



Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

1. TH Poyell CDP 7/1. 2  
2. Home Minister  
to write  
N.C. J  
7.2 cc Mr. Wicks ✓

md

NOTE FOR THE FILE

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH MR ALAN BRISTOW

On 7 February at 10.50am I telephoned Mr Alan Bristow and had the following conversation with him.

I explained that I was ringing at the request of Mr Tebbit. Following the matters which Mr Bristow had raised the previous day, Mr Tebbit, who was shortly to see members of the press, was concerned that he would be pressed to say what, if any, contacts had taken place between the Government and Mr Bristow. Mr Tebbit felt that he needed to be in a position to tell the press, if necessary, of the telephone conversations which had taken place between he and Mr Bristow while he was in hospital. Otherwise, if he did not do so, he feared that he would be accused of having concealed them.

Mr Bristow wished Mr Tebbit well. He said that he obviously appreciated Mr Tebbit's concern. He had no objection to Mr Tebbit referring to the conversation as he proposed. He had always found Mr Tebbit extremely helpful in all his dealing with him, more as a friend than as a politician. It was in that sense that he had sought his advice in those telephone conversations.

I told Mr Bristow that Mr Tebbit would refer to Mr Bristow's approach to him, as being to seek advice upon the manner in which he should exercise the power of his shareholding. He would go on to say that he had told Mr Bristow that he could give no advice other than that Mr Bristow should act in the best interests of the company as he saw it. Mr Bristow did not dissent from this, going on to say that he recalled that Mr Tebbit had told him that he (Mr Bristow) should make his judgements on the basis of sound commercial common-sense. He said that he was all in favour of having it all out in the open.

Mr Bristow said that he wished to explain his position. The only reason that he had mentioned the whole sordid saga was because Sir John Cuckney, on 5 February, had said that he was acting in concert with the European Consortium, and that he, Bristow, must be part of a concert party. Mr Bristow could not let that accusation go. He had today offered to go to the Stock Exchange or the Takeovers Panel to explain. He had taken extensive legal advice in order to be 100% sure that any actions he took would not debar him from using his votes at a General Meeting. But he was now subject to an open accusation and he had to defend himself. He had only chosen to act as he had as his name was being smeared. His name was being linked with the tender offer. Sir John Cuckney was trying to say that he was part of a concert party.

The conversation closed with Mr Bristow offering further good wishes for Mr Tebbit's health and continued recovery.

A.D. Hawley  
7/2/86.