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HALLSTEIN CALLS FOR SOLUTION
OF PRACTICAL TRADE PROBLEMS

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 24 -- "The urgent and immediate task on questions of European trade policy is the settling of current concrete problems," Professor Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, told the joint session of the Community's European Parliament and the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg today. This, he said, was clear to all parties concerned; the opinions of the Commission, the European Parliament, and the Consultative Assembly had in fact developed along a logical line in this direction.

It had become clear, he continued, that the cause of European trade would be better served if practical problems were for the time being given priority over the more fundamental questions. The resolution of the Committee of 21 on June 10 had made particularly clear the extent to which constructive realism had replaced the tendency to dramatize and to indulge in mutual reproaches. The 20 countries and the Commission were, he said, agreed that:

- The European talks had broadened out into an Atlantic framework and that all decisions must be taken in agreement with our friends in the United States and Canada;
- The discussions between the Community and the Seven must remain open to other interested partners;
- All solutions to specifically European problems must be sought in conformity with the rules of GATT and with consideration for the interests of other countries;
- Practical measures must be undertaken to maintain and to increase traditional trade currents;
- Appropriate preparation of the fifth round of tariff negotiations in GATT could serve this end; and
- An exchange of views on the long-term aspects of the problems in question is not excluded, although negotiations on this subject are not indicated for the present moment.

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President Hallstein welcomed the growing tendency of public opinion, as well as of official circles, in European countries outside the Community to give serious consideration to the question of full membership in the Community. In an allusion to Great Britain, President Hallstein declared that the treaty establishing the European Economic Community unequivocally opened the door for the entry of all those who were prepared to accept its rules. Referring to the current debate in countries outside the Community, he said: "We are very pleased to hear that in particular there is no desire to diminish in any way the present or future political content of our integration."

But Europe was not only made up of prosperous countries, President Hallstein continued, referring to the so-called "forgotten" or "peripheral" countries in whose favor he called for European solidarity. The Community, he said, had undertaken negotiations for an association with two of these countries. "We have never underestimated the difficulties of such negotiations, but we have equally never doubted that they would succeed. Indeed, in the case of the negotiations with Greece success is already almost within reach." "It may be easier," President Hallstein continued, "to unite 80 million inhabitants of flourishing industrial countries in a system of free trade than to find a solution for a single nation which, to grapple successfully with her problems, has very little more to rely on from her own resources than hard work and the determination to shape her life according to her own ways and her own great traditions." In such a case, "association" really means friendship and fellowship.

All these European problems, President Hallstein went on, must be dealt with in the context of the general problem of gradually forging a policy for world trade, both for the industrial countries and for those in the process of development. The nucleus of such a policy, he declared, was Atlantic cooperation, including a confrontation of economic policies and co-ordination of policy with regard to countries in the process of development. The organization for such cooperation would probably, in many respects, be more loosely knit than the old European OEEC. It would at the same time also be outward, rather than inward, looking. Last, but not least, it would be fully subject to GATT; that is, it would not develop a separate trade policy but would stimulate and further that of GATT.

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In conclusion, President Hallstein called for an active policy in regard to African problems. Collaboration between the African countries, he said, must continue undisturbed and in a constructive spirit. For this reason, any solution which the Community found to the problems of the African countries associated with it must also take into account the interests of the other African states. This means that any difference of opinion that might exist between European nations must not be allowed to spill over into their policies toward the countries of Africa; rather, the similarity of their responsibilities in this respect should act as a means of bringing them to closer mutual understanding.