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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

1 October 1980

European Commissioners

When the Prime Minister met the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Privy Seal and Chief Whip last night to discuss Labour Party candidates for the second of the two British posts on the European Commission, they agreed that now that Mr. Joel Barnett had ruled himself out, the two best runners were Mr. Ivor Richard and Lord Northfield (formerly Mr. Donald Chapman). There was not much to choose between Mr. Richard and Lord Northfield, but it was agreed that on balance Mr. Richard had slightly more in his favour, especially if we were going to try to fill the post now occupied by M. Cheyssen.

The meeting decided that the next step was for the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary to see whether Mr. Tugendhat would be happy to have Mr. Richard as his fellow Commissioner and that thereafter, if Mr. Tugendhat was content, the Prime Minister should let the Leader of the Opposition know that an approach was going to be made to Mr. Richard.

You told me later yesterday evening that Lord Carrington had spoken to Mr. Tugendhat who had said that he would be happy to see Mr. Richard appointed to the Commission. The Prime Minister has accordingly written to Mr. Callaghan, and I attach a copy of her letter.

I am sending copies of this letter to Stephen Gomersall (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

RE'A. WHITMORE

Paul Lever Esq  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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