



APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

cc [signature]

BF

Await Sir RN's advice.  
BF on Wednesday 14/11/85  
6 New of no news.

PRIME MINISTER

**BRITISH NATIONAL SPACE CENTRE: DIRECTOR GENERAL**

When agreeing Sir Robin Nicholson's proposals about the British National Space Centre in August, you asked that I should be responsible for their implementation, particularly in respect of the appointment of the Director General.

In agreement with Michael Heseltine and Peter Brooke, acting for Sir Keith Joseph, I therefore seek your agreement for the appointment of Mr Roy Gibson as the first Director General, subject to the necessary security clearance. Following consultation with Denis Trevelyan at the Civil Service Commission, who have been involved throughout, and the consideration of a shortlist by a panel of Permanent Secretaries (DTI, MoD, DES) there has been a unanimous recommendation for the appointment of Roy Gibson. He is the former Director General of the European Space Agency and would command wide respect in Europe and America. I attach a background note on him.

The appointment would, with the agreement of Treasury, be initially to a new Deputy Secretary post in the Department of Trade and Industry pending the formation of the Centre which, subject to clearance procedures, I hope to announce during November. Sir Robert Armstrong has been informed of these proposals and I understand that he has no objections.

I am copying this minute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Sir Robert Armstrong, Sir Robin Nicholson and the First Civil Service Commissioner.

GEOFFREY PATTIE

31 October 1985