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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

[Handwritten initials]

Following our
18 July 1984
conversation this morning,
Geoffrey Howe will tell
Dumas & the Irish
Presidency that we will
support
Delors.
CDD
18/7

Dear Charles,

Next President/Secretary General of the EC Commission

Sir Geoffrey Howe spoke to M. Dumas early yesterday evening about this, saying that while he had not yet been able to discuss with the Prime Minister the question of the new President, he wanted to follow-up with M. Dumas their earlier exchange about the Noel succession. In reply M. Dumas noted that there was scope for a UK/French agreement on these questions, although M. Noel would not be retiring for two or three years. Did the UK have a candidate? Sir Geoffrey Howe said that we did have one possibility in mind. We hoped for firm French support. It was left that M. Dumas would telephone Sir Geoffrey Howe back on the afternoon of 18 July, once the latter had been able to talk to the Prime Minister.

In the event, M. Dumas telephoned back as early as 0910 this morning, anxious to have the final UK view on M. Delors. Sir Geoffrey Howe said that he had not yet been able to discuss the point again with the Prime Minister, but said he would do so as soon as possible. M. Dumas, when pressed again on the question of the Noel succession, said he saw no problem about that: he had discussed the matter last night with President Mitterrand. We could be assured that the President was personally committed to support the British candidate when the time came to find a successor for M. Noel.

Yours ever,
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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