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OCMIAN 6171
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ZZ THHAG
FM FCOLN TO THHAG
291000Z NOV
GRS 150

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FM FCO
TO FLASH THE HAGUE
TELNO 176
OF 291000Z NOVEMBER 85
AND TO FLASH LUXEMBOURG FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY
INFO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO SAVING OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSTS, LISBON, MADRID

FRAME INSTITUTIONAL

MIPT: ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN COUNCILS

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO MR LUBBERS.
BEGINS

THANK YOU FOR SENDING ME A COPY OF YOUR LETTER TO JACQUES SANTER ABOUT THE FORTHCOMING EUROPEAN COUNCIL. I WARMLY WELCOME YOUR PROPOSAL THAT THE NUMBER OF EUROPEAN COUNCILS HELD EACH YEAR SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THREE TO TWO. AS YOU KNOW, WE TOO HAVE BEEN IN FAVOUR OF THIS AND SEE IT AS A USEFUL CHANGE WHICH, LIKE YOU, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE INTRODUCED EARLY NEXT YEAR. I ALSO AGREE WITH THE OTHER PROCEDURAL SUGGESTIONS IN YOUR LETTER FOR IMPROVING PREPARATION FOR, AND CONDUCT OF, BUSINESS AT FUTURE EUROPEAN COUNCILS AND WILL BE HAPPY TO GIVE SUPPORT IN DISCUSSION NEXT WEEK. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN LUXEMBOURG.
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FM FCO
TO FLASH THE HAGUE
TELNO 175
OF 290800Z NOVEMBER 85
AND TO FLASH LUXEMBOURG (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY)
INFO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO SAVING OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSTS, MADRID AND LISBON

FRAME INSTITUTIONAL

ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN COUNCILS

1. LUBBERS HAS SENT THE PRIME MINISTER A COPY OF A LETTER HE HAS WRITTEN TO THE LUXEMBOURG PRIME MINISTER WITH PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN COUNCILS. TEXT IS AS FOLLOWS (TRANSLATION BY DUTCH EMBASSY):

QUOTE I AM WRITING THIS LETTER IN THE HOPE THAT, DURING THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG ON 3 AND 4 DECEMBER 1985, THE COUNCIL WILL BE ABLE TO AGREE ON THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS IT SHOULD HOLD. AS OUR MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAVE FOUND, THERE IS A LARGE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT ON THE DESIRABILITY OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS FROM THREE TO TWO EACH YEAR, IE ONE PER PRESIDENCY. THIS WOULD ALSO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DOOGHE REPORT. NATURALLY IT WOULD REMAIN POSSIBLE, JUST AS IT IS NOW, TO ORGANISE A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IF CIRCUMSTANCES SO REQUIRED. I AM VERY KEEN TO SEE A DECISION ALONG THESE LINES MADE DURING

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THE FORTHCOMING EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING, SO THAT THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS CAN ENTER INTO FORCE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1986. I SHOULD LIKE TO EMPHASISE THAT MY WISH TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS IS NOT MOTIVATED BY ANY DESIRE TO LESSEN THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL. ON THE CONTRARY, THIS STEP IS INTENDED TO ENHANCE THE COUNCIL'S ROLE. SINCE THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL WAS FORMALISED DURING THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN DECEMBER 1974 IN PARIS, IT HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT THE COUNCIL CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN INITIATING AND DIRECTING THE GROWTH OF EUROPEAN UNITY AND IN TAKING ACTION TO RECONCILE AND MEDIATE WHEN DECISION-MAKING IN THE ORGANS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IS IN DANGER OF COMING TO A HALT. NONETHELESS, THE EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF SESSIONS HAS RESULTED IN A CERTAIN EROSION OF THE COUNCIL'S ABILITY TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY WHICH WE WILL HAVE IN LUXEMBOURG TO IMPROVE THE OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL BY EFFECTING PREPARATIONS IN A MORE ORGANISED FASHION. I SHOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO RAISE NEW TOPICS OR DISTRIBUTE NEW DOCUMENTS OR DECLARATIONS AFTER THE PRESIDENT HAS FINALISED THE ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR THE COUNCIL. THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN BY THE PRESIDENT AT THE END OF THE SESSION SHOULD ALSO AS A RULE BE BASED ON THE AGENDA AND SHOULD RELATE SOLELY TO MATTERS DISCUSSED BY THE HEADS OF STATE AND OF GOVERNMENT. LASTLY, WE MIGHT PERHAPS DEVOTE SOME ATTENTION TO THE SIZE OF DELEGATIONS. NOW THAT A LARGER NUMBER OF MEMBER STATES WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THESE SESSIONS, THERE IS ALL THE MORE REASON TO REDUCE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THEM. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS A LARGE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT AMONG PARTICIPANTS IN THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL WITH REGARD TO THE VIEW THAT THE SIZE OF CIVIL SERVICE DELEGATIONS COULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED WITHOUT DAMAGE. I HAVE FORWARDED THE TEXT OF THIS LETTER ALSO TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL. UNQUOTE
2. PLEASE PASS URGENTLY THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY AS IN MIFT.

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