

Ref: A04112



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PERSONAL AND APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

Annex

Contact with Lord Plowden

Should speak to

Edward Boyle as suggested

below?

28/1

PRIME MINISTER

When I saw Lord Plowden on 27th January, we also discussed the question of his appointment to succeed Lord Boyle as Chairman of the Top Salaries Review Body.

2. I said that so far as I knew Lord Boyle had not yet submitted his resignation. My understanding of the basis on which it was left at your meeting on 15th January was that Lord Boyle would retire at an early date, and that Lord Plowden would be appointed to succeed him as Chairman of the TSRB. The appointment would not be for a specified period, but my own conclusion from the discussion was that the expectation was that he should serve for at least another 15 months - in other words, at least long enough to complete the 1982 review. Lord Plowden said that he would be content to go ahead on that basis. He would like to leave the length of his appointment open, because of the uncertainty of his and Lady Plowden's plans, but he would regard himself as under a definite obligation to serve for fifteen months and under some degree of commitment to serve for two years - in other words, long enough to complete both the 1982 and the 1983 reviews.

3. We discussed the timing of the change. Lord Plowden said that he was going to see Lord Boyle in Leeds tomorrow. He thought that Lord Boyle was ready to resign the chairmanship, and certainly would not be able to come up to London for meetings, though he retained a great interest in the work. I said that I had no authority to say this, but I thought that, if it would help, he could safely suggest to Lord Boyle that Lord Boyle should resign as Chairman but remain a member of the Review Body. Lord Plowden thought that this was a good idea; it would make it easier for Lord Boyle, who would like to retain his interest in the affairs of the Review Body, and he himself would be glad to be able to continue to consult Lord Boyle. Unless he heard from me, he would suggest accordingly to Lord Boyle, when he saw him.

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PERSONAL AND
APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

4. Lord Plowden said that the terms of office of several members of the Review Body were due to expire after the forthcoming review, and the Government would need to make a number of new appointments. He had been impressed by an observation by Lord Boyle that it took a considerable time to get the measure of the Review Body's work and he thought that, when you came to make new appointments, you would need to be thinking about including a possible successor to him as Chairman, so that he had time to become familiar with the work before taking over. He did not think that any of the existing members would do. Other things being equal, he thought that it would be useful to have as Chairman someone who, like himself, while not currently in the public service, had some experience of it. The volume of work meant that it was unlikely that somebody with a full-time job in industry could take it on and do it justice; it would probably be necessary to think in terms of someone who was at least semi-retired. We left it that we would both give some thought to possible names which we might put in your mind in due course.

5. On the chairmanship, I wait to hear the outcome of Lord Plowden's conversation with Lord Boyle. If that has gone according to plan, it will then be possible to submit to you draft letters to send to Lord Boyle and Lord Plowden. I will arrange all that with Sir Ian Bancroft, to whom I am sending a copy of this minute.

Robert Armstrong

28th January 1981