



FCS/84/67

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY

IEA Executive Director

Prime Minister

MF

I am not supposed to know this but the real reason why we are in some difficulty is because Mr. Walker unilaterally told the Americans we would support his candidate.

A.F.C. $\frac{2}{3}$.

L.A. AD 53.

1. We are running into difficulties in the Community over the nomination of the new IEA Executive Director. Chancellor Kohl raised the issue with the Prime Minister on 28 February. You will have heard of the awkward proposals for a vote made in Coreper on 1 March. The issue will resurface in Coreper early next week. Voting is likely to take place on Tuesday 6 March, and we believe the voting process will continue until one candidate achieves a majority.

2. We have so far taken the view that the US candidate probably has the best qualities. I had hoped that by now, a month since candidates were formally proposed, we would be able to see whether a consensus was emerging round the American, or at least whether opposition to the American was such that he could not hope to be selected. As it is, the position is unresolved. Indeed, the latest indication is that the American may be withdrawn. If he is, that will resolve our tactical problem.

3. We cannot however count on this, and need to make plans against the possibility that the American may still be in the field next week. As is clear from Chancellor Kohl's mention of the matter to the Prime Minister, some at least of our partners attach considerable importance to this issue. Were we to dissociate ourselves from any Community consensus, it would I believe do us considerable damage in their eyes: they are always ready to trot out the old "Trojan horse" idea. This would not be helpful to us in the big negotiations. Nor would our dissociating ourselves make a material difference to the chances of a European candidate or Bosworth.



4. We have done our best to avoid matters coming to a head in this way, but I now see no prospect of preventing a vote next week. I do not believe that we can any longer decline to take part in a Community voting process. Plainly we have an interest in seeing the best man for the job chosen. I propose we vote for the Dutchman as the best of the three Europeans. If, as we would expect in these circumstances, a clear Community candidate emerges, we shall have to fall in behind him.

5. I realise that you will be in Washington from 6 to 8 March. I hope you would be able to explain to the Americans that we could not prevent the emergence of a Community candidate and could not dissociate ourselves from the process without unacceptable damage.

6. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

GEOFFREY HOWE

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

2 March 1984



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