



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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John T. ...

The Prime Minister's Visit to The Hague and Bonn: The Succession to Dr Luns

We have not included in the general briefs for the Prime Minister's meetings with Chancellor Kohl and Prime Minister Lubbers the question of the succession to Dr Luns, given the need to restrict circulation of papers on Lord Carrington's position. What follows - which I shall be submitting in parallel to the Foreign Secretary over the weekend - sets out the current position.

There has been a major development: Herr Genscher telephoned Sir Geoffrey Howe yesterday to offer German support for Lord Carrington. The Prime Minister will no doubt wish to thank Chancellor Kohl warmly for this; and the German decision goes a long way towards ensuring Lord Carrington's appointment.

The line up elsewhere in the Alliance currently is

- (i) full support from the United States, Italy, Denmark, Greece;
- (ii) favourable indications but no firm commitment from Canada, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway.

There is still a question mark over the French position. M Cheysson declared himself in favour of Lord Carrington at the outset; there have been subsequent suggestions that the Elysee were not so enthusiastic. But latest reports from Sir J Graham in Brussels suggest that the Elysee may now accept Lord Carrington's appointment as an accomplished fact and the German decision will be a new and important factor in this context. Of the smaller allies the Spanish have been non-committal and could find it difficult for Gibraltar reasons to support Lord Carrington openly; on the other hand, given their ambiguous position in NATO, it would be difficult for them to hold out against consensus. The Turks have stated a preference for a candidate from a smaller country but again are unlikely to block consensus. The Portuguese

have



- similarly we would not expect Tindemans to declare himself a candidate against Lord Carrington;
- NATO should aim at a decision soon, preferably before the Ministerial meetings in November/December.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram, with the request that papers on this issue continue to be held on restricted circulation.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R B Bone', written in a cursive style.

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

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