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From the Private Secretary

29 October 1984

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS

The Prime Minister has seen UKREP Brussels tel. no. 3469 reporting the Dooge Committee's discussion of Political Cooperation on 25 October.

The Prime Minister notes that the United Kingdom gave general support to Herr Ruhfus' ideas. She hopes that this support does not extend to the introduction of majority voting to POCO and is also dubious about taking on a formal commitment to consult.

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

(C.D. POWELL)

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

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FCO

RESIDENT CLERK

PLUS FCO

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MR ~~RENSWICK~~
~~MR JEREMY CHAMBERS~~
Mr Derek Thomas

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MR BRANTON CD(2)

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Mr Powell
No 10 DS

H Y TREASURY

M A F F

MR J G LITTLER
~~MISS [unclear]~~
MR. GW. HOPKINSON

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FRAME INSTITUTIONS

FM UKREP BRUSSELS 251920Z OCT 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3469 OF 25 OCTOBER

INFO ROUTINE COPENHAGEN, THE HAGUE, ROME, DUBLIN, PARIS, BONN, LUXEMBOURG, ATHENS, LISBON, MADRID, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON
INFO SAVING BRUSSELS STRASBOURG UKDEL NATO

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONS (DOOGE COMMITTEE),
24/25 OCTOBER : POLITICAL COOPERATION

SUMMARY

1. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF RUHFUS' IDEAS ON MODIFICATION OF POLITICAL COOPERATION INCLUDING INTRODUCTION OF FORMAL COMMITMENT TO CONSULT AND LIMITED MAJORITY VOTING, ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT HEADED BY A SECRETARY-GENERAL, AND IMPROVED LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. UK GAVE GENERAL SUPPORT. IRELAND AND DENMARK GENERALLY NEGATIVE. WIDESPREAD QUESTIONING OF IDEA OF MAJORITY VOTING. OTHER IDEAS RECEIVED WITH VARYING DEGREES OF ENTHUSIASM. RUHFUS TO REVISE PAPER.

- not do more major work

DETAIL

2. RUHFUS (FRG) INTRODUCED HIS PAPER. HE HAD DELIBERATELY CONFINED IT TO POLITICAL COOPERATION, SAYING LITTLE ABOUT SECURITY OR ABOUT COMMUNITY EXTERNAL POLICIES, IMPORTANT THOUGH BOTH OF THESE WERE. THE TEN MUST NOW MOVE FROM COOPERATION ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MATTERS TOWARDS A COMMON FOREIGN POLICY. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE CENTRIFUGAL TENDANCIES LIKELY TO BE REINFORCED BY

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THE TEN MUST NOW MOVE FROM COOPERATION ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MATTERS TOWARDS A COMMON FOREIGN POLICY. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY NECESSARY IN VIEW OF THE CENTRIFUGAL TENDANCIES LIKELY TO BE REINFORCED BY ENLARGEMENT. HE THEN RAN THROUGH HIS MAIN PROPOSALS INCLUDING THE APPOINTMENT OF A SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE CREATION OF A BRUSSELS BASED SECRETARIAT, THE TRANSFER OF WORKING LEVEL MEETINGS TO BRUSSELS, THE INTRODUCTION OF MAJORITY VOTING IN CERTAIN RESTRICTED AREAS SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT REPRESENTATIONS IN CERTAIN REMOTE AND SMALL THIRD COUNTRIES, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON APPROACH AND A POLITICAL COOPERATION OUTPOST AT THE UN, AND IMPROVED LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

3. DOOGE UNEXPECTEDLY OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY SPEAKING FOR IRELAND. HE SAW DANGERS IN THE IDEA OF A SECRETARY-GENERAL. A POLITICIAN OF STATURE, AS RUFUS PROPOSED, MIGHT BECOME AN 11TH MEMBER OF EPC, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE PRESIDENCY, THE PROBLEM OF CONTINUITY WAS EXAGGERATED AND HAD BEEN LARGELY SOLVED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TROIKA INTO THE PRESIDENCY FOREIGN MINISTRY. HE SAW LITTLE ROLE FOR RUFUS' SUGGESTED "LEGAL ADVISER". THE IDEA OF A SECRETARIAT WAS NOT NEW AND HAD ALREADY BEEN REJECTED BY HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT. HE SAW NO CASE FOR REMOVING MEETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENCY CAPITAL. NOR DID HE SEE ANY ROLE FOR MAJORITY VOTING: THE SUCCESS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION REFLECTED THE FACT THAT WHEN EUROPE SPOKE WITH ONE VOICE THE TEN REALLY WERE UNANIMOUS. HE WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE ANY FORMALISATION OF THE COMMITMENT TO CONSULT ON POLITICAL MATTERS UNTIL EUROPE WAS CONSIDERABLY FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD TO ECONOMIC UNITY. ON JOINT ACTION IN THE UN HE NOTED THAT THE SCOPE FOR THIS WAS LIMITED, GIVEN IN PARTICULAR THE INDEPENDENT STATUS THAT FRANCE AND THE UK INSISTED ON MAINTAINING FOR THEIR ACTIONS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HE WAS AGNOSTIC ON THE IDEA OF JOINT REPRESENTATIONS AND LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

4. DONDELINGER (LUXEMBOURG) NOTED THAT THE GREAT WEAKNESS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION LAY IN THE LACK OF OBLIGATION TO ACHIEVE COMMON POSITIONS. ANY STEP WHICH COMPELLED THE TEN TO FOCUS ON ACHIEVING COMMON EXTERNAL POLICIES, AND STRENGTHENED LINKS WITH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES WAS DESIRABLE. HE SHARED DOOGE'S DOUBTS ABOUT THE VALUE OF APPOINTING A SECRETARY-GENERAL OF STATURE. A SECRETARIAT HOWEVER MIGHT HAVE MORE VALUE. IT WOULD PROVIDE POLITICAL COOPERATION WITH AN INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY AND KEEP ITS ARCHIVES. IT SHOULD BE NOTED HOWEVER THAT IF THIS SECRETARIAT WAS AUTONOMOUS THE COUNCIL SECRETARIAT WOULD NO DOUBT FEEL FRUSTRATED AT HAVING TO PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR A SMALL BODY WHICH WAS NOT PART OF IT. ON MAJORITY VOTING, A BETTER APPROACH MIGHT BE THAT ON OCCASIONS WHEN A LARGE MAJORITY OF THE TEN HAD A JOINT VIEW, THEY SHOULD PRESENT IT ON THEIR OWN BEHALF RATHER THAN TRYING TO VOTE DOWN THE MINORITY.

5. FERRI (ITALY) SUPPORTED THE APPROACH AND INSPIRATION OF THE RUFUS PAPER. IT TOUCHED ON QUESTIONS WHICH WERE COVERED IN THE DRAFT TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION AND IN FAVRE'S PAPER ON MAJOR POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. THE IDEAS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FURTHER IN THAT CONTEXT.

DRAFT TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION AND IN FAVRE'S PAPER ON MAJOR POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. THE IDEAS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FURTHER IN THAT CONTEXT.

6. PAPANTONIOU (GREECE) WELCOMED THE RUFUS PAPER AS POSITIVE AND STIMULATING. GREECE'S BASIC APPROACH WAS TO FAVOUR IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE POLITICAL COOPERATION MACHINERY BUT NOT TO CHANGE ITS POLITICAL NATURE. HE COULD NOT SUPPORT THE IDEA OF MAJORITY VOTING. EVEN IN THE AREAS SUGGESTED FOR THIS, EG HUMAN RIGHTS, THERE WERE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES AMONG THE TEN, EG ON TURKEY. IT FOLLOWED THAT HE EQUALLY SAW NO NEED FOR A TREATY. HE SHARED THE DOUBTS OF OTHERS ON THE ROLE OF A SECRETARY-GENERAL. ON THE OTHER HAND THERE WAS SOME NEED FOR A PERMANENT STRUCTURE SUCH AS A SECRETARIAT. COOPERATION IN THE UN SHOULD BE PRESSED AHEAD AS FAST AS AGREEMENT ON POLICY IN THE TEN WAS MADE POSSIBLE. HE COULD SUPPORT THE IDEA FOR CLOSER LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

7. HERMAN (BELGIUM) WELCOMED RUFUS' IDEAS. THE QUESTION OF STRENGTHENED LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ADDED TO THEM. MAJORITY VOTING WOULD FACILITATE DECISION-TAKING BUT SHOULD BE CONFINED TO CLEARLY DEFINED SUBJECTS. A PERMANENT STRUCTURE FOR POLITICAL COOPERATION SHOULD CERTAINLY BE INSTALLED AS SHOULD LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. RUFUS' PAPER DID NOT ADDRESS ONE GREAT WEKNESS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION, THE EXCLUSION OF SECURITY MATTERS.

8. MOLLER (DENMARK) SAID THAT POLITICAL COOPERATION HAD DEVELOPED REMARKABLY AND CONTINUED TO MAKE PROGRESS. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO TAMPER UNNECESSARILY WITH ESTABLISHED AND PROVEN PROCEDURES. WAS THE PRESIDENCY REALLY OVER-BURDENED? WOULD THE TEN NOT BE WISER TO AVOID UNNECESSARY BUREAUCRACY? MIGHT IT NOT BE BETTER TO CONCENTRATE ON THE PRESENT FUNCTIONING AND POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE TROIKA? THERE WERE OBVIOUS CONSITUTIONAL PROBLEMS IN MAJORITY VOTING. DENMARK DID HOWEVER SEE SOME USE FOR GIVING POLITICAL COOPERATION AN ANTENNA, PERHAPS ON A TROIKA BASIS, IN NEW YORK.

9. VAN EEKELN (NETHERLANDS) SAID THAT POLITICAL COOPERATION HAD SATISFIED SOME, BUT BY NO MEANS ALL, OF THE HOPES ORIGINALLY PLACED IN IT. THE QUESTION WAS THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE TEN WERE WILLING AND ABLE TO PROCEED TO CONSTRUCT A COMMON FOREIGN POLICY. THIS PROCESS HAD BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN SOME AREAS SUCH AS THE CSCE PROCESS, AND LESS SUCCESSFUL IN OTHERS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST. ANY CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY THIS COMMITTEE SHOULD MAINTAIN AND REINFORCE THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION:

- (A) AN UNDERSTANDING THAT THE TEN WOULD NOT CAUSE EACH OTHER SURPRISES IN THE FOREIGN POLICY FIELD.
- (B) CONTINUED DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTRIES, AND
- (C) LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY.

HE COULD SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A FORMAL OBLIGATION TO CONSULT, ALTHOUGH THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE FORMULATED IN A WAY WHICH WOULD NOT AFFECT THE ULTIMATE SOVEREIGNTY OF MEMBER STATES. HE COULD CAUTIOUSLY SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A SECRETARIAT BASED IN BRUSSELS, BUT THIS SHOULD BE KEPT SMALL AND MIGHT CONSTITUTE SIMPLY AN

NOT AFFECT THE ULTIMATE SOVEREIGNTY OF MEMBER STATES. HE COULD CAUTIOUSLY SUPPORT THE IDEA OF A SECRETARIAT BASED IN BRUSSELS, BUT THIS SHOULD BE KEPT SMALL AND MIGHT CONSTITUTE SIMPLY AN EXTENSION OF THE TROIKA SYSTEM. IT SHOULD MAINTAIN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE PRESIDENCY FOREIGN MINISTRY BY MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION. HE COULD ALSO SUPPORT THE IDEA OF AN OUTPOST IN NEW YORK. IT SEEMED UNLIKELY THAT POLITICAL COOPERATION WAS AN APPROPRIATE AREA FOR MAJORITY VOTING.

10. MR RIFKIND (UK) SAID THAT HE COULD ENDORSE MUCH OF RUFUS' EXCELLENT PAPER. POLITICAL COOPERATION HAD MADE EXCELLENT PROGRESS FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS. THE OUTSIDE WORLD INCREASINGLY SAW EUROPE AS ONE. THE OBVIOUS DANGER THAT ENLARGEMENT WOULD MAKE DECISION-MAKING MORE DIFFICULT WAS TO SOME EXTENT OFF SET BY THE FACT THAT IT WOULD ALSO ADD TO EUROPE'S WEIGHT. THE MAJOR DEFECT OF POLITICAL COOPERATION WAS THAT THE TEN HAD TENDED TO BE REACTIVE RATHER THAN ACTIVE ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS. THE TEN SHOULD NOW WORK TOWARDS A COMMON EXTERNAL POLICY. GIVEN THE EFFORTS WE WERE MAKING TO INTEGRATE OUR DOMESTIC POLICIES ON A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS, THIS SHOULD NOT BE AS DIFFICULT AS SOME AROUND THE TABLE HAD SUGGESTED. HE SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF FORMALISING THE OBLIGATION TO CONSULT. THE QUESTION OF A SECRETARY-GENERAL AND A SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE EXAMINED ON THE BASIS OF HOW USEFUL THESE INSTITUTIONS WERE LIKELY TO BE. WE HAD AN OPEN MIND ON THIS, BUT NOTED THAT POLITICAL COOPERATION HAD PROGRESSED HITHERTO WITH AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM OF BUREAUCRACY. THE IDEA OF MAJORITY VOTING RAISED DEEP CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS. IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, TO ENTER INTO A POLITICAL COMMITMENT WHEREBY MEMBER STATES AGREED TO TRY TO ABIDE BY THE VIEW OF THE MAJORITY, PERHAPS WITH A SAFEGUARD FOR IMPORTANT NATIONAL INTERESTS. WE COULD SUPPORT THE IDEA OF STRENGTHENED LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

11. ANDRIESEN (COMMISSION) SUPPORTED THE MAJORITY OF THE IDEAS IN RUFUS' PAPER. HE EMPHASISED THE NEED TO DRAW POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY CLOSER TOGETHER. WHEN POLITICAL COOPERATION NEEDED INSTRUMENTS IT OFTEN HAD TO TURN TO THE COMMUNITY. IT WAS NECESSARY TO BUILD A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS.

12. FAURE (FRANCE) SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF A VERY SMALL SECRETARIAT WITH A HIGH LEVEL SECRETARY-GENERAL. THE LATTER COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE INDEPENDENT BUT COULD PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN ORGANISATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF CONTINUITY. THE IDEA OF MAJORITY VOTING SHOULD BE APPROACHED PRAGMATICALLY. IT WAS WORTH NOTING THAT THERE WERE ALREADY SOME BRIDGES BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY, EG THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND EUROPEAN COUNCIL.

13. DONDELINGER INTERVENED AGAIN ON THE QUESTION OF LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY: THE TWO FRAMEWORKS WERE ALREADY COMING TOGETHER IN AN INCREASING NUMBER OF CASES, EG RELATIONS WITH ASEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA. THE SAME APPROACH MIGHT USEFULLY BE APPLIED TO RELATIONS WITH THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES.

14. RUFUS RESPONDED BY NOTING THAT THE PROPOSED SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE THE SAME STATUS AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF NATO. BUT SHOULD BE OF SUFFICIENT STATUS

14. RUHFUS RESPONDED BY NOTING THAT THE PROPOSED SECRETARY-GENERAL WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE THE SAME STATUS AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF NATO, BUT SHOULD BE OF SUFFICIENT STANDING TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE AT A HIGH LEVEL TO THE WORK OF THE PRESIDENCY. HE COULD RELIEVE THE PRESIDENCY OF CERTAIN BURDENS SUCH AS BRIEFING THIRD COUNTRIES. HE WOULD HAVE TO MAINTAIN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE PRESIDENCY, BY FREQUENT (EG WEEKLY) TRIPS, BY TELEPHONE AND ONE DAY BY DIRECT VIDEO CONFERENCING. THE SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE SMALL AND SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS LINKS WITH NATIONAL FOREIGN MINISTRIES, EG BY BEING STAFFED BY SECONDED NATIONAL OFFICIALS. ON THE QUESTION OF COMMON EC REPRESENTATIONS OVERSEAS, THE TEN MUST CLEARLY BEGIN MODESTLY IN REMOTE AND FAR-AWAY PLACES WHERE PERHAPS NONE OF THEM CURRENTLY HAD EMBASSIES. THERE WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF VIENNA CONVENTION DIFFICULTIES WITH THIS IDEA, BUT IT SEEMED UNLIKELY THAT THE SMALL HOST COUNTRIES CONCERNED WOULD PRESS THOSE DIFFICULTIES. THE REVISED VERSION OF THE PAPER WOULD CONSIDER CLOSER LINKS BETWEEN POLITICAL COOPERATION AND THE COMMUNITY.

15. DOOGE, SUMMING UP AS CHAIRMAN, ASKED RUHFUS TO PRODUCE A SECOND MORE DETAILED VERSION OF HIS PAPER. MOLLER EMPHASISED THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THIS CONCLUSION DID NOT IMPLY ACCEPTANCE OF ANY OF THE IDEAS IN THE PAPER, IN PARTICULAR THAT FOR MAJORITY VOTING. HERMAN SUGGESTED THAT IN EXPANDING THE PASSAGE ON MAJORITY VOTING RUHFUS MIGHT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY OF "INDICATIVE VOTES" AND OF AN UNDERSTANDING WHEREBY ISOLATED MEMBER STATES WOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF A JOINT VIEW.

FCO ADVANCE TO:

FCO - PS, PS/MR RIFKIND, DEREK THOMAS, RENWICK, FAIRWEATHER,
BRENTON ECD(E)

CAB - WILLIAMSON, STAPLETON, LAMBERT

NO.10- POWELL

FCO PASS SAVING - STRASBOURG,

BUTLER

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