

of product standards, (maintained for reasons of health, safety etc.) and systems of taxation.

- ° Development of rules on competition, to come to grips with such practices as collusion between suppliers and abuse of a dominant position.
- ° Coordination of government purchasing policies to ensure bidding is permitted on a fully competitive basis.
- ° Operation of the common transport policy so that supply of transportation services is not manipulated in such a way that it impedes or distorts trade.

In point of fact progress on all these issues has been slow and, in some cases, minimal. A few examples will suffice.

- ° While steps have been taken to simplify border routines, they are still often cumbersome and time-consuming, increasing significantly the cost of shipping goods. The European Commission estimates that the cost of getting goods across frontiers represents 5 per cent of total transport costs.

- ° The EEC has issued 177 directives on product standards since 1969 but it has taken an average of 10 years to get each of the last 15 directives out. Sometimes they were out of date before they were issued. Moreover new national standards have been constantly emerging.

- ° Road traffic, which accounts for 42 per cent of goods traded between member states, is still to a considerable extent controlled by quotas established bilaterally. The Community's Parliament took the unprecedented step of censuring the Council of Ministers for its lack of progress on the common transport policy.

- ° Although all member states have adopted the Value Added Tax (VAT), standard rates vary from 12 per cent in Luxembourg to 23 per cent in Ireland.

- ° Telecommunications, transport, water and energy - all areas where an integrated market is important - have been excluded from the Community's directives on government purchasing. It appears that, in procurement of items which are covered, the rules are often