

PRIME MINISTER

ROY GRIFFITHS

If Roy Griffiths' appointment is to work:

(i) he must be ready to accept the constraints of his position. As a Minister of the Crown, he will have power and influence within the department. But a Parliamentary Secretary in the DHSS is not a great star in the constellation, and he will not be all powerful. He cannot proceed to run the NHS as he now runs Sainsburys. There will be lots of boring constraints - Parliament, the Treasury, public expenditure, Civil Service rules, etc. He must not accept the job under any misapprehension of his role; otherwise we risk another resignation.

(ii) relations with Ministerial colleagues in the DHSS must be satisfactorily defined from the outset. What precisely is Griffiths' role to be? How are his responsibilities to relate to those of Mr. Hayhoe, Mr. Whitney and Baroness Trumpington? (What would his future position be in the department if Mr. Hayhoe was replaced in September by a young up and coming Minister of State?) In this connection, Ken Stowe tells me that the Department can justify another Minister, such is the volume of PQs, MPs cases, visiting delegations, reviews, etc. But a new Minister would need to be ready to help with this routine work. Would Griffiths be willing to help here? (He would not have this routine work and would be more free to manage if he was content to take on Victor Paige's old job.)

None of this is to argue against Griffiths' appointment. Simply to emphasise that if it is to work, there ought to be no misunderstandings on the two points above.

N.L.W.

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*How well your
back benches react to the
appointment?*