One year into the EEC

With acknowledgements to The London Chamber of Commerce Journal

COMMON MARKET - THE WAY OUT

5p.

THE FIRST DISASTROUS YEAR

The defeat of Mr. Heath's pro-Market Government in February 1974 gives Britain the chance of fundamental re-negotiation of his disastrous 1972 Treaty of Accession with the Common Market. To such re-negotiation, followed by submission of the issue of membership to the electorate, the new Government is firmly pledged. Aim of the negotiation must be to free Britain from the intolerable economic and political burdens which Mr. Heath's hasty settlement imposed on us, and which provoked the economic crisis of 1973/74.

The first year of Common Market membership — 1973 — was one of gathering gloom for Britain. Food prices rose faster than ever before in our history — 15% between autumn 1972 and autumn 1973; and by the end of the year were 50% above the level of June 1970, when negotiations to join the Market began. A huge trade deficit opened up with the Continental E.E.C. Six, and this threw the whole British trade and payments balance into yawning deficit. That deficit in turn pushed the pound down to unheard of low levels, which automatically forced up food prices still further.

Thus, before the world oil crisis hit Britain, and at a time when we should have been bending every effort to achieve a payments surplus in the rest of our trade and commerce, we went far to create a deficit of between £1,000 m. and £2,000 millions a year by joining the Common Market. It is not cheerful, but it is ironical, to reflect that the Common Market Safeguards Campaign in its literature in 1971 and 1972 predicted a 50% rise in food prices and a £1,200 million payments deficit if we joined.

THAT GREAT "HOME MARKET"

First, joining the Market has involved Britain in an astonishing trade deficit with the old Market "Six" — Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg. In the twelve months of 1973, despite a fall in the pound which should have helped exports, this deficit in visible trade reached the staggering total of over £1,000 millions and is now running month by month at a still higher rate, The pro-marketeers told us, you will remember, that the great "home market" of the Six would be the salvation of this country, and would earn us a huge surplus sufficient to pay for all the more obvious burdens of Market membership.

Mr. Heath's notorious White Paper of July 1971, "Britain and the European Communities" assured us that our trade balance after joining would be "positive and substantial". Certainly it has been substantial. But unfortunately it has been negative. Mr. Heath's promise: "a positive and substantial surplus". The reality: a deficit of £1,000 millions in the first year.

For this huge deficit was easy for any reasonably informed person to predict; and it *was* predicted in the literature published by the Common Market Safeguards Campaign. Only the size of the deficit with the Six itself was underestimated by the most pessimistic anti-marketeers. Since the Market's industrial tariffs were lower than those of the U.K., it was obvious that the balance would worsen. As in addition to this British labour costs were bound to rise more than those of the Six, because our food prices would be forced up much faster, the gap was bound to occur, and is likely to get steadily worse. The promise, therefore, of a substantial surplus was either a piece of wilful deception or at the best reckless optimism.

But of course the visible trade deficit with the Six is not the only extra burden on the British balance of payments caused by our membership. Piled on top of this are the net budget payments to Brussels (largely to subsidise Continental agriculture) of about £100 millions in the first year, rising to £245 millions in 1978; the higher cost of importing dear food from the Market instead of cheap food from the Commonwealth; the easier export of capital to the Continent; and the loss of tariff-free entry for our exports throughout the Commonwealth. All these burdens of membership in 1973 added up to about £1,500 millions — just about the total deficit we actually suffered, and only a little more than anti-marketeers (who must now confess to understatement) had predicted.

DEARER AND DEARER FOOD

But the worst damage of all inflicted by the Market on the British people is by common consent the Dear Food Policy of the Market. This means a direct, permanent and growing loss in our real living standards compared with what we might have enjoyed if we had stayed outside. Since the negotiations to join began in June 1970, the retail price of food bought by the British consumer had risen just 50% by December 31st, 1973. This was deliberately enforced by (1) the imposition of a whole series of Common Market import taxes and levies on almost all foodstuffs throughout 1971, 1972 and 1973; and (2) by the setting up of an official Intervention Board which holds up food prices to the levels decreed from Brussels by "taking stocks off the market", storing them away from the public; mixing chemicals with them to make them unfit for human consumption; and selling them dirt cheap outside this country if necessary.

FOOD TAXES

The Dear Food system of the Market — known politely as the Common Agricultural Policy — works as follows. A floor price is fixed by the officials in Brussels below which the price of a given food must not be allowed to fall, however great and cheap the supplies in the outside world. Britain has to conform with this in a series of steps which raise the price year by year over a "transition" period of 4 or 5 years. Butter for instance has to be artificially forced up from a price before we entered of about £250 a ton — now about £410 — to £826 in a few years time. More than double what we used to pay. Mr. Heath himself was compelled to admit under questioning in Parliament that "in the longer term we shall be moving up to Community prices". (Hansard, November 15th, 1973, col.661.)

This artificial price rise is enforced mainly by a series of import levies (which vary with vast bureaucratic complexity from week to week, or even day to day) and import duties which are fixed for longer periods. Both these forms of food tax are often imposed on the same commodity at the same time. In the winter of 1973/4 the import levy on butter, which we used to buy cheaply and tax-free from Commonwealth countries, varied around £200 a ton — a 50% food tax. On cheese the levy was at times as high as £300 a ton.

By January 1974 taxes had been imposed by the British Government purely on orders from Brussels on the following foods:

> Beef and veal, mutton & lamb, bacon, canned hams, pork, fish, eggs, manufactured meat and fish products, butter, cheese, margarine, tinned and fresh fruit, vegetables, many secondary foods, and even maize and barley, the main feeding stuffs for British agriculture.
> (Hansard October 25th, 1973, col. 587 and December 17th, 1973, cols. 1059–1063.)

Many of these taxes are at very high rates indeed. In December 1973 the levy on bacon was just over £35 a ton, on canned ham £165 a ton, on butter nearly £200 a ton and on cheddar cheese £320 a ton. (Hansard December 20th, 1973, col. 349 and 350, and Intervention Board Information Office.) In January 1974 new import duties ordered by Brussels were imposed on mutton & lamb of 8%, rising to 20% by 1977, on beef of 4% rising to 20%, on eggs and margarine, and on many types of fish, fruit and vegetables.

All these are high taxes intended to enforce the Market's Dear Food system. The tax on mutton & lamb (hardly produced or consumed on the Continent) is cynically intended to hold up the price of beef by preventing the unfortunate consumer finding a substitute. So with the tax on margarine, designed to keep butter dear by preventing the public eating margarine instead!

INTERVENTION AND "DENATURING"

On top of these taxes, under the Common Market system enforced on Britain, a British "Intervention Board" had to be set up, with the sole purpose of holding prices up to high levels by taking stocks off the market and storing them if there is any risk of their falling below the level ordained in Brussels. Having prevented the housewife getting the food, the Intervention Board (which has now acquired a large staff and expensive premises in Reading and throughout the country) either stores it — building up a butter, meat and sugar "mountain" — sells it cheap abroad, or mixes chemicals with it to ensure that human beings cannot eat it.

This is why in 1973 the Common Market sold 200,000 tons of butter to the Russians for 5p. a lb. when the prices to the unfortunate public buying within the Market ring fence, was 40p. a lb. — eight times as much. The British Intervention Board throughout 1973 — in a year of world food shortages and excuses from pro-marketeers about "world prices" — has been buying up stocks of many foods and denaturing very large quantities of good milling wheat. Up to the end of November 1973, £19 millions of public money was spent by the Board on taking stocks of butter and other food off the market. Nearly 2 million tons of wheat had been "denatured" at a cost of a further £17 millions up to the end of November 1973. (Hansard December 20th, 1973, col. 353 and Intervention Board Press Notice December 12th, 1973.)

Largely as a result of all these price-raising activities, food prices in Britain have risen more steeply since we adopted the Common Agricultural Policy than ever before in our history. The rise in retail food prices from the time when the Market negotiations began in June 1970 up to 18th September 1973 has been as follows (Hansard October 25th, 1973, col. 589):

		% rise	
Beef: home-killed	Chuck	73.3	
	Sirloin (without bone)	74.1	
	Silverside (without bone)*	64.4	
	Back ribs (with bone)*	76.7	
	Fore ribs (with bone)	74.3	
	Brisket (with bone)	99.5	(a)
	Rump steak*	62.8	
Beef: imported chilled	Chuck	90.5	
	Silverside (without bone)*	79.3	
	Rump steak*	69.7	
Lamb: home-killed	Loin (with bone)	62.6	
	Breast*	65.2	(a)
	Best end of neck	61.1	
	Shoulder (with bone)	53.6	
	Leg (with bone)	57.9	
Lamb: imported	Loin (with bone)	92.2	
	Breast*	134.9	(a)
	Best end of neck	93.8	
	Shoulder (with bone)	94.6	
	Leg (with bone)	89.0	
Pork: home-killed	Leg (foot off)	53.9	
	Belly*	77.9	(a)
	Loin (with bone)	53.1	
Bacon	Collar*	74.7	
	Gammon*	69.4	
	Middle cut, smoked*	80.3	
	Back, smoked	88.6	(a)
	Back, unsmoked	88.5	(a)
	Streaky, smoked	88.6	
Butter	New Zealand	25.6	
	Danish	18.5	
Cheese	Cheddar type	77.6	(a)

*Or Scottish equivalent.

(a) Up to 16th October, 1973
(Hansard 22nd November, 1973, col. 459.)

RISE DUE TO MARKET

Unable to deny this astonishing rise in food prices, the Euro-fanatics now try to pretend that the greater part of it is not due to the Common Market. The ordinary public are perfectly right in refusing to accept this fiction, as a review of the real facts convincingly shows. First, the rise in food prices in Britain in 1973 was about 3 times as great as in the three main E.F.T.A. countries — Norway, Sweden and Switzerland — which had the wisdom to stay out of the market. From the autumn of 1972 to the autumn of 1973 the rise was 15.1% in Britain, 14.5% in Denmark; but only 5.2% in Norway, 5.8% in Sweden and 5.0% in Switzerland. (Hansard November 9th, 1973, col. 290.) If the rise in Britain was really due to "world prices", why did Norway, Sweden and Switzerland fare so startlingly better?

Secondly, the pro-marketeer's attempt to pretend that the Common Market was not the main cause is based on a manipulation of dates. They allege that the rise in prices due to membership *since* Britain's acceptance of the full Dear Food system in February of 1973 was only some small percentage. But of course the Heath Government introduced a whole series of Common Market burdens — including food taxes on lamb and beef — in anticipation of joining, though before February 1973. The increases thus caused were due to Market membership even though felt some months before that date.

Thirdly, a major part of the rise in food prices has been caused by the 20% fall in the value of the pound since the time when it was known that the burdens of membership were to be thrust on Britain. This 20% devaluation was itself caused by the £1,000 million trade deficit with the Continental E.E.C. and the other burdens, so that the rise in prices caused by devaluation has in fact been a direct secondary consequence of joining the Market. Yet when pro-marketeers talk of the rise in "world prices", they do not tell you that they mean sterling prices, and that much of that rise has been caused by the effect of membership on the pound. That is why Norway, for instance, was able to revalue her currency twice upwards in 1973, and had a food price rise of only 5.2%. In addition, Market membership means that any fall in the pound is automatically translated into a rise in food prices, because Brussels prices are calculated in pre-1971 dollars. Before we joined, the effect was not automatic, because falls in the pound tended in themselves to lower world food prices.

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Fourth, but equally important, the Commonwealth countries which used to supply us most cheaply with the essential foods (wheat, meat, butter and cheese especially) because they were the world's *most* efficient producers — Australia, New Zealand and Canada, were forced by Britain's neglect of the Commonwealth under Mr. Heath to seek markets for their food exports elsewhere far more quickly and sweepingly than they otherwise would have done. For instance, Australia and New Zealand previously gave us priority in supplies of lamb, butter, and cheese at a very low and reasonable price — butter at 3s. a lb. and cheese at 1s.6d. a lb. in pre-decimal coinage. Now that Market membership has forced us to cut down these supplies (and exclude Australian butter altogether), these countries have been compelled to find other markets. If we had kept out of the E.E.C., Australia and New Zealand could as a matter of long-term policy have sent us much bigger supplies at much lower prices. Yet these are the world's cheapest and most efficient producers because of their great national advantages in location and climate.

New Zealand, in particular, can produce lamb and dairy produce almost without feeding stuffs because grass grows in her country for ten months of the year. But now Brussels bureaucratic decrees are brought down like an iron curtain between these abundant supplies and the British housewife who wants them. New Zealand as a result has actually been forced, in order to find markets elsewhere, to put a heavy export tax on lamb exported to Britain, and give a bonus to exporters who send it elsewhere. The resulting rise in the price here is thus wholly due to Market membership. Folly in British economic policy could hardly go further.

So with beef. If we had not joined the Market, we could have drawn low-cost supplies from Argentina and Australia. We could have kept the price of home-killed beef, including Irish beef, below the import price by subsidies to the home farmer; and we could have banned meat exports to the Continent. All this would have kept the price down, and all of it has been prevented by rules made in Brussels and wholly contrary to British interests.

To estimate the full effect, therefore, of joining the Market on food prices, you have to take all these factors into the balance. This is the only true way of comparing the food prices we now have to pay with what we would have had to pay if we had not merely stayed out, but had pursued a resolute search for the lowest-price food available in the world, and offered assured future markets to our friendly, traditional and efficient suppliers. When all this is allowed for, there is no doubt that much the greater part of the 50% rise in food prices since 1970 is due to our joining the Market, and could in time be largely rolled back if we withdrew from it.

FLOOR BUT NO CEILING

It is sometimes pretended that Market membership can hold prices down below world price levels as well as force them up above it. Even this is not true, and rests on a misunderstanding of the way the Dear Food system works. Reputable international commodity agreements hitherto have provided for a floor below which the goods are bought by a central authority, and a ceiling above which they are sold. This gives some assurance against very low or very high prices. But in the Common Market there is a floor at a high level, but *no ceiling*. The Intervention Boards are bound to buy if the price falls to the floor, but there is no ceiling above which they have to sell. Common Market prices cannot, therefore, fall below world prices, except in very special circumstances of extreme scarcity as when for instance in 1973 an export tax was temporarily placed on wheat. It is a fool-proof case, from the unhappy consumer's point of view, of heads-I-lose and tails-you-win.

In any case, if it were really true that food prices inside the Market were lower than outside, why have an armoury of import taxes, levies and Intervention Buying? Why not abolish them?

WORSE TO COME

The rise in food prices in Britain today, serious as it is, is only the beginning, not the end. Much worse is to come if we remain members. World grain prices have temporarily risen (though in the case of wheat not until August 1973) in a few instances up to the extortionate Common Market levels. Yet even in some months of 1973, amidst alleged world shortage, levies were being paid on wheat imported into the Market. But present very high grain prices are not likely to last long. The 1973 world wheat harvest was extremely plentiful. Soviet Russia produced a record crop of 215 m. tons of grain, including over 100 million tons of wheat. The U.S. and Canada have freed grain production from the artificial limits of recent years. All experience suggests that before long world grain prices will fall back and bring the price of meat, dairy produce and other foods back with them. All countries outside the Common Market will benefit. But within the Common Market the fall in price will be stopped by the massive array of food taxes and the hoarding and denaturing activities of the Intervention Boards.

The gap will then widen between the artificially high and ever rising prices in the Market, and falling world prices outside. The Russians, the Swiss, the Swedes, the Americans, Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders will all enjoy cheaper food; but not the unfortunate British housewife. The cost, in fact, to Britain of the Common Agricultural Policy will grow and grow as world prices fall back and Common Market prices go up and up.

For the whole pretence that British membership of the Market would reform the C.A.P. had been abandoned by Mr. Heath well before the 1974 Election. He even surrendered again to the French in agreeing that reform of the C.A.P. should be excluded from the G.A.T.T. international trade negotiations in 1974-5, where alone Britain would have had some allies, including the U.S., in pressing for reform. The cost to Britain, therefore, in the middle and long-term future is bound to be far greater than anything we have suffered yet unless re-negotiation succeeds or we leave the Market.

A DOLE FOR FRANCE

For it is no accident that the French, to whom Mr. Heath always capitulated will fiercely resist reform of the pernicious C.A.P. Reform would mean that inefficient Continental agriculture would have to be subsidised, not by the mass of the people through food taxes and V.A.T., but by the wealthier tax payers through high and honestly paid direct taxation. This would mean the end of tax-evasion by the wealthy, which is estimated in the case of income tax alone to involve the loss of over £1,000 millions a year to the French Finance Ministry. And such a clean-up is the one change which the French bureaucracy and ruling Gaullist Party will in no circumstances tolerate. That is why they will never reform the C.A.P., and why the cost of tax-evasion in France has been thrust by crude French self-interest and the weak naivete of British pro-marketeers onto the mass of the British public through high food prices and V.A.T.; which are in effect a dole paid by this country largely to France. Such is the reality behind all the talk of "uniting Europe".

LAND PRICES

Another damaging consequence of the C.A.P. to Britain has been the steep rise in the price of farm land. As food prices have been forced up, the value of farm land has grown even faster. From June 1970, when the Brussels negotiations began, the value of farm land in Britain has approximately trebled. An estate worth £1 million in 1970 is now worth £3 millions; and from this two consequences have naturally followed. First a large vested interest in pro-Market propaganda has been created. And secondly, the cost of all land, whether for building or farming, in City or country, has been steeply raised. Dear Food means dear land; and it is the landowners who gain, and the mass of consumers who inevitably lose. As Dr. Mansholt, once President of the E.E.C. Commission, who so utterly failed to reform the C.A.P., remarked in celebrating British entry, *"the Market had done almost nothing to raise the standards of the mass of the people"*.

PAYMENTS DEFICIT

But the burden of Dear Food and paying a dole to the French is far from being the whole load which membership has cast on the U.K.'s balance of payments. It has also stimulated an export of capital from Britain which exceeds by hundreds of millions any inflow from the Continent. This is a new load on our payments balance, quite apart from the loss to British industry of savings which might have been invested here, for instance in North Sea oil and gas.

Secondly, the Commonwealth countries who have been thus thrown over by Britain, and found our markets shut against them, have begun to put tariffs on British exports which have for 50 years entered their markets duty-free or with a preference margin. Australia, one of the countries worst treated of all by the Euro-fanatics, has begun to raise tariffs against us. New Zealand, Canada and others, though they have shown great restraint and patience, are bound soon to do the same if we remain members. Steadily these markets will be narrowed or closed to us, just when our trade balance has been disrupted by the huge deficit with the Common Market itself and by dearer oil.

REGIONAL FUND

Finally, the last deception — Mr. Heath's boasted "Regional Fund" — has been shown up as another fraud. Publicised as a huge bonus to Britain, designed to outweigh the immense burdens of the Dear Food policy, it turns out — after a wrangle with the Germans as well as others — to be barely £50 millions a year net if that; compared with total Market burdens of now over £1,000 millions a year. It is nothing but a figleaf; not even equal to the £95 millions a year which our Development Areas are to lose when the present Regional Employment Premium is cancelled. And no firm agreement has yet been reached even on the £50m.

TOTAL BURDEN

So when the whole account is totted up realistically, and not on the basis of naive illusion, the total burden imposed on the U.K. by membership is already over £1,000 millions a year and moving inexorably towards the £2,000 millions a year mark. This is not far off our total current payments deficit in 1973. To have imposed it on ourselves gratuitously at a moment when oil is unavoidably to cost us another £1,000 millions a year more anyway, is an act of national folly unparalleled since Munich. It is a cost which this country simply cannot bear if we are to remain, as we could if we retained independence, a nation whose voice is respected in the Councils of the world, and if we are to defend our traditional high-living standards.

But even this cost — inevitable with present Market policies — may not be the end. For another straitjacket — not yet imposed, is still threatened — "economic and monetary union". Mr. Heath when Prime Minister several times declared this to be the Market's objective, though he had no authority from the British electorate or Parliament to do so. Monetary union would mean the removal of the power to vary the exchange rate of sterling from the British Cabinet and Parliament to some Brussels authority over which the British Parliament would have no authority, and in effect the end of control by the British people over their own livelihood, employment and living standards. Combined with the payments deficit unavoidable with the Market policies described above, it would increasingly mean deepening unemployment and the political as well as economic weakening of Britain — a prospect possibly not unattractive to some on the Continent. It is not yet a reality like the C.A.P.; but it is an already impending threat.

FEDERATION

Behind it stands another menace, even more dangerous for the British people: outright political federation with the Common Market countries. Pro-Marketeers, many in leading positions, are covertly working for this, even though they dare not admit it in public, because they know the British electorate are overwhelmingly opposed to it. Previously Mr. Heath, at so-called Market "summits" without any authority from the British Parliament or electorate, committed this country to "political union" with the Market countries in the future. This piece of verbiage is used to conceal the reality intended: outright federation in which each country would lose its identity and national independence. The extreme pro-Marketeers are seeking — as usual behind a veil of deception — to turn this country into the equivalent of one of the States of the U.S. or the Soviet Union: Texas or the Ukraine. In a federation Britain would cease to be an independent nation, with control over our own foreign and economic policy; and our own Parliament would become a mere County Council subordinate to an outside authority.

Euro-fanatics are entitled to advocate this if they wish. But they are not entitled to force or manoeuvre the British people into it in defiance of the almost overwhelming will of the entire nation. Rightly, the British Parliament has in recent years given Northern Ireland, Gibraltar and other British countries the right to determine by referendum the fundamental constitutional question to what nation they wish to belong. The British people themselves have the same right; and their independence, for which they have fought many times not unsuccessfully, must not be given away without their even being asked.

There is no evidence that the British electorate wish to be submerged in a Federation of the kind secretly planned by extreme Marketeers. On the contrary many people believe that British influence in the world in the cause of democracy, humanity and peace can best be exerted by an independent Britain; and that the extinction of this hope would be no better for the world than for this country. Indeed, if the British people did wish to give up their independence, and join a new political federation, there are other groups of nations which most of them would prefer as partners, and would be wise to prefer, to the Brussels Club. Whatever the electorate wishes, however, it is their wishes which must prevail, by a clearly expressed vote. Fortunately the present Labour Government is pledged to refer the whole issue of EEC membership to the Electorate.

E.F.T.A. AND NORWAY

The folly of the settlement made by Mr. Heath in 1971 and the Treaty of Accession signed in January 1972 has already been proved, not merely by the disastrous effect on Britain, but by the success of the other E.F.T.A. countries which stayed outside the Market. Norway voted to stay outside and within E.F.T.A. with Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, Finland, Iceland and Portugal. These countries have now negotiated a 100% free trade area with the Common Market as well as with each other. They have thus obtained the one alleged advantage of Market membership: tariff-free entry for industrial goods throughout both the E.F.T.A. and E.E.C. groups, but have also escaped the burdens — the C.A.P., enforced Dear Food, a heavy budget tribute paid to Brussels and subordination of their Parliaments to authoritarian decrees from the Brussels bureaucracy. (Between January 1st and November 15th, 1973, some 2,836 such decrees claiming the force of law, and made in secret by the Brussels Commission, not even the Council of Ministers, were imposed on Britain: see Hansard November 28th, 1973, col. 388.) Thus the E.F.T.A. countries, by staying out, gained all the alleged advantages without incurring any of the burdens. When we could ourselves have as easily

achieved these gains, we have in fact, through the folly of the pro-marketeers, alone inflicted the burdens on ourselves.

Norway's fortunes in particular have demonstrated the wisdom of staying out. Her food prices in 1973 rose by only one-third of the rise in Britain. The pro-marketeers in Norway predicted economic disaster if she stayed out. The common people in their vote not to join showed more good sense. For in 1973 Norway has enjoyed the greatest economic boom and the highest level of employment in her history. So strong has been her balance of payments that she has been able to revalue her currency upwards twice in one year. These are the consequences of staying out of the Common Market and remaining a loyal member of the E.F.T.A. group of independent nations enjoying industrial free trade with one another and with the Brussels group. The contrast is glaring with the disastrous experience of Britain in 1973.

RE—NEGOTIATION

The aims of re-negotiation in 1974 are therefore clear. The prospective enormous extra burden caused by dear oil on our balance of payments makes it imperative and urgent that we cut all other burdens down to the minimum. We must accordingly regain our freedom to rejoin the free trading E.F.T.A. group, enjoying as they do industrial duty-free trade with the E.E.C., and we must re-establish the greatest practical measure of tariff-free trade within the Commonwealth. There is no reason why this should not be achieved by friendly negotiations with the Market, provided we show the same resolution in defending British interests as Norway or France, for instance, have shown in defending theirs. The first essential in any new settlement must be the unrestricted right of Britain to import food without duty or other limitation on the best terms we can from the Commonwealth or any country in the world; and, while retaining industrial free trade with both the E.F.T.A. and Market groups, to work through G.A.T.T. towards freer trade with all Continents, offering in particular open markets to the products of developing nations.

Secondly, we must assert the right of the British Parliament to approve or reject any so-called legislation promulgated by the Brussels Commission or Council of Ministers, and make indisputably clear that no such decrees can have legal force here without specific Parliamentary approval. Thirdly we must cease budgetary payments to Brussels funds over which we have no proper control, and which are dubiously administered for purposes which the British electorate has not approved.

On these principles there should be no compromise. The only self-respecting way to re-assert and defend true British interests is to let it be known from the start that if these are not acceptable, we intend to repeal the European Communities Act, leave the Market and rejoin Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the rest of the E.F.T.A. group. We must re-negotiate on the clear understanding that these minimum demands have to be met, and that if they are not, we shall withdraw from the Market by a specified date. Otherwise we shall simply meet with obstruction. Finally, when the results of the re-negotiation are known, a clear choice must be placed before the British electorate and their decision accepted as conclusive. To this the Labour Government of 1974 are clearly pledged; and it would be far better and more conclusive to carry out this pledge by a simple referendum than a General Election in which issues were confused.

Only thus can Britain regain the hope of a viable economic future in a fuel-hungry world, and the genuine democratic independence of a self-governing people, which the Heath Settlement of 1971 imperilled. The fault, once again, is not in ourselves, but in the mistakes of our leaders, that we have temporarily, unnecessarily, lost our way.

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55 Park Lane, London, W.1
01-629 8741
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