

European Community NEWS

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EC COUNCIL PRESIDENT MEETS WITH KISSINGER

Dr. Garret FitzGerald, Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the European Community Council of Ministers, met with U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger in Washington January 8. The talks centered on matters of common interest to the Community and the United States as well as bilateral questions. Ireland has assumed the Council presidency for the first six months of 1975.

A barrister, FitzGerald was born in Dublin February 9, 1926. A member of the Irish Senate from 1965 to 1969, he has been a member of the Parliament since 1969. He is Vice President and former Chairman of the Irish Council of the European Movement, and Governor of the Atlantic Institute of International Relations, Paris.

US, CANADIAN VISITORS PROGRAM LAUNCHED BY EC

A visitors program to promote closer understanding of the European Community by future American and Canadian decision makers has been launched by the European Parliament and the Commission. Similar to the US State Department's "leader grant" program, the EC program involves participants working in politics, journalism, trade unions, professional economic and social organizations, and the federal, regional, and local civil services. Each will spend approximately 30 days in Europe studying EC institutions and developing

professional contacts (in their respective fields) in the member states. The program for Americans was begun last fall and will be expanded to include Canadians.

RISING PRODUCTION COSTS CUT 1974 EC FARM INCOME

Farm production costs went sky high but farm prices went down in the European Community last year, according to the Commission's recent report on the 1974 EC agriculture situation. Only in the three new member states (Britain, Denmark, and Ireland), did prices continue their upward trend, the Commission said. During 1973 and 1974, production cost increases ranged from 22 per cent in Germany to 61 per cent in Britain. Between July 1973 and July 1974, price drops ranged from 4.6 per cent in France to 11.4 per cent in Belgium. Overall EC farm incomes during 1972/73 had risen by about 31 per cent.

EC COMMISSION GETS BMW TO LOOSEN HOLD ON DEALERS

European consumers will no longer be forced to buy and repair BMW (Bayerische Motorenwerke AG) automobiles at their local dealers, following Commission approval of a new standard BMW dealer's contract. At the insistence of the Commission, BMW agreed to lift restrictive clauses which prevented authorized dealers from selling elsewhere in the Community, repairing BMW's bought at other dealerships, and using safe non-BMW parts. Additionally, non authorized dealers will now be allowed sell BMW parts.

INFLATION HEADS EC CONCERNS -- POLL SHOWS

Inflation is Europe's number one problem, according to the Commission's latest "Eurobarometer" poll of 9,000 European Community citizens, taken during October-November. Inflation rated highest among 92 per cent. About 70 per cent of those polled gave equal priority to energy, environment, consumer protection, and the need for a single European voice in the US-Soviet dialogue. About seven out of 10 favored common EC action to deal with problems of energy, inflation, East-West relations, and the environment. Nearly 70 per cent in the six original EC members thought the Community a good thing for their country. Fifty per cent thought so in Ireland, 36 per cent in Britain, and 33 per cent in Denmark.

Less than 10 per cent of EC-Six citizens foresaw serious consequences for the Community if Britain dropped its EC membership. Only 18 per cent thought so in Britain, 20 per cent in Denmark, and 29 per cent in Ireland.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL RIGHTS FOR EC MIGRANTS PROPOSED

An action program to give European Community migrant workers social and political equality was proposed to the Council of Ministers last month. The program's benefits for

non-EC migrants include measures to ensure transference of non-EC migrant family allowances to children remaining in the country of origin and that pension benefits cover the entire period of employment, both at home and in the Community. It also favors giving political rights at a local level to all migrants by 1980.

NINE TO HONOR BICENTENNIAL

The nine Common Market countries are planning a cultural invasion of the United States in connection with next year's Bicentennial celebrations. Tours planned include the Scala opera company from Milan, prominent ballet companies from Denmark and Belgium, the Berlin Philharmonic and the Concertgebouw from Amsterdam. France and Denmark plan *son et lumiere* exhibitions. Holland will send three traveling exhibitions -- on Dutch life in the 18th century, science in the Netherlands in the same period, and the John Adams fundraising mission to Holland. Belgium will exhibit Flemish paintings. Ireland will produce a film on Irish emigration to America. Permanent gifts will include a planetarium from Germany and a new bell for Philadelphia from Britain -- from the same foundry which made the original Liberty Bell.

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