



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

PMP

CH/EXCHEQUER	
REC.	27 MAY 1988
ACTION	Mr A.J.C. EDWARDS
COPIES TO	CST, FST, PMG, EST, Sir P. MIDDLETON Mr LANKESTER, Mr MORTIMER, Mr MERCER, Mr BONNEY.

27/5

FCS/88/109

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

26/5/88

Presidency of the European Commission

1. Thank you for your minute of 24 May about Bangemann's puzzling remarks in Paris.
2. The facts are that:
  - (a) A check in Bonn has confirmed that there has been no Federal Government decision to run a candidate to replace Delors. Delors has not yet formally indicated that he would be prepared to serve another 2 year term, but with Rocard chosen for the Matignon the universal assumption is that he will; and the betting in Bonn is heavily against any German opposition, if only because of the strong risk of causing offence in the Elysee.
  - (b) Bangemann announced (on 19 May) that he would seek nomination as an EC Commissioner. While acknowledging interest in the Presidency, he specifically added that he would not oppose Delors (Bonn telno 476).

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- (c) Kohl had already announced that he would support Bangemann's candidacy as a Commissioner; and German officials make no secret of the Chancellery's present intention that he should succeed Narjes as Vice-President, with the junior German Commissioner - Schmidhuber - staying on. Bangemann would then be well-placed to succeed Delors in January 1991. (If the Presidency changes during a Commission's 4-year lifetime, the choice is confined to existing Vice-Presidents and Commissioners.)
- (d) Since Bangemann's hat is not now in the Presidency ring, there has been no question of our indicating a UK preference as between him and Delors.
3. No other Member State shows any inclination to run a candidate against Delors; and it remains my view that we should not seek to block his reappointment at Hanover. I agree that we should continue to keep a low profile on this for the time being; but once it is clear that there will be no competing candidates we should take an early opportunity to make clear to Delors that we welcome the prospect of his continuing in office.

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4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Minister of Agriculture.

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

(GEOFFREY. HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
26 May 1988

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