

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: J E MORTIMER

DATE: 5 MAY 1988

1. MR EDWARDS ^{ADCE} 5 ✓
2. CHANCELLOR

cc: Paymaster General
Sir G Littler
Mr Lankester

Mark's

PRESIDENCY OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION

In his minute to Mr Edwards of 19 April, Mr Taylor said that you would like advice on the report that Mr Lubbers might be a candidate for the post of President of the European Commission from 1 January 1989.

2. I have consulted both Mr De Fonblanque (head of Chancery in UKREP) and Mr Kerr in the FCO, who is in the lead on this issue at official level in Whitehall. I told Mr Kerr about your support for Lubbers. He took note, and confirmed that it was, in any case, the Foreign Secretary's intention to consult you about the succession a little nearer the June European Council, when a decision will be taken.

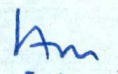
3. Mr Kerr said that, in his view, if Delors wanted to stay on in Brussels after the end of this year, he was unlikely to be deposed. It was generally thought that he had done a reasonable job as President, particularly on the internal market. It was unlikely that the Germans and the Dutch would want to oppose him. Sir David Hannay has expressed similar views (letter at Flag A).

4. The only real reason why Delors might not want to stay on as President is if he was invited by Mitterrand to take over as Prime Minister of France. But the chances of Delors being so invited are thought to be fairly slim (see the letter from our Ambassador in Paris at Flag B). Rocard and Beregovoy are thought to be stronger candidates. And there is always the possibility

that Mitterrand will choose a Prime Minister from outside the Socialist Party.

5. Although there have been numerous rumours that Lubbers would like to be President of the Commission, he himself has denied that he is a candidate, at least this time round. Our Ambassador to the Hague (letter at Flag C) thinks that a more likely scenario is that he will want to finish his present term as Prime Minister, which ends in 1990. Thereafter, however, he might well be interested in the Presidency of the Commission.

6. The position should be a little clearer by early next week, when we should know whether Delors will or will not be the next French Prime Minister.



J E MORTIMER

RESTRICTED



BF 22/4

FROM: J M G TAYLOR
DATE: 19 April 1988

BF 26/4

BF 6/5

5/5

28/4

MR A J C EDWARDS

cc Sir G Littler
Mr Lankester

3/5 29/4

PRESIDENCY OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The Chancellor has seen the enclosed translation of an article in "Het Parool", a Dutch newspaper.

2. He has noted the penultimate sentence of this article. He has asked whether the suggestion that Mr Lubbers might be the next President of the European Commission is a runner. If it is, he thinks we should certainly support it.

3. I should be grateful for advice.

J M G TAYLOR

ps3/27T

CONFIDENTIAL



FROM: J M G TAYLOR

DATE: 9 May 1988

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "JMG".

MR J E MORTIMER

cc PS/Paymaster General
Sir G Littler
Mr Lankester
Mr A J C Edwards

PRESIDENCY OF EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The Chancellor was grateful for your minute of 5 May.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "JMG".

J M G TAYLOR