

Revolution Is Changing Lives Of 170 Million

By WILLIAM ANDERSON
BRUSSELS (UPI) — When blonde young Hilda in Rotterdam shows off her curves in an Italian-made sweater, she's a customer of the European Common Market.

The Italian Fiat car her boy friend bought in Amsterdam cheaper than he could in Rome also came by grace of the Common Market.

So did the Krupp truck carrying a French farmer's fruit to market, the French butter sold in an Italian grocer's shop, the German canned frankfurters sitting in a Belgian housewife's refrigerator.

All over Europe the Common Market is working a quiet and highly profitable — revolution in the daily lives of 170 million people.

The six member countries — West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg — have seen their trade rise from a total value of \$8 billion to \$13.4 billion since 1958.

Under Common Market rules customs duties between the six member nations already have been slashed in half and will be abolished altogether by 1967.

Trading Booms
Manufactured goods such as cars, refrigerators, radios and children's toys are flooding back and forth between the six nations to feed an unprecedented wave of high living.

The countries of the Common Market are finding that jobs create jobs. Germany and Holland are crying for more workers to keep pace with their expanding economies.

Dutchmen no longer look around when they hear Italian being spoken in their coffee houses. Most waiters in Germany speak with a foreign accent.

This correspondent recently drove a car from Holland through Belgium, Luxembourg, France and Germany producing nothing but a certificate proving the car was internationally insured. There was no identity check, no baggage search.

Mrs. Germaine Meyers, a 58-year-old Brussels housewife, obligingly threw open her refrigerator for a United Press International inspection. The German-made ice-box contained Dutch butter, French wine, Italian olives and tomato puree — and the German frankfurters.

The amazing thing was that Mrs. Meyers thought nothing about the vast change in her purchasing habits since 1958.

In Holland, girls not only preen in their Italian sweaters, but twist in Italian styled shoes. Italian women meantime warm themselves in Dutch-made coats.

In Rome's working class area of Trastevere grocer Mario Esposito has French butter on sale for about 15 cents for 100 grams compared to the Italian product of about 18 cents.

In Paris the world-famed Galerie Lafayette department store reports that 45 per cent of all its imported articles come from Common Market suppliers. The United States supplies only 15 per cent.

A Pandora's Box
The Galerie is a Pandora's Box of German porcelain, Italian linen, Belgian carpets, Dutch electrical goods.

This availability of reasonably priced foreign goods is the greatest contribution the Common Market has made.

"Foreign made" used to ring a warning bell in shoppers' heads. More often than not such goods were either shoddy or very expensive.

They were shoddy because

they had to be cheaply manufactured to enable exporters to pay the enormous customs duties that were demanded before the "great levelling" of the Common Market began. The "expensive" tag came about because quality goods had also to add customs duties before they could get to foreign markets. This made them dearer than locally-made goods of the same quality.

Protectionism Hurts
Before the Market, many exporters just gave up trying to export through protectionist customs barriers. Local manufacturers sitting behind these barriers let their design and quality slip. Stagnation followed the protectionism.

Since the barriers started to go down six years ago a stimulating new wave of design and manufacturing has swept across Europe. Local manufacturers can no longer lean back and depend on customs duties to keep foreign produce out.

Parisien Jean Barthelmer provides a case in point. He told UPI: "The finish on foreign cars is better than it is on French vehicles. That's why I bought a German car."

French car manufacturers know this and are working on it. Not so long ago they could have shrugged it off knowing they were safe behind a tariff barrier that meant a foreign car cost 50 per cent more than its French equivalent.

Foreign food is no longer a luxury for the 170 million customers of the Common Market. Foreign cars and manufactured goods are commonplace. Foreign workers no longer cause comment. Competition is stimulating national production. Economies are humming — and pretty Hilda in Rotterdam is mighty happy with her Italian sweater.

Grange Urged to Form Joint Council

PORTLAND (UPI) — The National Grange was urged Thursday to take the lead in forming a joint council with other farm groups to give agriculture a united voice.

Gov. Mark Hatfield, speaking to the Grange's national convention, said an occupational group which contains only eight per cent of the nation's population cannot afford a divided effort.

He suggested that the Grange invite representatives of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Farmers Union and other smaller groups to join with it in forming the council.

He said its first chore should be the formation of a sound, rational farm policy.

On the subject of international trade, Hatfield said he was convinced agriculture was willing to do its part, but first there must be "reasonable parity" in trade requirements and regulations among various nations.

This country also must retaliate "where there is proven discrimination against the American producer," the Republican governor said.

Earlier, the Grange Agriculture Committee adopted a policy statement which included a call for renewed efforts to establish a voluntary domestic parity plan for wheat growers.

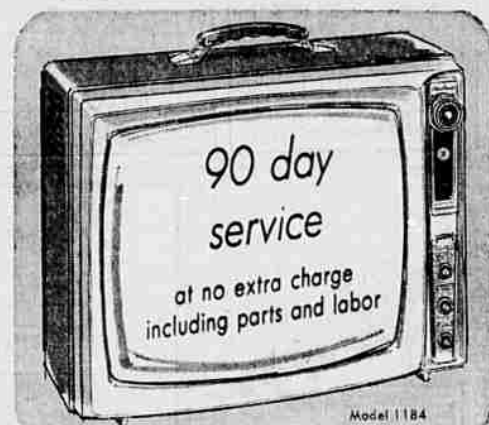
Delegates backed a program under which growers who met certain acreage diversion requirements would receive certificates covering a share of the market for wheat to be used as food.

All growers would be free to compete for the market for wheat for non-food use.

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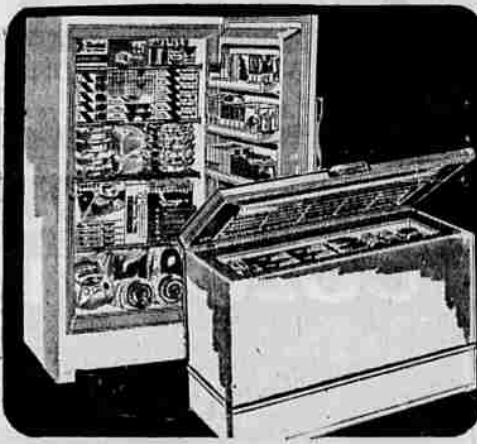
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