

SECRET

Ref. A086/3078

MR WICKS

Public Expenditure

Prime Minister 15
to note the possible
course at X.
N.L.W. *mt*
29.10.

If it proves impossible to settle the figures for Scotland without some formal discussion, and it is desired not to convene a full Cabinet, one possible course would be to call a meeting of E(A) on Tuesday 4 or Wednesday 5 November (a meeting of E(A) has already been arranged for 4 November at 11.00 am, which could be used for the purpose). A majority of the Cabinet attend meetings of E(A).

X
2. Another possible course would be to call a meeting of E(S). That is smaller, but grander (its members are the Prime Minister, the Lord President, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Energy, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary of State for Employment and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry). It would be necessary to invite the Secretaries of State for Scotland and for Wales and the Chief Secretary, Treasury, to attend. A meeting of this Committee would be less likely to attract public attention (because it is smaller) than one of E(A); but, if it could reach an agreed (or nearly agreed) conclusion, it would no doubt carry the Cabinet.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

29 October 1986

SECRET

PAYABD