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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT
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Charles Powell Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

19 November 1986

Dear Charles,

ANGLO FRENCH BILATERAL : SHIPPING

My Secretary of State had intended not to trouble the Prime Minister with shipping issues at your bilateral with M. Chirac but his meeting yesterday with M. Guellec, the French Minister of the Sea, left him concerned to see some further pressure extended on France to ensure their co-operation in securing the major shipping policy package at the December Transport Council.

Mr Moore is clear that the number of points on which the French still need to be satisfied are very limited but their slowness in helping to resolve them is proving an impediment to the whole negotiating process.

A short intervention on the lines of the enclosed brief could be very valuable in bringing about a more positive approach.

A copy of this letter goes to Colin Budd.

Yours Sincerely,

Jon Cunliffe.

JON CUNLIFFE
Private Secretary

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EC SHIPPING POLICY

LINE TO TAKE

Our shipping industries are in a critical state. I was interested to hear of the measures you are taking domestically. What we need now is a Community effort to confront protectionism and support European shipping. A worthwhile first package of measures is due to come to the Transport Council in December. Can we count on active French support in helping to iron out the remaining problems?

BACKGROUND

A series of measures constituting a first EC shipping policy is one of the objectives of our Presidency in the transport field. The prospects for getting most of the measures approved on 15 December are quite good, but the French Minister of the Sea, M. Guellec, has still to commit himself clearly. French indecision is affecting the other Mediterranean countries.

M. Chirac should be interested because he has personally associated himself with a package of measures worth £140m to help the French merchant marine. An EC package, containing the means to resist protectionism in other countries, is an essential complement to this. The main obstacle to French agreement is a reluctance to surrender access to their coastal (cabotage) trade, but we and others are flexible on the details of this.

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