

E/R

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PRIME MINISTER

Spoken
C.D.P.
19/xi

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

You objected to the proposed reference in the draft Treaty on Political Co-operation to the ultimate aim of "the joint formulation and implementation of a European [foreign] policy". Can I ask you, please, to look at this again?

I absolutely agree with you that there is no way you can have a European foreign policy without a European defence policy. And in practice we aren't going to have a common foreign policy. The question is really one of Euro-speak: can we refer to a goal like a European foreign policy, even though we know it is distant and probably unrealisable?

We have already gone quite a long way in this direction. The agreed conclusions of the Milan European Council spoke of convening a conference to work out "a Treaty on a common foreign and security policy on the basis of the Franco-German and United Kingdom drafts". The Stuttgart Declaration spoke of "joint action on all main foreign policy questions".

Geoffrey Howe is now isolated in opposing this and in a difficult position.

Can you authorise him to say that we shall be ready to discuss this point in the context of an overall package at Luxembourg, in the hope that it can be satisfactorily resolved? We might be able to bargain a bit with it. And the reality will not change: there will be no legally binding obligations on us in the foreign policy field.

Agree?

C.D.P.

C.D. Powell

18 November 1985