

Prime Minister

Ref. A084/1687

MR BUTLER

Agree the promotion of Mr. Hart and Mr. Rayner, and the transfer of Mr. France from MOD to DHSS?

FERB 11.6.

Grade 2 Appointments, Department of Health and Social Security

Appointments are needed, for different reasons, to three Grade 2 (Deputy Secretary) posts in the Department of Health and Social Security.

2. As you will recall, as part of the Secretary of State's plans for the management of the National Health Service (NHS) in the light of the Griffiths report, a candidate from outside the Civil Service is currently being sought for the new post of Second Permanent Secretary to act as Chairman of the NHS Management Board, and the Secretary of State minuted the Prime Minister recently about the creation of a post, proposed at Deputy Secretary level, of Director of Personnel for the NHS. This submission is not concerned with either of these new posts; but in considering recommendations for the three posts with which this submission is concerned we have taken into account the organisation and requirements of the work following Griffiths, and the experience and qualities that will be needed.

3. The first of the three posts is to be in charge of the NHS Management Group, the major component of the NHS Management Board and embracing responsibility for a multi-disciplinary departmental team working under the Chairman of the Board. The post-holder will be de facto, and perhaps formally, Deputy Chairman. The post (with minor modifications) has been held until this month by Dr John Evans, a doctor aged 50 who had taken with great success to administration and who might well have been a candidate in due course for the post of Chief Medical Officer. He is, sadly, extremely ill, and steps are in train for his early retirement on the grounds of ill health. This is a personal tragedy for him, and a great loss to the Service.

4. Mr Graham Hart is recommended for the succession to this post. Mr Hart, aged 44, is one of the outstanding Under Secretaries in the Service. He has had varied experience of the

Health side of the Department, was Private Secretary to the Secretary of State 1972-74 and was on loan to the Cabinet Office and the Central Policy Review Staff 1982-83. If appointed, he would become the youngest Deputy Secretary in the Service. This post, supporting the new Chairman likely to be from outside the Service, calls for the very best we can put forward. I believe that Mr Hart has the right qualities for it.

5. The second post, in charge of Health and Personal Social Services Policy, covers responsibility for the overall policy for social services (other than social security) in the Central Government, local government, private and voluntary sectors. The post ties in closely with the public health responsibilities of the Chief Medical Officer and entails the leadership of many clinical and scientific disciplines in the development of policy.

6. It is currently held by Mr T E Nodder, aged 54 and a Deputy Secretary since 1978. I am sorry to say that Mr Nodder has lost self-confidence and the confidence of the Secretary of State and the other DHSS Ministers. He has, to put it bluntly, run out of steam. He is willing to take early retirement, and I am satisfied that this is the right course in the circumstances. To replace him I recommend Mr Christopher France, aged 50, a Deputy Secretary from the Treasury but currently on loan to the Ministry of Defence. Mr France was Principal Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer 1973-76, and was the Treasury's Principal Establishment Officer 1977-80 before a short secondment to the Electricity Council. The Prime Minister approved my recommendation last July that Mr France should be moved to a Deputy Secretary post in the Department of Health and Social Security, to gain experience of that Department and be a candidate for the eventual succession to Sir Kenneth Stowe. It was not, however, possible to implement that move at the time because of the Griffiths report and the fresh thinking that then had to be done about the Department's top structure. Mr Nodder's post will be an ideal post for Mr France to gain experience of the Department. Mr France will also be available as a long-stop Civil Service candidate for the new Second Permanent Secretary post if the search for an outside candidate is unsuccessful.

7. The third post, in charge of Health Practitioners and Industries, carries responsibility for health care supplies and the pharmaceutical industries. The holder needs to be a first-class administrative manager, adviser and negotiator, with broad experience of NHS and health issues and of professional machinery. It is at present held by Mr P Benner, who has served on slightly past normal retiring age to help the Department while the Griffiths report's implications were assessed. Mr Brian Rayner, aged 52 and an Under Secretary since 1975, is recommended for this post. He joined the Service as a Clerical Officer in 1948, and has had wide experience of the health side of the Department. From 1978-83 he was in charge of the Department's regional liaison division responsible for implementing Ministerial decisions on Health Service reorganisation. In his current post, dealing with pharmaceutical, optical and dental services, his energy and imagination have shown to advantage and have much impressed the Secretary of State and the Minister for Health.

8. These recommendations all have the approval of the Secretary of State.

9. I should be grateful to know if the Prime Minister would be ready to approve the promotions of Mr Hart and Mr Rayner, and the transfer of Mr France from the Treasury. Announcement would be for the Department of Health and Social Security.



ROBERT ARMSTRONG

8 June 1984



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Grade 2 Appointments,
Department of Health and Social Security

Thank you for your minute of 8 June (A084/1687) which the Prime Minister has considered.

When you sent this minute, you will not have seen the Prime Minister's reaction to the minute of the same date from the Secretary of State for Social Services about the appointment of a Personnel Director of the NHS Management Board. David Barclay's letter of 11 June recorded the Prime Minister's view that the implementation of the Griffiths Report and the creation of any extra posts should be accompanied by savings in the existing DHSS administration: the Prime Minister asked for a report on the Secretary of State's thinking on the implications of Griffiths for the DHSS administrative structure.

The Prime Minister has commented on your minute that she is content to agree to the transfer of Mr Christopher France to DHSS but she is not prepared at present to agree to the other appointments since she would not wish to pre-empt any reductions which the Secretary of State may need to make in the top structure of the DHSS in order to offset the new Griffiths posts.

FERS.

13 June 1984