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February 17, 1960

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EEC OFFICIAL CALLS COMMON EXTERNAL  
TARIFF STEP TOWARD POLITICAL UNITY**

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 17 -- Giuseppe Caron, Vice President of the Commission of the European Economic Community (Common Market) and a member of the Common Market executive responsible for the internal market, issued the following statement in Brussels regarding the establishment of the Community's common external tariff:

"The common external tariff of the EEC, approved by the Common Market Commission early this month and by the Council of Ministers on February 13, not only constitutes a most important technical achievement but also confirms the political intention of the six member countries to continue to pursue their goal of complete economic integration.

"Starting with some 19,000 tariff listings, officials have consolidated these into somewhat less than 3,000 complying with the Brussels nomenclature. Common external tariffs have now been set for approximately 95 per cent of the various tariff listings ad valorem.

"This accomplishment gives proof to the possibility of all problems of a technical nature within the Common Market being concretely resolved as long as the political will exists within the member countries. Now that the Community's members have so tangibly proven that they respect the letter and the spirit of the Treaty of Rome, I am hopeful that this cooperation will result in achievements clearly in favor of constantly increasing trade between the EEC and other countries of the world.

"As a matter of fact, I hope, along with all the members of the Commission, that our Community -- with its high level of industrial development, its rapid expansion of exports, and its comfortable balance of payments surplus -- will anchor its commercial policies on the most liberal principles possible. Our

efforts toward European integration by no means represent steps toward protectionism or toward the establishment of a self-sufficient bloc.

"The actions of the Commission and the Council of Ministers underline the unity of the six countries and represent the first indispensable steps on the road to a common tariff policy. When will this actually take place? Here we run into the problem of accelerating the Common Market. The Commission is studying this possibility very carefully -- not only from the point of view of speeding up the transition period toward a full customs union, but also from the point of view of creating an entirely new rhythm in the method of implementation of the Treaty. In the years to come, the common external tariff of the EEC will play an important role in bringing all three stages of the transition period to successful conclusion."

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