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1 December 1989

EUROPEAN COUNCIL, STRASBOURG

8/9 DECEMBER 1989

FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

from

Drugs.

from known crime

Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office

UK Objectives

- To reaffirm practical approach to frontiers issues.
- To endorse Presidency impetus for more effective handling of drugs issues.

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Opening Speaking Note

- Since our discussions at Rhodes, Community has made real progress in identifying priorities and seeking ways to reinforce cooperation between member states over cross-border movement of people.
- Freer movement is rightly seen as important objective for 1992. Some 30m overseas visits made by UK nationals each year - five times the level when we joined the EC. Must reduce travel hassle where possible.
- But public opinion also wants confidence that we are not neglecting security.
- So our approach to these problems must be a practical one. Presidency are to be congratulated on just such an approach.
- Welcome Presidency initiative to give higher profile to the threat from drugs and the need for more effective Community action. Cannot overstate the potential menace of drugs to fabric of Community society. We all have heavy responsibility for ensuring

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that free movement within Community does not mean greater freedom for drug traffickers; a real People's Europe is a Community which is not in grip of drugs.

- Evidence suggests that drugs threat will grow as a result of 1992 and freer movement of people. European street prices about double those in America. This, combined with determined enforcement action in the US, means that the European market is increasingly attractive for traffickers, particularly of cocaine. Cocaine seizures at UK ports for first 10 months of 1989 were 385 kg, compared to 273 kg for the whole of 1988. Similarly for heroin: provisional figures so far for 1989 are 287 kg, compared to 212 kg for whole of 1988.

- This year almost 70% of drugs seized at our frontiers by UK authorities have come from or via other member states. The new Customs group has calculated that 200 tonnes of drugs (including 5 tonnes of hard drugs) were seized by EC customs services in 1988. So drugs are very real threat to us all.

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- Community drug problems cannot be seen in isolation from global problem. Twelve must, jointly, pay more attention to international aspects, particularly relations with drug producers and transit countries. Must tackle drugs problem at source as well as at home. Crisis in Colombia and in Latin America generally has heightened the need for prompt and effective action in helping producer countries. UK already a major donor, and provided substantial package of practical assistance for Colombia (training and equipment). Would welcome greater coordination of member states' bilateral efforts.

- French proposals for institutional changes, including establishment of a steering group of drugs coordinators, are a welcome step. Existing work by specialised groups now needs to be brought together: success of Rhodes "Coordinators" on frontiers issues now needs to be emulated in drugs area. And we need practical action by all member states.

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- For all of us to establish National Drugs Intelligence Units, as UK has done, is an important further step. Could lead to creation of a European Drugs Intelligence Unit, to collect and distribute intelligence.

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17 Decisions

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1 December 89

Rep. the President

Proper on health & safety
Free movement of people.
Freedom of establishment.
Training for jobs. - Social Funds

Feb 1988 -

Spend more money
'86

(1st & 2nd Council)

EUROPEAN COUNCIL, STRASBOURG

8/9 DECEMBER 1989

SOCIAL ISSUES

More Community
Western Europe than
in Eastern Europe
at the moment

Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Signing up to non-convergence.

UK Objectives

- To emphasise that social policies must sustain job creation and growth, and allow for labour market flexibility.

Conclusions - Social Fund
Health & safety
work
Any future proposal
escaped
5-10
needs
not

- To make clear that UK, while not opposed to any Social Charter, cannot accept Presidency version.

- To underline need to respect subsidiarity in future work on the Commission's Action Programme.

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Opening Speaking Note

- In our Madrid Conclusions we reaffirmed our joint view that job creation and action against unemployment was the Community's top social priority.

- Madrid Conclusions also stressed the continuing role of national and voluntary arrangements alongside action at Community level. Delors has christened this the principle of subsidiarity. A very good principle which he has developed wisely.

- Madrid Conclusions also rightly acknowledged the diversity of tradition and practice among Member States. It exists for good reasons; and it must not be called into question. Community action is desirable only where it is necessary. We respect other Member States' traditions and preferences in social policy: but in return we ask other Member States to respect ours.

- I regret that recent discussions on how to address the social aspects of the Single Market have been dominated by efforts to agree a Social Charter. It's deeds, not words, that matter; and declarations create no jobs.

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17 directives

← - Regret too that the text which has emerged does not match the prescription we agreed at Madrid. The thrust of the document is to invite the Community to displace the policies and measures already in place in Member States, to over-regulate the work-place, and to increase costs. That wouldn't create jobs - it would cut them.

- Our commitment to job creation as our top priority should mean a commitment to ensuring the continuing competitiveness of Community business and industry in international markets. With unemployment in the Community at over 14 million, can it really make sense for a Charter to say nothing about unemployment, and for an Action Programme merely to restate what is already being done about unemployment?

- Believe Member States' efforts better channelled towards the 30 Single Market measures for which proposals have still to be tabled, than towards the Action Programme's 43 new proposals.

+ 17 directives.

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- Will not disguise the fact that the Charter draft is particularly inappropriate for the UK.

- Over the last 10 years, we have deliberately set about reducing the role of the state and establishing a better balance between employers and unions. We have deliberately given priority to measures designed to free up the labour market, and to allow individual employees to make their own choices. These policies have been controversial in the UK, but the sad history of the UK labour market in the 60's and 70's had convinced us that they were right, and indeed essential.

- And they have worked. We have seen 39 consecutive months of falling unemployment, nearly 3 million jobs created since 1983, and a UK unemployment rate now down to 6%. 1,600 small businesses start up in the UK every week.

- One of most important developments in UK in 80's has been increase in flexible patterns of work. More people are working part-time or at home, or for short periods. They do so because it suits their life style.

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We do not regard this as 'atypical'. There are over 6 million part-time workers in the UK, and surveys show that 90% want to work part-time. Employers therefore have had to respond by offering flexibility in work arrangements.

- Not saying that what works in the UK would necessarily work elsewhere. Not saying that policies we've followed should necessarily be followed elsewhere. We had particular problems to overcome in labour relations, and we have overcome them - but recognise that some others didn't have them.

- But if I were to agree the Social Charter draft, and that agreement were to mean anything, it would mean changing policies which I believe are right for the UK, and working in the UK. Since I can't do that, I can't in good faith agree the text.

- Repeat what we have said all along. We do not oppose the principle of a Social Charter. A broad declaratory and general statement, free of detail and regulatory promises, would have been acceptable to us. I would have greatly preferred that, for it would have

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enabled us to display a united Community, united in working for more jobs. If others are content with the present text, I won't press my point. But nor can I agree the present text.

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