

SECRET

8

PRIME MINISTER

Thanks so  
very much ✓  
ml

SIR ROY GRIFFITHS

I duly saw Sir Roy Griffiths this afternoon (in the Cabinet Room, which seemed to go down rather well!) and he accepted the package set out in the draft Press Notice attached.

After I had explained that I was seeing him on your and Mr. Fowler's behalf because you were both out of London all day, Sir Roy said that the reason he was pressing his case was that he needed great authority if his job was not to be lost in the department. He had great respect for Tony Newton but as a Minister he could not be directly involved in the management. You were aware of his views on Mr. Peach's limitations.

This gave me the cue for referring to his question at yesterday's meeting about the possibility of his becoming Deputy Chairman of the NHS Management Board (NHSMB). I then handed him the piece of paper attached. I drew particular attention to the words "with the approval of the Prime Minister" in the first line and to what was said about his appointment in paragraph 2. I explained that the text did not refer to "Special Adviser". That was a term of art which encompassed some quite junior officials. He immediately queried the reference to his being an Adviser on NHS management; could he not become "Adviser on the NHS". I said that I assumed that the phrase "NHS Management" had been used because he clearly could not advise on certain aspects of the NHS, such as clinical matters, which fell to Sir Donald Acheson the Chief Medical Officer. I did not think that the qualification "Management" was intended to be restrictive. My understanding was that his task would include all the areas which were covered in his report. (Kenneth Stowe later told me that this was exactly right.)

Sir Roy then said that he was not going to cavil with the words if you wanted him to do the job. I emphasised that you

SECRET

SECRET

had personally approved this text from Milton Keynes. He then accepted it.

He asked me to convey to you that he was taking on the task because of his great personal admiration and commitment to you and all that you stood for.

At the end of the meeting I said that if he wanted ever to talk to you, he should be in touch with me. He hoped on his part that you would not be backward in summoning him if you had problems that he could help with.

The next step is for Mr. Fowler to speak to Sir Roy Griffiths over the weekend prior to, I hope, an announcement early next week. The purpose of the conversation will be, I think, to mend fences and re-establish trust after the bruising meeting yesterday.

Finally, you are seeing Sir John Sainsbury at the Sourcing in Britain dinner on Monday. Sir Roy would be glad if you could thank Sir John for the use of his services. Sir Roy said that he had somewhat "under-played" in his conversation with Sir John the amount of time that he would devote to his NHS task, so he hoped that you would bear that in mind.

N.C.W.

(NIGEL WICKS)

26 September 1986

VC4AKC

SECRET

DRAFT PRESS NOTICE

NHS MANAGEMENT BOARD APPOINTMENTS

With the approval of the Prime Minister the following appointments have been made in the Department of Health and Social Security:

1. Mr. Anthony Newton, MP, Minister for Health, to be Chairman of the NHS Management Board.
  
2. Sir Roy Griffiths, Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of Sainsburys plc, to be Deputy Chairman of the NHS Management Board and the Government's Adviser on NHS Management, with direct access to the Prime Minister. Sir Roy Griffiths' appointment will be part-time and unpaid.
  
3. Mr. Len Peach, currently Personnel Director on the NHS Management Board, to be Chief Executive Officer of the Board and Accounting Officer in the rank of Second Permanent Secretary. Mr. Peach is already on secondment to the Civil Service from IBM.

JC 4A100

10



## 10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

26 September 1986

I duly saw Sir Roy Griffiths this afternoon and he accepted the package set out in the draft Press Notice, copy attached, which the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State had agreed.

The discussion went like this. After I had explained that I was seeing him on the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State's behalf because they were both out of London all day, Sir Roy said that the reason he was pressing his case was that he needed great authority if he was to make a success of his task. This gave me the cue for referring to his question at yesterday's meeting about the possibility of his becoming Deputy Chairman of the NHS Management Board (NHSMB). I then handed him the draft Press Notice. I drew particular attention to the words "with the approval of the Prime Minister" in the first line and to what was said about his appointment in paragraph 2. I explained that the text did not refer to "Special Adviser". That was a term of art which encompassed some quite junior officials. He immediately queried the reference to his being an Adviser on NHS Management; why could he not become "Adviser on the NHS"? I said that I assumed that the phrase "NHS Management" had been used because he clearly could not advise on certain aspects of the NHS, such as clinical matters, which fell to Sir Donald Acheson, the Chief Medical Officer. I did not think that the qualification "Management" was intended to be restrictive. My understanding was that his task would include all the areas which were covered in his report.

Sir Roy then said that he was not going to cavil with the words if the Prime Minister wanted him to do the job. I emphasised that she had personally approved the text from Milton Keynes. He then accepted it.

I told Sir Roy that Mr. Fowler would be in touch with him over the weekend to discuss, eg, the timing of the announcement and so on.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Sir Robert Armstrong.

N.L. WICKS

Sir Kenneth Stowe, GCB, CVO.