

CONFIDENTIAL

MR. FLESHER



cc. Mr. Allison

Mr. Enoch Powell's Bill

The Prime Minister discussed with the Lord President, Lord Privy Seal and Chief Whip today the prospects of Mr. Powell's Bill becoming law. She noted that this had received a majority of 238 to 66 on the Second Reading and that it was very popular with many on the Government side. Moreover, if it were passed, there would be less urgency for a DHSS Bill to implement the rest of the Warnock recommendations. The Lord President confirmed that there would not be room for such a DHSS Bill in the coming session. In discussion it was agreed that the Whips could not be of any overt assistance to Mr. Powell's Bill. Its passage would be assisted if Mr. Tim Smith withdrew his Bill which was First Business for 3 May, but the Business Managers should not be seen to have a hand in that. It was also noted that Mr. Powell was considering a special procedure, for which there were precedents, e.g., on the Abortion Bill, which would prevent further amendments at report stage. It was agreed that Mr. Allison should keep closely in touch with Mr. Powell about the prospects for getting his Bill on to the Statute Book.

F.R.B.

22 April, 1985.