



Ref. A084/1378

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet: Community Affairs

You may wish to inform Cabinet of the Community aspects of your talks with the French President on 4 May.

2. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will report on the third Ministerial negotiating conference for the Lome III Convention in Fiji on 1-5 May at which the United Kingdom was represented by the Minister for Overseas Development. Some big problems remain, notably the size of the next European Development Fund and some aspects of the trade arrangements. The Community and the beneficiary countries (35 of which are within the Commonwealth), however, consider that the progress on this occasion towards the new Lome Convention was reasonable. The French Presidency may achieve their aim of solving the remaining outstanding problems at the next Ministerial conference on 28-29 June.

3. The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will report on the Agriculture Council on 7 May. The Republic of Ireland again blocked a five-year agreement on New Zealand butter imports, although other member states and the Presidency were in favour of an immediate decision on the five-year (or at least a three-year) agreement. A further two-month rollover was agreed to allow the Commission time for further informal consultations with New Zealand. The Council also established a new high level Agriculture Structures Group to try to speed progress on the new structures policy.

4. There is a Transport Council on 10 May, Finance Ministers meet informally on 12-13 May, and the Foreign Affairs Council meets on 14-15 May.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

9 May 1984