

E. R.  
MR. RICKETT

I doubt whether Sir Harold would send us the attached article purely for the files. He might get up at Parliamentary Questions and ask the Prime Minister "whether she has read the article in Financial Weekly which has been brought to her attention". Could you please get a speaking note about the Government's plans for the future of the British Technology Group and show it to the Prime Minister with the article (which she need not read in full) as briefing for Parliamentary Questions.

FERB

11 April, 1983





M.  
WM  
13/4

Prime Minister  
To be aware of  
Sir Harold's  
article.

WM  
12/4

## SIR HAROLD WILSON'S ARTICLE ON THE BTG

### BACKGROUND

Financial Weekly of 25 March contained an article by Sir Harold Wilson about the British Technology Group (BTG). Most of the article is historical, and describes his own involvement in the setting up of both the NRDC and NEB. The essence of the article is in the last two paragraphs, which express the hope that both the BTG's constituent parts will be retained and developed.

The Secretary of State for Industry's proposals are currently with the Prime Minister, and would involve a greater emphasis in future on the NRDC role of developing and exploiting technology and inventions, though with a greater degree of entrepreneurial spirit and initiative-seeking than has been shown in the past.

### SPEAKING NOTE

The Rt Hon Member's article was an interesting account of his part in the formation of the NRDC and NEB, though contained little evidence to suggest that his progeny have been terribly successful in their present forms. The Government is currently considering proposals which will provide a fresh impetus in the whole area of innovation and technology transfer, and my Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Industry will be making a statement soon.

12.4.83





10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

11 April, 1983

I escaped to Cornwall for Easter and consequently did not receive your letter of 30 March until my return today. Thank you very much for sending us your article in Financial Weekly. It will not surprise you to learn that it had been noticed already! I have read it with great interest, especially since I have a personal recollection of the latter part of some of the history in it.

F. E. R. BUTLER

The Rt. Hon. Sir Harold Wilson, K.G., O.B.E.,  
F.R.S., M.P.

From Rt.Hon.Sir Harold Wilson KG OBE FRS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

30th March 1983.

Dear Rohini ,

When I met the Prime Minister at the Kaunda reception last week, I mentioned to her that I had written an article for Financial Weekly, on the Government's decision concerning the British Technology Group.

The article contained the history of the N.R.D.C., which I set up in my Board of Trade days and also dealt with the N.E.B. which was set up under the later Labour Government.

You may like to have this for the files.

Yours,  
Harold

Mr. Robin Butler,  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister.