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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

21 July, 1980

cc Martin Set

Miss Stephens.
Can you get from
the meeting mentioned
only.

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Dear Paul,

European Commissioners

I wrote to you on 2 July to let you know that Mr Callaghan had undertaken to let the Prime Minister have the names of two or three possible Labour candidates to become the second of the two British European Commissioners when Mr Roy Jenkins leaves Brussels at the beginning of next year.

The Prime Minister saw Mr Callaghan again today when he offered only one name - that of Mr Fred Mulley. Mr Callaghan said that he thought Mr Mulley would make a very good European Commissioner. He was now quite recovered from his recent heart attack. He was a shrewd man who took a balanced and sensible view of the Community. Though a quiet man, he was a tough and skilful operator inside a bureaucracy. It was, of course, for the Prime Minister to decide whether to put forward Mr Mulley. He had approached seven or eight other people, including Mr Joel Barnett, but they had said that they did not wish to be considered. Most of them were clearly influenced in their view by the difficulty which any Labour member was likely to experience in trying to get back into British politics after he had given up a constituency to go to Brussels.

Mr Callaghan added that one or two people had also proposed themselves to him as candidates for the European Commission, but he did not support any of them and did not wish to put forward any of their names.

The Prime Minister said that she was grateful to Mr Callaghan for suggesting Mr Mulley's name and she would now like to reflect further on this. She would let Mr Callaghan know privately as soon as she came to a conclusion.

/The Prime Minister

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The Prime Minister would now like to discuss Mr Callaghan's suggestion and possible alternatives to Mr Mulley with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip. We will be in touch with you to arrange a time.

I am sending copies of this letter to Michael Richardson (Lord Privy Seal's Office) and Murdo Maclean, (Chief Whip's Office). A copy also goes to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

Blair Whitman.

Paul Lever, Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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