



SECRETARY OF THE CABINET

New European Commission

As you know, I paid a visit to Dublin yesterday for discussions with the Irish Attorney-General, Mr. Peter Sutherland. The primary purpose of the visit was to discuss the handling of a number of cases of persons wanted for terrorist offences either in Great Britain or in Northern Ireland. The discussions were very successful and my officials will be reporting on them to their colleagues in the various Departments concerned.

The Cabinet Office asked a little while ago whether I would be willing to take advantage of my talk with Mr. Sutherland to sound him out on the portfolio which he is seeking for himself when he takes up office as the new Irish Commissioner at the beginning of next year. Mr. Sutherland's ambitions in this respect could apparently be relevant to the way in which Lord Cockfield presents his own preferences. My personal relationship with Mr. Sutherland is such that I saw no difficulty in raising the matter with him - though not in the presence of his officials - and he felt able to speak frankly to me. He said that his first preference would be for Agriculture and he very much hoped that he would be able to obtain it. If that proved not to be possible, there were two or three other portfolios which would interest him: he mentioned, as examples, the Internal Market and Development. But he went on to say that this question of the allocation of portfolios was something that he very much

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up

[Prime Minister]

We shall have to  
lead him off Internal  
Market: and I doubt  
that we want an  
Irish ~~as~~ Agriculture  
Commissioner. Development  
is needed for Natali.

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wanted to discuss personally and as soon as possible with Lord Cockfield (and also perhaps with Mr. Clinton Davis). He hoped that they would be able to co-operate and work in harmony on this matter and indeed on all other matters. He therefore asked whether I could take steps to set up a very early meeting.

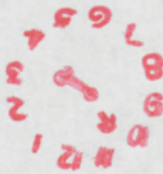
May I now pass this matter back to you. I am sure that Mr. Sutherland would be willing to slip across to London for discussions whenever it was convenient for us and without any formality. I need only add that I have found him very easy to deal with and genuinely anxious to be helpful and I have no doubt that, if tactfully handled and so far as he properly can, he will continue to be a good friend to this country in his new capacity.

I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary.

MA

24 October, 1984

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25 OCT 1984