



SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

CUADTS
BA
cc wigg
Jones

CONFIDENTIAL AND APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

Prime Minister

SCOTTISH TEACHERS' INQUIRY

I undertook to consult you about the appointment of the Chairman and members of the inquiry which I announced last Thursday.

2. We have already noted that whoever is chosen as Chairman would probably have to take over as Chairman of a parallel inquiry for England and Wales if it were later decided to set one up. The terms of reference we have given the inquiry are wide-ranging, and to examine 2 education systems in some depth within a 6 month timescale will be a demanding task indeed. It will also be important in establishing the credibility of the inquiry that whoever is chosen should be demonstrably independent of all the parties to the dispute.

3. I have reconsidered very carefully both the demands which the post will make in terms of intellectual capacity and time and the importance of choosing a candidate who can command total confidence north and south of the border. I acknowledge the objections to candidates in their 70s, but I feel that Lord Fraser of Tullybelton is the best available candidate for the job on every count. *aged 75.*

4. If Lord Fraser is not acceptable, my preferred candidate is Sir Donald Maitland (63) (former diplomat, Ambassador to UN and the European Communities, retired as Permanent Secretary at the Department of Energy,

1982). The inquiry are being asked to tackle a wide range of very complex issues, many of them administrative and legal, in a short space of time and I believe that it would be particularly helpful if the team were to be led by someone of his intellectual qualities, robust approach and experience of public affairs.

5. My third choice is Sir Peter Main (61) who retired last year as Chairman of Boots Ltd. He qualified as a doctor at Aberdeen and moved from general practice into the research department at Boots where he joined the Board 18 years later and was Chairman of the company from 1982-1985. He retired to Speyside last year. He has made it plain that he is interested in public work; and he has become a Board member of the Scottish Development Agency as well as taking up some non-executive Directorships. He could be expected to take a practical and sensible view of the issues and to seek the common ground within whatever committee is appointed.

6. As reserve choice I suggest Sir Duncan Macdonald (64), just retired as Chairman of Northern Engineering Industries. He has fairly recently moved to Newcastle but is a very well known figure in Scotland. He is a practical, down to earth engineer with a good public presence and I believe that his appointment would be generally acceptable to the public and to the teachers' unions. He would however find much that was unfamiliar in the complex issues involved and might need a good deal of support from his Committee and Secretariat.

7. The balance of the rest of the membership will depend in part on whether the Chairman is an industrialist or not. I have therefore given further thought to the matter; the list below includes a number of names which were set out in C(86)9; new names are underlined for convenience.

i. It would be very helpful if the Committee had among its members someone with experience of local government administration and I believe there is a fair chance we could obtain the services of an excellent candidate in Robert Peggie (57) who retires as Chief Executive of Lothian Region at the end of the month. He is not only an outstanding administrator who has worked well with the minority

Conservative leadership in Lothian; he has been closely involved in the attempts in Lothian to enforce teachers' contracts more vigorously during the dispute.

ii. The Committee should have one member with current or recent practical teaching experience if it is to carry full credibility. My first choice for this is Sister Maire Gallagher (52) headteacher of Notre Dame High School, Dumbarton who would bring to the inquiry both up to date experience of schools and an objective view. She is Vice-Chairman of my Consultative Committee on the Curriculum to which she has made a dedicated contribution for several years. She is noted for her common sense, balance and devotion to the education service; she is also a singularly effective headteacher of a rather tough school in a difficult area. Another headteacher who I think would serve the inquiry well is Ian R Fraser (55) who has been Rector of Inverness Royal Academy since 1971. He too is sensible, experienced and realistic in his approach to the educational problems of the day.

iii. If the Chairman is not himself an industrialist one of the members should certainly come from commerce or industry. My first choice is James Gordon (49) the Managing Director of Radio Clyde who is very shrewd and energetic. He has privately been strongly critical of the teachers' tactics in the dispute and the weak management response to them. He is a former teacher himself. Bill Hughes (45) Chairman and Chief Executive, Grampian holdings, Chairman of the CBI Education and Training Committee (Scotland) and a member of MSC (Scotland) is a knowledgeable enthusiast for our educational policies in Scotland. Allan Blacklaws (61) until recently group Managing Director for Personnel, Scottish and Newcastle Breweries and Alexander Soutar (52) former Personnel and Industrial Relations Manager (Scotland) Rolls Royce Ltd and now a Director of Inbucon Management Consultants both have extensive experience of industrial relations and a lively interest in education.

iv. If however the Chairman is an industrialist the third place on the inquiry team might go to an academic with experience in economic or industrial relations affairs. On reflection I think I should make my first choice Professor Christopher Blake (59) Professor of Applied Economics at Dundee University and now Chairman of the William Low supermarket chain. He is likely to be sympathetic to our public expenditure policies. Other candidates I have in mind are Professor Donald Mackay (48) of Heriot Watt University, now head of PEIDA consultants; Professor Laurence Hunter (51) Chairman of the Police Negotiating Board; and Professor Thomas F Carbery (61) Professor of Business Information at the University of Strathclyde, who has discharged a number of public appointments with some distinction: he served on the IBA from 1970-1979 and is now a member of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission. His attitudes are essentially balanced, down to earth and directed to practical solutions.

v. The final member of the inquiry might, I suggest, come either from the law or from the church. Whether or not I should wish to appoint a lawyer would probably depend on the balance struck in the rest of the Committee. I would certainly be happy to appoint Professor David Edward (whom I had originally proposed for Chairman). He is Professor of European Institutions at Edinburgh University and a practising Advocate; an able lawyer who might be able to find time for the demanding work of the Committee. Other possible candidates are Professor Robert Jack, Professor of Mercantile Law at Glasgow University and partner in a firm of solicitors in Glasgow. He has a distinguished record of public service, including service on the Scottish Law Commission, a long association with the YMCA movement and Chairman of the Governors of a well-known independent school in Glasgow. The churches have played a fairly public part in appearing to mediate between the various parties to the dispute. This has given them a positive status in the eyes of the teachers' unions and I think there might be advantage in trying to find a senior churchman of commonsense, ability and moderate views. One possible candidate is the Very Rev William Johnston (64), Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1980, a Parish Minister in my own constituency. He is intellectually able and experienced in public affairs, well equipped to handle the complex issues which will be involved and would I think be balanced and discreet.

8. I should be grateful to have your comments on the candidates I propose as Chairman (indicating not only your first choice but also the order of preference - we may have some difficulty in finding a candidate willing to take the job on) and to know if any of the proposals for membership are regarded as particularly unsuitable. It would be helpful if I could have your clearance by close of play on 13 March so that we can start approaching people; I shall be under pressure to announce names by the end of next week.

9. Since the Committee is going to have to work very hard for quite a long period we may find that one or two members are only prepared to accept appointment if we can pay them a fee instead of relying on the payment of expenses. There are some precedents for this and I presume that there would be no objection to our resorting to this expedient if we have to in order to secure the services of the right candidate.

10. I am sending a copy of this minute to Keith Joseph and John MacGregor and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

MR

M R

11 March 1986

