

RESTRICTED



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1 1AA

Dr
21/5

Malcolm Rifkind Esq MP
Minister of State
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

21 May 1984

Dear Minister of State,

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION, MONDAY 21 MAY: FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

I am writing in reply to your letter of 17 May to John Biffen, which you kindly copied to John Moore.

I agree that we can live with the terms of Jim Spicer's motion and need not seek to amend it.

I would, however, like to suggest a slightly different line to take from that contained in the fourth paragraph of your letter.

Given the line which the French Government are now taking - viz that they are in no hurry to resume negotiations on budgetary imbalances before Fontainebleau and that it is up to the UK to make the first move - I think it would be a mistake for us to seem to be pressing publicly for the immediate resumption of negotiations. I therefore do not think we should talk in terms of a settlement before the European elections, which is now quite clearly out of the question. I would suggest that the right line to take is that the Government is ready to resume negotiations on this issue as soon as our partners are ready; that we certainly expect the issues to be high on the agenda of the Fontainebleau European Council; that we remain determined to get an equitable settlement; and that this will certainly require a significant move by our partners from the position they have taken up until now. If pressed as to our own position, you might say that we are prepared to negotiate, but have little room for manoeuvre.

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

Yours sincerely
Adam Elkin

for IAN STEWART

Approved by the General Secretary
and signed in his absence.