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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

From The Minister of State

The Rt Hon Norman Tebbit MP
Secretary of State for Employment
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London SW1

AT 25/8

24 August 1983

Dear Norman,

You sent Geoffrey Howe a copy of your letter of 5 August to Cecil Parkinson about the two draft Directives on employee participation. I am writing in his absence.

I agree that it would be sensible to consult on these draft Directives together and I accept that this will inevitably involve some delay in the start of consultations on the Vredeling text.

I take your point that this delay could be of some tactical advantage to us in the negotiations in Brussels, in that we could use the consultations as an excuse for reserving our position on points of difficulty. I am concerned, however, about what our representatives will say in the period before this process of consultation is completed in January (and I hope incidentally that we can ensure that this timetable does not slip any further). In the discussions in Brussels I am sure that we should be constructive in our opposition. I hope you will agree, therefore, that the consultative paper and our handling of this question in Brussels should be considered at EQO in early autumn. This is the best way to ensure that the officials concerned in the various departments, including my own and UKRep, are kept in the picture.

Copies of this letter go to recipients of yours.

*Yours ever,
Malcolm*

Malcolm Rifkind

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