

Brussels, July 25, 1962
P-9272INFORMATION MEMOWORKING PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMON COMMERCIAL POLICY

During the night of July 24, 1962 the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community adopted, on a proposal of the Commission, a working programme for the Member States with a view to the gradual introduction of commercial rules based on uniform principles. This constitutes a step towards a common EEC commercial policy as required by the Treaty. Harmonization embraces both import and export policy, the target to be reached during the transition period being specified in each particular case.

The following aims have been set as regards import regulations: Liberalization lists will have to be brought into line in respect of GATT countries or third countries whose foreign trade is regulated according to GATT principles. For such countries the list is to be harmonized at the highest possible level. Indeed, full liberalization is the declared aim of GATT Member States.

The first objective is the elimination of disparities in liberalization between the OEEC area and member countries in the dollar area, insofar as such discrimination still exists. As soon as the problem of certain "sensitive" imports from low-price countries has been overcome, this harmonization list will be extended to the remaining GATT countries. When the Council, on a proposal of the Commission, confirms that national lists have been aligned at a high enough level, it will draw up a common liberalization list. Subsequent amendments thereto will be made under the procedure laid down for the common commercial policy in the Treaty.

Progress in the introduction of the common agricultural policy will be taken as a yardstick for the process of liberalizing agricultural produce.

Vis-à-vis "State-trading" countries that do not belong to GATT and whose foreign trade policy is not governed by its principles, the endeavour will be to harmonize quota policy insofar as all Member States do not of their own accord liberalize the importation of certain products. No later than the end of the transition period, common import regulations will be applied to all products from these countries, and in particular individual country quotas will be replaced by common quotas. The first step towards co-ordinating individual policies in respect of these countries is the consultation procedure laid down on October 9, 1961 by the Council for negotiations by Member States. Commercial safeguards (anti-dumping and

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countervailing charges) are to be progressively harmonized during the transition period. For any modifications, the consultation procedure of October 9, 1961 will be followed. Uniform measures will be applied with effect from a time-limit to be determined by the Council on a Commission proposal.

Measures relating to exports will also be progressively harmonized.

To the extent that aids for exports to non-member countries are still permissible under international rules, they will be harmonized in order to prevent any distortion of competition. Drawback of duty or indirect taxes does not come under these provisions, unless it amounts to a higher sum than the original direct or indirect charges on the goods exported. Harmonization will be effected on the basis of an inventory of export aids compiled by the Commission. Particular attention will also be paid to third country policies and the given needs of agricultural policy.

Export restrictions towards non-member countries will also be eliminated as far as possible. Unified quotas or Community quotas, as the case may be, will be introduced. Proposed amendments to national export regulations will be subject to the consultation procedure of October 9, 1961.

Finally, measures will be put in hand concerning existing co-operation in the field of foreign market research. Co-operation between the responsible authorities will be intensified, and the appropriate public or semi-public bodies will also be brought in. The possibility of Community action to promote exports will be explored. The Commission has been charged with preparing more detailed proposals to this effect.