



*Has any leader
in the House ever
had a special
adviser? I can
see no reason*

*PRIME MINISTER
Mr. St. John Stevas wishes to appoint
David Nicholson as Special Adviser
to help in the leader of the House
role. Agree?*

PRIME MINISTER

Special Adviser

*John - i.
what's even. Indeed it
MAD 24/6
means one role a special adviser
just last Jan. out*

I very much hope that you will be kind enough to agree to the appointment of a special adviser to assist me with the wide range of responsibilities which now fall to me. I fully appreciate the need to keep the appointment of non-expert political advisers to a minimum and I have both given the matter careful thought and waited to see how things were working out in practice before deciding to approach you. The truth of the matter is that I am in real need of help.

With regard to the arts I do not need special help as I have my own expertise in this field and I can draw upon the civil servants in the arts branch whom you have agreed should be transferred to the Duchy of Lancaster. We face some difficulties here of communication owing to the geographical separation but I trust that these can eventually be overcome.

Where I need help is in my work as Leader of the House. I have an excellent private office and I am seeking to reorganise it so that my work as Minister responsible for the arts can be fitted in with my primary duty as Leader of the House. However, the officials really are fully stretched and cannot do some of the work which I believe is vital to the success of my role. I intend to spend most of my time in the House and to be available to all Members, especially supporters of the Government. When Members come to see me they raise a variety of points which need to be quickly pursued and disposed of. Furthermore, as we get into the more controversial legislative field and our programme is implemented more and more representations will come to me from Members. Some of the points will be legal and constitutional and others will be political. It would be of very great assistance to me and also to our parliamentary party if I had within my office a full time political adviser with recognised links with the party. I need someone committed to our philosophy and aims who is aware of the difficulties in our path and who can help me overcome them. I want to establish close links with the Central Office and the Research Department. In this way I can be kept closely in touch with political and party developments, especially those which occur while the House is sitting.



There is a further point. As Leader of the House I receive representations about the policies the government are or should be pursuing from individuals and groups outside the House. Many of these representations will be coming from our own supporters and here too, the assistance of a special adviser who has openings to the party would be invaluable.

My third point is this. I intend to do as much speaking as I can outside the House in order to explain our philosophy and approach. The arts apart, I have no departmental responsibility and will be ranging across the general political field. It would be of very great help to have someone who can keep me in touch with developments in party thinking and with other Ministers and their work. I also need help with research and advice on speeches although like yourself, I prefer in the end to write my own speeches or at any rate, their final versions!

In making this application I have taken into account the fact that I have only a very small staff, that I have no Junior Minister, and that the civil servants allotted to me are principally in the arts field.

The person I would like to help me is David Nicholson, whom you will recall did excellent political work for us in the Conservative Research Department. He is totally loyal and discreet and at the same time is able to initiate. He gave me some particular help during the election which was of high quality. He does not intend to pursue a permanent career within the Research Department so there are no problems about his re-employment should we ever have to leave government.

I hope that you will give this your favourable consideration and let me know your decision as soon as is convenient as I wish to complete the reorganisation of my office and this is an important piece of the jigsaw that be fitted in if my suggestion finds favour with you.

NSJS

NSJS

