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NOTE OF A MEETING HELD AT THE HOME OFFICE AT 5.00 p.m.

ON TUESDAY 15TH JANUARY 1980

Present: Home Secretary
Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Vice-Chairman (AR)
Ian Gow

1. It was the unanimous view that the Leader of the Conservative & Unionist Party should retain the right to appoint the Leader of the British Conservative Members of the European Parliament.
2. It was to be hoped that the Leader of the British Conservatives in Europe would also be elected as Leader of the wider European Democratic Group, but it was acknowledged that apart from persuasion, there was nothing to prevent the European Democratic Group electing as its Leader a person other than the Leader of the British Conservatives, appointed by the Leader of the Conservative Party.
3. It was noted that the Prime Minister would have to appoint a Leader of the British Conservatives in Europe at the expiration of the first Session of the European Parliament. It was the unanimous view that Jim Scott-Hopkins should be reappointed, for the next Session, although future appointments should be for one Session at a time.

17.1.80

Ian Gow



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

11th January, 1980

Dear Alistair,

Following our talk last evening, I have spoken, as arranged, to Alan Howarth.

It was Alan's clear impression that, at the meeting at Central Office on 8th January, Ling was suggesting not that the Conservative Members of the European Parliament should elect their own Leader, but that the Members of the European Democratic Group should do so.

Although the Prime Minister appoints the Leader of the Conservative Members of the European Parliament, she clearly could not appoint the Leader of the wider European Democratic Group.

--- Jim Scott-Hopkins did consult the Prime Minister about the Rules for the European Democratic Group, of which I am enclosing a copy.

--- I also enclose, for your file, a copy of the Statement which was issued by the Prime Minister when she appointed Jim Scott-Hopkins, last year, as Leader of the Conservative Members of the European Parliament.

Ian Gow, MP.
Parliamentary Private Secretary.

Alistair McAlpine, Esq.

cc The Rt. Hon. Lord Thorneycroft, C.H.,