



A

PRIME MINISTER

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE BRITISH TECHNOLOGY GROUP

In his minute to you of 16/September Cecil Parkinson said he was interviewing potential candidates for the Chairmanship of the British Technology Group (BTG) and hoped to recommend a name to you quickly. This is now very urgent since Sir Freddie Wood's health is clearly deteriorating and we have already had to ask him to hang on until the end of this month to give us more time to find a successor.

2 I have therefore given this a good deal of priority and have interviewed three potential candidates. One, Mr Colin Corness, the Chairman and Chief Executive of Redland, who impressed both Cecil and me, is unwilling to accept the appointment on the terms on which it is offered. I mention this since it perhaps illustrates that this may not be an easy appointment to fill.

3 Of the other candidates, I recommend Mr Leslie Pincott whom I knew in his capacity as Vice Chairman of Remploy (CV attached). He is a chartered accountant who had a distinguished career with Esso, rising to Managing Director of Esso Petroleum Co Ltd. He was non-executive Chairman of Stone-Platt Industries, a position in which he was well regarded despite the demise of the company. He has also held other relevant directorships including investment companies.



4 Of the other candidates, I was also taken by Mr Colin Barker who is presently Managing Director, Finance, of BSC, to which he was recruited by Mr MacGregor (CV attached). He is now looking for an appointment which would allow him to get back to running an operation as he did at ITT and STC. Although he is an impressive man, I judge his particular qualities are not quite those we are looking for for the BTG.

5 I am satisfied that Mr Pincott has the right sort of experience to run the BTG and understands the way that we want it to be changed to fulfil the new role we recently announced. In particular, I am clear that he understands, and is prepared to carry through without any inflation of the task, the need to liquidate the portfolio acquired from the NEB and to concentrate on the important redefined role for the BTG of technology transfer. I believe he will do this. I hope you will agree to my announcing his appointment by the end of the week so that Sir Freddie Wood's successor will be known before his retirement.

6 Mr Pincott has not yet been cleared at official level with the MPO, but steps are in hand to complete this process.

7 I am sending copies of this minute to the Chancellor of the



Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Science and
to Sir Robert Armstrong and Dr Nicholson.

NT

N T

24 October 1983

Department of Trade and Industry

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS: INTERNAL NOMINATION FORM/RECORD SHEET (PAN1)

Sponsoring Official Name	Dept.	FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY		Source Dept:
		1.	2.	Dept. file no:
		3.		

SECTION A: NOMINATION Note to sponsors: Please complete as much of this section as your knowledge of the person allows. If your information is limited, however, please suggest any likely contacts who might be able to provide supplementary details:

SURNAME PINCOTT		FORENAMES LESLIE RUNDELL		TITLE MR
DATE OF BIRTH 27.3.23	MARRIED YES/NO	CHILDREN YES/NO	EDUCATIONAL/PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS/DECORATIONS FCA FInst MSM CBE	
HOME ADDRESS 6 Lambourne Avenue Wimbledon SW19 7DW			OFFICIAL OR BUSINESS ADDRESS 10 Grafton Street London W1X 3LA	
TELEPHONE NUMBER			TELEPHONE NUMBER 01-493 7000	

PRESENT OCCUPATION 1975 Remploy Director 1979 Remploy Vice Chairman	EXPECTED AVAILABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/> If part time, days per month available
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PREVIOUS MAIN JOBS* <i>Who's Who 1983</i> PINCOTT, Leslie Rundell, CBE 1978: Vice-Chairman, Remploy Ltd, since 1979 (Director, since 1975) (27 March 1923); s of Hubert George Pincott and Gertrude Elizabeth Ruffell; m 1944 Mary Mae Tuftin, two s one d. Educ: Mercers' Sch, Hoxton; served War, Royal Navy; 1942-46, Broads Paterson & Co. (Chartered Accountants); 1946-50 joined Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd, 1950-51 Comptroller; 1958-61 Ass. Gen. Manager (Marketing); 1961-65: Dir and Gen. Manager, Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd, 1966-68: Standard Oil Co. (NJ), Exec. Ass. to Pres. and later so Chm.; 1968-70: Man. Dir. Esso Petroleum Co. Ltd; 1971-75: Director, George Wimpey & Co. Ltd; 1978-: Canada Permanent Trust Co. (UK) Ltd; 1978-: Chm. Stone-Platt Industries; 1981-82: Chief Exec. 1981-82: A Dep. Chm.; 1978-79: Chm.; 1979-80, Price Control Committee; Huxford Gp of Chartered Accountants; 1978-79: Oxford Univ. Business Summer Sch; 1975-78: Printing Industries Sector Working Party, NEDCO; 1982-: Pres. District Heating Assoc.; 1977-79: Mem., BR Southern Region Bd; 1977-: Vice-Pres., English Schs Athletics Assoc.; 1977-: Mem. The Pilgrims; 1971-: FCA, MinstMSM; CBIM. Recreation: tennis. Address: 6 Lambourne Avenue, Wimbledon SW19 7DW. Clubs: Royal Automobile, Hurlingham.	KIND OF SERVICE NOMINEE IS SUITABLE FOR <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberative function (eg Tribunal, Committee) <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Action (eg Public Board) <input type="checkbox"/> Appointment of special responsibility (eg Chairman of major body) <input type="checkbox"/> Local Committee only
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OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE* (eg charitable, voluntary or committee work)

1978 to date	George Wimpey PLC	Non-Executive
1978 to date	Canada Permanent Trust Co (Toronto)	Non-Executive Chairman
1978 to 1980	Canada Permanent Trust (UK) Ltd	Non-Executive Chairman
1980 to 1982	Stone-Platt Industries PLC	Non-Executive Chairman
1982 to date	Edman Investments PLC	Non-Executive Director

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

"RISING STAR" CLASSIFICATION

Should the nominee be considered as a "Rising Star"

Yes

No

PEN PICTURE: Please indicate special skills, aptitudes, characteristics, interests and experience of the nominee.

See attached Management Consultants' report prepared for DTI

"At first sight quiet and reserved but he is intelligent, and forceful both in manner and in debate. Businesslike, and not loquacious, he should make an outstanding contribution in committee work provided he is not on unfamiliar ground." (DT 1973)

"He is an extremely competent executive whom I rate very highly indeed, and I think he would bring a lot to any organisation with which he was involved. Although basically he is an accountant by background, he has widened his horizons so much that he can now deal with virtually any type of problem, except for those of a more exotic technological nature. If, therefore, in 1978 the Government should happen to be looking for someone who could help with one of the major nationalised industries, or government influenced industries, I think you could do a lot worse than consider Leslie Pincott." (On advice to PAU 1976)

DTI considers Mr Pincott to be a very high-calibre executive, professional, dedicated, somewhat abrasive, very much the North American style, as might be expected. A little uncertainty about the breadth of his outlook (though Dr Pearce speaks well of this). Mr Pincott is the corporation man par excellence, devoted to Esso's interests but not concerning himself overmuch with what lies beyond. (Mr Philip Ridley CBE, Dep Sec DTI)

Your signature Date

SECTION B: RECORD SHEET

Present and previous Government Appointments

DATE	APPOINTMENT	POSITION	COMMENTS
1975 -	Remploy	Director	
May 1977-	British Railways Advisory Board (Southern Region)	Member	
1978-79	Price Commission	Deputy Chairman	
July '79-80	Price Commission	Chairman	
1979 -	New Price Commission	Chairman	Re-apptd until 30.4.80
1979 -	Remploy Ltd	Vice Chairman	Re-apptd 28.4.82
1982	Printing Industries Sector Working Party	Chairman	
1982	National Economics Development Office	Chairman of WP	

REPORTS/ASSESSMENTS OF PERFORMANCE [MPO will obtain if another Department is concerned]

He had risen through Esso to the top and then retired early. He had just become Chairman of Stone Platt which was going through a very difficult time. It was doubtful, therefore whether he would be prepared to leave. He was nevertheless extremely able and urbane

Mr Pincott did a good job at Stone Platt. No blame attaches to him for its demise.
(on advice from Bank of England, July 1982)

Please return when completed to:-

Ind Pol : BTG

Pt 2

24 JUL 1983

11 15 - 21 15



file No

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

27 October 1983

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE BRITISH
TECHNOLOGY GROUP

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 24 October. She also discussed this with him after today's Cabinet meeting. They agreed that Mr. Colin Barker was a more suitable candidate, particularly for BTG's role in developing technology transfer.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Kerr (H.M. Treasury), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office) and Dr. Nicholson.

ANDREW TURNBULL

Callum McCarthy, Esq.,
Department of Trade and Industry.

FILE 84



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Thank you for your minute of 31 October (A083/3088) about the chairmanship of the British Technology Group. I did report to the Prime Minister your advice on Mr. Leslie Pincott and your suggestion about Mr. Walter Goldsmith. She considered Mr. Walter Goldsmith for this post, but did not think that it was quite the right thing for him.

F. E. R. BUTLER

1 November, 1983

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE



Ref. A083/3088

MR BUTLER

Mr Tebbitt sent me a copy of his minute of 24 October to the Prime Minister about the Chairmanship of the British Technology Group.

2. I should have no objection to this appointment being offered to Mr Leslie Pincott but I did wonder whether this might be an appointment which would suit Mr Walter Goldsmith.

3. I see that it has in fact gone to a third party.

RA
ROBERT ARMSTRONG

31 October 1983

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Chairman of BTG

The Prime Minister spoke last night to Lord Cockfield about Mr. Tebbit's recommendation of Mr. Leslie Pincott for the chairmanship of BTG. The Prime Minister said the Chairman would have two roles - to run down the NEB portfolio and to act as a broker between research institutions and industry in the transfer of technology. While she could see that Mr. Pincott fitted the bill for the first role, he did not appear to be sufficiently vigorous and enterprising for the second.

Lord Cockfield said he knew Mr. Pincott but had not worked with him. Pincott had come into the Price Commission when it was being run down. He shared the Prime Minister's assessment. He regarded Mr. Pincott as a capable and straightforward business administrator of the kind produced from the ESSO stable. But he was certainly not a high flyer.

The Prime Minister doubted whether anyone could fulfil the job specification, which was partly why she doubted whether there should be a BTG. She said she would talk further with Mr. Tebbit.

AT

27 October, 1983

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Norman Tebbit has been briefed on your doubts about Pincolt. You could speak to him

(i) after Cabinet or failing that

(ii) in the House tonight before the vote on the NHS debate.

AT

27/10



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister ①

You seeking to talk to Lord Cockfield tonight about appointing Leslie Pincott to BTG. The papers are attached at Flag A

I have also investigated the degree to which a finance man as chairman supported by scientists.

DTI have produced the note at Flag B.

Lord Cockfield will be at home tonight.

AT

26/10

I don't believe the Pincott can do the Technology part of the job. That needs someone vigorous & younger
me



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

26 October 1983

Chairman of the British Technology Group

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has interviewed a number of candidates for the Chairmanship of BTG, a post which needs to be filled urgently. He has recommended the appointment of Mr. Leslie Pincott. The Prime Minister is still considering this recommendation. She has noted, however, that Mr. Pincott served on the Price Commission. As a result, she feels the Chancellor of the Duchy may well have a view on Mr. Pincott and she wants to have a word with him. I will be in touch about a time.

Meanwhile, the Chancellor of the Duchy may like to see the papers, a copy of which is attached.

ANDREW TURNBULL

Alex Galloway, Esq.,
Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.



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Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
1-19 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON SW1H 0ET

TELEPHONE DIRECT LINE 01-215 5422
SWITCHBOARD 01-215 7877

26 October 1983

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

Andrew Turnbull Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Andrew,

When we spoke on the telephone earlier today, I undertook to send you details of the extent to which the existing Board Members of the BTG have technical or scientific backgrounds. The details are as follows. Of the ten Board Members at present, five have a technical or scientific background. They are:

Brian Willott - PhD in Physics from Cambridge

Jim Cain - PhD in Chemistry. Worked in the pharmaceutical industry before joining the NRDC

Dr Dennis Oliver - Metallurgist by background. Technical Director at Pilkingtons

Professor Leonard Maunder - Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Newcastle.

Sir George Macfarlane - former Controller of Research at MOD. Electronics background from RSRE.

2 It is worth pointing out that both the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive, who are Board Members and are listed above, have technical or scientific backgrounds. In addition, of the three Group Directors in the BTG, two are similarly qualified, one in engineering and the other in chemistry. Under these three Group Directors are the three Technology Transfer Divisions which would form the basis for the principal new role of the BTG. In the Science Division all nine assessment staff have first degrees, and eight are PhDs; in the Engineering Division, all six staff have first degrees; and in the Information Technology Division there are nine staff with first degrees, one of whom is also a PhD.



3 I hope this provides the background information you wanted.

Yours ever

Callum McCarthy

M C McCARTHY
Private Secretary



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister ①

Mr Tebbitz has interviewed candidates for the Chairmanship of BTG and recommends Mr Leslie Pincott. Sir Robert Armstrong has no objection but has suggested Walter Goldsmith might be considered.

One of Mr Tebbitz's reasons for choosing Mr Pincott is that the latter will work to the extent of running down the NEB portfolio and stick to the BTG's new limited role. This hardly seems WG's style.

∴ Agree Mr Pincott?

I see he was on ~~AG~~ the Price Commission. 25/10
will have a word with

Arthur Bodfield. I do NOT
think Pincott's record suits you
for the job. not.



DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
1-19 VICTORIA STREET
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Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

6 October 1983

Sir Frederick Wood
Chairman
British Technology Group
101 Newington Causeway
London SE1 6BU

Dear Freddie,

Brian Hayes has told me that you have with great kindness and understanding agreed to continue as Chairman of BTG until the end of October. I wanted you to know how grateful I am to you for doing so. I was extremely reluctant to make this request of you and would not have done so had there been any alternative. But the statutory position requires us to have a Chairman, and as you know, we have yet to identify your successor. I should, however, like to make it clear that we are not expecting you to carry on assuming the full duties of the Chairmanship during this last month of your tenure, and to thank you again for being so ready to help in a difficult situation. I am very grateful.

Yours truly,
John Gummer