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Prime Minister  
NEDC is usually a pain, But if the  
Govt. is going to be in it the Chancellor  
needs to be supported properly by his  
colleagues. There is already absenteeism  
and DoE are important particularly on the

CONFIDENTIAL

MR NORGROVE

6 September 1985

infrastructure arguments with CBI & TUC, which  
won't go away. Agree to the Chancellor's

NEDC MEMBERSHIP

proposal?

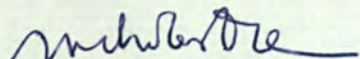
Yes no

DBS  
6/9

The Chancellor proposes to invite Kenneth Baker to fill  
the vacant Ministerial seat on the NEDC.

The Policy Unit urged the Prime Minister to consider  
abolishing the NEDC in 1983. It is not merely a waste of  
time; it is actively damaging in that it provides selected  
industrial interest groups with opportunities to attack the  
Government for spending too little in infrastructure,  
industrial support, R&D, training, or whatever. Press  
coverage invariably gives more space to the attacks than to  
the Government's replies.

Meetings occupy 10 half days a year. Surely Mr Baker has  
more pressing priorities than this? Could I suggest,  
therefore, that, in reply, the Prime Minister questions  
whether it is necessary for Environment to resume this seat,  
in view of the time which these meetings absorb and the  
predominantly industrial content of the agendas. Perhaps  
Kenneth Baker could attend by invitation, when the agenda  
features items of specific concern to the Department of the  
Environment?

  
NICHOLAS OWEN

SRW

10 September 1985

**NEDC MEMBERSHIP**

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 5 September. She is content for the Chancellor to invite Mr. Kenneth Baker to join the Council in order to fill the vacant Ministerial seat.

**(DAVID NORGROVE)**

Philip Wynn Owen, Esq.,  
HM Treasury.



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D R Norgrove Esq  
10 Downing Street  
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5 September 1985

Dear David,

**NEDC MEMBERSHIP**

The Prime Minister will be aware that there are normally six Ministers on the NEDC, to match the six representatives of the CBI and the six representatives of the TUC. However, the integration of the Enterprise Unit within the Department of Employment has reduced the Government team to five: the Chancellor, Mr Brittan (who replaces Mr Tebbit), Sir Keith Joseph, Mr Walker and Lord Young.

The Chancellor would like to invite Mr Kenneth Baker to join the Council in order to fill the vacant Ministerial seat. The Prime Minister will be aware that the Secretary of State for the Environment has always been a member of the Council until Mr Jenkin stepped down last year in order to accommodate Lord Young. Provided the Prime Minister is content, he would like to write to Mr Baker, inviting him to join the Government team on the Council in time for the next NEDC meeting on 25 September.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Philip Wynne Owen'.

P WYNN OWEN