



Copenhagen, 24th February 1977

Dear Jim

The exchange of letters that has taken place during the last few months between the members of the European Council, has been, in my opinion, very constructive. I have taken note of the principal line in the suggestions which you have put forward in your letter of the 18th February, and I believe that we will be able quickly to agree at the meeting in Rome upon lines which we will follow when organising the European Council henceforward, especially because none of us seems to wish that it should develop into an appellate body from the Council of Foreign Ministers.

I can fully support your specific proposals with respect to the preparations for the next meeting. At the present moment I have only two remarks I would like to make.

First, I find it an interesting idea to leave it to the Presidency, to decide whether a short paper should be prepared with the aim of focussing discussion in the general and confident exchange of views. Off hand, I feel it most appropriate that such a paper should be prepared by the President - in - office and not by the Council or the Commission. However, the purpose might be fulfilled if each of us informed one another about viewpoints, which we would like to inject into the discussions. In this way we would avoid formalities which, apparently, nobody wants.

Second, I fully support your proposal that Foreign Ministers, eventually together with Finance Ministers (or Agriculture Ministers), should meet briefly immediately before the European Council to compare notes on last minute developments.

For your information I enclose a copy of my answer to President Giscard on his letter of 21st January.

I also have found it right to inform our colleagues in the other member countries of the content of both letters.

Sincerely yours

Anker fougensen

Mr. James Callaghan,
Prime Minister,
London.