



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 November 1981

*Prime Minister
Apex?*

Ans - 10/11

Dear Mr. ...

President of the European Parliament

Sir James Scott-Hopkins has announced his candidacy for the job of President of the European Parliament to succeed Mme Veil, whose term of office expires at the end of this year.

Lord Carrington believes that, while we should welcome the election of a British President, it would be against the interests of the Government and indeed of Sir James himself, if we were seen actively to be lending support to his cause. The Parliament is increasingly jealous of its independence and sensitive to what it would regard as interference from the Community's Member States.

Lord Carrington therefore hopes that the Prime Minister will agree that, while we should say that we would be pleased if the Parliament chose a British President, we should confine ourselves to that and make quite clear our view that the election of the President is a matter for MEPs alone. I enclose a copy of a line which we are taking with the press to that effect.

*Yours ever
F N*

(I should welcome the guidance to the first 2 sentences. The

last 2 words and don't say we (F N Richards)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street

*don't say Sir James!
not.*

PRESIDENCY OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The British Government would welcome a British President of the European Parliament. This would be a suitable recognition of the major contribution British MEPs have made to the workings of the institution. (But election of the President is an internal affair for the Parliament. It is not a position which is in the gift of the Member States and it must be left to the MEPs themselves to decide.)

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