.D. Ehlermann