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PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

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Oifig an Taoisigh  
29th November, 1984. Office of the Taoiseach

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister.

Dear Margaret,

I look forward to welcoming you to Dublin for the meeting of the European Council on the 3rd and 4th December. Now that the Council of Ministers have concluded their deliberations this week, I am writing to you and our other colleagues to let you know how I see the content and conduct of our meeting.

Since the European Council at Fontainebleau, considerable progress has been made in giving specific form to the decisions which were taken or confirmed there. However, work still remains to be completed in relation to these decisions.

The major outstanding issue is, of course, that of the enlargement of the Communities. The completion of the negotiations for the accession of Spain and Portugal in time to ensure their entry into the Community on 1 January, 1986 has been a paramount priority for the Irish Presidency. Important progress, of course, has been made, but these results have been marred by the inability of Member States to reach agreement amongst themselves on positions to put to the applicant States on several vitally important issues.

The Dublin Council is, therefore, faced with a very considerable challenge. The psychological impact on the applicant States of an inability to resolve now the remaining questions would be serious and could have profound political consequences. In Dublin I will be relying on your goodwill and commitment, and that of our colleagues to clear the way for agreement at the Council on the remaining issues by focussing on key points that could unblock these discussions.

I recall our agreement to have the first phase of Integrated Mediterranean Programmes in place in 1985. We should consider at our meeting next week how we might contribute to the rapid implementation of this agreement.

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Office of the Taoiseach

2.

It will also be important and opportune, I suggest, particularly in view of the current uncertainties, that in Dublin we have a discussion of substance on the economic and social situation in the Community. Indeed, it has been some time since the European Council has had an opportunity for such a discussion. Given the persistence of the dominant problem of unemployment, I consider it essential that, on the basis of the Commission's Annual Report, we discuss a collective effort to turn employment trends in a far more positive direction, exploiting the European dimension, and building on the significant progress made with stabilisation policies.

We have received, and can, I hope, endorse the customary draft annual report on progress towards European Union. But we will also have interim reports on the work of the two Ad Hoc Committees established pursuant to the conclusions we reached at Fontainebleau. The interim report which has been presented to me by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Affairs has been circulated earlier this week. I envisage that we might have a discussion based on this report which reflects the views of all members of the Committee including a number of reservations, and that we might ask the Committee to submit a final report for the meeting of the European Council next March. In introducing the discussion, I will ask whether there are any further matters which members of the European Council would wish to have covered in the final report.

Under the rubric of European Political Co-operation, I feel that, to facilitate a constructive discussion, we should focus on the topics which have been recommended to us by our Foreign Ministers. These are: the Middle East, East-West relations, Central America and also Southern Africa. The problem of terrorism could also appropriately be raised.

I believe that we cannot overlook the terrible plight of the drought-stricken areas of Africa. Public opinion in the Community clearly expects us at the European Council to deal in a substantive and adequate way with what now is a major international problem and one that is going to endure for at least a further twelve months. Our discussion, I suggest, should centre on the present situation in Ethiopia and the other affected areas, the present aid contributions by the Community and the Member States, but above all, on the undoubted need for further contributions on a scale that, with what we can reasonably expect to come from other countries outside the Community, will meet - and be seen by our peoples to meet - the scale of the need as assessed for the year

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Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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ahead. I envisage that our conclusions might also welcome the agreement to sign the Third Convention with the A.C.P. countries in Lome on 8 December.

If there are other subjects you wish to raise or have discussed, I should appreciate it if you could let me know as soon as possible, so that I can inform our colleagues.

As to the ordering of our agenda, I hope that, following the lunch offered by President Hillery for participants at the Council, we can start our work at 3.00 p.m. on 3rd December. We might perhaps start by discussing the economic and social situation and the key questions we must deal with to unblock the Enlargement negotiations. Then we might discuss I.M.P.s, and finally before we break for dinner the interim reports of the Ad Hoc Committees could be introduced, without subsequent discussion, before a recess at about 7.00 p.m.

The discussion on the further development of the Community taking into account the interim report of the Dooge Committee could take place over dinner, at which the E.P.C. topics might also be discussed.

On the following morning we might start with the African famine issue, and we should approve our draft Conclusions before lunch.

I hope that this proposed manner of proceeding will meet with your approval.

A meeting of the European Council at which the issues set out above are brought to a successful outcome would provide a firm basis upon which to re-launch the Community in 1985 and would offer great hope to the peoples of the Community, including the applicant States. It is my hope, which I am sure you share, that we can achieve such a result next week.

*Best wishes*

*Yours  
Janet Ruffell*