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29 November 1971

H.E. Statsminister Trygve Bratteli

I am sending you this message about the EEC fisheries policy, a subject of great importance to both our countries, which our delegations are discussing with

I have been asked to pass the attached

message from the Prime Minister to you.

This is now the major issue which you and we as candidates have to settle with the Community. I fully

realize its vital importance to Norway, and you will know that it is also for us an issue on which it is essential to reach a <sup>DS</sup> settlement which we can present

to our fishing industry. T F Brenchley

greatly concerned about the implications of unduly Enclrafted negotiations on this subject. While both of us need to CONFIDENTIAL satisfactory settlement, I am

conscious from my own experience in negotiating with the Community that strict adherence to a rigid position, if persisted in for too long, can be counter-productive, particularly if principles which the Community regard as essential are at stake.

/The risk

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TEXT OF MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER HEATH

Dear Prime Minister,

I am sending you this message about the EEC fisheries policy, a subject of great importance to both our countries, which our delegations are discussing with the Community in Brussels today.

This is now the major issue which you and we as candidates have to settle with the Community. I fully realise its vital importance to Norway, and you will know that it is also for us an issue on which it is essential to reach a settlement which we can present to our fishing interests as satisfactory. But I am greatly concerned about the implications of unduly protracted negotiations on this subject. While both of us need to achieve a satisfactory settlement, I am conscious from my own experience in negotiating with the Community that strict adherence to a rigid position, if persisted in for too long, can be counter-productive, particularly if principles which the Community regard as essential are at stake.

/The risk

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The risk is that the Community's negotiators may lose interest in retaining sufficient flexibility to try to meet your and our essential interests. They have in fact gone a long way to meet both of us; we have to ask them to come a little further: if we are not to discourage them from doing so we must not ourselves appear too unyielding. All our experience also suggests that prolonged delay aggravates domestic (as well as Community) public opinion, and makes solutions more difficult to achieve. There are, as you probably know, those who would profess not greatly to mind if your negotiation with the Community were to break down, and would therefore be ready to take advantage of over-rigidity in the negotiations. I am not one who shares that view. On the contrary I and all my colleagues believe it to be of the highest importance, in the wider political context as well as in the economic context, that Norway should come into the European Community. It is because this is my belief that I venture to address this message to you today.

/For these

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For these reasons I believe that we must try to achieve a settlement in Brussels today. Substantial progress is for all of us a minimum requirement, a settlement which we can all welcome would be much preferable.

This depends, I think, on two points. First, on the duration of whatever arrangements are agreed to govern access. Your people have asked that the arrangements should be permanent. Our own experience - for instance, with New Zealand - is that a request for permanency encroaches on a principle which the Community regard as fundamental. They are ready to concede the substance, in the form of an indefinite transition, provided that they are not required to accept the literal form. I sincerely believe that, given the way in which the Community works,

"continuing arrangements subject to review", which they are (I understand) prepared to concede, gives you substantially the protection which you seek.

I hope that, having achieved so much, you will be able to authorise your representatives at today's

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meeting to accept that.

The second point is that your people in Brussels today should at the same time show readiness to accept a six-mile access limit for some small part of Norway's southern coastline.

If your people can show this limited degree of flexibility and willingness to meet the Community on these two points today, then I believe that we are in sight of a settlement which satisfactorily meets the essential interests of all of us. If not, I fear that the pressures on us and on the other candidate countries to try to reach agreement independently, without Norway, will become very strong, and I should very much regret it if we were put into that position.

With my best wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,

EDWARD HEATH.

29 November 1971

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