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Crude steel output growing by 15 per cent in the first quarter

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Hamburg's Free Port is in danger of losing decisive parts of its "in bond" privileges through the completion of the European Customs Union within the Common Market. Hamburg's Free Port was to have retained some of its privileges in a modernised form, but its new draft charter was turned down by France. On the Free Port's quaysides, there are now 79 industrial production plants in operation, where a total labour force of 25,000 is being employed, which represents about 12 per cent of the City's entire industrial labour force. The Chamber of Commerce estimates the combined annual turnover of these plants, mostly shipyards and ship and port equipment businesses, to be about DM 1,300 million. The perpetuity of the Free Port's privileges had been laid down by treaty and law in 1881, and the German Federal Government had given a firm promise to keep these privileges in being for ever, which did not only prompt industries to move to the Free Port area but will also play a major part in all future investment decisions.

Developing New Outlets for Pushing Agricultural Exports

Exports of German farm products have increased, during 1967, by 25 per cent to a total of DM 2,304 million. The Federal Ministry of Food is planning to speed up its efforts for increasing foreign sales of German farm products, in cooperation with "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Agrarexport" (Farm Export Association). Herr Höcherl, the Federal Minister of Food, emphasised that the main intentions are to open up new foreign trade outlets, to expand existing markets, and to organise concentrated publicity actions for certain farming products. Under this programme, it is intended to continue sending exhibits to fairs and trade exhibitions, to commission market analyses, to create new advertising media, and to stage special shows in foreign countries.

Decisive Fillip for Chemical Business Through Export Orders

1967, the year of the German recession, has naturally affected also the West German chemical producers, but their growth continued, almost exclusively supported by a vigorous export order flow. As the final annual returns for 1967 have proved, German chemicals recorded turnover totals which were by 4.1 per cent higher than in 1966 (1966: 7.5 per cent) and reached DM 37,760 million (36,260 million in 1966). Export deliveries rose by 11.1 per cent from DM 11,580 million in 1966 to 12,860 million, the strong upward trend lifting export's share in total business volume from 31.6 per cent in 1966 to 34.1 per cent in 1967. For the first time, German chemical companies sold more than one third of their entire delivery value abroad. By far the most important outlets have been, as always, in Europe, and in 1967, European markets also registered by far the largest expansion rate of nearly 75 per cent. Common Market countries have

steadily been gaining in importance, in this framework, deliveries to the EEC having reached DM 3,990 million, which represent 31 per cent of total business. The most important export client of the West German chemical industry now as usual is France. East European countries and the People's Republic of China also increased their purchases of German chemicals considerably in 1967: China took chemicals for DM 157 million (82 million), and the countries of Eastern Europe for DM 710 million (621 million). Overseas exports featured a moderate rate of growth of US purchases. The value of German chemical deliveries to the United States increased only from DM 564 to 589 million.

Crude Steel Output Growing by 15 per cent in the First Quarter

In the first quarter of 1968 the German iron and steel producing industry with an output of 10.1 million tons of crude steel surpassed the result of the previous year's corresponding period. With this record production the German iron and steel producing industry, whose coke supplies are being subsidised with DM 9.06 per ton since Jan. 1, 1967, has made another contribution to the stabilisation of the German mining industry's sales. In the first three months of 1968 the German steelworks will probably have used about 650,000 tons more of German coking coal than a year ago.

Declining Numbers of Foreign Workers 24.5 per cent down

The maximum number of foreign nationals in gainful employment in the Federal Republic had been reached in 1966 — with 1.314 million. In 1967, the reduced volume of production has led to a proportionate drop of this figure: at the end of last September, the total number of foreign nationals employed in the Federal Republic had slumped to 991,300, and their share in total employment had gone down to 4.7 per cent.

Net re-emigration of foreign ex-employees from Germany to their countries of origin expanded, most of the migrants having been made redundant by their employers, others having completed their labour contracts without renewal or prolongation. However, there have also been foreign ex-employees who themselves took the initiative for going home, because they were afraid lest their jobs were no longer secure, or because they did not find employment in Germany sufficiently attractive any more through the cancellation of former overtime work, productivity bonuses, and through short-time working. New arrivals through immigration were considerably fewer. Plants habitually employing foreign labour have called for far lower recruitment rates abroad than before, and they even cancelled requests made to employment agencies for hiring new labour.