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COMMISSION
DES
COMMUNAUTÉS EUROPÉENNES
CABINET DU PRÉSIDENT
Le Chef de Cabinet

Brussels....., le 16 February 1988.
ref.2709

Dear A. Nicols

Japan's Minister of Trade and Industry recently proposed that the Trade Ministers of the participant countries and the Member of the Commission with special responsibility for external relations should hold a meeting on the occasion of the Economic Summit.

Following the very negative reaction from the United States and serious doubts expressed by Canada and the European Community, Mr Tamura changed his proposal by suggesting that the Trade Ministers should meet outside the context of the Economic Summit.

There could be further meetings of this kind in the future, should circumstances so warrant.

We continue to have serious reservations about these proposals, which Mr De Clercq has already conveyed to his colleagues.

If these meetings are to be confined to trade, we do not see the need for them in addition to the quadripartite series of meetings. A number of the Member States of the Community would not be invited, and have already notified us of their concerns regarding such meetings in an area in which the Commission, in accordance with the Treaty of Rome, acts as spokesman for the Community.

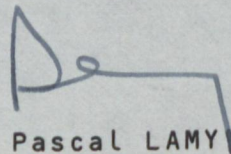
If the meetings proposed by Mr Tamura were to deal with matters other than trade (such as investment, debt, etc), this would raise the issue of whether the Trade Ministers were competent to discuss such matters.

In the light of the above and in view of the fact that many international meetings are already held on this subject, I'm sure that you will agree that it would not be in the interests of sound coordination of commercial policy to agree to Japan's proposal.

I should be pleased to receive any comments you may have on this matter.

Looking forward to meeting you in Montreal

Yours sincerely,


Pascal LAMY

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