

Qz 01605

MR ALEXANDER

THE NEW EC COMMISSION

When we paid our first visit to Rome the Italians wanted the 120 V.A.T. centage raised. They were only dissuaded by cc Sir Robert Armstrong (o.r.) but Sir Robert would be a good choice for President

②

Prime Minister

A useful survey. You will probably not want to come to any conclusions just yet but Sir Robert would be a good choice

1. In his letter of 29 May to Mr Lever, Mr Whitmore referred to the brief conversation the Foreign Secretary had with the Prime Minister after the Colombo dinner and said that they would need to consider further the appointment of the President of the new 1981 Commission, on which the Venice European Council is due to reach a decision. For that purpose you may like to have a note on the latest position as we understand it. I discussed the question with Sir Robert Armstrong before he left for Paris.

2. The situation is still fluid, and the French in particular have yet to shew their hand. The only formally declared candidate is the Danish Commissioner, Gundelach (although there is a newspaper report that he has withdrawn and wants to stay on as the Commissioner for Agriculture). Other names mentioned recently are Thorn (Luxembourg), O'Kennedy (Ireland), Pandolfi or Colombo (Italy) and possibly Tindemans or Davignon (Belgium). Despite earlier speculation, there is no sign of Barre (France), Biesheuvel or van der Stee (Netherlands) coming forward as serious candidates. Similarly, although there was some talk earlier of Mr Jenkins staying on - and he has recently denied that he intends to resign before the end of the year - there is no evidence that the other member states are disposed to press him to serve a further term.

3. Of this list, Thorn has the necessary political experience but is generally thought to be light weight. Even if he is in Giscard's bad books, he would be more likely to respond to French than to British pressure. No one doubts Gundelach's cleverness but he has not enhanced his reputation in recent months and even if his instincts tend to be Anglo-Saxon, we could not rely on him to push through eg reforms of the CAP. O'Kennedy is no more than an average Irish politician. In short, none of these names merit our support. The only one likely to emerge with significant support is Thorn, and it might be difficult to stop him if a consensus began to emerge.

4. Mr Jenkins has mentioned to Lord Carrington that Commissioner Davignon might attract French support. Davignon has been an energetic and pragmatic Commissioner for industrial affairs, showing no discernible national bias and a

good deal of flexibility in bending the Treaty to accommodate political realities eg in relation to our North Sea landing requirement. He would be worth considering if there is a general wish to give the job to a smaller member state (although the Belgians have supplied a President in the past).

5. But from our point of view one of the Italians would be a better choice for the United Kingdom. Pandolfi has the backing of Mr Tugendhat and the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks well of him. During the next few difficult years of living with the 1 per cent VAT ceiling, and ensuring the effective implementation of the budget settlement, we could do worse than a competent Italian with a financial background and an implied commitment to make the settlement negotiated under the Italian Presidency work. Colombo would be even better, but we should need to be careful not to interfere in internal Italian politics by expressing too clear a preference for one or the other. We should have to expect that either of them would take a Mediterranean rather than a northern view of enlargement.

6. If it were agreed that we should go for Pandolfi or Colombo, there would be advantage in letting Signor Cossiga know before the Venice summit that if the Italian Government were to put forward either name, it would have our support.

7. In case the discussion moves on to the question of British Commissioners, the Prime Minister should know that, at official level, we have reviewed the various portfolios (there is no certainty that they will stay exactly the same in the new Commission) and having regard to likely availability etc take the view that the portfolios for the United Kingdom to go for this time round would be the Budget, Development, Economic and Monetary, Internal Industrial Market, and Competition Policy; with a preference for the first two (though personally I would rate the third as equally desirable). We think Development important to try to neutralise the present francophone bias in the Community's dealings with the Lome countries, which has cost us aid contracts to French companies. The Budget portfolio, although traditionally not very important, can be made so in the context of the forthcoming negotiations over restructuring and the 1 per cent VAT ceiling.



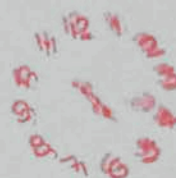
8. As regards names, might I just record our view that there would be no objection if the Prime Minister wished to ask Mrs Shirley Williams. Failing that, Mr Joel Barnett would be well suited for the Budget portfolio, if Mr Tugendhat moved on to another one. But there is not the same urgency about the British Commissioners at this stage, and the Prime Minister may wish to have some further advice when the President has been chosen and we know a little more about the intentions and aspirations of other countries.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M D M Franklin', is positioned above the typed name.

M D M FRANKLIN



5 JUN 1980



Eno 101 JJ
cc/O

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

MR. FRANKLIN

THE NEW EC COMMISSION

The Prime Minister has read your undated minute to me (Qz 01605) on this subject. She has not expressed any preference amongst the various candidates named in your minute but has commented as follows:

"When we paid our first visit to Rome, the Italians wanted the 1% VAT ceiling raised. They were only dissuaded by West Germany. I still feel their conversion is temporary. Keeping to the 1% VAT ceiling is vital to force the reconstruction of the CAP."

I am sending a copy of this minute to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

MA

9 June 1980

278

Guro P.A.

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 125
CONFIDENTIAL
FM ANKARA 261250Z JUN 80
TO IMMEDIATE F C O.

TELEGRAM NUMBER 302 OF 26 JUN 80
INFO IMMEDIATE UKREP E C
INFO PRIORITY PARIS, BONN, ROME, LUXEMBOURG, COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN
BRUSSELS

FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM LEVER
PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. COLOMBO LAST NIGHT CONVENED A MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE NINE PRESENT IN ANKARA MINUS THORN AND FRANCOIS-PONCET (WHO HAD ALREADY LEFT) TO DISCUSS THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION. EVERYONE PRESENT WAS DISPOSED TO ACCEPT THORN FOR THE JOB. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT THERE WERE A NUMBER OF GOOD CANDIDATES WHOSE NAMES HAD BEEN MENTIONED BUT THAT IF THERE WAS A GENERAL CONSENSUS FOR THORN THE BRITISH WOULD BE HAPPY TO ACCEPT THIS. IT WAS LEFT THAT COLOMBO WOULD CONTACT THE FRENCH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS WITH A VIEW TO RESOLVING THE ISSUE BY 30 JUNE.

LAURENCE

mf

FILES
EC2(I)
WED.
PS
PS/PS
PS/HARD.
PS/POS
H DULLARD
LORD BRIDGES
H HANNAY
H FERGLISSON

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 231000Z

FM THE HAGUE 230805Z JUN 80
TO IMMEDIATE VENICE
TELEGRAM NUMBER 001 OF 23 JUNE
INFO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS
INFO PRIORITY F C O

Amor
J. Alexander

FOLLOWING FOR PUS

VENICE TEL NO 001: PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1. OF THE POSSIBLE NETHERLANDS CANDIDATES MENTIONED SO FAR, VAN DER STEE WOULD IN MY VIEW COME CLOSEST TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE JOB, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF BIESHEUVEL, WHO REMAINS ADAMANT THAT HE WILL NOT ALLOW HIS NAME TO GO FORWARD.

2. VAN DER STEE HAS BEEN AMONG THE MOST SUCCESSFUL AND BEST KNOWN OF NETHERLANDS AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS OF RECENT YEARS ALTHOUGH HE HAD NO EARLIER EXPERIENCE OF AGRICULTURE. HIS FINANCIAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERTISE ARE A MATTER OF RECORD (LAWYER, TAX CONSULTANT AND STATE SECRETARY FOR FINANCE 1971-73). HE IS ON CLOSE POLITICAL TERMS WITH VAN AGT (BOTH ARE MEMBERS OF THE KVP, THE CATHOLIC CONSTITUENT PARTY OF THE CDA). HE IS ALSO GENERALLY POPULAR IN THE PARTY AND COUNTRY AT LARGE. HE HAS A WELL DESERVED REPUTATION FOR SHREWDNESS AND POLITICAL ACUMEN, BUT CAN BE RUTHLESS WHEN NECESSARY. NOR IS HE AFRAID TO SPEAK HIS MIND. HE HAS CROSSED SWORDS SHARPLY WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE NINE (MR SILKIN IN PARTICULAR) IN THE PAST BUT ALWAYS RETAINED GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH THEM. MOST OBSERVERS HERE WOULD AGREE THAT HE HAS THE TALENTS, EXPERIENCE AND ENERGY TO FILL THE JOB EFFECTIVELY.

3. BEFORE HE (RELUCTANTLY) BECAME MINISTER OF FINANCE IN MARCH, VAN DER STEE HAD MADE LITTLE SECRET OF HIS EUROPEAN AMBITIONS. HE IMPLIED STRONGLY TO SIR J TAYLOR LAST YEAR THAT HE HAD SET HIS SIGHTS ON THE AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO IN THE COMMISSION AND THAT HE HAD AN UNDERSTANDING WITH GUNDELACH THAT WERE THE LATTER TO BECOME PRESIDENT, HE WOULD INSIST ON VAN DER STEE BECOMING AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER.

4. THE ONLY QUESTION MARK MUST BE OVER HIS AVAILABILITY. DESPITE CONSULTATIONS OVER THE WEEK-END BETWEEN THE THREE BENELUX PRIME MINISTERS THEIR AGREEMENT ON A SINGLE BENELUX CANDIDATE HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED ALTHOUGH THE PRESS REPORTS THIS MORNING THAT VAN AGT HAS AGREED TO THORN'S CANDIDATURE. MORE IMPORTANT, VAN AGT MIGHT BE RELUCTANT TO RELEASE VAN DER STEE WHEN HE HAS JUST WORKED HIMSELF INTO THE SADDLE AND PUBLIC EXPENDITURE CUTS NOTABLY IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE FIELD MAKE THE TASK OF PREPARING NEXT YEAR'S BUDGET PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT IN THE FACE OF THE RESTIVENESS OF THE LEFT WING OF THE CDA INCLUDING SOME MEMBERS OF THE CABINET.

5. VAN DER STEE HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL TO US IN THE PAST BOTH AS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AS A CONFIDANT OF VAN AGT EG IN THE LATTER CASE OVER OUR BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION. BRITISH MINISTERS (MR WALKER, MR BUCHANEN-SMITH AND SIR G HOWE) WOULD I THINK CONFIRM THIS. IF HE WERE TO SUCCEES MR JENKINS, WE WOULD HAVE VERY REASON TO EXPECT THIS TO CONTINUE WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE JOB.

6. COD, VENICE AND UKREP BRUSSELS: PLEASE NOTE DESKBY.

HERVEY

NNNN

Mr. Alexander

~~From Minister~~
RMH

has seen.

Envy Pal

THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

22v

For Paul 23/6

The Belgium Foreign Minister's Chef de Cabinet telephoned me this afternoon. He was instructed by his Minister to convey the following message for the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington, resulting from the meeting of Benelux Prime Ministers.

At last week's European Council in Venice there had been a consensus that the next President of the Commission should come from one of the smaller Community countries; and preferably from a Benelux country. The name of Ms. Thorn had been suggested as the candidate. It was now for the Presidency to check whether Ms. Thorn's name was acceptable to other Community Governments. Sg. Cossiga had accordingly been asked to establish this, in particular while he was in Venice at the same time as the French President and the British and German Heads of Government. The Benelux Ministers had asked to be informed of his conclusion during the weekend, so that they could react. They were accordingly now waiting to hear from Sg. Cossiga but wished the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington to know the position.

I said that this message did not strike her as entirely clear. Was I being told that Ms. Thorn now be the Benelux candidate? Ms. de Schoutete did not give me a direct reply. He repeated that it was Ms. Thorn's name that had been suggested last week. What his Ministers wished to establish was whether that suggestion was acceptable to others. If there were "an unsurmountable obstacle" to Ms. Thorn's candidature then they would wish to reflect on the conclusions they should draw. I saw no point in trying to push him beyond this delphic position but said I would report to my Ministers.

of the exchange

The Chancellor reported a conversation with Pandolfi, who recorded (and agreed with) Matthoefer's views. This was that, whether or not there was a Benelux consensus in favour of Thorn, he would not be elected; and that a further search among the small countries would produce another candidate who again would not be elected. The way would then be open for Pandolfi; and the Chancellor's impression was that Pandolfi - who was already willing - would be made available by the Italian Government.

Michael Pansier

22/6/80

cc. Sir R. Armstrong
Private Secretary
PS/PS.

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPY

DESKBY

211000Z

Europe
Policy

+17

PS (b)

PS/LPS

PS/PUS

Sir D Mailland

Mr Bullard

Lt Bridges

M Hannay

M Ferguson

Hds ECA (I)

ECA (E)

WED

R C.

ML Alexander N° 10 J.S.

+

0927

LUXFO 001/21

OO FCO DESKBY 211000Z

PP UKREP BRUSSELS

PP ROME

PP PARIS

PP BONN

PP BRUSSELS

PP THE HAGUE

GRS 110

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 211000Z

FM LUXEMBOURG 210855Z

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 194 OF 21 JUNE

INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS, ROME, PARIS, BONN, BRUSSELS,
THE HAGUE

INFO SAVING COPENHAGEN, DUBLIN

YOUR TELNO 79

PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. I PASSED YOUR REPLY TO M THORN'S CHEF DE CABINET THIS
MORNING. HE WAS GRATEFUL. HE SAID THAT THE ITALIANS HAD TOLD THORN
THAT COLOMBO PROPOSED TO DISCUSS THE PRESIDENCY IN THE MARGINS
OF THE NATO MEETING IN ANKARA AND TO TRY TO REACH A CONCLUSION
THEN. KASEL ADDED THAT WERNER AND MARTENS HAD NOT AGREED ON
A SINGLE BENELUX CANDIDATE AT THEIR MEETING YESTERDAY (MY BELGIAN
COLLEAGUE CONFIRMS THIS). A TRIPARTITE BENELUX MEETING IS TO BE
HELD TOMORROW (SUNDAY) AND WERNER HOPES TO BE ABLE TO NOTIFY OTHER
EC HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AT VENICE OF THE OUTCOME BY TOMORROW
EVENING

Fils

EC HEADS OF GOVERNMENT AT VENICE OF THE OUTCOME BY TOMORROW
EVENING.

2. RESIDENT CLERK PLEASE PASS TO ALEXANDER (NO 10) OR REPEAT
TO VENICE.

FCO PASS SAYING TO COPENHAGEN AND DUBLIN

THOMAS

NNNN

SENT/RECD AT 210927Z DH/DGN

TO: [faint]

FROM: [faint]

INFO: [faint]

ATTN: [faint]

DATE: [faint]

TIME: [faint]

CLASS: [faint]

REF: [faint]

NOTES: [faint]

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HAGFO 001/20

OO FCO

PP UKREP BRUSSELS

PP BRUSSELS

PP LUXEMBOURG

PP ROME

GRPS 130

CONFIDENTIAL

FM THE HAGUE 200821Z JUN 60

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 209 OF 20 JUNE

INFO PRIORITY UKREP BRUSSELS, BRUSSELS, LUXEMBOURG, ROME

INFO SAVING ALL OTHER EC POSTS

UKREP BRUSSELS TELNO 3025: PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. VAN DER KLAUW CONFIRMED TO COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS ON 20 JUNE THAT THE THREE BENELUX PRIME MINISTERS HOPED TO AGREE THIS WEEKEND ON A BENELUX CANDIDATE. HE IMPLIED THAT POSSIBLE DUTCH CANDIDATES (TO BE FURTHER CONSIDERED BY THE CABINET AT THEIR WEEKLY MEETING THIS MORNING) WOULD INCLUDE DUISENBERG. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN ON THE PROSPECTS OF VAN DER STOEL'S NAME (HERVEY'S LETTER OF 18 JUNE TO SPRECKLEY) GOING FORWARD; VAN AGT IS REPORTED TO BE STRONGLY OPPOSED.

2. VAN DER KLAUW MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN THE EVENT OF THORN'S APPOINTMENT, THE DUTCH WOULD PRESS STRONGLY FOR A COMMISSIONERSHIP OTHER THAN THAT CURRENTLY HELD BY VREDELING; BUDGET AND FINANCIAL CONTROL MIGHT WELL BE A TARGET.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEES

HERVEY

X-12

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

PS
 PS/LPS
 P/P/S
 MR BRUNARD
 LORD BRIDGES
 MR HAMMAY
 HD FLD (4)

MR FRANKLIN } Cabinet
 MR. WILLIAMS } Office
 MR ALEXANDER No 10 Downing St.

(File)

[files]

+ +

LUXFO 001/19

PP FCO

RR UKREP BRUSSELS

RR ROME

RR PARIS

RR BONN

RR BRUSSELS

RR THE HAGUE

GRS 150

CONFIDENTIAL

FM LUXEMBOURG 191500Z

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 191 OF 19 JUNE 1980

INFO UKREP BRUSSELS ROME PARIS BONN BRUSSELS AND THE HAGUE.

INFO SAVING DUBLIN AND COPENHAGEN

PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. LUXEMBOURG MFA OFFICIALS ARE ALL VERY FED UP WITH THE BELGIANS. THEY CLAIM MARTENS HAS BEEN STALLING OVER THEIR EFFORTS TO HOLD AN EARLY BENELUX SUMMIT TO TRY TO ARRIVE AT AN AGREED BENELUX CANDIDATE BUT THEY NOW THINK THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE WEEKEND. THEY SUSPECT THORN'S PROSPECTS ARE SLIPPING AND THAT A THIRD MAN MAY END UP THE WINNER (? AN ITALIAN). THEY SUSPECT DAVIGNON AND GISCARD OF HAVING BROUGHT THEIR FAMILY RELATIONSHIP INTO PLAY. THEY CLAIM THAT SCHMIDT DOES NOT REALLY WANT DAVIGNON AND THAT THERE IS NO SERIOUS DUTCH CONTENDER. THEY PROFESS THAT, IF FACED BY THORN AS THE SINGLE BENELUX NAME, GISCARD WOULD FIND IT HARD TO MAINTAIN HIS OPPOSITION.
2. I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS ABOUT THE ONLY SUBJECT OCCUPYING THE LUXEMBOURG MFA AT THE MOMENT. IF THORN MISSES THIS BUS WE SHALL HAVE A SORE MAN TO DEAL WITH DURING THE LUXEMBOURG PRESIDENCY.

THOMAS

ADVANCE COPY

PS

PS/LPS

PS/R/S

LORD BRIDGER

MR HANNA

MR FRANKLIN } CABINET
MR WILLIAMS } OFFICE

MR ALEXANDER
No 10 D/S.

mb

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 70

CONFIDENTIAL

FM ROME 110940Z JUN

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 386 OF 11 JUNE

AND TO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS AND UKREP BRUSSELS

YOUR TELNO 281: PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. BERLINGUER (COSSIGA'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISER) TOLD ME THAT THE ITALIANS PUT DOWN A MARKER AT NAPLES. THEY HAD A FAIR CLAIM ON THE JOB AND THEY ALSO HAD A GOOD CANDIDATE (PANDOLFI). HE CONFIRMED THAT COLOMBO WAS NOT A CANDIDATE.

2. IT LOOKS AS IF THE ITALIANS WOULD LIKE TO SEE PANDOLFI GET THE JOB BUT THEY AND HE HIMSELF DO NOT WANT TO COURT A REBUFF AND ARE THEREFORE PLAYING IT CAUTIOUSLY.

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST.]

ARCULUS

FILES
ECD(I)
PS
PS/LPS
PS/PUS
SIR D MAITLAND
LORD BRIDGES

COPIES TO:-

MR FRANKLIN CABINET OFFICE
MR HANCOCK TREASURY

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

CONFIDENTIAL

x-8

CBBONN/FCO 003/10

PS
PS/UPS
PS/PUS
ADVANCE COPY

ZZ FCO

FLASH

Lord Bridges
Mr. Hanray
H.D. ECD-1 (2)

GRS 250

CONFIDENTIAL

FM BONN 101345Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 451 OF 10 JUNE

PS/NO 10 Downing St.
Mr. Franklin cabinet office.

YOUR TELNO 249: PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION

1. CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE REGRET THAT IT IS A QUOTE PHYSICAL IMPOSSIBILITY UNQUOTE FOR HIM TO SEE ME FOR EVEN A FEW MINUTES BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR VENICE. HE IS AT HIS PARTY'S CONFERENCE IN ESSEN ALL DAY TODAY, AND HAS A LONG LIST OF ENGAGEMENTS ON HIS RETURN INCLUDING A CABINET MEETING TOMORROW.

2. RELUCTANTLY, I THINK I MUST ACCEPT THIS. VON STADEN IS ALWAYS HELPFUL, AND WOULD I AM SURE HAVE ARRANGED FOR ME TO HAVE EVEN A FEW MINUTES WITH THE CHANCELLOR IF IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE. HE EXPLAINS THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAS NOT YET PROPERLY TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THIS PROBLEM (PARTLY, NO DOUBT, BECAUSE THE COMING FEDERAL ELECTION MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT GERMAN NON-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AT THIS STAGE: MY TEL. NO. 438). THIS WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO SWITCH ON TO THE SUBJECT FOR A TALK WITH ME. VON STADEN DOES NOT SUGGEST THAT I COME AND TALK TO HIM INSTEAD, BECAUSE HE HIMSELF HAS NOT ^{YET} PUT THE PAPERS TO THE CHANCELLOR AND SO IS NOT YET PRIVY TO THE CHANCELLOR'S THINKING.

* 3. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, VON STADEN WONDERS WHETHER IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE CHANCELLOR TO HAVE A FEW WORDS IN VENICE BEFORE THE FORMAL PROCEEDINGS THERE BEGIN. HE SHOULD BY THEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FOCUS ON THE QUESTION, HOWEVER BRIEFLY, IF THIS IDEA COMMENDS ITSELF TO THE PRIME MINISTER, THE MEETING COULD BE FIXED EITHER THROUGH THE RESPECTIVE PRIVATE OFFICES OR THROUGH ME.

WRIGHT

Done
Print

* If you agree I will have a word with Von Staden on the phone to-morrow.
Print

CONFIDENTIAL

31002 - 1

PP ROME

GRS 129

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 101300Z JUN 80

TO PRIORITY ROME

TEL NUMBER 281 OF 10 JUNE

INFO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKREP BRUSSELS

PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION

1. THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER SPOKE BRIEFLY TO PANDOLFI AFTER THE FINANCE COUNCIL IN LUXEMBOURG ON 9 JUNE TO ENQUIRE WHETHER HE WERE A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COMMISSION. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE IF THERE WERE A CONSENSUS IN HIS FAVOUR: BUT HE DID NOT WANT HIS NAME TO BE THRUST FORWARD PREMATURELY. HIS BELIEF WAS THAT THE FRENCH AND GERMAN GOVERNMENTS WERE NOW CONSIDERING A CANDIDATE FROM ONE OF THE SMALLER MEMBER STATES 'IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A DIFFERENT, LESS BUREAUCRATIC, STYLE OF MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMISSION'.
2. NOTHING WAS SAID ABOUT WHETHER THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPORT PANDOLFI'S CANDIDATURE.

CARRINGTON

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NNNN

X

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PS

PS/LPS

PS/PUS

SIR D MAITLAND

LORD BRIDGES

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MR HANCOCK TREASURY

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CONFIDENTIAL

Euro PS

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 170

CONFIDENTIAL
FM FCO 091600Z JUN 80
TO FLASH BONN
TELEGRAM NUMBER 249 OF 9 JUNE

Encl of 1

And

PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION.

1. PLEASE SEEK URGENTLY TO SPEAK TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, SAYING THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ASKED TO DO SO BY THE PRIME MINISTER. YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN THAT WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION, GIVEN THE CRUCIAL NATURE OF THE DECISIONS THAT WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS OVER THE FINANCING OF THE COMMUNITY, REFORM OF THE CAP AND ENLARGEMENT. IN OUR VIEW THIS REQUIRES A STRONG PRESIDENT, OF PROVED INTERNATIONAL STATURE AND FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE WHO WILL REALLY TAKE A GRIP ON THE COMMISSION. THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD VERY MUCH WELCOME ANY INDICATION WHICH THE CHANCELLOR WAS PREPARED TO GIVE OF HIS THINKING. SHE HERSELF HAD NOT YET FORMED A FIRM VIEW. YOU MAY SAY THIS IS NOT PART OF A GENERAL APPROACH BY US IN CAPITALS BUT RATHER A WISH TO KNOW HERR SCHMIDT'S OWN VIEWS. STRICTLY FOR YOUR OWN INFORMATION THIS APPROACH IS NOT BEING MADE THROUGH GENSCHER WHOM WE ASSUME WILL BE BACKING THORN ON POLITICAL GROUNDS.

CARRINGTON

*FILES
EC3(I)
PS
PS/LPS
PS/PLS
LOL & BRIDGES
HL HANNAY*

*COPIES TO
HL ALEXANDER 10 JOUWING ST
41 FRANKLIN CABINET OFFICE*

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

The Principal Private Secretary

29 May 1980

Dear Paul,

PREPARATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL -

12/13 JUNE 1980

Thank you for your letter of 28 May to Michael Alexander about the subjects which the Italian Presidency envisage the European Council will discuss.

I have shown your letter to the Prime Minister who is content with the line which the Foreign Secretary is proposing to take on the outline agenda at today's meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council. She has also noted that the European Council is likely to choose the next President of the Commission at its meeting next month. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary discussed this matter briefly after last night's dinner for Signor Colombo, and they will clearly need to come back to it again in the next few days.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Alvin White.

P. Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.