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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMON MARKET COMMISSION REACTS TO DENIAL OF BRITISH BID

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 20 - The Commission of the European Communities issued the following statement in Brussels today following the failure yesterday by the Communities' Council of Ministers to act on Great Britain's application for membership.

"The Commission deeply regrets the Council's failure to reach agreement on what steps should be taken to deal with the applications for membership in the Communities made by a number of European countries, in particular the United Kingdom.

"Whatever difficulties of substance may have arisen, the Commission still believes that the countries concerned must be given a hearing and that the Communities should negotiate with them in order to ascertain whether solutions acceptable to all can be found.

"The Commission, faithful to the letter and the spirit of its report to the Council, has spared no effort to convince all the member states that a solution should be sought which will reconcile the various views advanced.

"The Commission appeals to all concerned to keep the consequences of the present disagreement within the narrowest possible limits. More than ever before, efforts in the field of European integration will have to be pursued tenaciously, and opportunities must be sought to resume the course, temporarily abandoned, of expanding the Communities. The Commission will do its utmost to help attain these objectives."

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