

PRIME MINISTER

"SWITCH" TO ENGINEERING MEETING

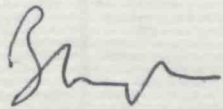
There is some interest in your meeting tomorrow with industrialists in relation to the above scheme.

We do not know how it will work out, but Department of Education and Science are anxious to make the most of it if the result is positive.

In that event, it is important we encourage both Sir Keith and representatives of industry to put over to the media (press, radio and television) industry's good response to a Government initiative.

DES are also first for Oral Questions tomorrow, so a Question could be engineered which would also colour the reception of the Higher Education Green Paper about which Sir Keith is to make a statement later.

DES have prepared the attached draft press notice or statement. It would be useful to have clearance for its use in one form or another at the end of the meeting.



BERNARD INGHAM
20 May 1985

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

TELEPHONE: 01-934-9880/9

21 MAY 1985

TOP INDUSTRIALISTS SUPPORT 'SWITCH'

Most successful meeting
at No 10 - Sir Keith

The Prime Minister today met [26] of Britain's leading industrialists at No 10 Downing Street, to discuss how they could help the Government's ^{drive to} ~~programme~~ ^{scheme} to pay for more students to study engineering and technology in higher education, ^{and some come with entirely new needs to stay in the forefront of the new science industries. Some 163- in being provided} ~~Under the Government for this programme~~

With the Prime Minister at the meeting were the Secretaries of State for Education and Science, Sir Keith Joseph, Scotland, Mr George Younger, Trade and Industry, Mr Norman Tebbit, and Employment, Mr Tom King; the Minister without Portfolio, Lord Young; and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr John Butcher.

The industrialists said that they welcomed, and fully supported, the Government's action in allocating more money - the 'switch' - to increase the output of engineering and technology graduates and postgraduates.

They committed their firms to give significantly increased assistance to the universities and polytechnics benefiting from the Government's programme.

The help they offered included more up-to-date equipment, help with teaching staff, and industrial places for sandwich course students. They also offered more active help with the design of relevant courses, a greater readiness to sponsor students and an undertaking to offer worthwhile initial jobs and subsequent careers to graduates.

It was agreed that industry's response could be channelled through the Information Technology Skills Agency, set up under the CBI's education foundation. Its chairman is Sir Robert Clayton of GEC.

Sir Keith Joseph who is in the lead on the Engineering and Technology Programme, said: "This was a most successful meeting. The leaders of British industry who were present responded as we had hoped and expected. The change in higher education will now gather increased momentum - and contribute even more to Britain's economic recovery."

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. A full list of the industrialists who attended the meeting is attached.
2. The Engineering and Technology Programme provides £43 million of Government money to pay for more students in higher education to study engineering and technology over the next three years (DES Press Notice 62/85, 19 March 1985).
3. In the first phase of the programme, announced last month (DES Press Notice 83/85, 3 April 1985), 20 universities will receive about £3.2 million to pay for an extra 579 engineering and technology students from this autumn. Second phase admissions will take place in autumn 1986, with allocations to be announced this summer.
4. Other significant education initiatives include:
 - a £38 million programme for information technology in higher education between 1983 and 1986 (announced in 1982) for the creation of an additional 5,000 places in electronic engineering and computer science at higher diploma, degree and postgraduate level in polytechnics and universities
 - the universities' plans to increase student intakes by some 3,000 in both 1984/85 and 1985/86, this increase being composed mainly of science and technology students
 - the NAB's programme for a substantial shift of resources into engineering and other vocational provision in polytechnics and institutes of higher education
 - £13 million through Education Support Grants in 1985/86 to help equip further education colleges at non-advanced level to ensure that students in vocational subjects receive an education which takes account of the industrial and commercial applications of IT. Further funding will be available in 1986/87 and subsequent years.

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MEETING OF INDUSTRIALISTS 21/5/85

ACCEPTANCES

Sir Austin Pearce (British Aerospace)
M Bett (B.T.) in place of Sir George Jefferson
Robert Thornton (Debenhams)
J D Alun-Jones (Ferranti)
S Toy (Ford Motor Co)
* R J Clayton (GEC)
Derek Roberts (GEC - Director of Research)
Sir Austin Bide (Glaxo Group)
D A Baldwin (Hewlett-Packard)
Sir Edwin Nixon (IBM(UK))
J H Harvey-Jones (IC)
R G C Messervey (Lucas Industries)
Viscount Sandon (Deputy Chairman National Westminster Bank)
Sir John Clark (Plessey)
Sir Ernest Harrison (Racal)
H Orr-Ewing (Rank Zerox)
Sir Roy Sisson (Smith Industries)
Sir Kenneth Corfield (S.T.C.)
P Swinstead (System Designers)
Peter Laister (Thorn EMI)
R E Utiger (T.I. Group)
Sir Terence Beckett (CBI)
* Sir Robert Clayton (I.T. Skills Agency - CBI)
Sir Francis Tombs (Rothschilds/Rolls Royce)
Robin Duthie (Scottish Development Agency)
J S Whyte (National Electronics Council)
P A B Hughes (Logica Holdings)

APOLOGIES

Sir W Barlow (BICC)
A Poot (Phillips)



10 DOWNING STREET

Press Notice

TOP INDUSTRIALISTS SUPPORT 'SWITCH'

The Prime Minister today met 26 of Britain's leading industrialists at No 10 Downing Street, to discuss their part in the national effort to increase the number of students studying engineering and technology in higher education.

With the Prime Minister at the meeting were the Secretaries of State for Education and Science, Scotland, Trade and Industry, and Employment; the Minister without Portfolio; and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Mr John Butcher.

The industrialists said that they welcomed, and fully supported, the Government's initiative to increase the output of engineering and technology graduates and postgraduates - the 'switch'.

They committed their firms to giving substantial and continuing practical help to the universities and polytechnics benefiting from the Government's programme. They offered more up-to-date equipment, more help with teaching staff and with the design of relevant courses, and they undertook to provide more sandwich course places and to sponsor more students.

It was agreed that industry's response should be channelled through the Information Technology Skills Agency, set up under the CBI's education foundation. Its chairman is Sir Robert Clayton of GEC. The Secretary of State for Education will also be holding further detailed discussions with the industrialists and with higher education.

The Prime Minister will be holding a further meeting with the industrialists at the beginning of Industry Year 1986, which will give them an opportunity to report progress.

21 May 1985

Telephone 01-930 4433

NOTES TO EDITORS

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4. Other significant education initiatives include:

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- the universities' plans to increase student intakes by some 3,000 in both 1984/85 and 1985/86, this increase being composed mainly of science and technology students
- the programme of the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education for a substantial shift of resources into engineering and other vocational provision in polytechnics and institutes of higher education
- £13 million through Education Support Grants in 1985/86 to help equip further education colleges at non-advanced level to ensure that students in vocational subjects receive an education which takes account of the industrial and commercial applications of IT. Further funding will be available in 1986/87 and subsequent years.

LIST OF INDUSTRIALISTS

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Robert Thornton (Debenhams)
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Sir Robert Clayton (GEC and IT Skills Agency, CBI)
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