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PRIME MINISTER

Amendments to the Treaty of Rome

I am told that at a meeting of the Conservative back-bench Foreign Affairs Committee yesterday it was suggested that you and the Foreign Secretary had different views on amendment to the Treaty of Rome. It was felt that while the Foreign Secretary had carefully not closed the door to amendment, you had comprehensively ruled it out. You have certainly said in The House that you do not see a need to amend the Treaty in order to improve the functioning of the Community. You have also spoken against specific proposals for amendment to Articles 57(2), 99 and 100. On article 100 you said, for instance, that "most of us would wish to keep the unanimity role on directives which could be quite vital to many of our industries". But I cannot find any record of you having absolutely excluded amendment.

In my view, this is wise. We do not want to go into an inter-governmental conference with our hands completely tied. Even in relation to the three Articles which have been mentioned, it is not impossible that some amendment might at the end of the day be acceptable to Article 100 and just possibly to Article 57(2) (though certainly not to Article 99). One could envisage, for instance, amending Article 100 so as to preserve unanimity for one or more categories of issue on which directives could be made (eg those vital to our industries) while allowing majority voting for some others; or to preserve unanimity for the basic decisions of principle while introducing majority voting for implementing decisions.

In a sense this is theoretical because there is no immediate need for any comment or statement. But it would be helpful to have confirmation that your view is that we see no present need for Treaty amendment and do not support the rather sweeping proposals for amendments to some Treaty Articles made at Milan. But we are ready to examine any

proposals which may be put forward in future on their merits.

CDP

C.D. Powell
17 July 1985

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10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Were you content
with this?

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CDD
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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

22 July, 1985

AMENDMENTS TO THE TREATY OF ROME

You mentioned to me last week that some concern had been expressed that the Prime Minister had taken a position firmly opposed to any amendments to the Treaty of Rome. I told you that I did not think this was the case. I now enclose a copy of a note which I put to the Prime Minister on the subject. She has expressed herself "more or less" content with it.

(C.D. Powell)

L. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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TREATY AMENDMENT

As I said in the House on 2 July, we shall consider what proposals are made at the inter-governmental conference.

PROPOSALS BY OTHERS FOR TREATY AMENDMENT

We have put forward proposals which could be implemented without it. Our attitude to any specific proposals will depend on whether these would in fact help achieve the reforms which are necessary in the way in which the Community works. One proposal we have made - for a reduction in the number of Commissioners - would, for instance, bear directly on a provision of the Treaty.