

du Cann TP

18th December 1979

Thank you very much for your letter of
11th December.

I will, of course, be pleased to discuss
the next series of the Boyle Reports with
you and the Officers of the 1922 Committee,
before decisions are made.

The Rt Hon Edward Du Cann MP

From: the Rt. Hon. Edward du Cann, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11 December 1979

L. Mayant

I gave evidence, with Fred Willey, to the Top Salaries Review Body last week, and reported on my conversations to the Executive of the 1922 Committee.

My colleagues asked me to request that when the next series of Boyle Reports are available you might be kind enough to consider consulting the Officers of the 1922 Committee before decisions are made. I think this might be a generally helpful suggestion and I hope you will find it so.

Y *Σ*

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher, M.P.

From: the Rt. Hon. Edward du Cann, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

File

7 December 1979

ls

L Mayant

I thought you would like to see a note I made following the meeting I had with the Conservative Members of the European Parliament in Brussels on Wednesday.

I am sure a good deal more needs to be done about liaison with them.

ls *Σ*
—

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

NOTES ON POINTS MADE AT A MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN
DEMOCRATIC GROUP IN BRUSSELS ON 5 DECEMBER, 1979,

1) Continuing anxiety, if not irritation, was expressed by the Leaders of the Group at the difficulties invariably experienced in obtaining a clear exposition of HMG's views in respect of subjects with which the European Assembly is concerned. The Treasury was especially quoted as a bad example. Nigel Lawson had apparently not consulted the Conservative M.E.Ps before his recent action. This had been a source of considerable embarrassment to them.

2) Conservative M.E.Ps have no funds for London offices and are unlikely to get any. They are examining a rent-free offer from Conservative Central Office. They are indebted to HMG in respect of the offices currently occupied.

3) They displayed extreme ^{sensitivity} ~~sensibility~~ about criticism in the U.K. Charles Irving's recent "gravy train" speech was repeatedly mentioned.

4) They were delighted to know that passes for them to visit the Houses of Parliament were under consideration. It would be helpful if a decision could be expedited by the Security Committee.

5) Now that it is agreed that Conservative M.E.Ps can visit U.K. Party Committees it is obviously important to develop these contacts. It would be very helpful if a note of Committee meetings could be sent on Thursdays



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presumably by Telex or Telecopy, to their offices or, alternatively, posted to individual M.E.Ps at their home addresses, at the same time as our domestic Whip.

6) Conservative M.E.Ps believe that British M.E.Ps are treated more harshly by the Inland Revenue than domestic M.Ps. One of them will send me a detailed note on this point. I undertook to raise it with the Boyle Committee, and have done so.

7) I urged them to ask domestic M.Ps to their relevant meetings and I said I would mention to the Chief Whip that I hoped he would be helpful if ever there was a problem over Pairing.

Ese
7.12.79

EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC GROUP

Subject to amendments
in detail, which will be
put right in a ~~sub~~ final
copy I'll send you

GROUP STRATEGY AND TACTICS

1. We are now six months out from the election and we are beginning to discover what we can do and what we need to do. This note is to suggest that the time has come to pull some of the strings together by putting down some suggestions as to what we should do and how we should try to do it.

2. It is suggested first of all that we need to begin to pull our policies together. The party and government at home need to know what it is we are after and what we can contribute. It will be much more difficult for us to pull apart if we are seen to be aiming for a European dimension which is a real contribution at home and which only we can deliver. And the only way of turning the tide of anti-Europeanism is to have a well-thought-out package which will attract strong public support. Only against this background can we show up the negative and purely destructive policy of the 'antis'.

3. We have made an excellent start with the Agricultural working party and it is suggested that we should follow the same pattern with the other major policies. We can't do everything at the same time, but we might start with a wider discussion of policies on energy, trade, regional development and currency stabilisation, bringing in - as in agriculture - members of the group outside those on the particular committees, so that there is some cross-fertilisation. We should aim at a package which helps solve some of our major domestic problems en route. For instance it would be better for the UK to have

an energy policy which provided for conservation and new resources by a levy on imports rather than by a levy on consumption. A tough European trade policy which effectively limited imports from the newly industrialised countries might help to counter some of the anti-Community arguments in Britain and Denmark and help the balance of trade in both countries. A well thought-out package of policies should have a self-consistent logic in which each policy supports the other, so that the whole is much more compelling than the sum of the parts and it is therefore more difficult to break up and damage. A group which knows where it wants to go is much less likely to be put off course than one which is flourishing without any real aims.

4. We will have to work for the support of the Government and the party at home and we cannot allow our work to be blocked by stray votes in the Council and we should certainly not go down one path only to find too late that our National Government has gone down another.

It is suggested therefore that the British Members (whose Party is in office) should ask for a steering group with the status of a Cabinet Committee chaired by Ian GILMOUR consisting of three or four from the Group and three or four from the Government. This group should have on its agenda position papers on our work and should be able to co-opt Treasury or Agricultural ministers and equivalent from our group to match the agenda. In order to preserve confidentiality it might be necessary for circulation of some papers and of its minutes to be restricted, but it should have free and frank discussions and should reach conclusions which should be minuted and reported on a 'need to know'

basis. We may not always agree with Westminster but we have a mutual right to know each others thoughts and to influence each others decisions. At the very least the process would avoid accidents. At best it could be extremely constructive.

The Danish Members will have greater difficulties while their parties are in opposition. Their more informal relations do not pose the same problems.

5. We already have the advantage of a much more coherent and disciplined group in the Parliament than any other and we should take full advantage of this. It is suggested that in each Committee one ED member be given the responsibility for liaison with someone in each of the other groups, especially of course in the right-of-centre groups. But if other groups are likely to vote with us on issues of national interest to both countries, we should be aware of it and the British members should help the Danish members and vice-versa.

At Plenary level, it is suggested that we have the same allocation of individual responsibility for keeping in touch, those who are multi-lingual having an especial responsibility. In addition it could be a great help if we had one or two formal liaison groups with the Christian Democrats meeting regularly to discuss the major issues. A strong liaison with the German Christian Democrats could be crucial in changing the balance of power in the Community. This is something in which our colleagues in the home Parliament have no standing and on which we can make a major contribution. There is also a need for our Italian-speaking members to establish a link with the numerous Italian Christian Democrats.

6. If we are clear on where we want to go and can improve our liaison in committees and in the plenary, we have a very much better chance of having our policies carried. But we will still need to consider our Parliamentary strategy session by session. We would not want to follow the tactics of the technical coordination group. That would be wholly counter-productive. But they did show what careful consideration of parliamentary strategy could do for a very small and disparate group. It is suggested that we need two or three people to mastermind the parliamentary tactics in each session and to recommend to us the conditions needed to forge majorities on the policies we want to pursue.

7. Finally we need to make sure that the electors know what we are trying to do for them, hear of our successes and understand the problems when we do not succeed. Richard COTTRELL has already been asked to put together a group which seems to fit this need precisely. It aims to help individual members and also to see that national TV and radio and press start to use MEPs and put a fair balance in their programmes.

8. We are a well-disciplined coherent group. We need to use that discipline and coherence to hammer out, argue and carry our own policies which will use the European connection to help our countries and give power and coherence to the Community itself.

Bruxelles
05.12.1979

Fred Coe

Richard Cottrell

David Curry

Diane Ellis

Edward Kettle-Bowman

David Nicholson

Henry Plumb

David Nicholson

Shelagh Roberts

Madsen Schjorner

Richard Simmonds

Andrew Simpson

Fred Warner

Michael Welsh