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Secretary of State for Industry

10 February 1982

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

Dear Willie

Thank you for your letter of 24 December to Jonathan Hudson.

2 My Secretary of State strongly supports the Prime Minister's suggestion of a lunch to discuss what more the higher education sector could do to help with the introduction of new technology into industry. He agrees that closer links are needed in this area and is to have a discussion with the Secretary of State for Education and Science shortly to see what more can be done. My Secretary of State is not free to attend a lunch on April 2, and he would therefore like to suggest that Mr Kenneth Baker be invited.

3 The following list of candidates for invitation has been prepared in consultation with the Department of Education and Science and the CPRS. The list is intended to achieve a regional balance as well as one between the new and the old universities and a mixture of relevant academic disciplines. There are also candidates from the SERC, Engineering Council and the CVCP as well as the UGC, which the Prime Minister suggested. There are a number of alternatives for the Prime Minister to consider; these could also serve as reserves if people were unable to come. In these cases my Secretary of State's preferred candidate is placed first, his preference being for those with a working involvement in the new technologies even though they may not be such well known names. This applies for example in the case of Professor Roger Needham, who has recently taken the chair of computer systems at Cambridge and made a good contribution to a recent Department of Industry mission to Japan.

4 The names are as follows:

Two University Representatives:

- (a) Mr Waldegrave has suggested that Professor Crawford, the Vice Chancellor of Aston, would be an alternative and possibly stronger candidate than Professor John Ashworth, Vice Chancellor of Salford University, the Prime Minister's suggestion.



- (b) Professor Roger Needham, Professor of Computer Sciences at Cambridge (and an expert on computers and communications). An alternative would be Sir Rex Richards, former Vice Chancellor of Oxford.

One Polytechnic Representative:

Rev Canon George Tolley, Principal of Sheffield City Polytechnic. An alternative would be Dr Ray Rickett, Chairman of the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics and Director of Middlesex Polytechnic.

One SERC representative:

Professor John Kingman, Chairman of the Science and Engineering Research Council.

One UGC/CVCP representative:

Professor Gordon Higginson, member of the University Grants Committee and Chairman of its Technology sub-Committee and Professor of Engineering Sciences at Durham. An alternative would be Professor Albert Sloman, Chairman of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals and former Professor of Spanish at Liverpool. With the restriction on numbers at the lunch it would be difficult to have representatives of both the UGC and CVCP. My Secretary of State would regard the UGC as being more relevant because of their control over university finance and the balance of places for arts and science. The CVCP are however interested in University industry links and recently published a booklet on the subject and held a seminar at which my Secretary of State spoke. We and the DES consider that Professor Higginson would be the better of the two nominations.

One Engineering Council representative.

Sir Kenneth Corfield, Chairman of Engineering Council. Sir Kenneth can also reflect the view of industry as Chairman and Managing Director of STC.

Two Industry Representatives:

- (a) Sir Ernest Harrison, Chairman and Managing Director of Racal.
- (b) Professor William Gosling, Technical Director of Plessey Electronic Systems and former Professor of Electronics at the University of Bath. An alternative would be Mr Denis Allport, Chairman and Chief Executive of Metal Box, who is also a member of the British Technology Group.



5 I understand that Dr Robin Nicholson has also been invited to attend the lunch. If Mr Baker is invited, this will make up the ten names which you are seeking.

6 My Secretary of State thinks that it will be helpful for the Prime Minister to have a list of specific topics to be discussed at the lunch. If you agree, I will let you have this and any further briefing material which the Prime Minister would find helpful in good time before the lunch.

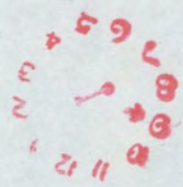
7 I am sending a copy of this letter to Nick Cornwell (DES) and Dr Nicholson (CPRS).

Yours ever

Andrew Coop

ANDREW COOP
Private Secretary

[Faint red markings]



12 FEB 1982





cc: DES
CPRS
Mrs. Goodchild

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 December 1981

~~FF 12-2-82~~

In my letter of 21 December recording the Prime Minister's discussion with Sir Ernest Harrison, I said that I would come back to you about the suggestion that the Prime Minister should hold a lunch to discuss what more the higher education sector could do to help with the introduction of new technology into industry. I have now consulted the Prime Minister.

She would like to hold a lunch here on Friday 2 April, followed by thirty minutes of discussion in one of the State Rooms. The lunch would start at about 1300, and the discussion would end at about 1515. The Prime Minister would like to keep the party to twelve in total. Given that the Prime Minister and a Private Secretary will be present, this means that there will be room for ten guests. The Prime Minister feels that these should include representatives of the universities, polytechnics, the University Grants Committee, and industry. She has also suggested that Professor John Ashworth of Salford University should be invited.

I should be grateful if you could suggest some candidates for invitation, in consultation with Nick Cornwell (Department of Education and Science) and Dr. Nicholson (CPRS), to whom I am copying this letter. It would be useful to have your advice by 12 February.

W. F. S. RICKETT

Jonathan Hudson, Esq.,
Minister of State's Office,
Department of Industry.

A.

PRIME MINISTER

At the meeting with Sir Ernest Harrison yesterday afternoon, you said you would like to hold a lunch or dinner to discuss what more the higher education sector could do to help with the introduction of new technology into industry, either by providing more scientists and engineers, or by extending collaboration with industry. You mentioned inviting representatives of universities, polytechnics, industry, and the UGC.

If you wish to pursue this, I suggest:-

- (a) We make it a lunch in the Small Dining Room, followed by a discussion of 30 minutes in one of the State Rooms.
- (b) That you invite about one dozen people in total. I could ask the DES and DOI to produce a guest list, in consultation with Dr. Nicholson, Dr. Ashworth's replacement in the CPRS. It might also be a good idea to invite John Ashworth himself.

Content to proceed on this basis? If so, the first convenient slot in your diary is Friday, 2 April.

CJR

Yes not

PM
PS
DES
DOI

UGC
Univ
PRG
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22 December 1981