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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

25 February 1986

**UK PRESIDENCY: REPORTING ON THE  
LONDON EUROPEAN COUNCIL**

Thank you for your letter of 24 February about the Prime Minister's report to the European Assembly in Strasbourg on the outcome of the London European Council.

The Prime Minister has agreed to deliver her report on Tuesday 9 December, following the timetable set out in your letter of 3 February. This means that she will plan on making a statement to the House on the outcome of the Council on Monday 8 December.

I am copying this letter to David Williamson (Cabinet Office).

(Charles Powell)

C. R. Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 February 1986

Dear Charles,

UK Presidency: Reporting on the London European Council

Thank you for your letter of 4 February about the Prime Minister's report to the European Parliament in Strasbourg on the outcome of the London European Council.

Sir Geoffrey Howe considers that it would be undesirable for the Prime Minister to give the report on Monday 8 December. The Parliament's monthly session does not normally begin until 1700 hours and many MEPs will not have arrived in Strasbourg by then. Moreover, reporting first to Strasbourg and only afterwards to the House of Commons would seem liable to attract criticism in the House.

The Foreign Secretary recommends that the Prime Minister should make her report on Tuesday 9 December, within the timetable indicated in my letter of 3 February.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 February 1986

UK PRESIDENCY: REPORTING ON THE LONDON EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Thank you for your letter of 3 February on the need for the Prime Minister to report to the European Assembly in Strasbourg on the outcome of the European Council held during the British Presidency.

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The Prime Minister agrees to do this but cannot manage Wednesday 10 December. Her preference would be to do it on Monday 8 December. The only disadvantage with this date is that it would make it impossible for her to report beforehand to the House of Commons. You may like to consult with the Business Managers as to how serious a problem this is. If they think it would be taken badly by the House, the alternative might be for the Prime Minister to make a statement to Parliament on the Monday and go to Strasbourg on Tuesday 9 December. I suspect that we may have to settle for this.

On the European Council itself, you may like to note for planning purposes that the Prime Minister has an unbreakable engagement on Saturday 6 December which will necessitate her being free from the Council and all follow-up press briefings by 1630 that day at the latest.

SMA

Charles Powell

Colin Budd Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

3 February 1986

Dear Charles,

UK Presidency : Reporting on the London  
European Council (5-6 December)

Further to my letter of 22 January, <sup>at 11.00</sup> I am glad to report that Mr Lubbers has now said that he will report to the European Parliament on 8 July on the European Council held under his Presidency. We now need to work out the best day for the Prime Minister's report to the European Parliament on our own European Council (5-6 December). The European Parliament will meet for the last time in 1986 from 8-12 December.

Given the commitments the Prime Minister has on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the best day would seem - as in 1981 - to be the Wednesday (10 December). It is usual for the Head of Government concerned to begin his or her report at about 10.00 am and to reply to the short following debate between 12.15 and 12.30 pm. At that point the Prime Minister would be able to give the traditional end-of-Presidency lunch for the President and Bureau of the European Parliament and members of the Commission who are in Strasbourg. It would then be possible for her to leave Strasbourg at about 2.45pm.

I should be grateful to know whether these timings are acceptable.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street