

ADDRESS

by

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President of the Commission  
of the European Economic Community

at the opening of the "Grüne Woche 1965"

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To be invited to the Grüne Woche by the Berlin Senate is at once an honour and a pleasure for me. It gives me an opportunity once again to convey to the City of Berlin the greetings of the European Economic Community. Berlin is a European city. Because of its past and its position today, it has a role to play in the Europe whose road to a great, peaceful and secure future we are endeavouring to build. We share your pride in what this city has accomplished for freedom, just as we share your cares and sorrows. In six European countries which a mere quarter of a century ago were locked in bloody combat, people are beginning to regard Europe as their common fatherland. No barrier and no constraint weighs upon them. We therefore feel all the more deeply with Berlin, where a wall must be pierced before peaceful people can spend a few days together for peaceful, human purposes.

My greetings are at the same time a word of hope. Berlin and the Eastern Zone have not only individual friends everywhere in the free world. A Community which embraces the free part of Germany and five European States and is growing in strength every day also supports the Germans behind the Iron Curtain; we look forward to the day when it will open up new possibilities of changing their fate!

The Grüne Woche in the free part of Berlin is a meeting of agriculturalists from the whole world. For this reason my second greeting and my wishes for outstanding success are extended to the "Grüne Woche 1965". This year too it will show what the farmer can do when he lives under the law of the free. Over there, in that world without freedom, we see misery without end

and depressing shortages, despite all the experiments made and "new courses" taken by the centralized, State management. Over here, where the farmer too is a free member of the economy, we have welfare, genuine progress and security.

Everywhere, both East and West, agriculture is a key problem. Everywhere, agriculture is in a process of profound change. It is no longer a world unto itself. It must dovetail with modern industrial society. The highly developed national economy and the world economy based on division of labour provide the background against which it is bound to work.

And so agricultural problems have become questions of life and death running like a leitmotiv through the process of European integration. If they have often brought the Community to the brink of disaster, they have always ended by taking it further along the road of progress, both direct and indirect.

Thus it was in the earlier years; thus it was - and how conclusively! - last year too. The decision on a unified price of cereals in the European Community is a turning-point in the history of European farming. It is the beginning of something completely new, of a European policy for agriculture.

From 1 July 1967 onwards there will be only one single cereals price in Europe, valid from Schleswig-Holstein to Sicily, from Passau to Brittany. We are convinced that it represents the golden mean between extremes. We believe that it is low enough not to lead to surpluses or to prevent a reasonable

quantity of imports. It is high enough to ensure an adequate income to agriculture as a whole. Once the other farm prices have also been fixed, as is planned, a large unified agricultural market without any obstacles to trade will exist in the Community. If, as we hope, the proposals put forward by the EEC Commission concerning the Customs Union are also accepted, the whole Common Market will be completed by 1 July 1967. In the fields of economic policy and social policy, then, the political unification of Europe is advancing swiftly and successfully. Let us hope that in the two remaining fields - defence and external policy - it will also soon be effectively launched.

For German agriculture this decision indeed spells "Good-bye" to a tradition of high cereals prices which goes back almost a century, but which has outlived its usefulness. Even if there had been no European Economic Community, it could not have been maintained. In saying this we do not wish to under-rate the fact that the reduction of the German cereals price will demand re-thinking and conversion - even sacrifices - particularly from the larger farms. It is universally agreed that the Federal Government has successfully accomplished a really great and difficult task and that the farmers have given proof of realism and understanding.

On the other hand generous compensation for loss of income, and advances in agricultural structure and social policy, which have so far been somewhat neglected in favour of market and trade policy, will help to increase the productivity of agriculture even faster than hitherto.

For the change in prices is no more decisive in Germany than it is elsewhere. What matters is that the German farmer now has before him new roads leading to a future in which the faulty relationship between agriculture and the other branches of the economy will be put right. In the long run this cannot be done by subsidies; the evil has to be cured at the root. Only a common European agricultural policy can get German agriculture into proper shape for the next decades of this century. The German farmer will then show that he is as good as any other farmer in Europe. Feelings of inferiority are out of place. He too will make use of his chances, he will gear himself to the new and larger market, and he will learn to defend his position in this market.

What is true of German agriculture applies equally to European agriculture as a whole. Only a common agricultural policy can put it in a position to compete with the great agricultural markets of the world.

To merge the agricultures of six European countries into one naturally changes their relationships with the other countries of Europe and overseas, for almost a quarter of the world's agricultural trade is accounted for by the European Community, which is the largest single importer of farm products. The new start being made in Europe with agricultural policy means that a new start must also be made in the world's agricultural trade. The present chaotic conditions must give way to a sensible order. We have proposed far-reaching solutions for this problem, and the Commission is now discussing them at the

world-wide negotiations being carried on in Geneva. Here too we must cease concentrating on the symptoms of the unsatisfactory state of world agricultural markets - the import restrictions - and must tackle its causes, i.e. the differences in our agricultural policies. This is novel and bold, perhaps revolutionary. It is no wonder that the Community has encountered doubts and objections on this issue. But we maintain that our approach is necessary; the decision on the cereals price now enables us to go beyond a theoretical and hypothetical policy for European agriculture, to achieve a real and practical policy which will have concrete form thanks to the fixing of prices, and we will now be able to present ourselves, armed with this policy, for the proposed confrontation of agricultural policies.

Berlin, Europe and the world: for all these agriculture - and the Grüne Woche - provide a focal point. The new Europe needs and employs no constraint and no violence. It is emerging through the exercise of freedom guaranteed by law, and in the practice of peaceful persuasion. The appeal is not to power but to reason, to solidarity, to wisdom. These are the instruments with which we will build Europe in the world of tomorrow, and no wall can limit our confidence in their success.

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