



*European Communities
Commission
Press Release*

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EEC free trade option:

UK still bound by fair play rules, says Commissioner

If Britain should leave the EEC and opt for a free trade solution "she will have to obey the rules of the game" and respect EEC dispositions governing state aids, competition and matters of international trade, Mr Finn Olav Gundelach, the EEC Danish Commissioner told the Master Cutlers in Sheffield last night. Mr Gundelach has special responsibility for trade between EEC Community countries.

Free trade arrangements between Britain and other EEC countries or the EFTA countries could not be confined to customs union only, because Britain's economy is so closely linked to those of the European countries concerned, he said. "If one opts out of making the rules of the game, it does not mean that one will be allowed to play according to one's own free will".

"Why not, then, stay as a member, when outside the Common Market, Britain is forced to act in respect of rules which she has been unable to influence?". Britain's influence inside the EEC will be considerable, Mr Gundelach stressed - and fears for loss of sovereignty were "unfounded".

The transfer of sovereignty to EEC organs applied to only a few specific areas of economic and commercial policy. Furthermore, should extension of these areas be considered, the unanimous agreement of all members of the EEC would be required followed by ratification through national parliamentary procedure.

With Britain inside, EEC policies would be formulated in accordance with the objectives of British governments. Outside, Britain would find it more and more difficult to preserve the special position brought about through her relations with the Commonwealth: for developing and developed countries of the Commonwealth, Britain's market alone did not suffice for their trading interests.

In the modern world, there was a need to balance national and international economic interests. In this connection, the EEC was very valuable to the member states in itself, since our economies are now so interdependent. But in addition to this the European Community was a liberal force that had done much to bring about a more open world.