

CONFIDENTIAL



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T.31/81

SUBJECT

10 DOWNING STREET

cc Danish Ambassador
23/2/81

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 February 1981

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 19 February about the 1981 arrangements for reciprocal fishing between the Community and the Faroe Islands. I fully recognise the importance of the factors you mention in your letter, and the major part which fisheries play in the economic life of the Faroes.

The basis of our reservation on this agreement is, however, one of substance, and important to our own hard-pressed fishing communities. The quotas provisionally negotiated for 1981 by the Commission favour the Faroes as far as the accepted co-efficients for comparing quotas of different fish species are concerned, despite the explicit recognition in the EC/Faroes framework agreement that the fishing opportunities for the two parties should be balanced.

Perhaps even more important, however, is the fact that technical restrictions on fishing imposed by the Faroese authorities in Faroese waters have meant that for the past several years Community fishermen, especially United Kingdom fishermen, have not been able to catch their quotas, while comparable technical restrictions do not exist in United Kingdom waters (where most Faroese fishing takes place under the agreement).

Moreover, I should add that the United Kingdom Government is very disappointed that the Faroese have not accepted any

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specific limit on their recently developed sea fishery for salmon in the recent negotiations. This is despite the emerging international consensus, reflected in the draft UNLOSC text, that the primary interest in salmon stocks lies rightfully with originating states. It is, of course, well established that many salmon caught off the Faroes originated from United Kingdom rivers.

I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot see how this matter can be brought to conclusion other than in the context of agreement on a revised CFP and I regret that this is likely to entail a delay until the Fisheries Council meets on 9/10 March.

I am sorry that I cannot give a more helpful reply. We remain determined, however, to reach an early settlement on the new Common Fisheries Policy. It is to be hoped that sufficient progress will be made at the next Council on matters of importance to all delegations to allow a satisfactory outcome on the Faroes issue.

Yours sincerely,

Rangar Thelander

His Excellency Mr. Anker Joergensen