



Prime Minister

1

Ref: A01014

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

Apce A or B? I am already speaking on the basis of C (e.g. for your meeting with the European Democratic Group on Tuesday.

Ministerial Liaison with MEPs

1 hour 4/1

see Euro Pol (Budget) Pt 4.

I see from the record that the question of liaison with United Kingdom MEPs arose at your meeting on 21st December on the Community Budget. I understand that you were critical of the advice you received from OD(E)(79) 20th Meeting about the possibility of the European Parliament rejecting the 1980 Budget shortly after you had seen Mr. Scott Hopkins (Mr. Alexander's letter of 7th December to Mr. Lever refers). There was a subsequent discussion about the briefing of MEPs in OD(E) (OD(E)(79) 21st Meeting) which laid down guidance for individual Ministers and charged the Cabinet Office to draw attention to those issues which might require a collective view. In addition, the Lord Privy Seal has now offered to meet members of the European Democratic Group before each plenary session of the Parliament.

2. How can these arrangements be tightened up to ensure that the Government is speaking with one voice? For routine matters, the procedure approved by OD(E) will probably suffice. But where there are major tactical questions on which Mr. Scott Hopkins is likely to consult you, then you may feel that it would be desirable for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary or the Lord Privy Seal to participate in your talks with him. It could also be advantageous to invite the appropriate departmental Ministers (e.g. the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the budget) when it is clear in advance that particular departmental interests are involved. In any event, you may think it helpful to commission a brief from the Cabinet Office or the FCO on the non-Party aspects for future meetings with Mr. Scott Hopkins.

A

B

C

1 I need to know the issues before OD(E) is advised.
2 We can't have several cab. ministers present every time we meet. We can consult the cabinet but the rest will have to be left to the CPS and me.

Robert Armstrong

3rd January 1980

3 Don't understand point C - is there anything we don't know?

CONFIDENTIAL



European
Policy

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR. VILE

MINISTERIAL LIAISON WITH MEPs

The Prime Minister has seen Sir Robert Armstrong's minute to her of 3 January on this subject. She agrees that it would be helpful if the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary or, more usually, the Lord Privy Seal, could participate in any talks she has in future with Mr. Scott Hopkins. She also agrees that a brief should be prepared for such meetings in future.

The Prime Minister does not, however, intend to invite departmental Ministers to these meetings. She considers that the presence of a Foreign Office Minister and the production of a brief should suffice.

We here will ensure that either Lord Carrington or Sir Ian Gilmour are in future invited to meetings with Mr. Scott Hopkins. The Prime Minister will be meeting with members of the European Democratic Group tomorrow: a brief has been requested.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

7 January 1980

TCA



KURO P02

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1

19 December 1979

*Lg
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Rund*

It has occurred to me that members of the European Democratic Group might find it useful to have more or less regular meetings with me here in the FCO before each session of the European Parliament to discuss any issues of concern to you and to give me a chance of explaining government policy. I think the best way might be for me to be as it were 'at home' to any members of your group who wanted to come along on a day to suit them before each plenary session of the parliament. If this idea appeals to the group, perhaps you would let me know which day of the week and what time of day members of the group are likely to find most convenient. I suggest we allow an hour.

James Scott-Hopkins Esq MEP
European Democratic Group
St Stephens House
Victoria Embankment
London SW1

bcc:PS
PS/PUS
Lord Bridges
Mr Hannay
Mr Spreckley
Mr FitzHerbert
Mr Franklin,
Cabinet Office
~~PS/No 10~~
PS/Chancellor of
the Exchequer
PS/Minister of
Agriculture
PS/S of S for
Energy



Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

CC: D ELLIOTT
M TOWNLEY
S BAMPFYLDE
N SANDERS
MRS BLACKBURN
D FAULKNER

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

2
PRIME MINISTER

22 October 1979

You mentioned this
at Cabinet today

MS

Dear Peter.

[Handwritten signature]
✓ 3

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UK PARLIAMENT AND THE DIRECTLY ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

I wrote to you on 17 August about how we might handle the discussion of relations between members of the Westminster Parliament and the United Kingdom members of the European Parliament.

In the light of the replies received (including the Lord Privy Seal's letter of 24 August), I now intend to start the soundings with MPs about privileged access to Westminster facilities for MEPs and the establishment of a Joint Select Committee on the constitutional and procedural aspects of their relationship to members of the Westminster Parliament. The Lord President of the Council has said (in his letter to me of 31 August) that he will wish at the same time to take soundings in the House of Lords. Subject to the outcome of these contacts, we can then agree a statement which I will make to the House shortly after the recess to get formal proceedings under way.

I would expect the Services and Offices Committees, whether singly or combined, to make their recommendations to the House on possible privileged access to facilities in Westminster within a month. These could then be debated in late November or early December, which I understand would fit in with the Chief Whip's views on timing. I note the Chancellor of the Exchequer's preference (his letter to me of 30 August) for allowing MEPs privileged access to existing Westminster facilities rather than creating new joint facilities where MPs and MEPs might meet.

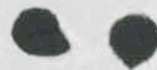
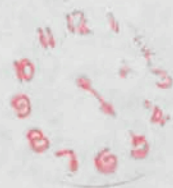
I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of my letter of 17 August.

[Handwritten signature]

The Rt Hon Lord Carrington, KCMG, MC
Secretary of State
Foreign & Commonwealth Office

W1

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V-ns
cc Mr Cumming-Bruce ✓

FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE
HOUSE OF LORDS

Enveloped.

The Rt Hon Norman St John Stevas MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Lancaster Place
Strand
LONDON WC2E 7ED

31 August 1979

Dear Norman,

I have seen a copy of your letter of 17 August to the Foreign Secretary.

So far as the House of Lords is concerned, I am content with what you propose. I should be grateful if you would let me know when you propose to begin consultations in the Commons as I shall also need to consult the usual channels in the Lords.

I am sending copies of this letter to recipients of yours.

Yours ever
Christopher

SOAMES

25 OCT 1979



cc: PS/Chief Secretary
PS/Financial Secretary
PS/Minister of State (C)
PS/Minister of State (L)
Sir Douglas Wass
Sir Kenneth Couzens o.r.



Mr. Jordan-Moss
Mrs. Hedley-Miller o.r.
Mr. Ashford
Mr. Thomson
Mr. R. Jones
Mr. Ridley

VMS

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
01-233 3000

20 August 1979

Dear Norman

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM PARLIAMENT
AND THE DIRECTLY ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

You wrote to Peter Carrington on 17th August with recommendations for implementing our Manifesto commitment to discuss the relationship between the Westminster and European Parliaments "with all parties".

Your procedural proposals strike me as entirely sensible and I am content for you to make a statement to the House on the lines you suggest early in the next session - subject of course to the outcome of the informal soundings you will be taking beforehand.

I agree also that there is little point in OD(E) discussing the issues of substance until we have a better idea of what MPs and their counterparts in the European Parliament will want. Meanwhile I find the preliminary conclusions set out in the note by officials attached to your letter broadly acceptable.

The only issue on which I would like to comment at this stage is that of joint facilities. I accept that arrangements which would enable the members of both institutions to mingle on terms of "easy informality" are highly desirable and a necessary part of establishing a good working relationship between the two bodies. But you will not be surprised to hear that I greatly prefer the first option mentioned in the note (privileged access for MEPs to existing Westminster facilities) to the second (new joint facilities), which carries with it the implication of additional UK public expenditure. Now is not the time for Parliament to splash out unnecessarily on new accommodation, even in cases like the present, where, in other circumstances, it might appear desirable. As the note by

The Rt. Hon. Norman St. John-Stevas, MP



officials observes, this is a matter for Parliament itself to decide, but I hope that, if a suitable opportunity arises, you will try tactfully to steer opinion in the Committee in the direction of the cheaper alternative.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Geoffrey Howe".

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

24 OCT 1979

