

Prime Minister
10 SEE P-ENR

2nd December, 1980

European Parliament

Thank you for your letter of 27th November.

The reports which I have received about the morale of our Conservative Euro-Members do not conflict with yours.

The position about the Leader of British Conservative Members of the European Parliament is that he (or she) is appointed by the Leader of our Party. The Prime Minister re-appointed Jim Scott-Hopkins as Leader on 5th February 1980 for the Session of the European Parliament which started on 11th March 1980. The Prime Minister will have to decide, early next year, whom she wishes to appoint for the new Session of the European Parliament which begins in March 1981.

It is possible that Jim Scott-Hopkins will wish to stand for the Presidency of the European Parliament, when the new President is elected in December 1981.

There are Conservative Members of the European Parliament, particularly some of the younger ones, who believe that they ought to elect their own Leader, rather than have the Leader appointed by the Leader of our Party.

At present, the Leader of the British Conservatives in the European Parliament is also the Leader of the European Democratic Group, which, as you know, also has Members from Denmark and from Ulster. The European Democratic Group elects its own Leader.

I have shown your letter to the Prime Minister.

Many thanks for having taken the trouble to write.

IAN GOW

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