



10 DOWNING STREET

17 October 1984

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Lady Platt.

Thank you very much for your letter of 26 September, and for the list which you enclosed of women who might be candidates for consideration as members of nationalised industry Boards and other Government bodies.

I am very pleased to have these names, and have passed them to the Public Appointments Unit in the Cabinet Office. As I expect you know, the Unit maintains the Government's Central List of people who are suitable and willing to be considered for public appointments. Some of those you mention do of course already hold appointments and are known to the Unit. But others are not, and if you could possibly spare the time it would be most helpful if the Unit's Director, Mr. Colin Peterson, could come and see you about them.

I fully share your view of the importance of giving more women the opportunity to make a contribution to public life through membership of public bodies, and I particularly look forward to seeing Mr. Knowles's list of young women engineers.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Fletcher

The Baroness Platt of Writtle, C.B.E.

Equal Opportunities Commission
Overseas House
Quay Street Manchester M3 3HN

Telephone 061-833 9244



From The Baroness Platt of Writtle,
C.B.E., M.A., C.Eng., M.R.Ae.S.,
Chairman.

BP/MB

31 October 1984

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON

8/3/11

Dear Mrs Thatcher

repon
DMS
5/4

Thank you for your letter of 17 October regarding the names of women who might be candidates for consideration as members of nationalised industry Boards and other Government bodies.

I shall, of course, be delighted to meet Mr. Colin Peterson to discuss the list. The Commission already has a close working relationship with the Public Appointments Unit and I would welcome the opportunity of extending this co-operation.

I understand Mr. Knowles has now sent on to you his list of successful women including young engineers whom you may wish to invite to Downing Street on a suitable occasion.

If we can be of further assistance I do hope you will let me know. We are most grateful for your personal interest and support.

Yours sincerely

Platt Jumble

Baroness Platt of Writtle

SCI + TECH : WISE

Dec '83



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

MR. HATFIELD
CABINET OFFICE

Women and Public Appointments

Thank you for your minute of 15 October to Tim Flesher.

The Prime Minister has signed a slightly amended version of the draft reply to Baroness Platt, and I enclose a copy. She would be content for Sir Robert Armstrong to remind his Permanent Secretary colleagues about the desirability of putting forward women candidates on short-lists, at a suitable opportunity.

DB

17 October 1984

JK

Ref. A084/2725

MR FLESHER



Prime Minister (3)

Draft letter attached.
Content with the
suggestion at X?

Yes not

Women and Public Appointments

Sub
16/10

You asked for a draft reply to Baroness Platt's letter of 26 September to the Prime Minister suggesting the names of women whom she considered suitable for appointment to the Boards of nationalised industries and other major public bodies.

2. As the Prime Minister will know, the Public Appointments Unit (PAU) here in the Cabinet Office maintains the Government's Central List of people who are available for possible appointment. The PAU already has details of several of Lady Platt's suggestions, some of whom hold or have held public appointments (for example Miss Eileen Cole, Dr Marsh and Miss O'Cathain). The PAU, whose Director is Colin Peterson, would welcome more details of the other names suggested by Lady Platt, and he could certainly contact her to pursue this.

X 3. To have the names of more suitably qualified women on the PAU's books is welcome, but is only a modest step towards securing more women in public posts; the need is for Ministers and Departments to be readier than they sometimes are to select women from the candidates on their short-lists. If the Prime Minister were content, that is a point Sir Robert Armstrong could make once again to his Permanent Secretary colleagues when next giving guidance on public appointments questions.

--- 4. I attach a draft reply for the Prime Minister's consideration.

R

R P HATFIELD

15 October 1984

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO :-

The Baroness Platt of Writtle CBE MA CEng M.R.AE.S
Chairman
Equal Opportunities Commission

Thank you ^{very much} for your letter of 26 September with a ^{and for suggesting}
the list ^{which you enclosed} of names ^{who might be suitable candidates} of women ~~whom you consider would be~~
~~suitable~~ for consideration as members of nationalised
industry Boards and other Government bodies.

I am very pleased to have these names, and have
passed them to the Public Appointments Unit in the
Cabinet Office. ^{I expect} As ~~you may~~ know, the Unit maintains
the Government's Central List of people who are
suitable and willing to be considered for public
appointments. Some of those you mention do of
course already hold appointments and are known to the
Unit. ^{others are not, and if you could possibly spare the time} But ~~it would be most helpful if the Unit's~~
Director, Mr Colin Peterson, could come and see you ^{by your}
~~to discuss the names you have given and to learn~~
~~about those who are not yet on the Central List.~~

I hope that you would be ready to talk to ^{Mr} ~~him~~ about
your suggestions and to help us further in this way.
I look forward, too, to Mr Knowles's list of young women
engineers. I fully share your view ~~that it is very~~
^{of the importance}



^{of giving} ~~desirable that~~ more women ^{the ~~the~~ opportunity} ~~should be able to make~~
a contribution to public life through membership
of public bodies; and I particularly look forward
to seeing Mr Knowles's list of young
women engineers.

Margaret Thatcher

CONQUEROR
LONDON

Science & Tech

Dec 83

WIS

CONGREGATION
THE
LONDON

File

086

1 October 1984

I enclose a copy of a letter which the Prime Minister has received from the Baroness Platt of Writtle.

bf || I should be grateful if you would let me have a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach this office by Monday, 15 October.

Timothy Flesher

Richard Hatfield, Esq.,
Cabinet Office.

2/82

Equal Opportunities Commission
Overseas House
Quay Street Manchester M3 3HN

Telephone 061-833 9244

From The Baroness Platt of Writtle,
C.B.E., M.A., C.Eng., M.R.Ae.S.,
Chairman.

BP/EMM

26 September 1984

Private & Confidential

The Rt.Hon.Margaret Thatcher, MP.
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON.

Dear Mrs Thatcher

Since our meeting in July before you honoured us by launching the W.I.S.E Bus I have been considering your request to me to suggest the names of women who would be efficient and financially competent to put on major national bodies such as the Boards of nationalised industries, etc.

I believe it is very important that women should take part in this kind of enterprise, and put forward their point of view, which may be very different from that of the men who normally form the majority of members of Boards of this kind. I also believe that if intelligent women of initiative take part in high-level decisions, they will gather the sort of experience which will enable them in future years perhaps to chair decision-making committees of importance themselves.

In a busy life I meet a number of women for short periods, perhaps on succeeding public occasions. I do not know their politics, and the judgement I make is bound to be based on short acquaintance and the knowledge I have of their public life and the responsibilities they shoulder at work. I hope the list will be helpful, and you will, of course, be able to have their experience researched to see if it fits the particular appointment you have in mind.

Yours sincerely
Platt Writtle

Baroness Platt of Writtle

Enc.

London Office: 1 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HD Telephone: 01-379 6323



**Equal
Opportunities
Commission**

Mrs. Valerie Boakes	Group Commodity Adviser Napier & Brown Limited
Mrs. Jean Heron	Managing Director, Herondrive
Mrs. Julia Cleverdon	The Industrial Society
Mrs. June O'Dell	National President, Business & Professional Women's Clubs Estate Agent
Mrs. Nancy Catchpole	Co-Chairman, Women's National Commission
Miss Audrey Head (home)	Chairman, Unit Trusts Association "West Chantry", 4 Clifford Manor Road, GUILDFORD, Surrey. GU4 8AG
Mrs. Judith Walpole (recently re-married)	Vice-Chairman, Association of County Councils Education Committee Chartered Accountant
Dr. Barbara Marsh	Chairman, Shropshire Education Committee, Chemist
Mrs. Stephanie Shirley	Managing Director F. International Ltd.
Mrs. Penny Hutley	Financial Director F. International Ltd.
Miss Diana Rookledge	Personnel Officer, Marks & Spencer plc. Equal Opportunities Commissioner
Miss Eileen Cole	Head of Market Research, Unilever
Mrs. Emily Blatch	Leader Cambridgeshire County Council

Mrs. Barbara Calvert, QC.

Head of her own Chambers

(home) 158 Ashley Gardens, London. SW1P 1HW

Miss Detta O'Cathain, OBE,BA.

Milk Marketing Board

Mrs. Anne Harris

Chairman

National Federation of Women's Institutes

Mrs. Janet Ramsden

Chairman

National Union of Townswomen's Guilds

Dr. Jean Scott

President

Medical Women's Federation

Mrs. Jean Viall

President

National Council of Women of Great Britain

You met Mr. W. Knowles, our Assistant Chief Executive on the day of the launch of the W.I.S.E. Bus, and he suggested the following women of whom I only know Sara Morrison, but they seem very worthy of your consideration:

Ms Claire Mulholland,
Chief Assistant, TV1,
I.B.A.
70 Brompton Road,
LONDON.
SW3 1EY

Mrs. Jennifer D'Abo
Ryman's Stationers (owner)
24-27 Thayers Street,
LONDON.
W1M 6BQ

Mrs. Elizabeth MacDonald-Brown,
Director,
Knight Frank & Rutley,
20 Hanover Square,
LONDON.
W1R 0AH

The. Hon. Sara Morrison,
Director,
GEC,
1 Stanhope Gate,
LONDON.
W1A 1EH

Mr. Knowles is gathering a separate list of young women engineers for you which you requested, and will be letting you have it in the near future.

SCIENCE & TECH: WISE

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