

GILMOUR, I. R.



10 DOWNING STREET

6th October, 1980

Party Conference Speech

Thank you so much for having sent round this morning a draft of the passage on Europe for the Prime Minister's speech. This will be of very great help.

Ian Gow

The Rt. Hon. Sir Ian Gilmour, Bt., M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Monday.

Dear Sir,

Margaret asked for an offering
in tribute for her Conference speech. Here it is -
for what it is worth, which is 1 hour very
little.

Yours
Sir

As I have said often before, this Government remains wholly committed to Europe. Not for us the out-in-out-in-out of the Labour Party. They change their position on Europe according to whether they are in Government or Opposition and according to which faction in the Party is dominant for the time being.

But the foreign policy of Britain should not be the plaything of a lot of quarreling socialists. — After all they have got plenty of other things to squabble about. The foreign policy of this country should be reliable and consistent, and it should be based upon the steady, settled interests of Britain. That is how foreign policy is decided in the Conservative Party, and that is how it will be decided by this Government.

It is for that reason that we Conservatives have always been the European party. With all the dangers that we face, it is vital that the free countries of Europe should be as united as possible. Britain needs Europe, and Europe needs Britain.

Of course there are things that are wrong with the Community just as there are things wrong with everything else.

One of the things that was most obviously wrong was Britain's budget contribution which was grossly unfair. We worked hard and long at altering it, and last May we got it reduced by 2/3.

Our budget contribution was mounting fast under the Labour Government. But of course they did nothing about it - except complain. Then when we successfully got it reduced, what did they do? Complain again.

/We

We can expect no help from them in the years ahead as we pursue, like our ^{partners} fathers, our national interests in the Community and ^{the} Community interests ~~as a whole.~~

The Labour Party once again will just complain. But we ~~let~~ ^{let them} ~~won't be~~ ^{us} ~~deterred~~ from our purpose of building a stronger Europe and a stronger Britain in Europe. As the old Turkish proverb says, the dogs bark but the caravan passes on.

Under Labour incidentally the dogs barked, but the caravan did not move at all.

But we are concerned with action not complaining from the side lines. We have therefore