

F Westlands
file

Noted

Prime Minister

I should like a word
first they know about
this.

N.C.W.

15.7

Ref. A086/2076

MR INGHAM

c Mr Wicks ✓

Mr John Mogg, the Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, has been selected for promotion to Grade 3 (Under Secretary) to take the place of Mr N P Brecknell as the Under Secretary in charge of the European Commercial and Industrial Policy Division of the Department of Trade and Industry. The vacancy has arisen unexpectedly, following Mr Brecknell's untimely death (by his own hand).

2. Mr Mogg was of course Principal Private Secretary to Mr Leon Brittan at the time of the Westland affair and the Solicitor General's letter. We do not know whether Mr Mogg is one of those who will be criticised in the forthcoming report of the Select Committee on Defence, but he was not singled out for special notice or criticism in the course of the hearings at which I gave evidence and was not mentioned in the recent press stories.

3. This is a "plum" appointment, and will be seen as a mark of confidence in Mr Mogg.

4. An announcement is likely to be made later this week, and thus before the Select Committee reports. I think that in the circumstances that is the right timing, and have told the Department of Trade and Industry accordingly.

5. If you were to be asked about it, you could say that the appointment was entirely a matter for the Department of Trade and Industry, and was not one for which the Prime Minister's approval was required. The vacancy has arisen unexpectedly, and there is therefore no significance in the timing. A vacancy having arisen, the Department of Trade and Industry is entirely satisfied that Mr Mogg is the most suitable person to promote in to it.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

15 July 1986

SENIOR STAFF IN CONFIDENCE