

Indeed, he negotiated the Economic Co-operation Agreement with Saudi Arabia which set up the Joint Commission with that country. The negotiations were concluded dramatically and swiftly when he was heading a large British delegation in the Saudi capital and the Saudi King was assassinated. Some months later the Agreement was formally signed at a ceremony in the Speaker's House at the House of Commons in the presence of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd and Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

During these three years there was much emphasis in helping British business take advantage of the new found oil wealth of the Middle Eastern countries following the massive rise in oil prices in 1973.

In 1977 Sir John was seconded to the National Enterprise Board as Secretary initially and later, following the mass resignation of the entire Board membership, as Acting Chief Executive and Member of the Board. In 1980 he was promoted to Deputy Secretary and returned to the Department of Trade to be Chief Executive of the British Overseas Trade Board for two years with responsibilities for the promotion of British exports and bilateral trade relations world-wide.

In the 1983 New Year Honours List he was awarded the CB (Companion of the Order of the Bath).

In 1983 he became Deputy Head of the Central Policy Review Staff at the Cabinet Office - the so-called 'Think Tank'. This proved to be an unexpectedly short appointment as the Think Tank was disbanded by Margaret Thatcher in the summer of that year. He returned to the Department of Trade and Industry as a Deputy Secretary. During the four years which followed, he had once again an enormous variety of subject responsibilities. This included industrial policy, competition policy, company law and Companies House, company investigation (including the Guinness investigation), the Insolvency Service (including the 1986 Insolvency Act - the first

major legislation on insolvency and bankruptcy for a hundred years), insurance regulation and financial services.

This was a major time of change for financial services. When he took on responsibilities in this area, Professor Jim Gower's seminal report on investor protection had just been delivered to the Government. He therefore found himself responsible for advising Ministers on the Government's response. First there was the White Paper to be drafted and then the policies outlined in that document had to be translated into legislation which became the Financial Services Act of 1986.

In the Spring of 1987 yet new areas of work beckoned when Sir John was promoted to Permanent Secretary rank and put in charge of Britain's £1.5 billion overseas aid programme at the Overseas Development Administration in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It was during his time at the ODA that he met Joe Bossano. One of Joe's early overseas engagements following his election as Chief Minister was to attend the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Conference in Cyprus as part of the British delegation. The same delegation, including the Chief Minister and Sir John, went on to Berlin for the Annual Meeting of the IMF and World Bank. As Permanent Secretary of the ODA, Sir John was the United Kingdom's Alternate Governor of the World Bank (substituting for the Governor of the Bank of England).

To cap a career of astonishing variety, Sir John's final

**(Continued opposite)**