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PRESIDENT JENKINS' STATEMENT TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON THE
OUTCOME OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN VENICE

After complimenting the Italians on "a distinguished Presidency", reaching its height under Signor Colombo's "outstanding chairmanship" of the General Affairs Council on 29-30 May, Mr Jenkins went on:

" The Community's ability to respond to the challenge by the solutions reached at the end of last month on a range of internal Community issues.

The agreement achieved was a true victory for the Community. It was a reaffirmation that the cohesion of the Community remains overridingly more important to all its members than the maintenance of national policies or interests which might risk its disintegration. It was a confirmation that answers to Community problems are still to be found by the Community's institutions, and that within these institutions all sides are prepared to argue to a solution rather than to an impasse.

The implementing legislation has still to be approved by the Council and the Parliament. We sent forward two proposals, one on the financial mechanism, the other on supplementary expenditure measures in the United Kingdom. It is important that these proposals should be considered and adopted rapidly. I hope that all the necessary procedures can be carried through before the summer break. I therefore ask the Parliament to take this matter in hand as quickly as possible. Second, there will need to be discussion in the Parliament about our proposals for extra expenditure in the United Kingdom to be entered into the 1980 and 1981 budgets.

I will only say now that this should be dealt with by all concerned in the same spirit in which the agreements themselves were reached. Everything possible must be done to avoid undermining the progress made in the past weeks.

In this context, it is helpful that much of the extra expenditure in the United Kingdom will take the form of contributions to the development of the infrastructure. This will not only make a contribution to some of the problems facing Britain but it will also help move towards the better balance of policies within the Community budget that the Commission and the Parliament have sought.

But, if following the agreements of 30 May, there is work ahead for the Parliament, there is also major work ahead for the Council of Ministers. First at Venice the European Council stressed the Community's commitment to carry through those structural changes which are a fundamental requirement for progress if unacceptable situations are not again to arise in any of the Member States. The Commission will fulfil its mandate with the objective of ensuring that the time we have gained is used wisely to build the next stage in the Community's development. This will be on the basis of existing foundations. The present Commission will soon be setting the necessary work in hand. The responsibility for major decisions will then devolve on the Council.

Second, the European Council devoted particular attention to the worsening international energy crisis. On energy investment we are still only at the beginning of what must be a long-term effort and we still need to determine the right means. On the other ideas put forward by the Commission, including the need for energy price proposals and progressive harmonization of energy taxation throughout the Community, I am concerned that little or nothing has yet been done.

Third, the European Council laid emphasis on the urgent need to give priority in some of the Member States to short-term structural measures to promote employment. Here, it is essential that the Community should be in position to look systematically at the impact on employment of the various Community policies. To ensure a better coordination of employment policies at the Community level, and to harmonize Community actions in the field of economic policy with those taken in the social and employment field.

We have to some extent broken the recently growing and dangerous habit of leaving difficult decisions to the European Council. We have seen the Council of Ministers succeed when the European Council has failed. We need more decisions from the Council of Ministers as part of the normal rhythm of Community business. I hope they will now proceed vigourously and with renewed morale."