



PM/82/47

PRIME MINISTER

Luxembourg Compromise

1. I understand that you are replying to a question today by Mr Tony Marlow about whether you are seeking to restore 'the right of veto' by the United Kingdom in accordance with the White Paper dealing with our accession.
2. As you know, I raised this question with my colleagues at the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 June. I made very clear our views about the Luxembourg Compromise and the Member States can now be in no doubt of the importance we attach to this. In the discussion, Denmark and Greece supported us without qualification. France and Ireland also supported the view that the Community practice under the Compromise should be maintained, though with some qualification about the circumstances.
3. The Member States are unlikely to change these positions in any further discussion in Brussels. I do not think therefore that it would be productive for you to raise this matter formally with your colleagues at the European Council, though there could be some discussion of it informally, perhaps over dinner. I also think it is important that we should not raise expectations in the House and in the country by suggesting that we can get further on this than we are likely to be able to get.
4. What I propose therefore is that in reporting to the House I will explain to them as above what happened in the discussion and conclude that the extent of the support we received from four other Member States on the question of how Community business should be carried on, provides us with a basis on which we can proceed and can safeguard our important national interests. I will also point out that the position is essentially the same as what was foreseen when we joined the Community: the practice of deferring decisions by majority vote where a Member State considers that its important interests are involved was never formally supported by all Member States and this will remain the case.



5. In your answer to Tony Marlow's question I suggest that you do not go into detail but say that I will be making a statement shortly about the results of my discussions in Luxembourg and indicate the broad lines of my response.
6. We could have a word later this morning if you wish.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'FP', with a flourish above the letters.

(FRANCIS PYM)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

22 June, 1982

22 JULY 1962

