

du Cann

Prime Minister

EDWARD DU CANN

1. He came to see me last evening.
2. He has asked to come to see you for a general chat about the presentation of Government policy and our strategy between now and the Election. We both know that there may be other purposes as well.
3. We cannot, I am afraid, say no to him, and we have arranged for him to come to see you at 3.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 31st August.
4. We discussed the Speaker. I think it probably is the case that Edward, who is now aged 58, has genuinely not made up his mind as to what he ought to do with the remainder of his life:-
 - (a) If he wanted a Peerage, you could hardly refuse it. He is Chairman of the 1922 Committee and has been for 10 years and is a former Chairman of our Party.
 - (b) He could continue as Chairman of the 1922 Committee, of the Select Committee on the Treasury and Civil Service and as Chairman of the Liaison Committee, with the prospect of the Chairmanship of Lonhro when Duncan Sandys (now aged 74) retires.
 - (c) He could try for the Speakership.
5. The Speakership would involve a substantial reduction in earned income for Edward. I said that my own personal view was that Jack Weatherill was the front-runner and Edward said that Jack was being backed by our Whips Office (hardly surprisingly).

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5. I repeat my conclusion that Edward has not made up his mind about his own future, but I do not exclude the possibility that he might want, though I do not think that he will obtain, the Speakership.

19.8.82

IAN GOW