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PRIME MINISTER

FILE

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The Company Secretary of British Leyland telephoned yesterday, to ask whether you would be prepared to do for the launch of the Maestro, on or about 1 March, what you did for the launch of the Metro. He said that you had enormously helped in the Metro launch, and that the Maestro was probably even more crucial to their recovery than the Metro had been. The Maestro would be the first all-British designed newcomer to the mid-car sector, for a number of years.

What he had in mind was that you should take delivery of a Maestro for your own personal use, or for No.10's use, free of charge, for a number of weeks. Patrick Jenkin would similarly have one, and would probably be driven around in it instead of in his usual Government car.

This seems to me a good idea in principle (David Wolfson and Bernard Ingham concur). The taxpayer has a great deal at stake in BL and in this new car. But it would be a totally unsuitable car for you to ride around in, and it seems very artificial for it to be delivered for your use if in fact you have no use for it. If, however, you are prepared to be associated with this new launch, (you have already sent a message of support for the launch), perhaps the best thing would be for Bernard Ingham to arrange, with BL, photographs and press coverage, of your looking at, and perhaps driving down the street. Patrick Jenkin's Maestro, when he arrives here for some meeting.

Agree to an arrangement on these lines?

M. C. SCHOLAR

25 January, 1983

Austin Rover Group



From: The Chairman &
Chief Executive

The Right Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister
10, Downing Street
London SW1.

Bot
Austin Rover Group Limited
Canley Plant
Fletchamstead Highway
Coventry CV4 9DB
England

Telephone: Coventry (0203) 75511
Telex: 31567
Cables: Flywheel Coventry

ms
2nd March 1983.

Dear Prime Minister,

May I extend to you my sincere thanks for the outstanding support you gave to the new Maestro at the press photocall in Downing Street yesterday.

As you will, no doubt, have already seen, the media coverage of the event was outstanding and I could not have wished for a better 'send-off' for the new car on its launch day.

We have already announced 10,000 initial fleet orders for the car worth £50 million, and another 10,000 fleet orders - we are assured - are in the pipeline. The motoring public is also flocking to our dealer showrooms and we are very confident that Maestro, like Metro, will prove to be a winner.

Once again, many thanks for your invaluable support.

Yours sincerely,

HAROLD J MUSGROVE

HJM/MRH

A Managing Agent for BL Cars Limited

Registered Office:
35-38 Portman Square London W1H 0HQ
Registered in England No. 1595268

1.3.83

End Ref

81423 MARVEH G

TLX TO HAROLD MUSGROVE - MAESTROLOGER SUPREME, CHAIRMAN

CC : THE PRIME MINISTER
THE SEC OF STATE FOR INDUSTRY
SIR AUSTIN BIDE - CHAIRMAN BL PLC

MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL AT AUSTIN ROVER ON GIVING BIRTH TO ANOTHER OUTSTANDING WINNER - AND OUR MOST IMPORTANT ONE YET AS IT IS THE KEY TO OUR MUTUAL FUTURE PROSPERITY.

OUR BRITISH BABY MAESTRO IS CLEVERLY CONCEIVED AND ENGINEERED AND IS ALREADY ATTRACTING UNPARALLELED CUSTOMER INTEREST AND ORDERS. IT WILL GROW IN NUMBERS VERY FAST AND BE THE CULT CAR FOR 1983 AND BEYOND IF TOGETHER WE CONTINUE TO CARE FOR IT AND BUILD ON ITS WINNING WAYS AND STRENGTHS WITH PROFESSIONALISM ENTHUSIASM AND PRIDE.

YOUR DEALER NETWORK IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU TO ENSURE THAT MAESTRO ACHIEVES THE SUCCESS IT DESERVES AND IS PLEASED WITH THE STEADY BUILD UP IN PRODUCTION AND THE DEDICATION TO QUALITY.

WELL DONE TO YOU AND ALL YOUR TEAM FOR ALL THE BLOOD SWEAT AND TEARS WHICH HAVE GONE INTO CREATING THIS WONDERFUL NEW BEGINNING - THIS MASTERSTROKE FOR BRITAIN.

MICHAEL MARSHALL
CHAIRMAN
BL CARS DEALER COUNCIL

81423 MARVEH G

27582 CABOFF G

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WEKLL IF OSCAR ILL DOWN TOOLS NOW
READY TO SWITCH NOW KK RHRGRGR

7582 CABOFF G

81423 MARVEH G
1.3.83

TLX TO: THE PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

MIS 13

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING BL AND FOR YOUR PERSONAL WORDS OF
SUPPORT TO THE MAESTRO LAUNCH.

THE CAR WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE A WINNER AND I AM PLEASED TO
ENCLOSE A COPY OF A TELEX WHICH I HAVE TODAY SENT FROM THE
AUSTIN ROVER DEALERS TO HAROLD MUSGROVE - MAESTROLOGER SUPREME
- AND TO SIR AUSTIN BIDE.

THE NATIONAL INVESTMENT IN BL WILL BE REPAID MANY TIMES OVER
- BALANCE OF TRADE, EMPLOYMENT, TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP, THE
UPLIFTING OF NATIONAL QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY STANDARDS AND
CONSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PRIDE AND COMPETITIVENESS
QUITE APART FROM BL'S OWN FUTURE PROFITABILITY - IT LIKE OUR
MAESTRO IS A MASTERSTROKE FOR BRITAIN. DELIGHTED TO LEARN OF
YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT SO THAT BL AND ITS NETWORK CAN "DEVELOP
THE TOOLS TO FINISH THE JOB" AND THEREBY CONSOLIDATE THIS
VITAL INVESTMENT

MICHAEL MARSHALL
CHAIRMAN
BL CARS DEALER COUNCIL

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