

c. Mr. Gow

PRIME MINISTER

WORKING LIFE PEERS LIST

Following your meeting last week with the Home Secretary, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip, I had a further word with the Chief Whip and Ian Gow. Both recommend that you should go ahead with offering to recommend six Conservative Peers and four Labour Peers and that you should write to Mr. Foot and Mr. Steel about this before you go to the Far East. This would enable Mr. Foot to produce names by the time of our return with a view to producing the List in the spill-over or at the start of the new Session.

I attach draft letters to Mr. Foot and Mr. Steel. I have included in the letter to Mr. Foot a hint that the problem arises because his previous nominations have not pulled their weight - perhaps more than a hint.

I wondered whether you should write to Mr. Jenkins in similar terms to Mr. Steel, but I concluded that you should not since (a) this would set a precedent which you may not want to create yet; (b) the SDP have only two elected Members of the Commons and we do not consult the SNP or Ulster Unionists; and (c) Mr. Jenkins (unlike Mr. Steel) has not asked. I have discussed with Murdo Maclean, who agrees, but have not been able to take the view of the Chief Whip himself.

E. E. R. BUTLER

14 September 1982