

SUBJECT

see MASTER

CONFIDENTIAL

p.c. P.C.

of



10 DOWNING STREET

9 July 1984

From the Private Secretary

Dear Roger,

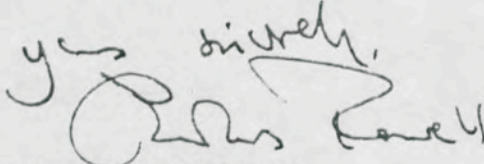
PRESIDENCY OF THE EC COMMISSION

The Prime Minister had a brief discussion of this subject this morning. Those present were the Lord President, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip.

The Prime Minister said that Dr. FitzGerald would be telephoning her on Wednesday to discuss this subject and she needed to decide what to say. There seemed to be a distinct risk that the Germans would not put forward a candidate after all and would leave the field free for the French. Urgent efforts should be made to convey to the Germans our views that this was disappointing and would redound badly upon Germany. In particular, it should be made clear to Chancellor Kohl that the French could not be considered residuary legatee for the Presidency if the Germans did not take their turn.

As to other candidates, Andriessen was well spoken of and Davignon a strong contender. Our best course might be to try to form an alliance around Davignon of the smaller countries and Italy, though there must be risk that Craxi would side with the French. Sir Geoffrey Howe agreed that this appeared the best prospect though we should be careful not to be too prominent in leading such an alliance. Mr. Tebbit pointed out that there were arguments for supporting Davignon, whatever the outcome; we should earn ourselves useful credit with him. The Prime Minister commented that if, at the end of the day, there had to be a French candidate, Delors might be acceptable, Cheysson not.

You will wish to take account of this discussion in preparing briefing for the Prime Minister's talk with Dr. FitzGerald. You will also wish to pursue urgently the question of a German candidate and also the prospects of rallying support behind Davignon.

yes sincerely,  
  
(CHARLES POWELL)

Roger Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.