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June 15, 1961

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COMMON MARKET TAKES INITIAL STEP
TOWARD FREE MOBILITY FOR WORKERS

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 15 -- The Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community (Common Market) has unanimously approved the first phase of a program that eventually will permit the completely free circulation of workers within the six member states of the Community.

The Council's action, taken June 12, is regarded as a major step forward in progressing toward a totally free labor market, to be achieved by phases -- the first, just approved, being for two years. The regulations now approved will allow workers to cross national frontiers to accept jobs in other Common Market countries. "National" labor markets will still exist, but in two progressive stages, they will be eliminated. According to Title III of the Treaty of Rome which established the Common Market, all restrictions on workers moving throughout the Community must be lifted by the end of the transition period.

The new regulations embody the principle of EEC priority on the labor market, meaning that a member country will take into account the availability of workers in its sister states before reaching out to non-EEC countries for manpower. In approving the portion of the regulations dealing with EEC priority, the Italian Government's view was that EEC priority was an obligation of the Rome Treaty, while the German Government indicated that it did not consider a treaty obligation to be involved.

Under the regulations, a state which cannot meet its manpower needs will make vacancies known to other member states after openings have existed for three weeks. The states notified are to report their resources, if any, within 15 days and forward specific candidate lists within another three weeks.

To coordinate action during the first phase, the regulations provide for a consultation committee with equal representation for governments, labor and management, as well as an EEC bureau to correlate job offers with available workers.

Common Market workers employed in an EEC member country will be free to take their wives, minor children and dependents with them; to join and vote in labor organizations; and to renew their work permits in the host country (for the same job after one year, for another job after three years and for any job after four years).