



1. Mr. Webb / 2. p.c. ECDC
WV27iv
Foreign and Commonwealth Office (4)

London SW1A 2AH

MWB 30019
RECEIVED

6 OCT 1988

Dear Charles,

Invitation to the Prime Minister from the College of Europe,
Bruges (2)

Sir David Hannay has forwarded the enclosed letter from Professor Lukaszewski, the Rector of the College of Europe at Bruges, inviting the Prime Minister to be the guest of honour and speaker at the opening ceremony of the College's academic year in September. I also enclose a letter from Lord Plumb to the Prime Minister recommending acceptance of the invitation.

The College is a post-graduate institution with approximately 180 students which provides courses in European studies, law and administration. Winston Churchill, Duncan Sandys and a number of other leading Europeans of the post-war years took an active part in its creation in 1949 and it will be celebrating its fortieth anniversary during the coming academic year.

The College is funded by contributions from a number of European governments, including a small contribution (£2500) from Britain. The largest part of its budget is provided by the Belgians (approximately £1 million in 1987). The European Commission also provides a sizeable contribution (£120,000 in 1987).

The College's former students are widely spread through the Community and include members of several national Parliaments, as well as the Commission and the European Parliament. A number of Heads of State and Government have addressed the academic opening ceremony at the College in the past. The most recent was President Mitterrand, last autumn. Previous speakers include President Soares of Portugal, Prime Minister Gonzalez of Spain and Chancellor Kreisky of Austria.

I understand that there are currently no plans for the Prime Minister to give any major speeches during her visit to Madrid. Nor will she do so in Luxembourg when she stops there on the way to Spain. None of her other visits to EC member states or meetings with Community heads of government this year is likely to provide an opportunity for a speech.



Although the College of Europe is small, they drew a large and distinguished audience for President Mitterrand's speech. The Foreign Secretary considers that the occasion would enable the Prime Minister to make a major speech setting the seal on the reforms we have secured in the Community, looking forward to the Single Market in 1992 and bringing Britain's economic success to the attention of a wide European audience. So, while there is no difficulty about saying 'no' to the invitation, the Foreign Secretary would recommend acceptance if the Prime Minister were to wish to make a European speech this year.

The College's academic year begins on 19 September, but Professor Lukaszewski makes it plain in his letter that the College are quite prepared to arrange the official opening ceremony for any date convenient for the Prime Minister in the two or three weeks following this date. One possibility might be to pass via Bruges on the way to or from the Prime Minister's visit to Luxembourg and Spain on 21 - 23 September.

Copies of this letter go to Tom Jeffery (DES) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Tom Jeffery

L Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
PS/10 Downing Street