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LONDON SW1A 2AA

20 July 1989

From the Private Secretary

MR. RUDI LEDERER

Thank you for your letter of 18 July about Mr. Lederer. The Prime Minister was sad to lose his services but is reconciled to the fact that he must retire soon. I agree that Oliver Hayward should be asked to recommend one or two suitable candidates to succeed him: they will need to be very good to compete with those who interpret for Chancellor Kohl. I should be grateful for recommendations in due course.

CHARLES POWELL

J. S. Wall, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 July 1989

I fear we shall have to lose him
think this is probably inevitable. He loves translation for you. But he has never quite recovered from the shock of his daughter's death, & has after all we hope must finish soon.
Dear Charles, no I think this is probably inevitable. He loves translation for you. But he has never quite recovered from the shock of his daughter's death, & has after all we hope must finish soon.
Prime Minister
Mr Rudi Lederer

As you know, Mr Rudi Lederer has done sterling work interpreting for successive British Prime Ministers over many years. He has already received both an MBE and an OBE in recognition of his services in a very demanding profession. I understand that Mr Lederer, who is now well over 70, has himself been wondering what future provision we have in mind for the Prime Minister's interpretation needs. Though content to soldier on, there have been signs that he is finding major events something of a strain. This was apparent, for instance, at the press conference at Deidesheim. The Embassy in Bonn have reported that his discomfort was noted by members of the press corps. His translations did not have the same accuracy and force as those of the German interpreter. Mr Lederer himself mentioned to a member of the Embassy that he found difficulty taking notes for consecutive translation (though he had no problem with simultaneous translation).

We have no contractual obligation towards Mr Lederer and we understand he expects us to want to appoint a successor in due course. If you agree, I suggest that we should now tell him that we are looking for one but that we do not expect it to be easy to find someone suitable and we hope he will be willing to stand by to interpret for the Prime Minister for a few months longer.

Ideally we would like to have found a successor in good time for the next Anglo-German Summit in March. Unless you already have views on a successor, I suggest that Oliver Hayward (our adviser on interpretation matters) should be asked to recommend one or two suitable candidates. In submitting recommendations for a successor we would also submit a draft letter of thanks for the Prime Minister to send Mr Lederer when he finally stands down.

Jans.
Stephe
 (J S Wall)
 Private Secretary

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