

dti

the department for Enterprise

CCPC
Alan Clark

The Hon. Alan Clark MP
Minister for Trade

Department of
Trade and Industry

1-19 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

Switchboard
01-215 7877

Telex 8811074/5 DTHQ G
Fax 01-222 2629

ALAN
CLARK

Direct line
Our ref
Your ref
Date

PRIME MINISTER

The Bruges Speech

I must ask you to forgive my approaching you directly on this subject - particularly as what I have to say is at variance with the official recommendation ^{to} ~~as to~~ the Dept's response to Charles Powell's letter of 31 August. *with COP?*

I have compared the first draft (which I thought excellent) with the full text of the alternative suggested by the Foreign Office. I have now seen the second draft - which I was glad to see resisted many of the changes suggested by FCO but is already at, or very close to, the dilution threshold. For example, the excellent passages (pp 29-32) of the original draft of which the essence was the para on page 30 -

Let me say bluntly on behalf of Britain: we have not embarked on the business of throwing back the frontiers of the state at home, only to see a European super-state getting ready to exercise a new dominance from Brussels.

- have been very greatly curtailed.

Furthermore, it is my opinion that Delors, by coming over here and addressing what to all intents and purposes is an Opposition Conference, offering them the 'deal' of a return to their old non-elective privileges if they support him - has put himself outside any immunity that might attach to his position as President.

In addition, I would caution very strongly against any changes that reduce the vivid illustrations and punchy phrases which are characteristic of your style, and will be expected by your audience, both in the Hall and more widely.

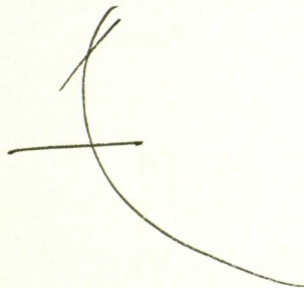
This speech is of crucial importance. It will signal our attitudes to developments in the Community both micro and macro over the next decade. Ministers, certainly of my own rank, need this to fortify their resolve; the public need it for reassurance.

I say this against a background of two years of negotiating at Internal Market Councils in Brussels (and six months chairing one). In this situation I have been aware of two disadvantages.

First, lack of strategic co-ordination. The attitude to individual issues is governed by Line-to-take briefings, drafted by officials in the different Departments that 'lead' on that particular subject, in the narrow departmental interest and with little effort to assert relative priorities. Although one can occasionally derive some advantage by delaying tactics and the occasional horse-trade on minutiae, there is no master plan that offers the possibility of advantage-building allegiances, often single-issue alignments, with other particular states. It is like fighting a battle with individual battalion commanders making their own decisions on the ground without a strategic overview from headquarters.

The second disadvantage vests in the commitment - some might say the timidity - of certain key officials notably those in UKREP. Their understanding of 'isolation' is not yours or mine, ie being 'alone'. (And indeed if one is asserting leadership, one often is 'alone' initially) but simply not being in a majority. I do not say this happens in every case but certainly I find it an inhibiting factor in trying to operate behind the scenes in a number of cases.

It might be that the Cabinet Office paper and other initiatives presently under consideration will improve our strategic co-ordination. But in order to correct other attitudes which continue to proliferate, and can be found at many levels, it is essential that a very clear statement of the United Kingdom's position should be uttered. If you are yourself on this occasion we shall all be the stronger for it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a horizontal line that curves upwards and then downwards into a long, sweeping tail.

ib

14.11.1944
MARR