

010  
Ref. A085/1748

MR POWELL  
\_\_\_\_\_

Possible European Initiative on Cancer

I received a visit this afternoon from Mr R H Grierson, who said that he had been asked by Monsieur Attali, President Mitterrand's Special Adviser, to come and see me about this matter.

2. When the French "EUREKA" proposal is discussed at the meeting of the European Council in Milan, the French President and the Italian Prime Minister may propose that the "EUREKA" programme should include an initiative on cancer.

3. Mr Grierson said that he had become involved in this matter as a member of the EORTC Foundation, which is (as I understand it) a European organisation concerned with research into and treatment of cancer.

4. Mr Grierson left with me a copy of an aid memoire which he said reflected points which he had made in his conversations with Monsieur Attali and others on this matter. The points to which he attached particular importance were that any initiative should start on a modest basis, and should probably be directed to cancer prevention and cancer treatment rather than cancer research: there was likely to be a better reception to proposals for European co-operation amongst those concerned with treatment and prevention than amongst those concerned with research. He was also anxious that the development of the initiative should be kept out of the hands of health bureaucracies.

Prime Minister<sup>①</sup>  
CDP  
26/6.



[There have been none]

5. Mr Williamson and I said that so far as we knew, there had been no other indications that the French President or the Italian Prime Minister might introduce such a proposal into the discussion at Milan. It seemed unlikely that Heads of State or Government would wish to commit themselves to a particular initiative unless and until there had been a chance of proper examination. We were going to suggest at Milan that a high level group should be set up to deal with proposals for inclusions in the "EUREKA" programme; if such a group was set up, we envisaged that its members would work with experts in particular fields as appropriate. We suggested, and Mr Grierson agreed, that a proposal for an initiative on cancer on the lines envisaged could be very properly dealt with in that manner.

6. Mr Grierson said that he thought that an initiative on cancer, the incidence of which was rising steadily, could be warmly received by the public throughout the European Community. I did not disagree.

7. I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretary to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and to Mr Williamson.

Approved by  
ROBERT ARMSTRONG  
*and signed in his absence*

26 June 1985