

RESTRICTED

of Euro Pd. Mar 79
Call on PM by 3 Wise Men

Assumed, Euro Pd
for - Paul



(1) Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Prime Minister

London SW1A 2AH

Agree that we should

3 November 1980

reiterate your willingness to make
a statement to the European Parliament
when we hold the Presidency next year?

I see no
reason to
decide yet
with the Council
not.

Dear Michael,

Paul 11/11

Reporting on European Council to European Parliament

The Three Wise Men's Report on Community Institutions suggested that the President of the European Council should be prepared to report on its meetings to the European Parliament. The Prime Minister agreed with Lord Carrington's recommendation that she should be prepared to do so during the UK Presidency; for ease of reference I enclose copies of the correspondence.

/ not attached

Foreign Ministers have been unable to agree on the proposal, however, owing to French insistence that the decision is for the European Council as a whole to take, that since President Giscard does not appear before the National Assembly he cannot do so before the European Parliament and that, therefore, no other Head of State or Government should do so either. On 1-2 December the European Council is to consider Foreign Ministers' report on the Three Wise Men's proposals and this will be one of the questions for decision.

On 27 October M. Thorn told Lord Carrington that his Prime Minister was inclined to report to the European Parliament during the Luxembourg Presidency and was under strong pressure to do so from Mr van Agt, who intended to do so during the Netherlands tenure of office; M. Thorn asked what the UK's position was, and said he would raise the question again at the Foreign Affairs Council.

Lord Carrington sees no need for us to become embroiled in this Franco/Benelux dispute. In particular, we have no interest in getting involved in a dispute as to whether the European Council has to agree or it can be left to individual Heads of Government. He told M. Thorn he was inclined to favour the suggestion, but would seek the Prime Minister's views on it. Since we have previously said that the Prime Minister

/would

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would be ready to report to the European Parliament, all we need do is reiterate that line both to M. Thorn and at the European Council. We can then leave it to the French and Dutch to argue out. By the time our Presidency comes in the second half of 1981 it will be clear whether Luxembourg and the Netherlands have stood out against the French.

/ I enclose a draft telegram to Luxembourg asking the Ambassador to make our position clear to M. Thorn.

Yours etc

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul".

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

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No 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

cc: D J Wright Esq, Cabinet Office

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Department ECD(I)

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[TEXT]

REPORTING ON EUROPEAN COUNCIL TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1. During his conversation with me on 27 October, M Thorn asked whether the Prime Minister agreed that the President of the European Council should appear before the European Parliament to report on its meeting. I gave no firm reply.

2. Please now inform M Thorn's Office that if the matter is discussed at the December European Council the Prime Minister will say she would be prepared to make a statement to the Parliament when we hold the Presidency in 1981.

BACKGROUND

3. The idea of such a report from the President of the European Council was mooted by the Three Wise Men. Foreign Ministers, however, have been unable to agree owing to French insistence that since President Giscard, does not appear before the National Assembly he cannot do so before the European Parliament. The question is one of those left for the European Council to decide in

The report from Foreign Ministers which is to go to the European Council on 1-2 December.

4. Thorn said that M Werner was inclined to make a statement to the Parliament and was under strong pressure to do so from the Dutch Prime Minister, who intended to. The French, however, continued to argue that it remained for the European Council ^{as a whole} to decide and were likely to try to have the idea rejected.

5. In any discussion at the European Council the Prime Minister will take the line in para 2 above and leave it to the Dutch and French to debate whether there should be a unanimous decision or whether it should be left up to each Member State.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN