

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Sir Christopher SOAMES

Sir Christopher Soames is currently Vice President of the Commission of the European Communities, and is responsible for Europe's growing relationships with the wider world. Indeed, Sir Christopher, as the European Communities' "Foreign Secretary", has presided over the most fruitful period in the Communities' relationship with third countries.

Sir Christopher was born October 12, 1920, and is married to Mary Churchill, youngest daughter of the late Sir Winston Churchill. They have three sons and two daughters.

He was educated at Eton College and at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and was commissioned in the Coldstream Guards in 1939. He saw active service in North Africa (where he was Liaison Officer with the Free French Forces and was decorated with the Croix de Guerre), Italy and France. He was then appointed Assistant Military Attache at the British Embassy in Paris.

Sir Christopher's formal political career began in February 1950 when he was elected Conservative Member of Parliament for Bedford. In 1952, he was appointed Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill.

In December 1955, Sir Christopher was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Air Ministry, then with the Admiralty and the War Office, later becoming a Privy Councillor.

In July 1960, he became a Cabinet Minister in Harold MacMillan's Government as Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food until the change of government in September 1964. He took an active part in the negotiations for British membership in the European Communities from 1961 to 1963. In 1964, he became Opposition Spokesman on Foreign Affairs in the Shadow Cabinet until he lost his parliamentary seat in 1966.

Sir Christopher was appointed British Ambassador to France by Harold Wilson in 1968. He played a key role in the negotiations for British membership in the European Communities, and, in January 1973, was appointed to the Commission of the European Communities as Vice President.



Sir Christopher's present appointment ends at the end of 1976. It is widely thought that he will re-enter British politics and is likely to be a prominent member of the Conservative Party Front Bench.

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