



COMMISSION
OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITIES

8 Storey's Gate London SW1P 3AT
Telephone: 01-222 8122
Fax: 01-222 0900

WE/1789

12th January 1989

THE WEEK IN EUROPE

New Commission meets. The first official meeting of the new Commission took place in Brussels on Friday, 6 January. The following weekend President Jacques Delors, accompanied by Commissioners Frans Andriessen, Henning Christophersen and Manuel Marin, visited Madrid since Spain has now taken over from Greece the Council Presidency for the six months' period until June. On 9 January, Chefs de Cabinet met in Brussels. Thus the scene is set for the beginning of the second half of the eight year run-up to the completion of the internal market by the end of 1992. The first of the regular Wednesday Commission meetings took place yesterday and was attended by the UK's new Commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan, who received a knighthood in the New Year's honours list, and Mr Bruce Millan. Further form and content will be given to the new Commission's work programme when President Delors addresses the European Parliament next week.

Farewell briefing by Lord Cockfield. Speaking at the Commission's London offices on 3 January, Vice-President Lord Cockfield gave his views on Community progress in completing the internal market. It was a valedictory occasion as Lord Cockfield has now ended his 4 years term as the UK's senior Commissioner. He told his audience that by the end of the last Commission's life "about 90%" of proposals for the completion of the internal market had been produced by the Commission and at the last count, made just before Christmas, the Council of Ministers had adopted 47% of the total number of proposals. Asked what he envisaged the UK's role in the Community to be, Lord Cockfield said: "It is all very well congratulating yourself, as I have seen some people do from time to time, at our ability to run after the departing train and leap aboard as it leaves the station. That is not the role that we in this country ought to be playing. We oughtn't to be in the guard's van at the back, we ought to be in the driver's cab at the front. That's the sort of role this country ought to be playing." His future role, Lord Cockfield said, would be to "return to active service in the House of Lords".

U.K receives £82m from ERDF. The Commission has approved grants from the European Regional Development Fund amounting to £82.73 million in respect of 350 investments in infrastructure and industry in the U.K. By region the investments are: West Midlands - 62 investments receiving £9.41m; Yorkshire and Humberside - 22 projects receiving £12.96m; East Midlands - 6 grants totalling £1.25m; South-West - 19 investments totalling £4.69m; North - 17 projects granted £28.91m; North-West - grants totalling £6.68m; Scotland - 62 projects totalling £14.49m; and Northern Ireland - 67 projects receiving £7.64m.

Free Food action. In 1989 free food valued at 147m ecu (£97m) will be distributed among Member States in continuation of the programme undertaken over the past two years.

Europe against Cancer. 1989 is "Europe against Cancer" information year and the Commission has so far come up with the following slogans - Certain cancers may be avoided; do not smoke; moderate your alcohol intake; avoid excessive exposure to the sun; respect safety instructions on the use of cancerogenic substances; eat fresh fruits and vegetables; avoid becoming overweight. The official launch of the campaign will take place shortly.

EIB loan to Barclays for SMEs. The European Investment Bank is advancing the equivalent of £80m (123m ecu) to Barclays Bank for on-lending to Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) throughout the UK. The 15 year multi-currency financial package is the first the EIB has negotiated with a British clearing bank since 1985.

Plessey takeover bid. The Commission hopes to state its position on the takeover bid for Plessey by GEC and Siemens by the end of this week. The Commission as yet has no basis on which to respond to the takeover plan for GEC by a multinational consortium.

EC-US trade war. EC Ambassadors on 5 January broadly approved imposing 100% duties on imported US nuts and dried fruits if the US imposes tariffs on selected goods in retaliation for the ban on hormone treated meat which came into force on 1 January. The earliest Ministers could endorse such action is at a meeting of EC Foreign Affairs Council on 23 January.

State aids in the motor vehicle industry. The Commission has decided to introduce a framework for state aids in the motor vehicle industry with which it intends to monitor all aids granted to motor vehicle and motor vehicle engine manufacturers. The framework foresees that Member States, from 1 January 1989, must notify in advance all proposals to grant aid where the cost of the project to be aided exceeds 12m ecu (£8m).

New Shipbuilding aid ceiling. Under the terms of the Sixth Directive on Shipbuilding aid, the annual review by the Commission has decided to reduce the aid ceiling to 26% in 1989. It was 28% in 1988.

Racal Decca Marine Navigation Ltd. The Commission has imposed no fine on the UK company which has been found guilty of infringing the competition rule of Articles 85 and 86 of the EEC Treaty. The reason: Racal Decca has agreed to abandon its anti-competitive practices.

European Business and the Ecu. The French organisation Faits et Opinions has published the results of a survey among 1,036 business leaders in the EC entitled "European Business and the Ecu". The survey took place at the initiative of the Association for the Monetary Union of Europe with the help of the Ecu Banking Association and the European Commission. For copies of the survey, contact Faits et Opinions at 25 rue Cambon, Paris, 75001. Tel 010 331 4296 4165.

Europe Magazine. The January/February issue of "Europe" magazine includes a run-down of how far along the road to 1992 the Community has progressed: halfway to that already historic date, the picture is looking good. Other articles include accounts of the threat to Europe's farmland and of Glasgow's 12 month build-up to 1990, when it is designated as Culture Capital of Europe. Subscription enquiries: 0934 621415.

George Scott. The memorial service for George Scott, former Head of the Commission's UK offices who died last November, will be held on Saturday, 21 January at 11.30 am at St Mary's Parish Church, Wimbledon.

Conference and Diary Dates.

Conference on "Exploiting the Single Market" organised by PERA at The Brewery, Chiswell Street, London, EC1 on 25 January 1989. Information: Donald Stewart - 01 730 8181.

ECO/FIN Council	16 January	Brussels
Agriculture Council	16/17 January	Brussels
General Affairs Council	23/24 January	Brussels
Internal Market Council	30 January	Brussels
Informal Transport Ministers	13 February	Murcia
Political Co-operation	14 February	Madrid

Our next briefing will take place on Thursday, 19 January at 11.30 am.