

Letter from the Commission of the EEC to the governments of the Six (4 June 1964)

Caption: On 4 June 1964, Walter Hallstein, President of the Commission of the European Economic Community, sends a letter to the Foreign Ministers of the Six in which he expresses his concerns about the decision of the Council of Agriculture Ministers to hold over the decisions on cereals prices to 15 December 1964.

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Monsieur le Ministre,

The Commission of the European Community feels impelled to inform your Government of its grave concern at the decision taken by the EEC Council of Ministers on 3 June 1964 concerning cereal prices.

1. The postponement until 15 December next of the decision on the alignment of prices runs counter to the commitments accepted by the Council on a number of occasions, notably during the discussions of 23 December last. No pledge was given, and there is no certainty, that the appointed date of 15 December will be adhered to, any more than several others in the past. There it also reason to believe that this delay will render the adoption of the decisions more difficult.

2. To put back by six months or more the decision on farm prices will undermine the work to build up the common agricultural policy, of which this decision it a vital part.

3. This postponement jeopardizes the whole Kennedy round. The failure to fix cereal prices will rapidly bring to a halt the work of the Agricultural Committee, since there is at present no prospect of finding another basis for the negotiations. Moreover, as several delegations at Geneva hoped that negotiations on agricultural products might go on concurrently with those on industrial products, the lack of a decision on the part of the EEC will cause a general slowdown and possibly the collapse of the whole negotiations.

4. The Commission it seriously alarmed at such a situation, for which the European Economic Community will certainly be held to blame because it has been dilatory in taking, or possibly incapable of taking, the decisions which it has itself foreshadowed and which lie at the root of the policy agreed upon by the Council. It has explicitly drawn the attention of the Council, in the course of the discussions, to these grave repercussions.

5. Consequently, for the reasons, both internal and external, set out above, the Commission urgently requests your Government to reconsider its whole position in order to render possible, before the summer recess, a new deliberation by the Council and the adoption of the indispensable Community decisions.

Please accept, Monsieur le Ministre, the assurance of my high consideration.

Walter Hallstein
President of the Commission