

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Jacques Delors, EC Commission President

Jacques Delors, who is a French national, born in 1925, has been President of the Commission of the European Communities since January 1985. He has combined a number of careers—banker, public servant, academic and politician. He served as Economics and Finance Minister of France between 1981 and 1984.

As president of the Commission, Mr. Delors has maintained a strong and direct interest in monetary affairs. Last year he also took a lead in promoting capital flow liberalization as part of the trend towards freer movement of goods and services within the Common Market. Another key area of community interest for Mr. Delors has been high technology research and development. He has been actively participating in the latest EC Institutional and Budgetary Reform efforts.

Mr. Delors will be accompanied by his Personal Representative, Mr. Pascal Lamy, who is his Chef du Cabinet.

Prime Minister of Belgium Wilfried Martens

Born in 1936, Mr. Martens is married and has two children.

He studied ancient civilizations at Eeklo College. In 1959, he graduated from Université catholique de Louvain with a doctorate in law, a notarial license and a Bachelor of Arts in Thomist philosophy.

From 1955 to 1965, he worked as a lawyer at the Court of Appeal in Ghent and is one of the leaders involved in the Vlaamse Volksbeweging. In 1965 and 1966 he served as advisor to Prime Ministers Harmel and Vanden Boeynants respectively. In 1968 he was appointed Head of Mission in the cabinet of the Minister responsible for relations amongst the ethnic communities and he became president of the Christeliuke Volkspartis.

In 1974, he was elected a Member of Parliament for the first time and played an important role at the European Union of Christian Democrats. In April 1977 and December 1978, he was re-elected as an MP, and on April 3, 1979, became Prime Minister. Defeated in April 1981,

he was re-instated as Prime Minister in December 1981, a position he still holds.

As a member of the most important Belgian political party (Social Democrat Flemish Party) Mr. Martens became involved in the resolution of conflicts between the two linguistic communities, and in the search for compromises both to linguistic problems and to those between the communities. His mother-tongue is Flemish.

Mr. Martens will be accompanied by his Foreign Minister, Mr. Leo Tindemans.

The Presidency of the EC

The Presidency of the Council of the EC rotates every six months amongst the Member States. The Presidency is responsible for overseeing progress on Community priorities and for coordinating extra-Community activities such as European Political Cooperation. Belgium acceded to the Presidency as the EC was striving to adjust to major developments such as the enlargement to Spain and Portugal and the awaited ratification of the "European Single Act", and to cope with a number of pressing problems including a budget crisis, the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the maintenance of momentum toward completion of the internal EC market.

As a process, integration is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, requiring the gradual building of a consensus. As an unhesitating advocate of closer European union, Belgium has been well suited to this role, and has contributed effectively to nurturing a growing consensus in collective EC political and economic decision-making.

The Economy of the European Community

The slump in oil prices and the decline in the dollar-denominated cost of other imports yielded the first-ever overall trade surplus - 5 billion ECU (C\$ 7.4 billion) - for the European Community in 1986. This was the net effect of a drop of 10 per cent in EC third-country exports and of an even steeper decline of 17 per cent in the EC's imports. The EC remained by far the world's largest trading bloc, with nearly one-fifth of global trade (one-third if intra-Community trade is counted). Cumulative 1986 GDP in the EC amounted to C\$ 3,976.6 billion in constant 1980