



DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY
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Secretary of State for Industry

16 October 1981

William Rickett Esq
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Papers please. attached

WR 19/10

Dear Willie

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY YEAR 1982: MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for your letter of 13 October and for letting me know that the Prime Minister has agreed to record a personal message on video tape for IT Year. I have asked Mr John Symes of our Information Technology Division to get in touch with No 10 direct about the detailed arrangements.

2 As requested in your letter, I attach the redraft of the first paragraph of the message suggested by my Secretary of State. I hope that this is suitable.

3 When we spoke on the phone on 13 October, you mentioned Mr Baker's request (his minute of 25 August) that the Prime Minister should be interviewed for the BBC series on computer literacy. I can confirm that that request still stands but I should be grateful if you would take no action on it at present. Since Mr Baker minuted the Prime Minister, the BBC have suggested some changes in the use to which the interview would be put. Mr Baker will be meeting representatives of the BBC next week and he hopes to clarify then whether the proposed interview would be given sufficient coverage to justify the call on the Prime Minister's time.

Yours ever

Richard.

RICHARD RILEY
Private Secretary

I'd like to talk to you for a few moments about information technology. Information technology is the application of microelectronics to the handling of information. It is not something that will just happen during Information Technology Year; it's here already. We all use information technology daily; in our homes through the telephone and the television, in our offices through computers and word processors and in our factories through robots and computer-aided design and it is also in our hospitals and schools.

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PRIME MINISTER

Video-tape Message to Launch Information
Technology Year

① This was to have been done on Tuesday but because of the Censure Debate I have moved it to Friday 30. It has to be taped before Monday 2 so we do not have a great choice of dates. I am afraid this makes Friday 30 October look pretty bad as far as media commitments are concerned as you already have Barry Askew, editor of the News of the World, and Keith Gore of Worcester College for the Northern Ireland interview.

② As the above will be filmed I hope you will be happy to do your own make-up and to have had your hair down the previous day?

ES.

MS.

Yes
MS

21 October 1981

PRIME MINISTER

Information Technology Year 1982

You agreed to videotape a personal message for the launch of IT Year. Since the launch is on 2 November, we will arrange for the recording to take place next week. I hope that if the recording team can set up their equipment in one of the State Rooms the recording itself need not take up more than ten minutes of your time.

You commented that you were not happy with the *first paragraph of the* Department of Industry draft message. You felt this did not give a simple enough definition of information technology. I attach at 'A' a redraft of the first paragraph which I suggest you might use. Is this on the right lines?

Are you content with the rest of the draft at 'B'?

WNSL

ms

20 October 1981

I would like to talk to you for a few moments about information technology. Information technology is the application of micro-electronics to the handling of information. It is not something that will just happen during Information Technology Year; it is here already.

This message I am recording proves that. The videotape on which I am being recorded, and the television on which you are seeing and hearing me are both examples of information technology. They are helping me get my message, my "information", across to you. And whenever you pick up the telephone, it is information technology that helps you get your message across.

Information technology is in our offices in the form of computers and word processors, and in our factories through robots and computer aided design. I want to see people introduce it wherever it can be of real help.



PRIME MINISTER'S VIDEO BROADCAST ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

I'd like to talk to you for a few moments about information technology. Information technology is not something that will just happen during Information Technology Year; it's here already. It covers all manner of activities from satellites to computer games, it's in our homes through the telephone and the television, in our offices through computers and word processors and in our factories through robots and computer-aided design and it is also in our hospitals and schools.

In the last few years, rapid changes in microelectronics have made the creation, the passing and the recording of information the fastest growing economic activity in the world. It is this all-reaching nature of IT which makes it so important for our future economic prosperity.

The development of IT products and services is a vital step for Britain because we have a wealth of experience in communicating through the arts and through broadcasting and through the universality of the English language.

This is a great opportunity and we mustn't miss out on it. That's why the government, ^{in partnership with industry, is supporting} ~~has launched~~ a major programme, IT Year 1982, to make us all aware of the importance of IT. Did



you know that only half of the companies in Britain use microelectronics at all? It is only by using these new technologies that we can remain competitive. The way forward is to create more opportunities and that is why we decided to end the telecommunications monopoly in Britain. This is an industry which must be driven forward by competition and not dominated by monopoly. At the same time, we have increased the investment in the telephone network of Britain because we want to ensure that we have the best communications system in the world. If we don't, then businesses will migrate from our country.

In 1982, Kenneth Baker, the Minister for Information Technology will co-ordinate this programme. Many new initiatives will be taken. We've announced the offices of the future in Whitehall, the Micros in Schools Scheme which I launched in April has been an outstanding success and it will be extended in 1982 to all Secondary Schools. For the young and unqualified unemployed, we are setting up a national network of IT centres.

IT Year '82 will give us an opportunity to celebrate our achievements but more important, it will point the way to the great opportunities that lie ahead for British industry.



DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY
ASHDOWN HOUSE
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FROM THE
MINISTER OF STATE
FOR INDUSTRY AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

TELEPHONE DIRECT LINE 01-212
SWITCHBOARD 01-212 7676

P.M.

mb

You will be interested to see the
leaflet were already got out on
the IT. centres. We are preparing
a fuller version. The team is
in place and the work has started.

K.S.

Adapting to new technology- Information Technology Centres

A Department of Industry and
Manpower Services Commission
initiative



Manpower
Services Commission



ADAPTING TO NEW TECHNOLOGY

It is essential that young people are given training and practical experience in the use of the new technologies which will form the basis of so many future jobs.

Information Technology Centres are a joint Manpower Services Commission and Department of Industry initiative to provide young unemployed people with an introduction to microelectronics and computers and involve them in the development and production of saleable products. Some of the products developed in the Centres may be attractive enough to industry to be taken up and produced on a commercial basis by new or existing enterprises.

WHAT ARE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRES?

Information Technology Centres aim to provide young people with training and work experience in the development and production of new technology items and an introduction to basic computer

skills. Trainees will learn basic computer programming, develop keyboard skills, have access to microprocessors and enter the world of electronics through "hands on" experience. They will start with the building of simple electronic products and gradually progress to more sophisticated items. Supervision and training will be provided by experienced adults within an industrial type training environment. Centres will also attempt to offer young people experience in a range of other saleable skills, for example clerical, purchasing etc., which will develop their potential and improve their prospects of finding permanent employment. Centres will normally provide about thirty training places and have six adult staff, but larger units can be considered.

WHO SETS UP AND RUNS THE CENTRES?

Centres may be set up and run by any responsible organisation or individual but they are particularly appropriate to private employers with an interest in new technology.

Other groups might include Local Authorities and voluntary organisations.

Such groups will be responsible for administering the scheme and directly employing the adult staff. Additional staff may be seconded from local industry. Those running the Centres will assume the normal responsibilities of employers towards the adult staff and will be accountable to DI/MSD for the running of the scheme and for its financial probity.

TRAINEES

The trainees will be young people registered as unemployed who will be recruited through the Careers Service, local Jobcentre or Employment Office. Training will normally last between six and twelve months and will include an induction programme; life and social skills training in such areas as applying for jobs, interviews and safety at work; day release opportunities for further education, and personal advice and

support. Trainees will be encouraged at all times to seek permanent employment. While in the Centres they will be paid the Manpower Services Commission trainee allowance.

WHO PAYS FOR THE CENTRES?

Up to twenty Centres will be funded jointly by the Department of Industry and the Manpower Services Commission. Local companies will be invited to support each Centre with staff, funds, equipment and advice.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information please contact your local office of the Special Programmes Division of the Manpower Services Commission whose address and telephone number can be found in your local telephone directory. Alternatively written enquiries may be directed to:—

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July 1981

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