

PRIME MINISTER

Govt Mach

Quangos

You said that you would personally inform Cabinet colleagues of Sir Leo Pliatzky's assignment: You need to do this at this week's Cabinet, to provide him with the authority to get moving. It would be best to raise this as "other business" after completion of the formal agenda.

You may want to refer to the meagre response to your initial inquiries (in May) about Quangos. You could add that one or two (i.e. Mr. Heseltine's) substantive responses have now come forward, but that you want to speed up the process of considering severe curtailment of numbers, staff and overall costs of Quangos. You have therefore asked Sir Leo Pliatzky to stay on in the public service for a short period to handle this. He will be contacting Departments to obtain full information about Quangos. You will not want this to cause duplication of work already done e.g. in researching Answers to Parliamentary Questions from Mr. Philip Holland last session. But Sir Leo will need to gather existing information to ensure a comprehensive point of reference.

You accepted Sir Leo's request that you should emphasise the central objective of reduction in the number of Quangos, their staffs, and their total costs, and you agreed to mention the two subsidiary objectives of proper fact finding, and examination of future arrangements for accountability of Quangos, which might have to differ between types of body.

You will want to emphasise that Sir Leo has your personal authority to pursue this in a quick, thorough, and vigorous way. You may want to ask that Cabinet Ministers and their Junior colleagues make themselves available to Sir Leo for discussion where he finds this necessary.

