



*European Communities
Commission
The Week in Europe*

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A WEEKLY SUMMARY OF PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS

Next Council Meetings

Brussels	February 20	Finance
	March 6 + 7	Agriculture
	March 7	Foreign Affairs
	March 13 + 14	APC/EEC
	March 20	Finance
	March 21	Energy

Provisional Dates Further Ahead

European Council (Summit)	April 7 + 8 (Copenhagen)
Joint Council Finance/Foreign Affairs	April 3
Foreign Affairs Council	April 4, May 2, June 2, June 27
Finance Council	April 17, May 22, June 19
Agriculture Council	April 3 + 4, April 24 + 25, May 22 + 23, June 19 + 20
Social Affairs Council	April 24
Development Council	April 25
Environment Council	May 30
Energy Council	May 30
Transport Council	June 12
European Parliament	March 13 - 17 (Strasbourg) April 10 - 14 (Luxembourg) May 8 - 12 (Strasbourg) June 12 - 16 (Luxembourg)

FLASHBACK

JAPAN: Continuing concern with the rising Japanese trade surplus with Europe was expressed in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. A senior Commission trade official, Mr Benedict Meynell, completed four days preparatory talks in Tokyo with a briefing in which he pointed out that the surplus in Japan's favour grew by almost 1 billion dollars in 1977 to 5.2 billion dollars. He said there was concern that only 40 % of Japan's export to the Community were now covered by Japan's imports from the Community.

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ELEVENTH GENERAL REPORT: Monsieur Emile Noel, Secretary-General of the Commission, presented the Eleventh General Report. He stressed progress achieved in 1977 in three particular areas: 1) reinforcement of Community action towards difficulties in industrial sectors such as steel and textiles; 2) the reaffirmation of the necessity to proceed towards economic and monetary union within the context of a concrete action programme under a political control at the highest level; 3) on the external front the re-launching of multilateral trade negotiations of which the Community was one of the driving forces. These negotiations were a key element in the struggle against world protectionism.

UNEMPLOYMENT: The Commission approved a working document setting up new guidelines for work sharing in the Community in order to struggle against prolonged underemployment. This document will be tabled at the next meeting of the Permanent Committee on Employment which will take place during March. The vice-president of the Commission responsible for employment policy, Mr Henk Vredeling, pointed out that it would be necessary before 1985 to create 9 million extra jobs. This was partly because of prolonged recession and partly because of a growth in the population entering the labour market and a diminishing of the number of people retiring from the market. He hoped that work sharing would be made the object of close cooperation among employers, workers and governments, cooperation which ought to lead to solidarity on both sides of industry.

BANANAS: The European Court of Justice in Luxembourg pronounced guilty United Brands, the world's largest grower and supplier of bananas, on three counts of abuse of a dominant market position. A fourth accusation of charging unfair prices was dismissed. After reducing an earlier fine imposed by the Commission the Court decided on a fine of £354,166. Legal observers regarded the Court's ruling as a major step in the strengthening of the Commission's powers to prevent abuses in trading markets.

TACHOGRAPH: The Commission took the second step in legal proceedings against the British Government for its failure to implement secondary legislation on the use of the tachograph in heavy lorries and passenger coaches. The Commission is to issue an "Avis Motivé" - a Reasoned Opinion - in which the British Government is invited to set the tachograph law in motion within two months or face the prospect of action in the European Court of Justice.

FLOOD AID: The Commission announced disaster aid of nearly £1 million to the U.K. England will get £651,186 to help repair flood damage in the East and South-East. Scotland is to get £325,593 towards the repair of snow damage.

DIRECT ELECTIONS: The Bill authorising Direct Elections in Britain to the European Parliament was given a third reading in the House of Commons by 159 - 45 votes, a Government majority 114. The Bill now goes to the House of Lords. In the European Parliament, the member of the Commission responsible for energy policy, Mr Guido Brunner, said that the Commission hoped that the next meeting of the European Council (summit) in Copenhagen on April 7 + 8 would decide on a firm date for the holding of Direct Elections.

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