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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 June 1985

Dear Sir Robin,

Thank you for your note 'Options for the Future of UKAEA', which I have discussed with my colleagues.

I understand your arguments for giving the AEA unfettered manufacturing powers in the non-nuclear sector, subject to a limit on non-nuclear assets to 25 per cent of the total. However, I do not think that a limit would make it possible to reconcile your approach with the Government's policy on the role of public sector bodies and private sector companies, who would see themselves as facing unfair competition.

I recognise that you would not wish to accept the chairmanship of AEA on the basis of the first option set out in your note. I fear also that we cannot offer it on the basis of the second option. I am disappointed at this outcome, but it is obviously better to have clarified the position now rather than to have appointed someone of your qualities on the basis of a misunderstanding as to the nature of the task.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Sir Robin Nicholson



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

I have redrafted the third paragraph to make it slightly warmer and to make it clear that Sir Robin is at heart, reluctant. I have discussed this with him and he would be happy to receive a letter of this kind.

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APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

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~~GR~~ ~~Richard~~ ~~Hartford (Co)~~
Any comments?

AT
11/6

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY
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Andrew Turnbull Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

11 June 1985

New Andrew,

CHAIRMANSHIP OF UKAEA

Thank you for your letter of 5 June recording the outcome of the Ministerial discussion on this subject. As requested I attach a short draft letter for the Prime Minister to send to Sir Robin Nicholson.

Yours ever,

Geoff

G S DART
Private Secretary

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE



Sir Robin Nicholson
Chief Scientific Adviser

SRWACTH

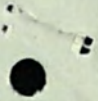
CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE UKAEA

Thank you for your note 'Options for the Future of UKAEA', which I have discussed with my colleagues.

I understand your arguments for giving the AEA unfettered manufacturing powers in the non-nuclear sector, subject to a limit on non-nuclear assets to 25% of the total. However, I do not think that a limit would make it possible to reconcile your approach with the Government's policy on the role of public sector bodies and private sector companies, who would see themselves as facing unfair competition.

I fear therefore that we cannot offer you the chairmanship of the AEA on the basis of the second option set out in your note, and that you would not wish to have it on the basis of the first. This is a disappointing outcome, but it is obviously better to have clarified the position now rather than for the appointment to have been made on the basis of a misunderstanding as to the nature of the job.

ENERGY : UKAEA : Mar 84



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