

PRIME MINISTER ①

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION ON WORKING HOURS

The Chancellor also opposes signature of this recommendation.

The Foreign Secretary does not support it in substance but believes we should play for time. While this might avoid offence now, it could cause trouble later, if, having achieved all the changes to the text we were seeking, we still opposed it. Mr. King does not believe the FCO's halfway house is tenable and believes that the choice remains

i) sticking to our principles and offending the French who are very keen to see the recommendation as an achievement of their Presidency

or ii) negotiating the best text we can and then agreeing.

Mr. King, having considered the arguments more fully, believes we should go for (ii).

Note: This was meant to read (i) to which PM would have answered yes. Agree?

No - this goes ^{AT} contrary to our industrial policy. The EEC is setting a kind of equality in efficiency. No. Stick to our principles i.e. (i).

5 June 1984

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cc: Nick Owen

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 June 1984

EC LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL: DRAFT RECOMMENDATION ON THE
REDUCTION AND REORGANISATION OF WORKING TIME

The Prime Minister has seen the Chancellor's letter of 5 June to your Secretary of State and the Foreign Secretary's minute of the same date. She understands that your Secretary of State doubts whether the negotiating tactics suggested by the Foreign Secretary can be successfully carried out without being accused later of bad faith.

The Prime Minister shares these reservations. While obviously not wanting to give needless offence to the Presidency at this meeting, the Prime Minister believes there is no prospect that the UK can assent to a recommendation which goes contrary to our industrial policy. She has commented that the effect of the recommendation is to impose equality of inefficiency throughout the Community.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roger Bone (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), David Peretz (HM Treasury), Callum McCarthy (Department of Trade and Industry), Ivor Llewelyn (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), Henry Steel (Law Officers Department), Anthony Cary (Minister of State's Office, FCO) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Andrew Turnbull

David Normington, Esq.,
Department of Employment.

089