

Scotland

PRIME MINISTER

PERSONAL

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

You should be aware, especially in the light of events this week, of a conversation I had with Michael Forsyth when we were in Scotland.

Relations between Michael Forsyth and Malcolm Rifkind have never been good. Malcolm opposed his appointment, they come from opposite wings of the Party and I suspect Malcolm views Michael as a threat to his own position. The result has been that Malcolm continually puts obstacles in Michael's way: for instance, Michael is not allowed to see papers other than those relating to his specific Ministerial responsibilities.

Part of the problem is that Michael is still only a Parliamentary Under-Secretary and lacks authority in the Scottish Office. He also feels that he has no real allies in the Ministerial team. The solution to both these problems would be to promote Michael and bring in a new PUS. Michael's suggestion was for him to replace Lord Sanderson (who has not proved a success) and to bring in Bill Hughes as a new PUS in the Lords. This seems to me a very good idea.

JW

JOHN WHITTINGDALE

23rd March, 1990