

Committee on External
Economic Relations
- Secretariat -

Luxembourg, 28 November 1987

NOTE OF A MEETING OF COMMISSION AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OFFICIALS HELD ON
TUESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 1987, BRUSSELS, ON IMPROVEMENTS IN THE FLOW OF
INFORMATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE SINGLE ACT

- I The main purpose of the meeting was to consider what steps could be taken to improve the information process between the Commission and parliamentary committees in the light of the Single Act and of Parliament's new Rules of Procedure.
- II This was with particular reference to accession treaties, accession agreements, significant international agreements and trade and cooperation agreements (not designated as significant) which are covered by Parliament's Rules of Procedure 32-35.

The following are the main points which emerged from these discussions:

- 1 The way in which matters had been handled between the Commission and the development committee was a useful precedent since the Commissioner held discussions with the committee concerned prior to the publication of the Commission's communication and the communication was given in confidence to the committee at the same time as the Commission handed it to the Council of Ministers.
- 2 It was agreed that it was important to advance the information process to as early a stage as possible and it was recalled that by the time the Commission had agreed its draft negotiating brief for submission to the Council, it was often in practice too late for Parliament or Parliament's committees to provide any significant input since there would already be broad agreement between the negotiating parties as to what was to be negotiated. The Commission should therefore inform the appropriate

committees of its general intentions as early as the stage when it was about to carry out exploratory discussions with a third party.

- 3 The Commission officials confirmed that the Commission still felt itself engaged by both the Blumenfeld report of February 1982 and the Commission's subsequent communication of 27 May 1982.
 - 4 Neither the Declaration of Stuttgart nor the Single Act in any way replaced the Luns-Westerterp procedures which remained an essential compliment to any new procedures and which had in fact assumed a new importance.
 - 5 It would be desirable if the European Parliament held more orientation debates at as early a stage as possible in the negotiating process (see Rule 32(2)).
 - 6 It was the sense of the meeting that if significant information was given sufficiently early to the committees concerned, problems concerning formal demands for Parliament to be given negotiating mandates by the Council as provided for in the Rules of Procedure (Rule 33(1)) could be avoided.
 - 7 In addition to information provided by the Commissioner responsible when he appeared before the relevant committee it would be desirable if, at the meetings of the committee concerned, a Commission official made a regular statement to the committee concerning the Commission's future intentions in regard to agreements.
- A useful precedent here was the recurring item 3 on the agendas of the REX Committee meetings and it was felt that the type of information currently given to the committee under this item could be extended.
- 8 Both sides were agreed that it might lead to confusion if the Commission committed itself in any written document to any precise time table concerning the various stages of negotiations or projected negotiations.
 - 9 Any further and earlier provision of information by the Commission would need to be accompanied by the appropriate follow up by the committees

concerned and this would include early orientation debates (see paragraph 5 above).

- 10 President Delors letter to the President of the European Parliament of 3 November 1987 provided the basis on which improved information processes could be achieved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David DeWar', written over a horizontal line.

David DEWAR