

EUROPEAN BACKGROUND INFORMATION COMMUNITY

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

2100 M Street NW, Washington DC 20037 Telephone (202) 872-8350

New York Office: 245 East 47th Street, New York NY 10017 Telephone (212) 371-3890

BACKGROUND NOTE

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STRONG U.S. ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN UNITY

President Jimmy Carter, the first American president to visit the headquarters of the European Community in Brussels, made clear in his statements there this month his strong support for European unity.

In his prepared statement to the Commission, the administrative branch of the nine-nation Community, Carter said that "the United States welcomes a strong, united Europe as a common force for the values our peoples share." And in extemporaneous remarks at the close of the January 6 meeting, he added that he would "do everything I can as President to encourage you in a proper fashion, through public statements and otherwise, to reach that cohesion of purpose and that organizational structure that you desire."

"There have been allegations," Carter continued, "and perhaps even some indications in previous administrations in Washington, that there was a concern about a strong, united, dynamic European Community. We don't share those concerns at all, if they did exist, and we think it is to our advantage to have a European Community that is united and is politically and economically very strong."

In a statement welcoming President Carter to the Community headquarters, the Right Honorable Roy Jenkins, president of the Commission, described the unity he foresees for the European Community, one that includes economic and monetary union, the admission of the three applicants for membership -- Greece, Portugal and Spain, and direct elections to a European Parliament.

"We are a young Community formed out of ancient peoples with strong national traditions," said Jenkins, "we do not seek to flatten those nations' traditions, but rather to help canalize them toward more constructive purposes than has often been the case in the past. The Community has powers and responsibilities both externally and internally that make it more than the sum of its constituent parts. Within Europe our job is to make that sum stronger and more effective."

"We are delighted that your visit today testifies your continuing support for this great enterprise," Jenkins said to Carter. "We are your forefathers. But you are now also ours, in having shown in your very different circumstances, one way of creating unity out of the diversity of European heritage."

Texts of the statements by Presidents Carter and Jenkins follow:

Opening Statement by President Jenkins:

Mr. President, the European Commission is honoured and delighted to welcome you here. It is the first visit to the Commission of a President of the United States. Your visit is therefore both a symbol and a practical manifestation of the enduring relationship between Europe and the United States and, more particularly of the developing and excellent contacts between this Commission and your Administration. They are both one year old this month, and in fact you visit us on this Commission's birthday, the sixth of January.

Both the United States and Europe have in the past year had to confront many similar problems throughout the world. Your present tour has brought into sharp focus several aspects of your great international responsibilities. We are also aware of our actual and potential role in the outside world. These roles are in our view complementary. We see neither contradiction of our European purpose nor dependence in a strong relationship between the Community and the United States. This is especially so on the world economic scene. Our mutual desire to ensure the success of the multilateral trade negotiations is of greater importance both for us and for the world as a whole than any bilateral difficulties that may exist between us. Our cooperation, together with the Japanese, is necessary both to withstand the damaging dangers of protectionism and to regenerate a still sluggish world economy.

Another important dimension of mutual concern is our approach to the third world and the way in which we conceive of the dialogue between north and south. Both Europe and the United States have outgrown the age of charitable action. We live in a world where a proper division of labour and of economic effort between developed and developing countries is necessary for our health as well as theirs. And it is necessary not only for our economic health but for the political and social health of the world as a whole.

We agree with you that the importance of our relationship is exemplified in the field of energy. My official visit to you in April of last year took place in what, for you, was "energy week". We in the Community strongly support your continuing efforts to achieve a result which is both practical and imaginative and will begin to deal with this major problem. Our relative dependence on the outside world is of course still greater than yours. But our priorities are similar - to save energy, and to develop alternative sources to oil imports. Moreover, if our need for nuclear energy is perceived at the present time somewhat differently from yours - although I believe it is now possible to exaggerate the differences - we enter willingly into the International Fuel Cycle Evaluation Programme, wishing for its success and without prejudice to its results.

The European Community and the Commission here have a major role to play in the world. But to underpin we must constantly safeguard and strengthen our internal cohesion. The United States is still often thought of as a relatively new nation. But we are an even younger Community: twenty-five years old compared with your 201. We are a young Community formed out of ancient peoples with strong national traditions. We do not seek to flatten those national traditions, but rather to help canalize them towards more constructive purposes than has often been the case in the past. The Community has powers and responsibilities both externally and internally that make it more than the sum of its constituent parts. Within Europe our job is to make that

sum stronger and more effective. That is why this Commission has redefined and is relaunching our approach towards economic and monetary union.

This initiative has also to be seen in conjunction with two other strategic developments that are on the Community's agenda today: on the one hand, the prospect, very soon, of the first direct elections to the European Parliament, and, on the other hand, the prospect of further enlargement of the Community to embrace the three nascent democracies of Southern Europe - Greece, Portugal and Spain. These three developments are powerfully inter-related. We could not envisage monetary union without a European direct democracy. What better way of underwriting democracy in the three applicant countries than by inviting them to a new, shared democratic Parliament? What better way of assuring that enlargement does not dilute the integration of Europe than by resuming the move towards economic and monetary union?

Mr. President, we believe that you, representing the people of the United States, share our desire for a Europe economically unified in essentials and therefore better able to play a major role in the world. We are delighted that your visit today testifies your continuing support for this great enterprise. We are your forefathers. But you are now also ours, in having shown in your very different circumstances, one way of creating unity out of the diversity of European heritage.

Opening Statement by President Carter:

Mr. President, and members of the Commission:

I am glad to meet with you today, and to continue the discussions that began when my administration was only a few hours old.

Before my first week in office was over, Vice President Mondale began his visit to our traditional allies, stopping first of all in Brussels, home of those international institutions that represent our shared hope for a secure and prosperous future.

As the first American President to visit the headquarters of the European Community, I believe this meeting symbolizes America's abiding commitment to a strong and united Europe, and to the European Community.

It has been my pleasure to meet often with the Community's leaders. In addition to meeting President Jenkins both at the London Economic Summit and in Washington, I benefitted from meeting with Prime Ministers Callaghan and Tindemans during their countries' term in the presidency of the Council.

As I have travelled in these last nine days, crossing continents and cultures, discussing different systems of politics and economics, seeing humanity in its full diverse array, I have reaffirmed certain constant themes time after time.

I have stressed the importance of democratic political values, and the steps needed to defend them; the economic challenges we face in our relations with the developing world, and the need to cope with problems of our own.

We must also open our hearts to improve the chances for peace, while always maintaining the strong right arm of our defense.

I have repeated these themes because they need repetition, because they express to the world the values my nation most deeply holds.

I am proud today to add another -- that the United States welcomes a strong, united Europe as a common force for the values our peoples share,

The United States will do its part to work with you.

Our economy is prosperous and growing, continuing its steady recovery,

Because we have confidence in the fundamental strength of our economy, we have confidence in the fundamental strength of the dollar, now and for the future.

But we are also aware of the degree to which our own prosperity depends more than ever on international economic cooperation.

We are prepared to work with the Community in a wide variety of ways, in order:

- to promote the economic growth of nations so as to control inflation reduce unemployment, and achieve monetary stability;
- to reach a rapid and successful conclusion to the multilateral trade negotiations, and thus to expand international trade, create more jobs in all countries, and help us all resist protectionist pressures;
- to work creatively toward mutually beneficial relations with the developing nations;
- to cooperate in providing a role for nuclear technology in meeting our energy needs, without hazarding our children's future through the threat of nuclear proliferation; and
- to find answers together to social and economic problems facing each of our societies.

As I said in Paris two days ago, we must use the tools of shared freedom to increase the choices and opportunities in our economic system.

We can share our experience in social development -- in education, health care, social services, the organization and management of factory and farm.

As the world's largest trading unit, the Community shares with us a clear interest in a successful conclusion to the multilateral trade negotiations.

They are progressing well, though much remains to be done.

I welcome the success of the participating nations in reaching the goal set last May in London: substantial progress by the end of 1977.

What has been achieved already should enable the negotiations to end this year.

Speed is important, if these negotiations are to improve the world trading system and remove pressure for protectionism.

We need a broad package of agreements, with major reductions in tariffs and non-tariff barriers, and with provisions for agriculture.

We know that each country will face problems of transition to a freer trading system.

But those are a small price to pay for the benefits of more open trade, and they are small, too, in comparison to the danger of protectionism if we fail to reach a comprehensive agreement.

Our nations also share concern for developing comprehensive energy programs.

Two months ago, I postponed my visit here to Brussels in order to do everything possible to enact an energy program in the United States.

My country must waste less energy and develop alternative sources of supply; as soon as I return, I will resume work on this crucial legislation.

I am confident that the United States will soon be setting an example for responsible energy policy.

The European Community and the United States also share a deep interest in promoting relations with developing countries, and our cooperation has led to constructive results.

We must continue to work together to draw these countries more fully into the global economy.

They too must be able to share more equitably in the benefits and responsibilities of global economic progress, and to play an appropriate role in making global economic decisions.

We in the United States also welcome the growing political and economic role of the Community beyond Western Europe.

The role of the Community contributes vitally to reaching goals we share.

Most recently, I have been particularly pleased by the close cooperation between us -- and by the firm leadership shown by the members of the Community -- at the Belgrade Review Conference on security and cooperation in Europe.

Finally, in stressing our commitment to European unity, I look forward to continuing a close and productive association between the United States and the European Community in the years ahead. And I can think of no more fitting tribute to what you are doing than to cite the words of Jean Monnet, the Father of European unity: "You are not making a coalition of states; you are uniting peoples."

Closing remarks by President Carter:

I am very grateful that you are accepting me today. We have a feeling of mutual support and mutual respect and a sense of equality. Although the European Community is the collective home of a larger trading entity than our own, I would like to do everything I can as President to encourage you in a proper fashion, through public statements and otherwise, to reach that cohesion of purpose and that organizational structure that you desire, I think we can be of help Mr. President, in bringing into a more productive trade relationship not only our own country, but perhaps Japan. We have had a long fruitful, profitable, close friendship with Japan. We know them very well, we consult with them constantly, and they are beginning, I think, to understand the special economic problems and the attitudes of both the European Community and ourselves. We have had some very frank and detailed negotiations with the Japanese recently, and I can report to you that we have made very good progress. And of course the more we understand the problems of one another the better opportunity we will have in the future to give mutual support.

There have been allegations, and perhaps even some indications in previous Administrations in Washington, that there was a concern about a strong, united, dynamic European Community. We don't share those concerns at all, if they did exist, and we think it is to our advantage to have a European Community that is united and is politically and economically very strong. We have welcomed you Mr. President in the past to our country, and I hope that later on this year you will be able to come back and visit us again to keep us abreast of the accomplishments of this group and also of your plans for the future because to a substantial degree I would modify and shape our own nation's political and economic decisions based upon the advice and information which I can derive from all of you. I want to congratulate you for what you have done in this first year. We share with you the pleasure of your accomplishments. We look forward to an even closer working relationship with you in the years ahead. Thank you very much.