

No. 38/1985
December 4, 1985

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COMMISSIONER DE CLERCQ CALLS FOR VETO ON TEXTILE AND FOOTWEAR BILL

Willy De Clercq, E.C. Commissioner for External Relations, today made the following remarks in Brussels on learning that the U.S. Congress passed the Textile and Apparel Trade Enforcement Act of 1985, providing for import restrictions on textile and footwear:

"The President of the United States will have to weigh the merits of the bill before signing or vetoing the measure. In the Community's view, a Presidential veto is the only coherent course of action to take.

"President Reagan has repeatedly committed himself to free trade policy, and confirmed this principle in his September 23 policy speech, when he said, 'Our trade policy rests firmly on the foundation of free and open markets--free trade.'

"In accordance with his commitment to free trade, the President decided not to grant import relief to the footwear industry despite an International Trade Commission recommendation to the contrary. The same determination is required now.

"Regarding textiles, the bill excludes the E.C. from restrictive measures. However, the Community is convinced that U.S. action will put at risk the existence of the Multifiber Arrangement, which remains in its view the necessary international mechanism for the orderly development of trade in textiles.

"I also want to state unequivocally that U.S. restrictions on Community exports of footwear would be bound to provoke Community countermeasures on U.S. exports to the E.C."