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Bennett

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

5 June, 1985

\* Michael Alison

Dear Charles,

I am more dubious than the FCJ whether the PM will in the end agree to do this. But for the moment it is open.

PP's please

You asked for advice about the Rt Hon Sir Frederic Bennett's suggestion that the Prime Minister should commit herself to a visit to Strasbourg in the Spring or Autumn of 1986, and that terrorism would be a suitable topic for a speech by her to the Assembly.

C D P  
6/6.

When we advised you previously on this subject (Peter Ricketts' letter of 8 February to Tim Flesher, of which I enclose a copy) we identified terrorism as the most promising theme for the Prime Minister to address at the Council of Europe. That is still the Foreign Secretary's view. But we still think that it is too early for the Prime Minister to commit herself to visiting the Council of Europe and speaking on this theme, until it is possible to see more clearly what will be the outcome of the current work being done in the Council of Europe's expert working group on terrorism. Progress to date in that working group, following the Home Secretary's initiative on last year's meeting of Ministers of Justice in Madrid, has been slow. The group is to consider soon the joint Anglo-Swiss working paper on terrorism. We still hope that this work can be carried through to a satisfactory agreement in the Council of Europe some time next year. This could provide a suitable occasion for a major speech.

We will keep the Council of Europe's work on terrorism under review and make a recommendation about a speech at the appropriate moment.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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CORR 0261

8 February 1985

Dear Tim,

Council of Europe

You asked for a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to Sir Frederic Bennett in reply to his letter of 24 January about the invitation to the Prime Minister to address the Council of Europe Assembly.

I enclose a draft reply.

The Prime Minister told Sr Oreja that if she were to address the Assembly "she would want to have something new and interesting to say". We have given thought to a theme which the Prime Minister might take up in addressing the Assembly. The most promising is terrorism, where the Council of Europe has put work in hand following last year's meeting of Ministers of Justice in Madrid. In principle the Council of Europe would be a highly suitable forum for a major speech about international terrorism.

In terms of the Council of Europe's own work on terrorism, we think that it would be better not to address this theme at once. The Home Office will be submitting some specific proposals to the forthcoming meeting of the Council of Europe working group on terrorism. If, as they hope, the momentum of the Home Secretary's initiative in Madrid can be carried through to a satisfactory agreement in the Council of Europe, that might well provide a suitable occasion for a major speech. But we need to be sure of a satisfactory outcome before the Prime Minister commits herself.

If the Prime Minister agrees with this approach, we will keep progress on terrorism in the Council of Europe under review with the Home Office and make a recommendation about a speech at the appropriate moment. We need to bear in mind also that the Prime Minister will need to go to Strasbourg during the British Presidency of the Community (either second half of 1986 or less probably first half of 1987) to report on the European Council to the European Parliament.

/I am

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I am copying this letter to Hugh Taylor (Home Office).

*Yours ever,*  
*Peter Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

Timothy Flesher Esq  
10 Downing Street

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**DRAFT:** minute/letter/teleletter/despach/note

**TYPE:** Draft/Final 1+

**FROM:**

Reference

Prime Minister

**DEPARTMENT:**

**TEL. NO:**

**SECURITY CLASSIFICATION**

**TO:**

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

The Rt Hon Sir Frederic Bennett MP  
 House of Commons  
 LONDON SW1A 0AA

Copies to:

**PRIVACY MARKING**

**SUBJECT:**

.....In Confidence

**CAVEAT**.....

Thank you for your letter of 24 January reminding me of the invitation to visit Strasbourg and address a plenary session of the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

I was impressed in my conversations with Sr Oreja by his determination to get the Council of Europe's programme of activities into better shape and to reassess priorities. As I promised, I have considered carefully his invitation to address a plenary session.

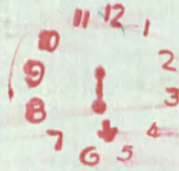
I shall want to do this when the time is right. But my purpose would be to deliver a particular message on a particular theme. I am not in a position at the moment to be more specific in answer to the invitation but you can be sure that I will not forget it. I am happy for you to discuss with Michael/ Alison how to explain the position to the President of the Assembly.

Enclosures—flag(s).....



Envoy Pol. Senior Ortega + Council of Europe  
Jan 84.

5 Jun.







10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 May 1985

## COUNCIL OF EUROPE

When the Prime Minister met the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe in January (my letter of 16 January refers), Senor Oreja invited her to visit Strasbourg and address the Council. The Prime Minister promised to consider the invitation, observing that she would want to have something new and interesting to say.

Sir Frederick Bennett is aware of this exchange and is trying to pin down the Prime Minister to a visit next year. His preference is the Spring 1986 session with October 1986 as a fall back. He has mentioned that Sir Dudley Smith M.P., who is Chairman of the Council's Legal Affairs Committee, hopes to have a substantial report on combating terrorism to present to the Council in 1986. He suggests that this would make a useful topic for the Prime Minister to speak about. He also says that the Prime Minister is one of the few, if not the only, European Head of Government who has not visited and spoken at the Council of Europe.

I should be grateful for advice before putting this suggestion to the Prime Minister.

I am copying this letter to Hugh Taylor (Home Office).

(C.D. Powell)

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



Charles Powell

POSSIBLE VISIT BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE COUNCIL  
OF EUROPE

We spoke about this. You reminded me that the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe had pressed the Prime Minister to visit and speak to the Council before too long. I understand that she did not entirely rule out this possibility.

Sir Frederic Bennett, who leads the UK Delegation to the Council of Europe, obviously knows about this exchange between the Prime Minister and the Secretary-General, and is pressing me to pin down the Prime Minister to a visit next year. The Spring of 1986 session is the preferred occasion. October 1986 could be a fall back. One point that Sir Frederic mentioned specially to me is that Sir Dudley Smith MP, who is Chairman of the Council's Legal Affairs Committee, hopes to have a substantial report on combatting terrorism to present to the Council in 1986, and this would make a useful topic for the Prime Minister to speak about.

Could you kindly keep me in touch as to how thinking develops in regard to this visit, since I shall be subjected to increasing pressure from Sir Frederic Bennett.

*I understand that the PM is one of the few, if not the only, European Head of Government who has not visited the Council of Europe Assembly*

MICHAEL ALISON  
20.5.85

*MA*