

cc Mr. Wolfson
Mr. Ryder

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

The Prime Minister discussed SDA appointments with the Secretary of State for Scotland at 1230 hours on 22 November.

The Prime Minister said that the Party in Scotland had already been angered over selection of the Select Committee for Scotland. She wished to avoid similar problems, and the Secretary of State had warned of these in his minute of 15 November.

The Secretary of State for Scotland said that Mr. Robertson was the preferred choice for chairmanship. The Party would favour the removal of the present Chairman. But Mr. Robertson remained identified with the old SDA which the Party disliked. He did not, however, wish to remove both Chairman and Vice-Chairman/Chief Executive simultaneously. It would be possible to select another Chairman, and leave Mr. Robertson to work out the remaining year of his term as Vice-Chairman/Chief Executive. Possible candidates were Mr. Robert Duthie, Chairman of Black and Edgington, who would have to give up his Clyde Port Authority post, but would probably agree to do so. The alternative would be Mr. Lawrence Boyle, Chief Executive of the Strathclyde region. His experience was sound and he would be respected by the Party, but he lacked commercial experience.

The Prime Minister regarded commercial experience as essential. She therefore favoured the appointment of Mr. Duthie. His age - 54 - was an asset. As the post was only part-time, there appeared to be no need for him to give up his private sector chairmanship, although any possible conflict of interest would need to be checked beforehand. She agreed that the Secretary of State should invite him to accept the appointment.

22 November 1979